



1999 Sunstone Symposium

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

14-17 JULY
SALT PALACE
SALT LAKE CITY

CALL TO GET
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

ART AUCTION

DONATIONS NEEDED

Sunstone
343 N. Third West
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
801/355-5926; Fax 801/355-4043
SunstoneUT@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>).

THE MORMON UNIVERSE

The **Association for Mormon Letters** has begun publishing *Irrantum*, a magazine that "explores literature by and about Mormons." The magazine is to be published three times per year, with issues in March, June, and September. Subscriptions are currently available only to members of the association. To join, send a \$15 check payable to the AML to treasurer Henry Miles, 1925 Terrace Drive, Orem, UT 84097. A sample copy of *Irrantum* may also be obtained by sending \$2 to *Irrantum*, P.O. Box 50883, Provo, UT 84605. The magazine's e-mail address is <irreant@cs.com>.

Evergreen International, a support group for those wishing to overcome homosexuality while remaining faithful to the LDS church, opened a San Francisco Bay Area chapter in April 1999. The Evergreen program includes a weekly class, group support sessions, and other regularly scheduled activities. For more information, contact: Bay Area Evergreen, P.O. Box 731, Brisbane, CA 94005 (415/334-5827; <bayareaevergreen@hotmail.com>).

Similarly—but different—**Affirmation**, an organization for gay- and lesbian-identified Mormons, will hold its annual conference on 8-10 October 1999, in Lake Tahoe, California. For information, visit the group's website at <www.affirmation.org/conf99info.htm>.

The **Mormon History Association** will hold its annual conference in Denmark, 24 June-2 July 2000. The theme will be "Mormonism in Continental Europe: Commemorating 150 Years." Further information is available on the MHA website at <www.mhahome.org>.

Quincy, Illinois, the town that offered hospitality to the Latter-day Saints in 1839 after they had been driven from Missouri, and the town that the *Times and Seasons* said would "be held in everlasting remembrance for their [the Quincy citizens'] unparalleled liberality," will hold a 160-year-anniversary party for its welcoming the Mormons. Chuck Scholz, current mayor of the town, has planned a Quincy Heritage Celebration to be held 24 July 1999 in which historical events will be reenacted. For information, call 1-800/453-0022, extension 15.

A Spanish language mailing list has been created for sharing the gospel. The name is **mormon-spanish**. The list is semi-moderated—all posts will be reviewed before being sent to the list. Messages must be in Spanish and discuss the gospel. Arguing is not allowed. To subscribe, send a blank e-mail message to <mormon-spanish-subscribe@makelist.com>.

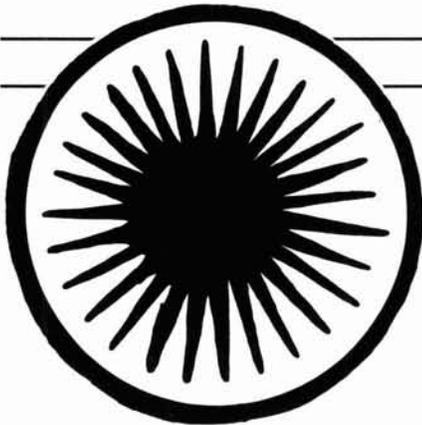
SUNSTONE

MORMON EXPERIENCE, SCHOLARSHIP, ISSUES, & ART

June 1999

Volume 22:2

Issue 114



SUNSTONE (ISSN 0363-1370) is published by The Sunstone Foundation, a non-profit corporation with no official connection to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Articles represent the opinions of the writers only.

SUNSTONE is indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*, the *Index to Book Reviews in Religion*, *Religion Indexes: RIO/RIT/IBBR 1975-* on CD-ROM, and the *ATLA Religion Database* on CD-ROM, published by the American Theological Library Association, 820 Church Street, Evanston, IL 60201-5613 (e-mail: atla@atla.com, www: <http://atla.library.vanderbilt.edu/atla/home.html>).

Submissions may be on IBM-PC compatible computer diskettes (WordPerfect format), on double-spaced typed manuscripts, or by e-mail. Submissions should not exceed 8,000 words and must be accompanied by a signed letter giving permission for the manuscript to be filed in the Sunstone collection at the University of Utah Marriott Library (all literary rights are retained by authors). Manuscripts will not be returned; authors will be notified concerning acceptance within sixty days.

SUNSTONE is interested in feature- and column-length articles relevant to Mormonism from a variety of perspectives, news stories about Mormons and the LDS church, and psalms—prose or poems addressed to God. Poetry submissions should have one poem per page, with the poet's name and address on each page; a self-addressed, stamped envelope should accompany each submission. Short poems—haiku, limericks, couplets, and one-liners—are very welcome. Short stories are selected only through the annual Brookie and D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest (submission deadline: 1 June 2000; \$5 fee per story).

Letters for publication should be identified. SUNSTONE does not acknowledge receipt of letters to the editor. Letters addressed to specific authors will be forwarded, unopened, to them.

Upon request by subscribers, SUNSTONE will not provide a subscriber's address to mail list solicitors.

Send all correspondence and manuscripts to:

SUNSTONE
343 N. Third West
Salt Lake City, UT 84103-1215
801/355-5926
fax: 801/355-4043
e-mail: SunstoneUT@aol.com

United States subscriptions to SUNSTONE are \$36 for 6 issues, \$66 for 12 issues, and \$90 for 18 issues. Eight-issue international subscriptions are \$36 (U.S.) for Canada, Mexico, and for surface mail to all other countries. International airmail subscriptions are \$4 extra per issue. Bona fide student and missionary subscriptions are \$10 less than the above rates. A \$10 service charge will be deducted for all cancellations.



∞ Printed on acid-free paper.

Copyright © 1999, The Sunstone Foundation.
All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

FEATURES	
26	Robert A. Rees GOING TO CHURCH
31	Jason Lindquist WRECK
36	Jana K. Riess STRIPLING WARRIORS: THE CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS OF CONTEMPORARY MORMON KITSCH
48	Lee Warthen HISTORY OF SUNSTONE, CHAPTER 1: THE SCOTT KENNEY YEARS: SUMMER 1974-JUNE 1978
POETRY	
11	Philip White MISE EN SCENE
14	Mark J. Mitchell MATERFAMILIAS
17	Robert Rees TAI CHI IN XIAN
30	Robert Jones TEMPLE OF THE MONOLITH
35	R. S. Carlson PORT CALL
47	Linda Sillitoe THE DREAM YOU WAKE FROM
61	Ray Greenblatt BREAKING SUBURBAN
63	Doug McNamee WINTER SONG
69	Durga Prasad Panda NIGHTLINES—5
72	Mark Mitchell HOW I MET MY WIFE
COLUMNS	
6	Elbert Eugene Peck FROM THE EDITOR: Sophomorics
7	Mary Ann Morgan FROM A TRUSTEE: Making the Dream Come True
8	Dean L. May IN MEMORIAM: Leonard James Arrington
12	Brian Evenson LINE UPON LINE: No Toil Nor Labor: An Encounter
15	Bryan Waterman TURNING THE TIME OVER TO: Four Looks at My Father
CORNUCOPIA	
18	Courtney S. Campbell REFLECTIONS: Shattered Dreams
21	M. Spaff Sumsion CURELOMS AND CUMMOMS: Benedictionary
22	Davis Bitton TWENTY YEARS AGO: Realistic Expectations
23	Michael Austin THE WORDS AMONG US: Some Notes on Literature by Mormon Women
21	P. Q. Bliss CYBERSAINTS: Bracketing Out [Mess]
80	C. K. Woodworth LIGHTER MINDS: Flash—BYU in Chaos; Uniforms Declared
80	Richard L. Bushman AN OLIVE LEAF: "I Can See Anything"
REVIEWS	
64	R. Dennis Potter <i>Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education</i> by Martha C. Nussbaum
73	Michael Austin <i>Father of Lies</i> by Brian Evenson
NEWS	
73 UPDATE • PEOPLE • MORMON MEDIA IMAGE
Cover	Michael Stack

SUNSTONE

Founded in 1974
SCOTT KENNEY 1975-1978
ALLEN D. ROBERTS 1978-1980
PEGGY FLETCHER 1978-1986
DANIEL RECTOR 1986-1991

Editor and Publisher
ELBERT EUGENE PECK

Managing Editor Office Manager
ERIC LYNN JONES CAROL B. QUIST
Associate Editors Production Manager
GREG CAMPBELL MARK J. MALCOLM
BRYAN WATERMAN
CHERIE WOODWORTH

Section Editors

PHYLLIS BAKER, fiction contest
MATTHEW BLACK, news
MARNI ASPLUND CAMPBELL, Cornucopia
DENNIS CLARK, poetry reviews
STEVE MAYFIELD, librarian
DIXIE PARTRIDGE, poetry
WILL QUIST, new books
MIKE STACK, photography
NELSON WADSWORTH, historical photographs

Editorial Assistants

BEVERLY HOPPE
JANE MOMBERGER, LYN WORTHEN

Advisory Editorial Board

PAT BAGLEY
BRIAN KAGEL

Contributing Columnists

MICHAEL AUSTIN, COURTNEY CAMPBELL
DORICE WILLIAMS ELLIOTT
MARYBETH RAYNES, MATT WORKMAN

Correspondents

JOANNA BROOKS, NEAL & REBECCA CHANDLER
BRIAN EVENSON, KARL SANDBERG
HOLLY WELKER

Cartoonists

CALVIN GRONDAHL
PAT BAGLEY
CHRIS CHECKETTS, KENT CHRISTENSEN
SAM DAY, MARVIN FRIEDMAN,
BRUCE READE

Volunteers

VIRGINIA BOURGEOUS, JIM DYKMAN
BARBARA HAUGSOEN, MICHAEL OWNBY, BRANDON QUIST
KATHRYN QUIST, REBECCA QUIST, SHARON QUIST
WENDY SILVER, JIM WOOD



THE SUNSTONE FOUNDATION

Board of Trustees

STAN CHRISTENSEN, chair
MARTHA S. BRADLEY, ROBYN KNIBBE DAVIS
EUGENE ENGLAND, MARY ANN MORGAN
LOUIS MOENCH, MARGARET REISER, KATHY WILSON

Executive Director

ELBERT EUGENE PECK

Symposiums

MOLLY BENNION, Northwest
ANN STONE & SUSAN PAXMAN HATCH, Chicago
RICHARD RANDS, Symposium West

National Advisory Board

ALAN ACKROYD, IRENE BATES
IAN BARBER, MOLLY BENNION
CARLAN BRADSHAW, BELLAMY BROWN
COLE CAPENER, RENEE CARLSON
BLAINE CARLTON, PAUL CARPENTER
STEPHEN C. CLARK, DOUGLAS CONDIE
JOHN COX, D. JAMES CROFT
WILFRIED DECOO, ROBERT FILLERUP
KENT FROGLEY, SHELDON GREAVES
MARK GUSTAVSON, LIONEL GRADY
NANCY HARWARD, DIETRICH KEMPSKI
SHUNICHI KUWAHATA, GREG KOFFORD
GLEN LAMBERT, FARRELL LINES, PATRICK MCKENZIE
CARRIE MILES, RONALD L. MOLEN
MARJORIE NEWTON, ALICE ALLRED POTTMAYER
DANIEL H. RECTOR
CHRIS SEXTON, RICHARD SHERLOCK
GEORGE D. SMITH JR., NICHOLAS SMITH
RICHARD SOUTHWICK, MARSHA S. STEWART
LORIE WINDER STROMBERG
JOHN & JANET TARJAN
NOLA W. WALLACE, HARTMUT WEISSMANN
MARK J. WILLIAMS

YEA, YEA NAY, NAY

In the previous issue, *SUNSTONE* invited comments on the dynamics of humor in Mormonism, especially relating to *SUNSTONE* cartoons.

A MIRROR

SINCE SO MANY people respond so differently to the same cartoon—from appalled heresy to hearty belly laughs—reactions to cartoons function as an inkblot test: they reveal much more about the viewer than the cartoonist. Hence, cartoons will always be an uncharted minefield for any but the most cautious editor. Don't be too timid.

AIDEN SHAW

Lincoln Park, Illinois

FEARS

CARTOONS ARE READ in their context. Readers who fear a subversive agenda in *SUNSTONE*'s editors, authors, and artists will be on guard against one in the cartoons and will see one more often. Those less threatened by radical differences in Mormon religious approaches will less often find the sinister in the simple. Cartoons reveal our own religious fears and how they operate in relation to *SUNSTONE*.

CHIP DANIELS

Provincetown, Massachusetts

KEEP JESUS OUT OF IT

NONE OF your cartoons offends or bothers me. Some just aren't funny, but that's no crime. I do ask that you not include the Savior in cartoons. That would probably cause me to cancel my subscription, as much as I enjoy *SUNSTONE*.

PETER HODGE

Riverside, California

THE MOST OF IT

SHOULD *SUNSTONE*'s cartoons be hard-edged, pointed, political cartoons or "softer, light-hearted humor about generic Mormon culture"? Definitely the latter.

When I first saw *Fiddler on the Roof*, I wondered why Mormons couldn't incorporate our "peculiarities" into a similar light-hearted yet profound musical. A wise friend said it was because we had not matured enough to laugh at ourselves. More than twenty-five years have passed, and now a lot of us can indeed laugh at the foibles of our wonderful, generic Mormon culture. It's

healthy, it's delightful to add humor to our faith. And maybe someday, we will get away from the lugubrious musicals in which somebody has to die so that we can admire how we as a people handle death. Commendable, yes. But we've always claimed to be a "peculiar" people. Let's make the most of it!

LAEL LITKE

Pasadena, California

A MOST INGENIOUS . . .

WITHIN THE MORMON community, we believe we deal with ultimate issues. But we live in a world of daily trivia. The ultimate and the trivial—at times it is almost impossible to distinguish between the two. We are in a world whose point is the development of mastery that comes through actions and occasional mistakes, which we must recognize and correct as best we can. This process is one in which we must be seriously engaged, but it requires that we also have a tentative commitment to our previous decisions so that we can recognize their possible error and make revisions. Thus the paradox of being seriously engaged without taking ourselves too seriously.

Similarly, Mormon humor is seriously engaged with ultimate issues but reminds us not to take ourselves too seriously. To be able to laugh at/with the ultimate, or that which we mistakenly thought was ultimate but was only trivial. Laughter can be our best friend in this process of repentance: how could I ever have mistaken *that* for ultimate? Humor continually interrogates everything, continually asks what is truly ultimate and what is trivial? To propose a false etymology: humor comes from humility: to be humble is to be seriously engaged, but to not take ourselves too seriously.

ROBERT J. CHRISTENSEN

Eugene, Oregon

UNGODLY MYSTERIES?

I take exception to a couple of points that Wayne Booth makes in his insightful and entertaining "Do What Is Right, Let the Consequence Follow: Contrasting Messages in Mormon Hymns" (*SUNSTONE* Mar. 1999).

The first is that we should celebrate ambivalence in our concept of God, and we should do this because any concept of God fails to capture the nature of God. I take issue with this point for three reasons. (1) Joseph Smith clearly thought that knowing the na-

ture of God was essential to salvation. He said, "If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves" (King Follett Discourse, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 343). If God's nature is truly incomprehensible, then Smith would have to be wrong. (2) Part of the strength of Mormon theology is that it makes God's nature more comprehensible than does traditional Christianity. Indeed, think about the logical problems associated with explaining the concept of the Trinity. Moreover, an embodied God is one which we can understand to be a person whereas it is difficult to see how an immaterial being could interact in ways that persons do. (3) The idea that God's nature is incomprehensible seems to lead to the conclusion that no amount of reasoning or use of revelation on our part will lead to any substantive knowledge of God, and so we should just quit thinking about it. Such a view is often used, even if Booth does not intend this, to defend a staunch anti-intellectualism that we should find unacceptable.

Moreover, claiming that God is ambivalent, incomprehensible, or mysterious is an easy "cop-out" when one is faced with difficult theological and philosophical problems such as evil.

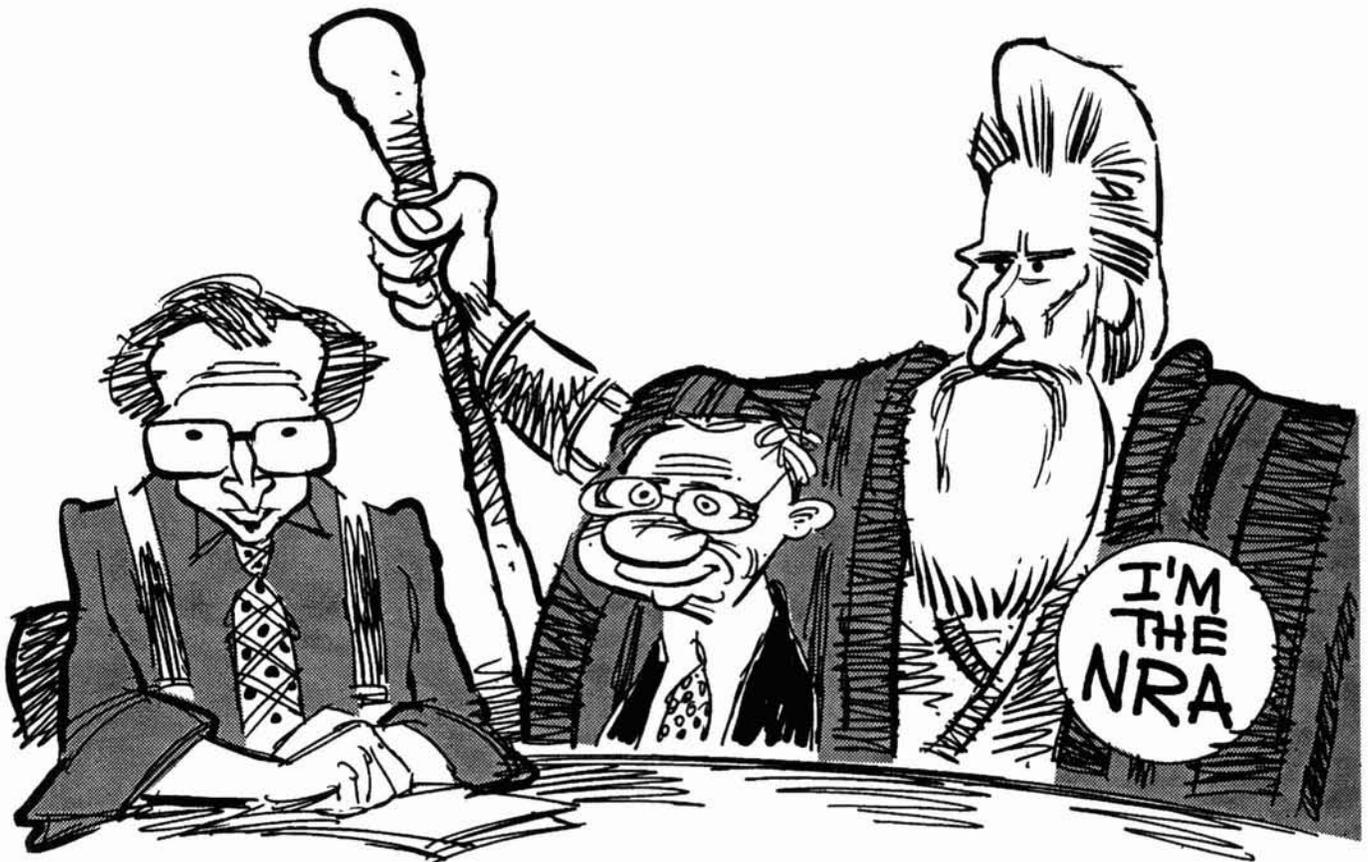
This brings me to the second claim: Booth argues that the problem of evil is easily resolvable once we see that God's nature has this ambivalence. Here he makes the seemingly rash claim that Bertrand Russell was foolish to reject the existence of God on the basis of the problem of evil.

The problem of evil, despite the impression that Booth gives us, is a significant problem. Hans Kung has called it "the rock of atheism." This is because it poses a significant threat to Christian belief. To dismiss it as foolishness is to dismiss a long history of Western philosophy and theology starting with Augustine, passing through such important thinkers as Leibnitz and Hume, and leading up to the present. (See David Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* for a good introduction.) For anyone familiar with

the problem, it should be clear that Mormon theology has the beginnings of a substantive response to this problem in the fact of its denial of God's absolute omnipotence and its denial of ex nihilo creation. Why opt for the cop-out response to the problem of evil (i.e., it's all just a mystery) when such an intellectually satisfying response is on hand?

Perhaps Booth will respond that he does not opt for the mysteriousness of God for the reason that this allows him to eschew the problem of evil but that this is just the way God happens to be. Now it should be clear that something can be mysterious in some ways and not mysterious in others. The Christian tradition unanimously agrees that God is mysterious, and yet they go on to make many claims about God's nature. We can know some things about God, but not much. The problem of evil depends on these tidbits that Christianity does claim to have knowledge. Now a Mormon who wants to cling to some aspect of mysteriousness in God (for whatever reason) can still accept

GRONDAHL SUNSTONE



"I'm Larry King and the subject is guns. With me are God's prophet on earth and God's prophet in Planet Hollywood."



SUNSTONE IS SOLD HERE

Pick up extra copies for your friends.

Move them from the back row of the magazine display rack to the front.

Call ahead to make sure they have a copy in stock.

NEW LOCATIONS: CALIFORNIA *Dublin:* Barnes and Noble; *San Mateo:* Barnes and Noble; *Santa Monica:* L.A. Int'l News. CONNECTICUT *New Minas:* Inside Story. ILLINOIS *Normal:* Hastings. MARYLAND *Gaithersburg:* Grand Corner Ave. Barnes and Noble. OKLAHOMA *Lawton:* Hastings; *Midwest City:* Hastings. TEXAS *Houston:* 13201 N.W. Freeway 119 Superstand; *Richardson:* Superstand. UTAH *Ogden:* Newgate Mall B. Dalton.

STORES: CANADA *Edmonton, Alberta:* Hub Cigar & Newsstand; *Winnipeg, Manitoba:* McNally Robinson Books; *Ajax, Ontario:* Disticor; *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan:* McNally Robinson Books. ALABAMA *Birmingham:* Book-A-Million; *Montgomery:* Barnes & Noble. ARIZONA *Flagstaff:* Hastings; *Mesa:* Borders, Bookstar; *Peoria:* Barnes & Noble; *Sierra Vista:* Hastings; *Tucson:* E. Broadway Barnes & Noble; N. Oracle Borders. ARKANSAS *Fort Smith:* Hastings. CALIFORNIA *Bakersfield:* Barnes & Noble; *Calabasas:* Barnes & Noble; *Campbell:* Barnes & Noble; *Chula Vista:* Third Avenue News; *Citrus Heights:* Barnes & Noble; *Culver City:* Bookstar; *Los Angeles:* Westside Village Borders; *Long Beach:* Carson Blvd. Barnes & Noble, Pacific Coast Barnes & Noble; *Oceanside:* Coronet News Stand; *Orange:* Barnes & Noble; *Palo Alto:* Borders; *Rancho Cucamonga:* Barnes & Noble; *Redding:* Barnes & Noble; *San Diego:* Hazard Center Barnes & Noble; *San Jose:* Barnes & Noble; *Valencia:* Valencia News; *Stevenson Ranch:* No Limit Newsstand; *Stockton:* Barnes & Noble; *Thousand Oaks:* Barnes & Noble; *West Hollywood:* Sunset News. COLORADO *Aurora:* Aurora Newsland; *Boulder:* Barnes & Noble; *Denver:* Barnes & Noble, South Monaco Newsland; *Grand Junction:* Hastings; *Lakewood:* Lakewood Newsland; *Pueblo:* Barnes & Noble; *Westminster:* Westminster Newsland. CONNECTICUT *New Haven:* Chapel St. News Haven. DELAWARE *Wilmington:* Barnes & Noble. FLORIDA *Boynton Beach:* Barnes & Noble; *Orlando:* Univ. of Central Florida Barnes & Noble; *Oviedo:* Barnes & Noble; *South Miami:* Sunset Dr. Barnes & Noble. GEORGIA *Atlanta:* Perimeter Ctr. W. Barnes & Noble; *Duluth:* Barnes & Noble Books, Borders. HAWAII *Honolulu:* Borders; *Waipahu:* Borders. IDAHO *Boise:* Barnes & Noble, Borders; *Coeur D'Alene:* Hastings; *Pocatello:* Main Street Coffee & News; *Twin Falls:* Barnes & Noble, Hastings. ILLINOIS *Chicago:* N. State St. Barnes & Noble, City News, Webster Ave. Zines & Beans; *Naperville:* Barnes & Noble. INDIANA *Carmel:* Barnes & Noble; *Fort Wayne:* Hastings; *Richmond:* Hastings. IOWA *Coralville:* Barnes & Noble; *West Des Moines:* Barnes & Noble. KANSAS *Olathe:* Hastings; *Wichita:* Borders. KENTUCKY *Lexington:* Pavilion Barnes & Noble; *Louisville:* Barnes & Noble; *Okolona:* Hastings. LOUISIANA *Shreveport:* Barnes & Noble. MAINE *Augusta:* Barnes & Noble. MARYLAND *Annapolis:* Barnes & Noble; *Baltimore:* East Pratt St. Barnes & Noble, Honeygo Blvd. Barnes & Noble; *Bethesda:* Barnes & Noble; *Rockville:* Barnes & Noble; *Towson:* Barnes & Noble. MASSACHUSETTS *Boston:* Beacon St. Barnes & Noble, School St. Borders; *Leominster:* Barnes & Noble; *Walpole:* Barnes & Noble. MICHIGAN *Ann Arbor:* Borders, Waldenbooks; *Dearborn:* Borders; *Troy:* Barnes & Noble. MINNESOTA *Minneapolis:* Dinkytown News. MISSISSIPPI *Jackson:* Barnes & Noble. MISSOURI *Independence:* Barnes & Noble; *Kansas City:* NW Roanridge Rd. Barnes & Noble; *Kirkville:* Hastings; *Springfield:* Barnes & Noble. MONTANA *Billings:* Hastings. NEBRASKA *Lincoln:* Barnes & Noble, Hastings. NEVADA *Las Vegas:* Decatur Blvd. Borders. NEW HAMPSHIRE *Nashua:* Barnes & Noble. NEW JERSEY *Clark:* Barnes & Noble; *Cliffside Park:* Garden State News; *Deptford:* Barnes & Noble; *Hillsdale:* Garden State News; *Paramus:* Barnes & Noble; *Wayne:* Borders. NEW MEXICO *Las Cruces:* Hastings. NEW YORK *Amherst:* Barnes & Noble; *Brooklyn:* Barnes & Noble; *Elmira:* Barnes & Noble; *Levittown:* Borders; *Mohegan Lake:* Barnes & Noble; *New York City:* 1972 Broadway Barnes & Noble; 160 E. 54th St. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Place Barnes & Noble, E. 86th St. Barnes & Noble, 122 Fifth Ave. Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave. Barnes & Noble; *Poughkeepsie:* Barnes & Noble; *Syracuse:* Barnes & Noble; *West Nyack:* Barnes & Noble. NORTH CAROLINA *Cary:* Barnes & Noble; *Charlotte:* Barnes & Noble; *Durham:* Barnes & Noble; *Fayetteville:* Barnes & Noble; *Hickory:* Barnes & Noble. OHIO *Cleveland:* Bank News; *Columbus:*

Olentangy River Rd. Barnes & Noble, Grandview Ave. Newsworthy's, Bethel Rd. Newsworthy's; *Fairlawn:* Borders; *Westlake:* Borders; *Whitehall:* Barnes & Noble. OKLAHOMA *Oklahoma City:* Taylor News & Books; *Tulsa:* E. 71st St. Barnes & Noble. OREGON *Eugene:* Barnes & Noble; *Portland:* Lloyd Center Barnes & Noble, Sixth & Washington News. PENNSYLVANIA *Devon:* Barnes & Noble; *Greensburg:* Barnes & Noble; *Lancaster:* Barnes & Noble; *Pittsburgh:* Freeport Rd. Barnes & Noble, Quinn Dr. Barnes & Noble; *University Park:* Penn State Bookstore Barnes & Noble. SOUTH CAROLINA *Charleston:* Barnes & Noble; *Hilton Head:* Barnes & Noble; *North Charleston:* Barnes & Noble. TENNESSEE *Clarksville:* Hastings; *Franklin:* Hastings; *Maryville:* Hastings. TEXAS *Amarillo:* Plains Blvd. Hastings; *Austin:* Barton Creek Ink Newsstand, Research Blvd. Barnes & Noble, Guadalupe St. Barnes & Noble; *Dallas:* Greenville Super Stand, 10720 Preston Rd. Borders; *Houston:* 1505 Sawyer Superstand, S. Sheperd Super Stand, 5348 Westheimer Rd. Super Stand, 8096 Westheimer Rd. Super Stand; *Lubbock:* Hastings; *New Braunfels:* Hastings; *Odessa:* Hastings; *San Angelo:* Hastings; *Waxahachie:* Hastings. UTAH *Bountiful:* Barnes & Noble; *Layton:* Barnes & Noble, Hastings; *Logan:* Hastings, Waldenbooks; *Murray:* Fashion Place Waldenbooks, 5900 S. Barnes & Noble; *Ogden:* Hastings, Waldenbooks; *Orem:* Barnes & Noble; *Provo:* Borders, BYU Bookstore; *Salt Lake City:* Benchmark Books, Crossroads Borders, E. Winchester Borders, 612 E. 400 S. Barnes & Noble, Hayat's Magazines, Sam Weller's Zion Bookstore, Sugar House (1100 East) Barnes & Noble, 7123 South Barnes & Noble; *St. George:* Dixie College Bookstore. VIRGINIA *Fairfax:* Barnes & Noble; *Manassass:* Barnes & Noble; *Newport News:* Barnes & Noble; *Roanoke:* Barnes & Noble; *Vienna:* Borders. WASHINGTON *Silverdale:* Barnes & Noble; *Seattle:* Pine St. Barnes & Noble; *Spokane:* Barnes & Noble, N. Division Hastings; *Woodinville:* Barnes & Noble. WISCONSIN *Cudahy:* Cudahy News & Hobby Center; *Greenfield:* Cudahy News; *Wauwatosa:* Barnes & Noble.



Guarantee Continuous Delivery

Subscribe to SUNSTONE

6 issues for \$36

12 issues for \$66

18 issues for \$90

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Visa MC Disc Amex check

Card # _____ exp. _____

Phone orders: 801/355-5926 Fax orders: 801/355-4043

E-mail orders: SunstoneUT@aol.com

Mail: Sunstone, 343 N. Third West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103-1215

that we can know that God does not have some of the properties that Christianity claims he has and which lead to the problem of evil. We don't need the irrationalist gambit any longer to avoid the problem of evil. And this even if we do think that God is in some measure incomprehensible.

R. DENNIS POTTER
South Bend, Indiana

Wayne Booth responds:

To deal adequately with the questions raised by Dennis Potter's puzzling letter would require a book on the history of theodicy—the effort to defend God's goodness and omnipotence in a world where evil obviously exists. But I can't resist offering three inadequate rejoinders.

1. On God's "incomprehensibility": Potter has misread the word (at least until his final paragraph) by taking it in one modern sense: totally distant, totally inaccessible. That is not what it has meant to theologians. Rather, it has always been used to mean something like "not totally encompassable, not totally masterable, not entirely "grasped around," com-prehended. Only for a few theologians has God been seen as totally unreachable, and that is certainly not what I had in mind.

2. On the notion that Mormons, through Joseph Smith, have or should have a fixed, clear, unambiguous grasp of God and his nature: I invite Potter to do a little more close reading of the history of Joseph Smith's descriptions of God. The God I was raised with was the non-omniscient, ever-learning One described in the King Follett Discourse (but not in Potter's chosen quotation). Not until I discovered Joseph Smith's earlier descriptions, and the mysterious Trinity, omniscient and omnipotent, Whom one often meets in the Book of Mormon, did I realize how un-pin-down-able, in-comprehens-ible God was, even for Joseph Smith.

3. On Bertrand Russell's turn to atheism because he could not reconcile an omnipotent, all-loving God with the evil world as he saw it: I don't understand why Potter thinks I was foolish to call Russell's choice foolish. Russell's adolescent, proud rationalism, pinning God down, treating him as intended to be seen as "comprehensible," led him to atheism. Had he been reared to a different view (perhaps Potter's), his life might not have later revealed such a mishmash of claims to atheism and more or less secret longings for some meaning in the world (see his "A Free Man's Worship").

WAYNE BOOTH
(dwelling in an unwavering sense of mystery)
Chicago, Illinois

"YOO HOO! UNTO JESUS"

THANKS for Wayne Booth's entertaining and enlightening article on LDS hymns. May I add a few tangential odds and ends to his rewarding study?

Concerning alternate lyrics, one of the great delights of my misspent youth in Farmington, Utah, was singing loudly, "Yoo hoo! Unto Jesus, Yoo hoo! unto Jesus, Yoo hoo! unto Jesus for refuge have fled." That famous and unfortunate line in "How Firm A Foundation" was changed, thankfully, in 1985 from "You who unto Jesus. . ." to "Who unto the Savior. . .". While many of the changes in texts in the 1985 *Hymnal* are indicated, this particular change, however, has not been so noted.

Another bit of puerility some of us enjoyed getting away with was singing the following words during the first verse of "High on a Mountain Top":

High on a mountain top
Where green grows the grass
Along came Billy Goat
Sliding on his overcoat.

Then there is the concern of borrowing melodies, especially in Mormonism's early, more naive days. To wit: "MIA Our MIA!" is set to the German carol "O Tannenbaum." "Do What Is Right" is sung to the "Old Oaken Bucket." We have borrowed from Mendelssohn ("We'll Sing the Songs of Zion") and Mozart ("The Earth Was Shrouded Deep in Gloom," and the 1927 version of "Truth Reflects upon Our Senses.")

"In Our Lovely Deseret" (the most parochial hymn ever written, and which helped form my *Weltanschauung* for more than six decades—to this very day), is sung to the Civil War tune "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp or the Prisoner's Hope." I still can hear my little Primary friends—Blazers, Trekkers, Guides, Bluebirds, Larks, and Seagulls—singing "Hark! Hark! Hark! 'tis children's music—children's voices, oh, how sweet."

Many other favorite hymns were also set to borrowed tunes ("Oh My Father," "O Ye Mountains High," "Come, Come Ye Saints," and "The Spirit of God"). Oh well, we as a people do continue to mature. Maybe our musicians can reset some of our favorite texts to better, original music in the next hymnal.

STANLEY B. KIMBALL
Glen Carbon, Illinois

LETTERS 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).



WORDS OF MORMONS

Can't Find a Book?

These stores specialize in out-of-print and hard-to-find LDS books.

ALPHA BOOKS

251 S. State St. #6, Salt Lake, UT 84111
801/355-2665; willq@fortress.com
appraisals, catalog, mail orders,
search service, credit cards

BEEHIVE COLLECTORS GALLERY

368 E. 300 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801/533-0119
Mormon Memorabilia Catalogue
issued quarterly: \$10 per year

BENCHMARK BOOKS

3269 S. Main, Ste. 250,
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
801/486-3111; fax 801/486-3452
toll free for orders 800/486-3112
buy, sell, trade

B&W COLLECTOR BOOKS

3466 S. 700 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84106
801/466-8395
appraisals, catalog, mail orders,
search service, credit cards
thousands of titles in stock—many rare

KEN SANDERS RARE BOOKS

268 S. 200 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801/521-3819; fax 801/521-2606
ken@dreamgarden.com
<http://www.dreamgarden.com/ksb/>
appraisals, catalog, mail orders,
search service, credit cards
10 A.M.—6 P.M., Monday—Saturday

SAM WELLER'S BOOKS

254 S. Main, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801/328-2586; 800/SAMW
books@samwellers.com
<http://www.samwellers.com>
appraisals, catalogue, mail orders
delivery service, special orders
search service, credit cards

Simply the Best collection of Mormon and Mormon-related titles to be found anywhere.

CONGRATULATIONS

*We compliment Sunstone
on a quarter-century
of intellectual exploration.*

Carry On!

BEN ADAMS
JOHN ASHTON
PATTY ASHTON
JAY BALL
MARTHA BALL
MARTHA SONNTAG BRADLEY
MARILYN BUSHMAN CARLTON
BLAINE CARLTON
ALEX CALDIERO
GENE CARR
KATHERINE CARR
STAN CHRISTENSEN
RICHARD CUMMINGS
JULIE CUMMINGS
SCOTT DANIELS
ROBYN KNIBBE DAVIS
CHRISTINE DURHAM
EUGENE ENGLAND
CHARLOTTE ENGLAND
MARTHA ESPLIN
FRED ESPLIN
CHARLOTTE HAMBLIN
ROBERT HINCKLEY
JANICE HINCKLEY
GLEN LAMBERT
MARIJANE LAMBERT
SCOTT LECKMAN
LOUIS MOENCH
TONY MORGAN
MARY ANN MORGAN
LINDA KING NEWELL
JACK NEWELL
CHASE PETERSON
GRETHE PETERSON
ALLEN ROBERTS
MARGARET REISER
RICK REESE
JILL REMINGTON
GARY SHEPHERD
GORDON SHEPHERD
DENNIS SMITH
GIBBS SMITH
KATHRYN STATS
MARY WHITESIDES
J. D. WILLIAMS
BARBARA WILLIAMS
TED WILSON
KATHY WILSON

FROM THE EDITOR

SOPHOMORICS

By Elbert Eugene Peck

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Note the list on page 5 of hot dealers for out-of-print and hard-to-find LDS books (perfect gifts!). *SUNSTONE* appreciates their support; they'd welcome your patronage.

2. *SUNSTONE* is interviewing for part-time word-processing and desktop publishing help.

TODAY'S SERMONETTE

LONG AGO, my well-meaning friends and I annihilated the James Madison High School Bible Club.

In a now mythical time, scattered Israel in every major U.S. city labored to replicate the entire menu of Church programs designed for a compact, three-square-block, Wasatch Front ward village. Though surrounded by millions of non-Mormons, I was socialized in one such all-consuming suburban Mormon ghetto. Each schoolday morning, the faithful youth of McLean and Vienna Wards emerged from the meetinghouse and fanned out from early-morning Seminary via quite complicated car pools to six Fairfax County, Virginia, high schools. After the great race down Maple Avenue while listening to Harden and Weaver's 7:35 A.M. broadcast of a Souza march, the Mormon contingent at Madison, thirty-five out of two thousand students, clustered for a half hour in the cafeteria to eat donuts, complete homework, plan MIA-Maid/Explorer excursions, and forge parental absence excuses.

I learned about the Bible Club while being a member-missionary in geometry, a teach-each-other-in-small-groups class that afforded much non-supervised, non-math chit-chat. While we plotted parabolas and talked religion, one student trumped my piety by inviting me to join the club, which met in a classroom for twenty minutes prior to the first morning bell.

Mary Cummings and I were the first Mormons to join. We'd skip the cafeteria and go sing Jesus songs, testify of Jesus' love, listen to an inspirational scripture thought, and pray. I still sing the songs, especially, "I've

got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart . . . to stay." On our turns to lead the group, we taught Mormon songs, which they politely learned, such as "I Am a Child of God."

I don't recall any of the club's devotional lessons, but I do remember carefully listening to them, looking for opportunities to insert Mormon truths. For our scripture thoughts, we used Bible verses we had learned in Seminary. Initially, our texts were unobjectionable, such as James's exhortation to works over faith, but they lacked the evangelical flavor of the other club members'.

In a short time, the LDS Bible clubbers increased from two to four to six. The club welcomed the growth, but it meant that the proportion of Mormon devotionals grew, too. I am amazed that we really gave lessons on what Paul meant by "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead if the dead rise not at all . . ." (1 Cor. 15:29), and "for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first" (2 Thes. 2:3), and Jesus' teaching that "other sheep I have which are not of this fold . . ." (John 10:16). Our Christian colleagues didn't know how to respond, but they correctly sensed that, despite our friendly sharing tone, our hermeneutics somehow attacked their beliefs.

Our presence had changed the nature of the meeting. It was no longer a mutual quest for Christ's spirit to help us be loving disciples through the day; now, we were earnest theologians trying to get the scriptures right. There were no real arguments, but the difference no longer fed the spirits of the club's founders; their numbers began to dwindle as those of the Mormons multiplied.

Then one day, only Mormons showed up. The next day, too. By the third day, we realized we'd lost all the lost sheep we'd been seeking, and since we were already attending early morning Seminary, the continuation of a solely Mormon Bible club seemed superfluous. So we disbanded it, returned to the Mormon cafeteria clique, and resumed eating maple bars, planning super activities, and filling out applications to BYU.

FROM A BOARD MEMBER

MAKING THE DREAM COME TRUE

By Mary Ann Morgan

WHEN I relate this what-fools-these-Mormons-be tale, I tell it with relish and humor. But the story's elements intimate larger issues, too:

- How the LDS call to always be a missionary inhibits intimate Mormon/non-Mormon relationships. Because we focus on creating positive missionary moments, we often forgo real sharing and true friendship, genuine listening and candid spiritual conversation, and unfeigned love and equal regard.
- How the proselyting motive tempts us to condescension, even arrogance, and how the rightness of our purpose blinds us from seeing that. We are oblivious to the truths others possess because we have the essential saving truths that they lack.
- How Mormons are taught to approach scripture categorically, to proof-text isolated verses for theological abstractions, and not to read the Bible large for its pervasive call to a new spiritual life.
- How we can think that we are doing good, doing "service," because we call it that, and not see when we destroy something good.
- How dwelling in a Mormon enclave does sustain a vibrant, protective, nurturing community, but that the higher the ghetto's village wall, the less we act as contributing citizens of the world and the more we act as ambassadors/saviors to a lost world. The different metaphors color how we engage non-Mormons—fellow citizens or lost souls.

This tale is not a Mormon aberration, one of overzealous youth. Our sophomore, one-way service project was clumsier than most adults', but we accurately assimilated the general, condescending Mormon approach to gentiles—friendshipping instead of friendship; converting instead of collaboration, and serving instead of reciprocal care. In our Mormon/non-Mormon relationships, when do we expect to be the receiver as well as the giver? The student instead of the teacher? It is rare for the ghetto Saints I know and love to embrace even one non-LDS friend as a whole, worthy individual whose non-baptized life's journey, wisdom, and grace are acceptable to God—a gentile with whom they feel comradeship in their quests, someone they eagerly engage for *who she is now*, anticipating joy, love, and truth in equal exchange.

More and more, Mormons encounter non-LDS in meaningful ways. Some compensate for eliminated Church programs with community involvement. And now, even our we-take-care-of-our-own Mormon Welfare is less exclusive, and the rise of Mormon humanitarian projects has turned gentiles into allies. The ghetto walls are now lower; perhaps we will engage the world differently. ☒

A SENIOR RELIGION writer for a national news magazine once told SUNSTONE editor Elbert Peck that Sunstone's magazine and symposium are rare and impressive among religions. A large, lay group enthusiastically pursuing historical, psychological, theological, and ethical questions for their enjoyment just doesn't happen in most traditions. When I heard this, I felt proud just to be a member of that community. Proud that I belong to a religion where average members care so about the quality of life in their religion that they create forums to engage scholars to better understand the individual challenges of being a Christian disciple and the institutional ones of becoming a people of God.

For twenty-five years, we have been delighted, challenged, entertained, educated and enlightened through Sunstone. Incredibly, Sunstone enriched our lives all those years while, financially, most of the time it was near death. Those who know the history know how remarkable just reaching this silver anniversary is; many times Sunstone's own doctors predicted its death, but the belief and aid of others kept it alive.

This little Sunstone gem that radiates so much light is precious, but it is easily lost. We must ensure that it doesn't vanish because we take it for granted. The hard fact is that all organizations like Sunstone require ongoing support. Thankfully, over the years thousands have donated hours and dollars to keep this gem shining. And despite limited resources and increasing difficulties in producing the magazine and symposium, Sunstone has not only survived this turbulent quarter-century, it has continually improved! Sunstone shines brighter today because many friends with modest means are devoted to independent, thoughtful exploration and celebration of Mormonism.

In the past, helping Sunstone financially meant paying off old printer's bills. Today, Sunstone's finances are better (it's not in debt, only broke). For those committed to Sunstone's continuing existence, that means we have a rare chance *now* to build a structure to shield Sunstone from the future finan-

cial blasts instead of rescuing it from the ravages of the last one.

This is done by establishing an endowment that will help counter Sunstone's destabilizing financial cycles. An endowment has been the dream of many caring, future-looking souls. But implementing it was always postponed by the immediate cash crisis of raising money to send a ready-to-print issue to press, which would then generate renewal income and restart the cycle. This all-too-frequent budgetary trauma created vicious spirals, and the longer the delay, the deeper the debt. Those nightmares are history, but with Sunstone's hand-to-mouth funding, they could easily return. The best way to prevent that is to raise a fund that will eliminate costly delays by reducing printing costs. The time is ripe to strengthen Sunstone's long-term stability, to ensure that it will be here for its golden anniversary.

To celebrate its twenty-fifth birthday, Sunstone's friends have committed to raise \$100,000 to start the long-dreamed-of Sunstone Endowment. This goal is realistic and exciting—if one hundred people each stretched to give one thousand dollars, we'd be there. (In future years, we hope to increase the total.) Some can be that generous, others cannot. We invite all friends, scholars, and students who want Sunstone to thrive to give what they can. I hope every one who feels they belong to this rare community will stretch and help make this dream come true.

Some preliminary invitations from the board of trustees have already produced some warm and gratifying commitments. We'll be under way by the symposium in July, and we'll continue on throughout the year. Each issue of SUNSTONE will give a progress report.

Dear friends, please make plans now to give. An account has been established; make checks to the Sunstone Endowment.

Thank you. ☒

MARY ANN MORGAN is a member of the Sunstone Foundation board of trustees.

IN MEMORIAM

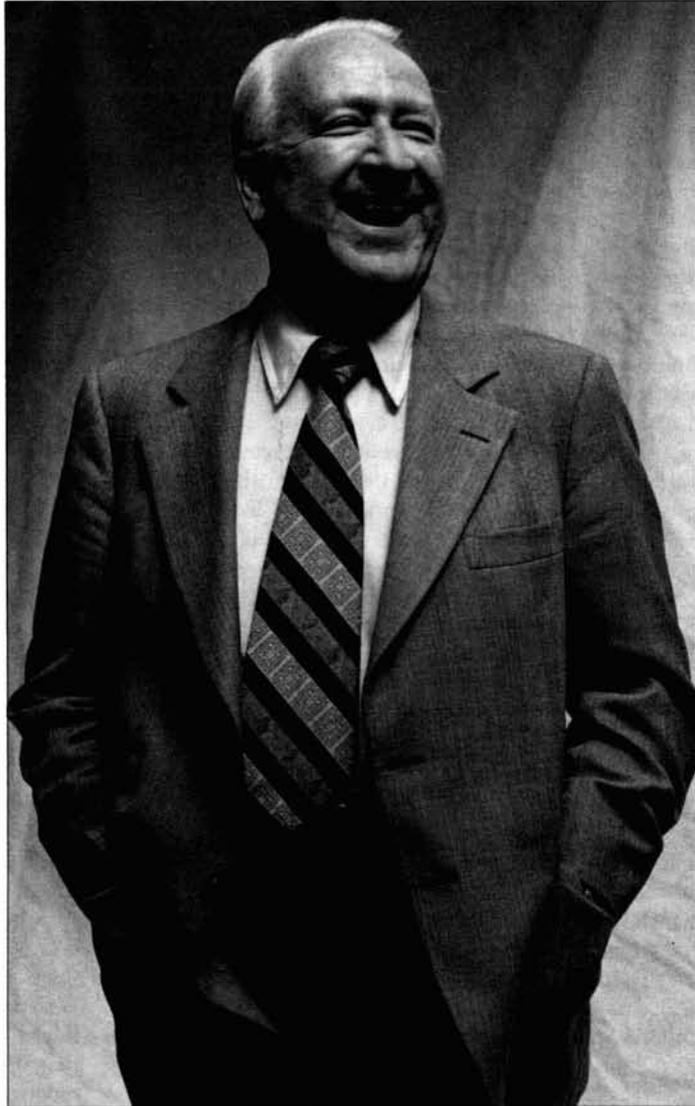
LEONARD JAMES ARRINGTON

By Dean L. May

I N 1974, while updating Preston Nibley's *Presidents of the Church*, Leonard Arrington asked me to work on several of the biographies. The research brought me to some of Leonard's papers, including a response from then-Apostle Ezra Taft Benson to his 1951 essay, "Zion's Board of Trade, A Third United Order." The letter began, "Dear Brother Errington, Thank you for the copy of Zion's Port of Trade, one-third United Order."

I've always wondered whether Elder Benson had a biting wit or a bungling secretary. If wit, the letter says much. In the early 1950s, Americans defined themselves as not-communists. For many, whatever communists were thought to be *for*, we were against. Since communists advocated communal responsibility and condemned selfish individualism of capitalistic societies, Church leaders downplayed the LDS communitarian past, which in the nineteenth century had caused some to see Mormons as among America's more successful communistic societies.¹

If Elder Benson's pun on "Arrington" intentionally suggested Leonard had erred, many others thought the work penetrated the clear, bright air of historical truth. At Harvard in the mid-1960s, a select library contained the books graduate history students had to master for their exams. Two connected directly with Mormonism: Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* and Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom*. Arrington's work resonated with me, drew my interest toward Utah history, and ultimately transformed my life and career.



Much has been written about *Great Basin Kingdom*, Leonard Arrington's magnum opus, in print for forty-one years and moving toward a highly likely golden anniversary.² It connected Mormon activities to larger social and economic contexts and set a high scholarly standard. But few Mormons realize its place in American and western history. The

central theme of these persuasive essays woven into so enduring a book is that one chief peculiarity of this people in the West is their commitment to cooperation and harmony—virtues held superior to individualism and competition and antithetical to the spirit of liberal capitalism. This *leitmotif* set Arrington's work at odds with what Elder Benson thought about Mormons and their place in U.S. society.³ So perhaps the apostle truly did see Leonard as Brother Errington.

Equally important, the book portrays the Mormons as strangers in a strange land, a people seeking a cooperative commonwealth in the midst of the American West, a region of rugged individualism, of often brutal competition for land, water, and space. The Mormons proclaimed tradition, civility, cooperation, and harmony—the antithesis of what Americans and their historians understood and wanted to believe about the West.

There are multiple ironies about the place of *Great Basin Kingdom* and what some see as its sequel, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation among the Mormons*,⁴ have in the historical literature of the United States and the West. *Great Basin Kingdom* appeared when the "consensus historians" reigned

and taught that American society was characterized, despite the diverse origins of its population, by a remarkable unity of purpose and conformity of values. Subsequent historians have condemned that view as facile and exclusive because it ignored the conflict, diversity, and complexity of the American past and present.

At first blush, Arrington's work might seem to have arisen from his day's prevailing paradigm. The agreed-upon consensus of 1950s historians was that American society was wholly and uniquely infused with liberalism, an argument compellingly made in Louis Hartz's *Liberal Tradition in America*.⁵ But Arrington was actually countering the conventional scholarly wisdom; he provided to a generation of scholars evidence that in the West, there were dissenters and alternatives to the liberal, Hartzian model.

The Mormons, Arrington argued, carved out in the Far West a haven of cooperation, unity, and order. Their cooperatives, United Orders, and Boards of Trade ran contrary to free markets and other fundamental tenets of liberal capitalism. Their society embraced a vast expanse of the West, and its very existence, manifested in *Great Basin Kingdom*, suggested major faults in the consensus Hartz and others claimed to be the bedrock of America.

In the 1980s and '90s, Donald Worster, Richard White, Patricia Limerick, and others offered a "new" western history that affirmed the Hartzian model but condemned, rather than celebrated, the consequences of Anglo-Europeans acting under it. In their eyes, liberal capitalism was the core of a dominant American culture that conquered, exploited, and ravished the West. Certainly, that insight was new to them and many others. But by emphasizing the Mormon alternative, Arrington had long insisted that neither a liberal consensus nor an exploitive rapaciousness were adequate to fully explain the West.

Thus, for nearly half a century, *Great Basin Kingdom* has vexed the changing modes of understanding the West. Its importance has been amplified by the expansion of Mormons beyond their Intermountain corridor, making it ever more difficult to see them as an aberration irrelevant to understanding the American West. As Paul Simon long ago reminded, "A man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest."⁶ Historians and other observers still do not really see the Mormons as part of the West.

More commonly, however, historians do not see Mormons at all. Many Mormon farm boys, working the back-country packing trade in southern Utah have had to learn to wear Stetson hats and cowboy boots, to chew and spit and swear in order to meet the expectations of their clients. The Mormons are not what Americans want to see when they think of the wild West, so they render them invisible. Even now, no history of the United States nor of the American West fully incorporates the Mormon experience and its relevance to understanding of the broader

American experience. Leonard Arrington's work as scholar and mentor assures that that lapse will not always be the case.

HERE is much more to Leonard James Arrington, however, than *Great Basin Kingdom*. He grew up on a farm in Twin Falls, Idaho, where his family was part of a small, Mormon minority. In 1929, at age twelve, for a Sunday School class, he researched his family history, and that fascination with families and their histories never left him. Throughout his life, he regularly amazed friends and colleagues with his remarkable mastery of the family connections of virtually the whole founding Mormon population.

In Twin Falls of the 1930s, most youth became farmers. With characteristic zeal, young Leonard specialized in poultry, and became Idaho state president then national vice president of the Future Farmers of America. Remembering that, he proudly put the chicken on his family crest, and friends bestowed him endlessly with chicken neckties, dishes, and statuettes. Much to the consternation of some Salt Lake neighbors, a six-foot-high plastic rooster adorned his front yard until it fell afoul of high school pranksters.

Leonard entered the University of Idaho with a scholarship from the National Youth Administration. He found agriculture sterile and technical and soon switched to economics, with minors in political science, history, and literature. A graduate scholarship in economics took him to the University of North Carolina, where he met and married Grace Fort before he was drafted into service in World War II. Their marriage lasted until Grace died in March 1982. In November 1983, he married Harriet Horne, who survived his death. In both marriages, he was blessed with supportive spouses who were exceptionally able and accomplished.

After nearly three years in North Africa and Italy, Leonard took a faculty position at Utah State University in Logan while he completed his doctoral degree, which North Carolina awarded in 1952. During this period, he had an epiphany,

a meaningful moment of insight and connectedness had come to me that helped me to see that my research efforts were compatible with the divine restoration of the church. . . . In an electrifying moment, the lines and beliefs of nineteenth-century Mormons had a special meaning; they were inspiring—part of the eternal plan—and it was my pleasure to understand and write about their story. . . .

Regardless of frustrations and obstacles that came to me in the years that followed, I knew that God expected me to carry out a research program of his peoples' history and to make available that material to others.⁷

Encouraged by William Mulder, editor of *Western Humanities Review*, Leonard began publishing in professional journals in 1951, and his first book, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Harvard University Press), appeared in 1958. He was most proud of his 1962 USU Faculty Honor Lecture, *The Price of Prejudice: The Japanese-American Relocation Center at Topaz, Utah, during World War II*. That says a lot about his profound moral and human values. His was the first scholarly work on that shameful product of the panic and war mentality that arose after Pearl Harbor, in which more than a hundred thousand resident aliens and U.S. citizens of Japanese descent were removed from their West Coast homes to inland relocation camps. Leonard's humanness and compassion continued throughout his career. He is often praised for advocating women's history, but he encouraged research on many long-ignored groups and episodes in the Mormon and U.S. past.

This breadth of interest and empathetic wish to give place to the forgotten and unknown was manifested in his encouragement of other scholars, especially those beginning their careers. He was mentor to many. I was one of dozens, perhaps hundreds, of young, diffident researchers who sought out this living icon whose dozens of books and articles traversed nearly the whole terrain of Mormon studies. He always made time for us, and we always left buoyed, encouraged, and stimulated. He helped many in material ways—writing letters, seeking grants, or retaining them to assist his research. Rarely does an academic create so wide a wake.

If *Great Basin Kingdom* was his scholarly apex, his tenure as Church Historian crowned his mentoring. When Apostle/Church Historian Joseph Fielding Smith became prophet in January 1970, Apostle Howard W. Hunter became Church Historian and began considering the potential of "The Historian's Office." In 1972, he reorganized the office, and the First Presidency called Leonard to be Church Historian—the only time a professional scholar and lay Church member had filled the position. University of Utah history professor Davis Bitton and Brigham Young University history professor James B. Allen were called to assist in directing the History Division, which soon housed a stable of scholars charged with honest, professional



Leonard Arrington, the former chicken farmer, and Harriet with the chicken that adorned their yard for years. After a particularly rough year for Mormon historians, Leonard was awarded a hard hat by the Mormon History Association.

research and writing in Church history.

Arrington, Bitton, and Allen—the Church history “presidency” — enlisted promising, faithful, young scholars. They inaugurated a new, multi-volume Church history as well as focused, Mormon history “task papers.” They commissioned studies of women, Blacks, priesthood organization, communalism, and a myriad of needed research topics, including publishing papers relating to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and the first scholarly biography of Brigham Young based on complete access to his voluminous papers. They had transcribed and indexed heretofore inaccessible documents, and the Church’s archives, the motherlode of Mormon history, became more accessible to all scholars.

Following Leonard’s lead, the staff was generous and encouraging to all who came, and the History Division became a mecca for highly educated, creative Latter-day Saints. Many welcomed it as a haven where optimism, encouragement, counsel, knowledge, and sources were shared. Some revenues from division-related publications went to the Mormon History Trust Fund, whose directors aided research of younger scholars around the world. This was a heady time, and Leonard not only set the pace, for many he was also the symbol of the “New Mormon History.” But the Arrington spring was not to endure.

IN late 1982, five years after I had left for University of Utah, I returned to the large, open room on the second floor of the Historical Department where the History

Division researchers had once worked. The entire division had just been moved to Provo, Utah—miles from the archives. The room was quiet, vacant. Desks and credenzas seemed scattered; the walls were bare of their historical photographs and paintings. Books and papers were strewn about the floor. I sat and wept for the loss of the energy, honesty, goodness, and love I had known while in the company of those men and women.

Although gone from there, the staff was creating the new, Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University, with Leonard as its founding director. In his autobiography, he details the circumstances of the “move south.” My impression is that some Church leaders were concerned that members and others might take publications by division staff as official Church statements; that not all would see them as writings shaped by academic standards and subject to challenge, refutation, and refinement by future scholars. Some publications had raised eyebrows, including passages in *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* about “experiments” in communal living and in *Building the City of God* about failed Mormon pioneer communal efforts. These concerns were heightened by a fear that anti-Mormons had used the archives to acquire and publish documents out of context to harm members’ faith.

Apparently motivated by these concerns, Church leaders concluded to release Leonard as Church Historian and again have a general authority as Historian. The executive director

of the History Department was set apart as Church Historian—G. Homer Durham. Under Elder Durham, the decision was made to transfer the History Division to BYU’s academic setting where its academic publications would be identified with a university and not the official Church. Given the circumstances, this was wise and necessary. But it should have been possible to acknowledge Leonard’s remarkable work as Church Historian, to gratefully release him where he had been sustained, in general conference, and to retain his photograph in the pantheon of Church historians, from which it was removed for several years.

Moreover, the fellows of the Smith Institute (former history division staff) could have been given research space in the Church Office Building near the vital archives and still have been placed administratively at BYU. Leonard was clearly hurt and dispirited by the manner of the reorganization. Still, as always, he continued to encourage, to work, and to make the best of the new circumstance; he rarely spoke about it publicly. Even in his memoirs, he constructively emphasized the potential service of professional historians and downplayed the institutional conflicts and individual wrongs.

Many sensed a deliberate attempt at closure and conciliation when President Gordon B. Hinckley, now Prophet, spoke at Leonard’s funeral. Afterward, as he was getting in his car, President Hinckley saw the casket being brought to the hearse. With almost no one else around, the Church president got out of

the car and stood tall, alone, in a gesture of honor and respect, until the hearse drove away. Then, during the April 1999 General Conference when the list was read of prominent Latter-day Saints who had died the previous year, Leonard Arrington was described as former "Historian of the Church."

THE History Division was not the only history organization Leonard had presided over. He had been a founder and president of both the Western History Association and the Mormon History Association and a president of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association. After he retired from the Smith Institute at age seventy, he continued to be a prolific scholar and writer. When he died on Thursday, 11 February 1999, he had a book at press, and he was preparing a paper on the Mormons and the Gold Rush.

Despite his prominence in American history and his commanding position in Mormon studies, we must acknowledge that some did not see Leonard as perfect in all things. As with all highly accomplished people, he had faults, often arising from the same qualities that led to his greatest achievements. There were those who felt he was too prone to measure scholarly accomplishment by volume of output. I smiled at his implicit nudge, when, in our last telephone conversation, he asked me what I was working on now. He, of course, had just completed what would prove to be his last major work, the yet-to-appear biography of W. W. Clyde, the Springville, Utah, contractor and builder. And he had published several books since my last book, *Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900*, had appeared in 1994.

Some felt his compulsion toward abundant production at times did not serve him well. His amazingly high productivity was first and foremost a consequence of hard work—the unstinting personal dedication he brought to his research and writing. Even allowing for that, such a level of output, as he understood, was possible only because he often collaborated with or retained others who contributed to studies ultimately published under his name as principal author.

Leonard's academic training was in the social sciences, where it is not only acceptable, but conventional, for well-known scholars to appear as first author in publications of work done with or by students and collaborators. In doing so, he promoted and enhanced the careers of others, using his name and prestige to give lesser-known scholars opportunity for research and writing they might otherwise not

have had. Moreover, during his years as Church Historian, Leonard felt pressure to justify the existence of his History Division to Church authorities, a justification he centered on productivity. I suspect nearly all who worked with Leonard and were credited as co-author or as having "assisted" him with work published in his name came, as did I, to understand the mutual benefits of the collaboration and are grateful to have had that opportunity.

In such collaborations, Leonard was not always the critic he might have been. He was encouraging and supportive, again, a quality consistent with his mentoring spirit. But there were times when I wished he had been more critical of work I did with him, when I hoped he would ferret out my facile logic or internal contradictions. He had too generous a spirit to find it easy to tell us when we were not up to snuff. That generous spirit also led him to avoid reviewing for professional journals studies that he felt he could not review positively.

Recently, I was asked who might be Leonard's successor in Mormon history. I replied "No one." Leonard was unique in his gifts—his playful spirit, and patented, down-home lack of pretension; his vast knowledge of the genealogy of Mormonism; his perceptive understanding of the relationship between the economic and spiritual underpinnings of the restored Kingdom of God; his unwavering faith; his wholly communal sharing of his remarkable personal knowledge (and even his notes and files from previous or projected studies); and his effervescent optimism, encouragement, and mentoring. He was a giving and caring father and a facilitator of a generation of writers, scholars, and history buffs; and withal, brilliant. He was unique. No one can take his place, and we shall never see the likes of him again. Even now, months after he's gone, I reach from time to time for my phone to call and ask him to help me with one problem or another, and then I realize he will not answer. We are on our own.



NOTES

1. Charles Nordhoff, *The Communist Societies of the United States* (1875; reprinted, New York: Hillary House Publishers, Ltd., 1961).
2. *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited: Contemporary Perspectives*, Thomas G. Alexander, ed. (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1991).
3. Apostle Benson, ironically, had spent much of his early life helping farmers to counter marketplace and corporate inequities through the forming of cooperatives.
4. Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation Among the Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976; 2nd edition, Champagne and Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).
5. Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: an interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955).
6. Paul Simon, "The Boxer," 1969; on *Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits* (New York: CBS, Inc., 1972).
7. Leonard J. Arrington, *Adventures of a Church Historian*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 28-29.
8. A full description and citation of the various publications of the History Division is in *Adventures of a Church Historian*.
9. Reportedly, President Benson was especially unhappy with the use of "experiment" in references to the United Order—initiated by revelation, it could hardly have been an experiment. Apparently, others were bothered that the book documented the failure of many Mormons to live the United Order.

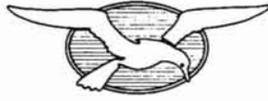


MISE EN SCENE

The tree is half dead
in which they play,
the sparrows, each
in its turn slooping
off, venturing away.
Yet they might be
tethered, so sure
is their returning,
desire tracing an arc
as inescapable as their
curve of wing, the set
of their eye—given,
as they are given
one another, as the whole
prospect is given,
retina and light, rough
bark for their homing,
a tongue for their
minimal cry.

—PHILIP WHITE

NO TOIL NOR LABOR



Chapter 6

AN ENCOUNTER

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

This is the final 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 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.)

WHY 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.

IT 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, anything 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



STEVE KLAMM

"Listen a minute, Jeneal. All I'm getting around to is that we found Larry's body. Suppose you tell me what he died of."

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."

SHE 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 for 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.

IT was the sheriff this time, out of uniform and not in his Sunday bishop's suit either. He stood in the dirt track, resting one hand on the hood of her car as she approached with the gun held before her.

I should have waited on the porch, she thought.

I should have made him come all the way to me.

"Jeneal," he said, lifting his hand convulsively.

She nodded. "Bishop," she said.

He deliberately looked all around him. "Lovely country," he said.

"Lonely."

She nodded again.

"Suppose you invite me in?" he asked.

"I'm fine here."

"I got something I want to say," he suggested.

"Out with it," she said.

"It's a tad delicate," he said.

"You've never been one to mince words."

"No," he said. "That's true. I don't come as bishop," he said.

"I'm here as sheriff." He pushed away from the car.

"Larry confided in me."

"As bishop or sheriff?"

"As both."

"You never spoke to him."

"Now, Jeneal, listen a minute. All I'm getting around to is that we found Larry's body." He propped his hat a little higher with a thumb, fiddled with the brim. "Suppose you tell me what he died of."

"I don't have anything to say."

"Now, Jen, the Holy Spirit is telling me different."

"I thought you came here as sheriff," she said.

He swallowed. "Truth told, I don't know what I came up here as. I came up in good faith and friendship," he said. "How can I help you if you won't cooperate?"

"Maybe I'm beyond help."

"No," he said. "Don't say that." And then, "Please, give me the gun."

"What gun?"

"The rifle in your hand."

"What rifle?" she asked. "I'm not holding anything. Your word against mine, bishop."

"Look," he said. "Just to run a test or two. I'll tell them you handed it over willingly. Hell, we'll come soon and get it in any case."

He took a step forward toward her, a little puff of dust rising where his boot came down. She raised the gun, flicked the safety off.

"You wouldn't shoot me," he said, "whether you did Larry in or no. Jen," he said, "You wouldn't do it."

"What do you know about what I would or wouldn't do?" she said.

"All's I want's the story of what happened," he said. "I swear I'll cast it in the best light I've got."

When he took a further step, she spun the rifle around, took the snout of the barrel inside her mouth, against the mouth's roof. It was awkward. She could just reach the trigger.

"Jen," he said. "Don't do this to me."

To him? she wondered. "Go on home," she said, her tongue and lips awkward against the metal.

He turned and climbed back into the truck. He started it, pulled slowly away. She watched him a moment, then pulled the gun from her mouth. Turning, she walked back to the cabin, taking her place in the rocking chair, rocking back and forth, tasting the metal in her mouth, waiting for whoever would come next. ☐



MATERFAMILIAS

Dorothy Lyon Mitchell 1925–1997

She glows thin, small
in the large chair—
light as a bird with hollow bones.

A transparent tube
traces the hallway like
Ariadne's thread, binding her breath
to this world.

She holds the newspaper tight,
proud enough to offer
this disease to God.

An exaltation of grandchildren
followed close by
an argument of offspring
spill into the room.

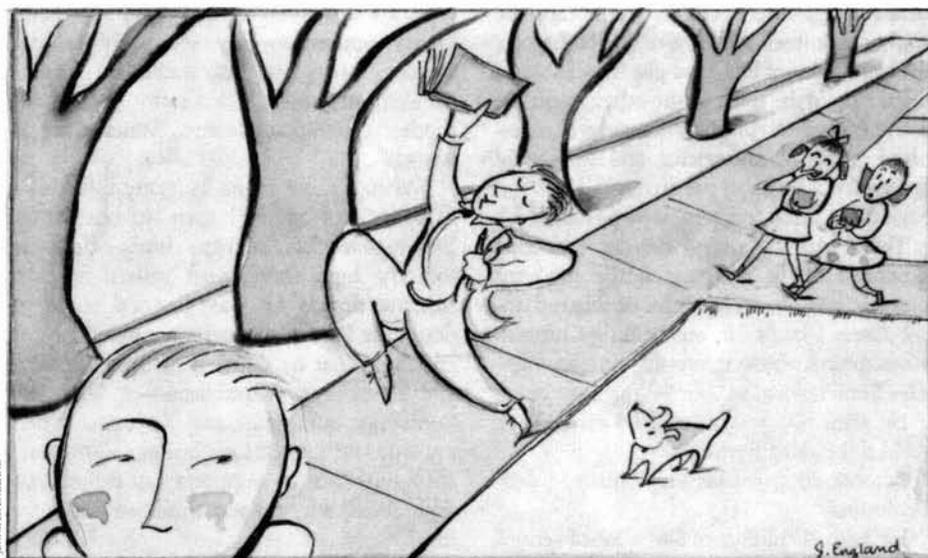
She folds the paper, crisp,
and gathers them
in her iron tenderness,
touching, without moving,
each and every one.

—MARK J. MITCHELL

TURNING THE TIME OVER TO . . .

Bryan Waterman

FOUR LOOKS AT MY FATHER



"Five years into being a parent, I evaluate myself through childhood memories of my father—often now with a greater compassion for him, a clearer understanding of what went right."

ONE

I WAS UPSTAIRS asleep that night in 1976, but still I can see my father, spread like a crucifix on worn orange carpet, thinking he was about to die. I've heard him tell the story, and I remember parts: how he had contracted the mumps from the kids, stayed flat on his back for weeks, and, instead of recovering, developed (or intensified) allergies to everything, even the sugar in Campbell's soup. Not that his health was ever great anyway. He'd been raised by a mom whose husband had walked out after returning from World War II, a mom who had

BRYAN WATERMAN is a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies at Boston University and an associate editor of SUNSTONE. He may be contacted by e-mail at <h2oman@bu.edu>.

to be at work before he woke in the mornings, leaving him to a diet of toast and cocoa for his first six years.

On his mission, somewhere in Guatemala, contaminated Pepsi-Cola ate his insides. By the time the mumps took him down when I was six, he had no immune system, and so I grew up in his world of allergy pills, self-inflicted shots, wormwood teas, and unstable emotions.

According to my admittedly imperfect memory, the night he spent sprawled on the living room floor, he made two promises. One, he would do his home teaching. Because he had been sick that night, he had flaked out on his assignments, but he depended on his home teachers to give him a blessing. After that, he was 100 percent.

When I think of Dad's home teaching, I think of hippies: from 1976 on, he'd teach

whomever they gave him, and we had whole communes of rebellious bishops' kids living the natural life, miles out of town but still within our ward boundaries. He milked the commune goats while my mother helped deliver babies named Wind and Morning. He offered our phone and our faucet when they needed a place to stop in town. Every once in a while, we'd get a van load of messy-haired kids to come in with us to Primary. It was a mission of love.

His second promise affected me more directly. He's never said so, but I pinpoint that night as the time he decided to give everything to fatherhood. When he saw his six short years as a parent spin and rock, about to escape him, he reordered whatever priorities there were to reorder and started getting ready for his first Pinewood Derby, his first tee-ball game, his first Scout-O-Rama. We were doomed to superdad.

TWO

MY first day of first grade at the old Snowflake Elementary School, I walked that three-quarter mile with my dad, since it was his first day there, too, if you don't count preparatory faculty meetings. He taught "special ed," and so I never expected to have him as a teacher. But I needed him to convince the librarian ("Mrs. Switchblade Fingernails") to let me read from the sixth grade shelves. We'd race to school, lamppost to lamppost, past the Pioneer Market, past the old Main Street Chapel. Then he'd head for his classroom, and I'd head for mine.

By the time I'd reached sixth grade, though, special ed had sucked his spirit dry. He was in a regular classroom, and I was his student. The benefits:

1. He let me run my own student newspaper, courtesy of new Xerox technology.
2. He appointed me class president once.
3. He let me organize a tournament to see who could do a Rubik's cube the fastest. (Of course, he had special Chinese instructions, and I had long since got it under a minute.)

The disadvantages:

1. He watched to make sure I didn't hold hands with girls during film time.
2. He pulled me out of class one day and bit my head off for publicly humiliating the kid who always made up unbelievable hockey stories for the class's morning news-weather-sports reports.
3. He still wanted to race to school, or else when he'd walk, he'd throw his elbows out like a drum major's and imitate a tuba.

I had become increasingly aware of the other kids walking to school—especially the ones wearing training bras—and I didn't exactly want to be marching with the one-man band. I survived, although perhaps a little traumatized.

By the time I was a senior in high school, elementary school had sucked his spirit even drier, and he'd returned to high school teaching, where his career had begun. Somehow, though, he (a political science major) ended up teaching English, since it seems high schools hire only coaches (history minors) in social studies. When he got to teach an advanced government class my senior year, he regained some energy the previous years had drained.

I sat back and watched. He read passages aloud from *Lord of the Flies*, kept kids on edge as flies buzzed around a great pig head on a stick. He outlined the American political system with verve, made history come alive when he played Jefferson or Hamilton. In May, he scrapped the final exam and had a class mock court instead, much to the administration's displeasure. They took the course away from him the next year. He didn't assign enough homework, they said.

When graduation came, though, and the seniors sat at midnight watching slides of school scenes set to sentimental music, his picture came up again and again: his transcendental meditation finger exercises; his rendition of the '60s dance craze, "The Vulture"; the stance he takes when he can't remember what he was saying, his tie in his mouth, forehead furrowed. The crowd cheered each time his picture took the screen. I realized I had seen a master teacher

at work, from a higher view than had that sixth grader.

A week before my mission, I took him to see *Dead Poet's Society*, thinking his conflicts with a stodgy system mirrored Robin Williams's as Dr. Keating. At the movie's end, he cried like a kid, and I half expected him to stand on his seat and shout Whitman's line: "O! Captain, My Captain!"

THREE

MOST of my father's books are in his library, shelves floor to ceiling that made me so proud I once snapped a picture with a Polaroid One-Step to immortalize their grandeur. His second library, the family sometimes joked, was the bathroom. Always, a stack of half-read paperbacks stood to one side of the toilet or the other, or on top of the tank. His placemarks bulged of assorted rainbow cardstocks, and he would often yell out to those passing in the hall and make them listen to a potent paragraph.

That's what happened the day I became convinced of his apostasy. I, the innocent passerby, was probably twelve or thirteen, intellectually a lamb. He was reading Christian philosophy, something unsafe, outside channels of real revelation.

He said, "Do you think God created the world through evolution?"

I stood, drop-jawed, ears unsure. I said, "Evolution?"

He said, "I think it makes a lot of sense," and he held the book out to me, spine spread wide, to back himself up. He resumed his bathroom business, and I left, stunned, having been forced to think things I'd never

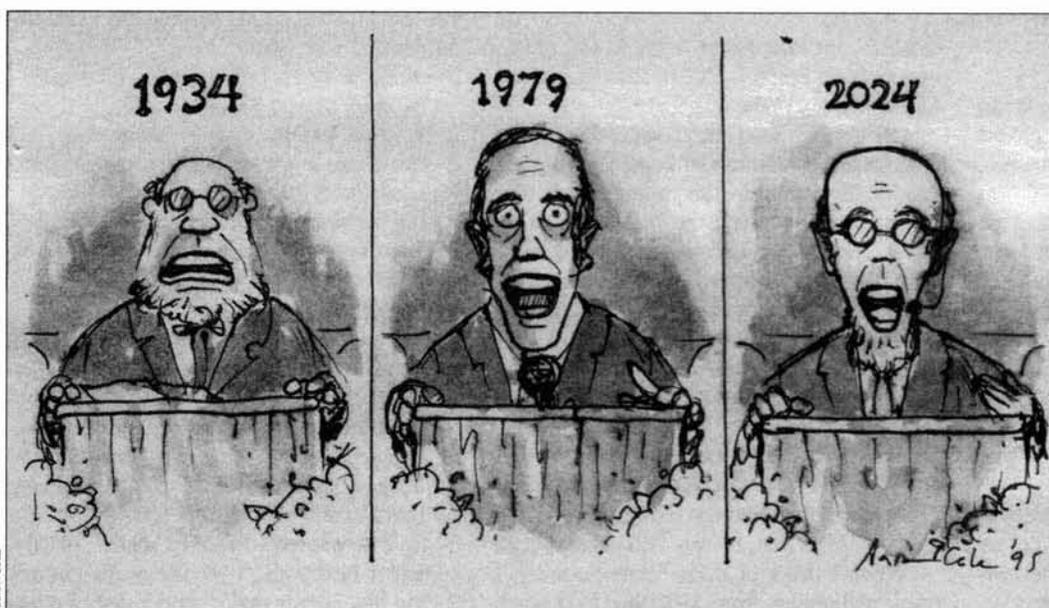
thought before.

That memory stands out now, signifying irony like a flashing blue light on a Kmart shoe sale. My father's love of knowledge meant this: Family Home Evening lessons one after another on *The Empire Strikes Back*, Yoda's Campbellian philosophy dripping heavily off his tongue; Nibley on the mantic and the sophic; an occasional, "So that's what Emerson was getting at with his transparent eyeball." Here's his love of knowledge once removed, manifest in me: my first encounter with SUNSTONE at eighteen—instant identification with a bishop/author who admits he grew up racist; my suspicion as a college sophomore that Nibley's mantic and sophic types are structured like any other oppressive binary opposition; my selectively eclectic theology that stretches traditional understanding of prophetic authority beyond orthodox recognition. He says, "Where did I go wrong?"

When I came home from my mission—two-thirds of which I spent in bruised-up brownstones in America's inner-cities—he told the high councilmen with their slow Arizona draws he was glad I'd come to doubt the Democratic party's approach to social ills. What he didn't realize was that I'd still never vote Republican—at least the Democrats admitted social ills exist. When my wife and I voted for Clinton and my parents said, "But he supports gay rights," we said, "Well, why do you think we voted for him?"

They're still bemoaning Evan Mecham's railroading, his being tossed out of the governor's office so many Arizona Mormons had worked hard to get him into. When I was a senior in high school, Mecham came through town, campaigning against his impending recall. He spoke in the Snowflake High School auditorium to an audience of Saints. My father clapped along as the crowd gave him ovation after ovation. (In church, they'd compare him to Joseph Smith.) I clapped once, when God's little governor said, "We need to be more careful who we put in office."

My father wonders if he should have told me his conversion story one more time—how his parents threw him out when he'd been baptized at eighteen, how he had taken a mission on faith and someone's anonymous money. How an apostle had



AARON COLE

blessed him that his parents would be baptized if he filled a worthy mission. (He did, and they were.) He gives me a copy of Orson Scott Card's essays, and he writes: "I hope his testimony strengthens yours; he survived his Sunstone phase."

FOUR

As a teenager, I gave my dad an emotional beating. Once, the night before I was to roadtrip to Puerto Peñasco, Mexico, he and my mother barged in on me at a friend's house. Sure, it was four-thirty in the morning, and, sure, I should have been home at midnight, but we were doing the long, hot highway to Mexico in the morning, and sleeping was the last thing we were about to do. I argued my point in the family van on the way home, and I don't remember quite what prompted it, but I remember his sharp-tongued, "You're too damn smart for your own good, and your smartness is going to kill you someday." Of course, he came forward with an increase of love, like clockwork: five, four, three, two, one. Every time. I'd count it on my fingers in my bedroom.

Five years into being a parent myself, I evaluate myself through my childhood memories—sometimes in fear, but more often with a greater compassion for him, a clearer recognition of what went right.

Maybe I just never could understand the sickness that had twisted his temper. I certainly didn't understand him the morning we fought over breakfast until I yelled, "You're a fool," leaving one sister crying at the table, the other kids staring at oatmeal while I slammed the front door behind me. In time, we cleared space for each other, stayed quiet when we knew a few words could set off something bad.

He wrote calm letters to me while I served my mission; occasionally they would reveal a doubt, a struggle—why, if he did all he could to live a righteous life, did God keep him from getting well? Like Tevyah, he'd shake his fists at heaven and say, "You're supposed to be bound when I do what you say!"

Once, in the middle of a humid New Jersey week, I wrote him over lunch, something I'd usually save for a P-day. I gave him scriptures, the outline of a fireside, some popular Mormon self-help tips. But it was timed just right, inspired. My mother wrote that he'd received the letter while home for lunch, on a day he was convinced he couldn't take an afternoon of smart-assed classes. She said he'd cried reading what I'd written, just those few lines.

When I call home, now that they have more kids married than living with them, my mother does most of the talking. She asks me how my daughters are, how Stephanie's job is going. Occasionally my dad will ask me what I've read recently. But more often, somewhere

in the background, my father breathes on a faded extension, static on the line. He stays quiet, and what rides his silence is a love that hasn't quite cast out fear. When I say goodbye, he'll say it back, then leave me on the line with that hard click. ☐



TAI CHI IN XIAN

An old man moves in morning
like a great blue heron awakening—
his coat sleeves ruffle, wings
slowly shaking off the night.

*The painted eyebrow thrushes
rejoice in the almond trees*

He balances on one leg
graceful as a crane,
arms and hands tucked
tight then wide spread,
cradling light.

*The ochre-colored bailing
chorus from the locusts*

Left hand embraces tiger,
right plucks the sparrow's
tail. As feathers fall
to ground, he circles,
circles to the mountain.

*The blue-throated canaries
exult among the poplars*

His meditation complete,
a black-blue egret
lifts from the Junghe River
and jubilates the sky.

—ROBERT REES



CORNUCOPIA

Reflections

SHATTERED DREAMS

I WELCOME STUDENTS ENROLLING IN MY DEATH and dying class each spring with a comment that I enjoy the course the most of any that I teach. This is because I learn so much from the students who really become my teachers. So, what lessons were available when, some two thirds of the way through the most recent class, an excellent student and prominent class participant takes her life with a gun, with no note, no good-bye, no explanation why. What can I say when philosophy encounters reality?

I did not know W very well, although she had struck me as very bright and independent, and dedicated intellectually and socially to the aims of the class. She would bring refreshments for other students on her own volition; the week before her death, she had coordinated one of the most scintillating class discussions that has ever taken place in any of my classes, on ironically enough, the theme of grief. I had sensed a kind of intellectual kinship with W that occurs with only one or two stu-

dents each class. Now, I think, that kinship might have instead reflected a shared experience of the torture of internal demons.

Upon first learning of W's death—from an M.D. who had been summoned from our class and, much to his horror, found himself performing a medical examination on a classmate—an immediate guilt reaction kicked in. What had I said, what had the class done, that might have contributed to or even encouraged W's suicide? I teach the course on the premise that the confrontation with one's own mortality brings meaning and fullness to life. It is a pedagogically risky premise if one takes the premise seriously and finds a void of meaning. As Dostoevsky wrote, "One must love life before loving its meaning. Yes, and if love of life disappears, no meaning can console us."

Had I missed something in W's journal writings, writings her family read and re-read to see if there was any inkling of W's state of mind? We could find nothing suggestive. Still, my personal sense of guilt reflects an academic conceit that students are actually absorbing the class content. How presumptuous such thinking is. Sure, I hope my course will help students live the examined life, but that goal is seldom shared by students. We may learn together, but with different agendas in mind.

I soon came to the realization that what was passing as guilt was a profound sense of regret, a sentiment stimulated by the fact that I had never yet (and now, never would) told W how "good" she really was—as a scholar, a writer, a person. The bureaucratization, competitiveness, and impersonality of the modern university does not encourage such sharing. The price of fairness to all is friendship with some. Still, the regret persists.

Traditionally, philosophic prohibitions of suicide have invoked the harm of self-killing on the community. Such claims have lost their force in a culture that prizes the social abandonment we dignify as "autonomy." W's suicide was a testament to the wisdom of the traditional concerns. There were the immediate survivors—a family, a partner, a friend—who had gazed into the abyss of meaningless death and had become emotionally numb, shells of their selves. And W's classmates, my students, would find themselves in the



*"I was going to just 'let the consequence follow,'
but then I decided to engage an attorney."*

days and weeks to come engulfed in tides of anger, grief, and bewilderment, pained for reasons they could not understand or clearly articulate. W's suicide seemed to open the floodgates of hell, as student after student came and talked . . . about personal or familial experiences with suicide, or stories of violence, family abuse, divorce, sexual assault. A never-ending cascade, it seemed, of pain and broken lives. How much pain we must bear in life, how fragile the goodness we embody.

I recognized also what this class catharsis meant, and it too made me angry at W. What her peers will remember forever after from the class will be her death, not the many enlightening and empowering dialogues we experienced on how to live life fully. W supplanted me as instructor, and I had no recourse or way of control.

"How do you go on?," several students asked, not to me necessarily, but of themselves. "It seems so stupid," others commented, "to philosophize about death. Talk is futile." Or, "everything, my life, just seems so pointless." My students (and I) were experiencing what Camus calls "the absurd," or what C.S. Lewis describes as the "iconoclasm of death." I did not inform my students of these scholarly constructs; they knew full well what they were experiencing without any French or British overlay. Indeed, to indicate their sentiments were academically explicable in fact diminishes the individuality and uniqueness of that experience. It has the pernicious effect of suggesting the



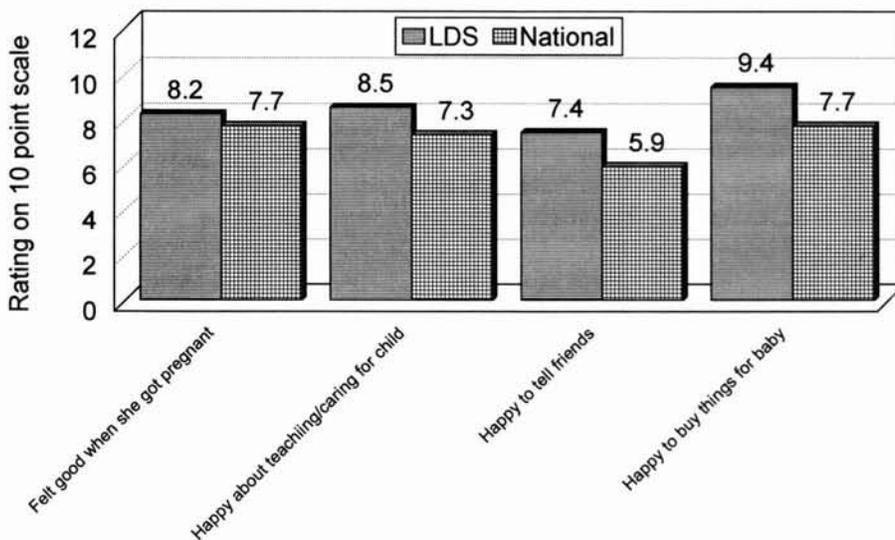
"W's suicide seemed to open the floodgates of hell, as student after student came and talked . . . about personal or familial experiences with suicide, or stories of violence, family abuse, divorce, sexual assault."

class might use W's suicide as some kind of learning exercise, as though her death, her person, were a mere means to pedagogical ends.

I found nonetheless that I could carry on because of the simple acts of kindness of others. Phone calls, notes, encourag-

Peculiar People

FEELINGS ABOUT GETTING PREGNANT



IN 1995, THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF Family Growth interviewed a national sample of about ten thousand women between the ages of 14 and 44. These women were asked how they felt about their last pregnancy, with ratings ranging from 1 to 10. Most women report positive feelings, but LDS women are more likely to do so than is the case nationally. Specifically, LDS women were more likely to say they felt good, that they were happy about teaching and caring for the child, that they were happy to tell friends, and that they were happy to buy things for the baby. Indeed, the LDS women rated a near perfect 10 on the happy to buy things for the baby scale.



Silver Anniversary

WHAT SUNSTONE MEANS TO ME

MY RELATIONSHIP WITH SUNSTONE IS many-faceted. I enjoy the talks, articles, stories, news, reviews, editorials, letters, and cartoons. They continually enrich and challenge my life and thought.

Since converting to the Church in 1955, I have had a growing sense of spiritual loss. The Church has a greater emphasis on conformity and institutional concerns, less on the liberating message originally brought by missionaries all those years ago. SUNSTONE keeps alive for me a spirit of acceptance and love amid diversity—the essence of Jesus' teachings. SUNSTONE's spirit of free inquiry and personal discovery enables me to preserve the vitality of my faith. And it gives me a loving community where I can respond honestly—a community that also encourages me to recognize and accept the honest heart-searching of others.

I rejoiced at my first Sunstone symposium, held at the University of Utah. I was deeply relieved as I found anew what the Church had provided for me back in England—the freedom to grow and discover truth, the chance to have my ideas tested in open discussion (as Hugh B. Brown advocated just after I joined the Church). I thrilled once more at liberating truths newly unveiled. The magazine has played its part, too, publishing a constant supply of challenging, new articles. Elbert Peck's editorials always move me. They contain some of the most spiritually healing messages I ever hear, and they help me in daily life.

SUNSTONE allows me to see myself more clearly and honestly. It also helps me feel less alone in my questioning. It is wonderful to meet the members of this loving and enthusiastic community each year at symposiums, many who are as strong in the faith, if not stronger, than many of those Saints I meet each Sunday at church. Quite frankly, I often wonder where I'd be without all the spiritual and intellectual nourishment they and SUNSTONE provide.

IRENE M. BATES
Pacific Palisades, California

SUNSTONE WAS ONE OF MY FIRST MEANINGFUL encounters with Mormonism. Reading back issues of the magazine, I realized for the first time that Mormonism was diverse and intellectually challenging, more than I had thought from the Church's public image. Through SUNSTONE, I have become friends with some extraordinary people. And my participation in various symposiums has given me an opportunity to sharpen

and clarify my own views.

Perhaps non-members like me have a different idea of SUNSTONE than do members. SUNSTONE has a vitality and passion for truth not seen elsewhere. And although once-fresh ideas can become stale with repetition, SUNSTONE somehow manages to stay lively and interesting.

If I were to express a single interest for the future of SUNSTONE, it would be, "Please, don't ever lose passion. You really matter, even to those of us on the fringe." I can fairly say that my interest in Mormonism would have waned long ago if not for SUNSTONE. Lively discussions, challenging meetings with the best and the brightest, and opportunities to participate all combine to keep my interest.

Thanks to all who make this endeavor possible. This Jewish Gentile is grateful to make SUNSTONE a part of my life.

JEFF NEEDLE
Chula Vista, California

MY INVOLVEMENT WITH SUNSTONE HAS not been as intense as I might have liked, though through the symposiums, I have found comfort. Because of this, I have not completely left Mormonism, although I have been excommunicated. When I embraced Mormonism at the age of twenty, I was enraptured by the idealism that I believed it promulgated. It is a marvelous institution in so many ways, bringing vitality and joy to so many. Now, I am amazed to join with the diverse and tolerant SUNSTONE community. I find a familiarity of spirit not unlike that of members of a family who have grown and gone separate ways but when brought together, because of mutual history, associate happily again though differences may be great.

That is the power of SUNSTONE to me, and I am grateful to be part of it, however peripheral that may be.

TREVOR SOUTHEY
Oakland, California

In celebration of 1999's marking twenty-five years since a small group of audacious college students founded Sunstone, the magazine will feature reflections on its role in the lives of those within the "Sunstone community." Please briefly share your thoughts on Sunstone's successes and failures and where it should go in the future. E-mail to <SunstoneUT@aol.com> or mail to 343 North 300 West, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103.

ing words. Paradoxically, W's suicide revealed humanity at its worst (self-destruction) and best (compassion). Part of the strength of the human self is its resiliency to endure and live on when there are no answers.

I do not know if I have it in me to teach this class again, notwithstanding the requests to continue by W's partner, her classmates, and some professional colleagues. I had enjoyed the class because of what I had been taught, but this learning was unanticipated, painful, and wrenching. It was a shaking of the foundations. Maybe silence is the preferable option, a silence that acknowledges the validity of Camus' comment that the order of the world is shaped by death. Or, should the approach be one of revolt and rebellion against meaninglessness, in solidarity with others? All I have now are questions . . . and a prayer that W has found a measure of peace.

—COURTNEY S. CAMPBELL
Corvallis, Oregon
CCampbell@orst.edu

Cureloms and Cummoms

BENEDICTIONARY

PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO THE LATTER-DAY SAINT Lexicon:

BABYLONDE: Pamela Anderson, Marie Osmond's new pal.

BRIBLE BELT: Utah, in Olympic parlance.

B. Y. EUNUCH: Professor who can't propagate challenging insights for fear of being cut off by the university. (Cf. WRITERS GELD.)

ELDER SKELTER: That unbalanced missionary who inevitably becomes your companion.

GARMENTIA: "Forgetting" to put them back on after the ball game.

GENERAL CONFLUENCE: Semi-annual crush of traffic and pedestrians in downtown Salt Lake City.

HAULOCROST: The Mormon Exodus. (From "Think of all the stuff the pioneers had to haul across the plains.")

HYMNOSIS: Mental state following the singing of "If You Could Hie to Kolob."

INTERNECK: To display inappropriate intimacy in an LDS Singles chat room.

JANICE KAPILLARRRY: Blood vessel in forehead which may burst when subjected to Mormon musicals.

MATRICUMONY: Enrollment at BYU in order to get married.

MORMONA LISA: Portrait of famous female Church leader. (Yet to be painted.)

PARTICLES OF FAITH: Those scriptures still committed to memory after age twenty-five.

PATRIARCHIE: Household power structure reminiscent of *All in the Family*.

POLYGAMETE: Pre-mortal child of Wife Number Three.

POLYGLUT: Abundance of plural marriages in Utah despite a one-hundred-year ban.

PREMATURE EVACUATION: Slipping out of the meeting before



INTERNECK: To display inappropriate intimacy in an LDS singles chat room.

the closing hymn and/or prayer.

PROPHETEERING: Using Church leaders' food-storage admonitions to drum up sales of Y2K supplies.

PROXYISM: Performance of convulsions for the dead.

QUADROPHOBIA: Anxiety about having to lug around all four standard works.

RELEASE SOCIETY: Group of sign-waving loved ones waiting for a missionary to step off the plane.

REMERSION: Multiple baptism attempts due to a pesky toe or knee.

SCRIPTURE CHASTE: Never having read the Song of Solomon.

SEAGULP: Rapid consumption of a cricket.

SLACKRAMENT: What a deacon takes to the unmotivated folks in the foyer.

SLAM DUNK: Baptism which takes longer than the prior conversion process.

TESTOSTEREVELATION: His "spiritual confirmation" that she's his eternal mate, despite her lack of interest. (Also TESTOSTIMONY.)

TRANSGREST STOP: Border town (e.g., Evanston, Wendover) that exists primarily to give Utahn Mormons quick access to vice.

Y2C: The Year of the Second Coming. (Highly unlikely to be 2000 A.D., but, hey, you never know.)

—M. SPAFF SUMSION
Austin, Texas
spaff@itransect.com

Translated Correctly

"DON'T CURSE, BLESS"

ROMANS 12:9-21

KING JAMES VERSION

CHAPTER 12

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN
MODERN ENGLISH

Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972

CHAPTER 12

Let us have real Christian behaviour

Let us have no imitation Christian love. Let us have a genuine hatred for evil and a real devotion to good. Let us have real warm affection for one another as between brothers, and a willingness to let the other man have the credit. Let us not allow slackness to spoil our work and let us keep the fires of the spirit burning, as we do our work for the Lord. Base your happiness on your hope in Christ. When trials come endure them patiently; steadfastly maintain the habit of prayer. Give freely to fellow-Christians in want, never grudging a meal or a bed to those who need them. And as for those who try to make your life misery, bless them. Don't curse, bless. Share the happiness of those who are happy, and the sorrow of those who are sad. Live in harmony with each other. Don't become snobbish but take a real interest in ordinary people. Don't become set in your own opinions. Don't pay back a bad turn by a bad turn, to anyone. See that your public behaviour is above criticism. As far as your responsibility goes, live at peace with everyone. Never take vengeance into your own hands, my dear friends: stand back and let God punish if he will. For it is written:

Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense, saith the Lord.

And it is also written:

If thine enemy hunger, feed him;

If he thirst, give him to drink:

For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Don't allow yourself to be overpowered by evil. Take the offensive—overpower evil with good!

Twenty Years Ago in SunstoneREALISTIC
EXPECTATIONS

IN 1979, RANDOM HOUSE PUBLISHED THE landmark *Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* by Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton. The July–August 1979 SUNSTONE featured an interview with the two Church historians. Here is Davis Bitton's answer to the question, "How would you describe the relationship between faith and history?"

BITTON: What's potentially damaging or challenging to faith depends entirely, I think, on one's expectations, and not necessarily history. Any kind of experience can be shattering to faith if the expectation is such that one is not prepared for the experience. A person can join the Church with a totally unrealistic mind picture of what it means to be a Mormon or to be in a Mormon ward. To go into a real Mormon ward where there are children crying and where there are uninformed comments made in Sunday School classes can be damaging to that person's faith. . . .

History is similar. One moves into the land of history, so to speak, and finds shattering incongruities, which can be devastating to faith. But the problem is with the expectation, not with the history. One of the jobs of the historians and of educators in the Church, who teach people growing up in the Church and people coming into the Church, is to try to see to it that expectations are realistic. The Lord does not expect us to believe lies. We believe in being honest and true, as well as chaste and benevolent. My experience, like that of Leonard, has not been one of having my faith destroyed. I think my faith has changed and deepened and become richer and more consis-

tent with the complexity of human experience. This is what the Lord wants me to do in life—to grow and develop in this way. Perhaps the only answer to a question about faith and history is to say that we are examples of people who know a fair amount about Mormon history and still have strong testimonies of the gospel.

The Words Among Us

SOME NOTES ON LITERATURE BY MORMON WOMEN

ONE PRINCIPAL PROJECT OF FEMINIST LITERARY criticism has been to go back into history and recover texts by women that a male-dominated process of canonization has excluded. This is a worthy project but not one a necessary one when discussing Mormon literature. To a very large degree, texts by Mormon women *are* the Mormon literary canon, and when we discuss important, influential, and critically acclaimed books by Mormons, we will find our conversations nearly dominated by women authors' works.

A brief list of the major accomplishments of Mormon women writers would include at least: the first novel ever written by a Mormon (Susan Young Gates's *John Steven's Courtship*), the most critically acclaimed novel ever written by a Mormon (Maureen Whipple's *The Giant Joshua*), the most respected body of literature about Mormonism by a Mormon (the novels of Virginia Sorensen), the only book by an active Mormon ever to win a Pulitzer Prize (Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's

A Midwife's Tale), and the only work of Mormon literature regularly taught in English departments around the country (Terry Tempest Williams's *Refuge*).

To this list, we can add the impressive accomplishments of Mormon women in the last few years. Judith Freeman and Terry Tempest Williams have garnered more laurels from the culture-vulture crowd than any ten other Mormon writers combined. And writers such as Phyllis Barber, Pauline Mortensen, Margaret Young, and, in the field of adolescent literature, Ann Edwards Cannon and Louise Plummer, have gained favor with critics and reviewers throughout the United States. And the appeal of Mormon women is not limited to the world of academic fiction. During the last ten years, the two best-selling books involving Mormons have been Betty Eadie's *Embraced by the Light* and Deborah Laake's *Secret Ceremonies*. And, though I do not have sales figures, I would guess the current sales leader among Mormon writers is not Orson Scott Card, but Anne Perry, whose seemingly endless string of best-selling mystery books now occupies a full shelf in most major bookstores.

Considering such impressive accomplishments, it seems a bit anomalous to ask if we should consider "Mormon Women's Literature" as being different than "Mormon Literature" in general. I have realized for a long time that the vast majority of what I consider serious Mormon literature has been written by women. I could imagine a plausible college course in Mormon literature that didn't teach a single book by a man; I could not, however, imagine the reverse. In both historical and contemporary terms, Mormon women have simply outdone Mormon men in almost all categories of literary production.

In the World



Brian Crane, a nationally syndicated cartoonist and Latter-day Saint of Sparks, Nevada, has recently released an anthology of his *Pickles* cartoon strips. Among them are several that have subtle, easy-to-miss Mormon connections: the temple photograph hanging in Opal and Earl's home or perhaps an LDS chapel in the background, and, of course, the strip's continual, family-friendly orientation.

Brian Crane's comic strip *Pickles* is syndicated by the Washington Post Writers Group. This cartoon is reprinted courtesy of Longstreet Press, publishers of *Pickles*, the anthology.

This impressive body of literature by Mormon women needs to be analyzed as both Mormon literature and women's literature—and, if we examine it these ways, we will find it has significant implications for both areas of study. Mormon literary critics need to try to understand the strength of women's writing within our culture. We need to ask if something about a woman's position within Mormonism is especially conducive to good literature—or, on the other hand, if something about the position of men decreases either their ability or their propensity to write. We are a culture whose official, institutional definition has always come from our men; is this situation in any way responsible for the fact that such a large part of our unofficial, literary definition has come from our women?

But feminists, too perhaps, have something to learn from Mormon women's writing. In most feminist circles, Mormonism is seen as a constrictive, rigidly patriarchal culture where women are almost entirely confined to the domestic sphere. If this is indeed the case, then why have Mormon women enjoyed such success in the very public sphere of literary production? Could it be that Mormon culture in general isn't quite as Neanderthal as many in academia believe? Or is it something else? There is yet much to be asked—and learned.

—MICHAEL AUSTIN

Shepherdstown, West Virginia

a version of this originally ran on the AML-List



I don't care how you quote me,
just make sure you spell my
name right.

CyberSaints

BRACKETING OUT [MESS]

ITS TITLE IS *TEACHINGS OF... BRIGHAM YOUNG*, YET THE 1998–99 Relief Society/Melchizedek priesthood manual did not intend to be a representative sampling of the nineteenth-century Church president's thought. No, the manual is by, for, and of the emerging twenty-first-century Church, and that's to be expected. It is for a Church class designed to exhort Saints in their *present* duties; it's not for a graduate history seminar. The manual appropriates well over a thousand of Brigham's quotes to make *its* correlated points, not *his*. A more accurate title is, "Teachings of Brigham Young *with which We Agree*." It's not interested in his non-applicable thoughts, in taking the man whole, in discerning divinity within his humanity.

But even with safe lesson topics, Brigham's outspoken, occasionally radioactive words are often hard to harness. The task was made easier by picking from John A. Widtsoe's sanitized and at times out-of-context 1941 quote collection, *Dis-*

courses of Brigham Young (DBY), instead of directly quoting *DBY's* ready-referenced original source, the *Journal of Discourses (JD)*.

It is one thing to choose the safest of his 150-year-old-words that buttress today's curriculum; it is another to edit Brother Brigham into his antonym—a late twentieth-century monogamist. For President Hinckley, polygamy is "not doctrinal." Okay by me. But Brigham without the Principle is like Socrates with no questions. You can't quote B. Y. much without it popping up. Even editor Widtsoe with his unellipsed cuts kept polygamy. Yet from the introductory "Historical Summary," which notes Young's first wife's death and then *only* his second marriage, the manual manages to *never* mention the P-word. It's not lying, just protective omitting, and with scrupulous textual care. In chapter 23, ironically about "the new and everlasting covenant of marriage," a B. Y. quote reads:

Let the husband and father learn to bend his will to
the will of his God, and then instruct his [wife] and
children . . . (*DBY*, 198).

In the original *JD*, and also in *DBY*, the word is *wives*. The quote was chosen for its counsel to fathers; polygamy was an unfortunate and disruptive weed, and easily plucked. But for many, this oft-cited change made every bracket and ellipsis suspect.

And in early 1998, the LDS Internet buzzed about the manual's "censorship": that the context for one seemingly innocuous quote was—get this!—Adam-God; with a quote about laying hands on the sick, the very next *unquoted* sentence praises women for giving blessings; and one quote's ellipsis skipped words about sealings that not only bind "woman to man" but—gasp!—"man to man." In the past, Church leaders who knew better tried to inoculate the Saints from Brigham's boo-boos by preaching that he was misquoted. Today, they just quote around the embarrassments. Sleuthing these editorial cover-ups was tedious work. To read each quote in its original *JD* text, you had to first go to *DBY* to get the *JD* reference and to see if any changes were Widtsoe's. For scandal addicts, the rushes were few and weak. Most cuts had some rationale; after all, these were "quotes," not whole speeches. Still, analyzing their selection and editing can reveal theological and cultural insights. And since the LDS Curriculum director told the A.P. that the ellipsis cuts were First Presidency directed, the editings are a snapshot of our leaders' Church and world views.

But this is old news. What is new right now is this website: <http://www.netcolony.com/members/tseng/llds/bylessons/Contents.html>. It has all the manual's *DBY* quotes, and with a mouse click on one, its extended *JD* passage appears, with the quote bolded, in color, shining in its original (con)text, and bumping into Brigham's adjacent, heretofore quarantined heresies. It took the quotekeepers years to purify Brigham, and now in seconds any online Mormon can be exposed to the earthy, generous, racist, visionary, opinionated, brilliant, erroneous, Moses-prophet, petty dictator Brigham Young. And why worry? For centuries, Christians have discerned Paul's paean to charity as pure God (1 Cor. 13) while in the very next chapter they've dismissed Paul's command for women to be silent in Church as "his opinion." Mormons can take Brigham straight.

—P. Q. BLISS



MORMON INDEX

- Average number of LDS chapels built each day during the first half of the 1990s: 1
- Average number of chapels built daily in the second half of the '90s: 2
- Percentage of ZCMI retail chain owned by the LDS church: 52
- Rank of Britain among all nations for most Mormons in 1850: 1
- Rank of Britain among all nations for most Mormons in 1997: 8
- Approximate number of Church buildings in Western Europe equipped to receive general conference proceedings via satellite: 150
- Number of members the Victoria British Columbia Stake has pledged to reactivate by the year 2000: 800
- Number of missionaries the new Peru missionary training center can accommodate: 150
- Number of cans of food preserved for non-Mormons at a Montana LDS cannery over the last three years: 170,000
- Number of years a small, North Carolina cemetery was uncared for before eighty Saints performed service clean-up: 40
- Approximate number of mission reunions occurring near the time of each general conference: 900
- Average age of first marriage for Manti women born before 1852: 20.28
- Average age of first marriage for Utah men born before 1852: 24.25
- Percentage of Manti males, born before 1852, who were married before age 28: 81.8
- Rank of BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School among U.S. law schools: 29
- Rank of BYU's Marriott School of Management among U.S. management schools: 49
- Average percentage of their total income that Americans making \$200,000 or more give to charities: 3.3
- Average percentage of their total income that Americans making \$15,000 or less give to charities: 18
- Ratio of percentages of Utah Valley LDS teen girls to boys who admit being sexually active: 5:6
- Ratio of percentages of East Coast LDS teen girls to boys who admit being sexually active: 12:7
- Percentage of Utah Valley high school male students—mostly Mormons—who admit to cheating in school often: 69
- Percentage of U.S. high school students who admit to cheating often: 70
- Change for 1999 in minimum age for members of the Tabernacle Choir: 30 to 25
- Maximum number of years a person may sing in the Tabernacle Choir: 20
- Age of mandatory retirement from the choir: 60
- Amount of money Gordon B. Hinckley had to his name when he married Marjorie Pay: \$150
- Number of Deseret Industries thrift stores the Church operates: 47
- Number of U.S. states with Deseret Industries stores: 7
- Number of years the Church has operated the "D.I." thrift stores: 60
- Estimated number of people who went to Temple Square for the April 1999 General Conference: 34,000
- Number of square miles expected to be infested with Mormon Crickets in the Western U.S. in this year's "major infestation": 1,300
- Number of states facing the cricket plague: 5
- Amount the Department of Agriculture needs, and does not have, to fight the cricket infestation: \$1 million
- Height the Church shortened the main Boston temple spire as a "gesture of good will" to concerned neighbors: 17 feet
- Portion of planned Boston temple spires entirely eliminated in this same Church act of good will: 5/6
- Number of covered wagons in a Church sesquicentennial parade in Rome: 5

1,2 *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 Apr. 1999, A1; 3 *Time*, 4 Aug. 1997, 54; 4, 5 *1997–1998 Church Almanac* (Deseret News), 19; 6 *Church News* 3 Oct. 1998, 10; 7 *Church News* 22 Aug. 1998, 10; 8 *Church News* 12 Sept. 1998, 3; 9, 10 *Church News* 22 Aug. 1998, 10, 11; 11, *Church News* 19 Sept. 1998, 8; 12, 13, 14 *Journal of Mormon History* 24:1 (spring 1998) 93, 99; 15, 16 *U.S. News & World Report* 29 Mar. 1999; 17, 18 *Salt Lake Tribune* 16 Jan. 1999; 19, 20 *Daily Universe*, 12 Nov. 1998, 3; 21, 22 *Deseret News*, 28 Nov. 1998; 23, 24, 25 *Church News*, 2 Jan. 1999; 26, 27, 28, 29 *Church News*, 7 Nov. 1998, 5; 30 *Ogden Standard Examiner*, 7 Apr. 1999, online edition; 31, 32, 33 *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Mar. 1999, online edition; 34, 35 *Salt Lake Tribune*, 13 Feb. 1999, C1; 36 *Church News*, 19 July 1997, 3.

The heart of every religion is not different—the highest form of worship is to love God with all of our hearts, minds, and souls and to love others as we would want to be loved. Wherever we find these practices, we find fellowship.

GOING TO CHURCH

By Robert A. Rees

ON A TRIP TO LONDON SEVERAL YEARS AGO, walking and wandering the streets on a late Saturday night, I kept thinking of T. S. Eliot's lines from *The Waste Land*:

A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many
I had not thought death had undone so many. . . .

London, for all its glories, is squalid, especially at night. Once one of Christendom's most luminous cities, it is now besotted with the evils and banalities of contemporary secular life. Caught in the human tide that flows from Piccadilly to Leicester Square to Covent Garden to Trafalgar and back to Piccadilly, one feels swept along in a sort of circular River Styx. It is a river of desperation and truculent ennui that stain much of the modern world.

The next morning I felt the need to cleanse myself, especially from the dark shadows that haunted my sleep from having seen a film the night before, *Internal Affairs*, that turned out to be far more violent and sexually explicit than I expected. Sensing my own internal affairs needed ordering, I decided to go to services at Westminster Abbey and then to sacrament meeting at Hyde Park Ward.

Some times our lives are blessed by gracious or fortuitous convergences. This was such a Sunday for me, for when I arrived at Westminster Abbey, I discovered that that day, July 22, was St. Mary Magdalene's day. It seemed appropriate that here I was, a sinner, seeking grace on a day honoring a sinner who had experienced the forgiving grace of Christ in a complete and profound way—"then neither do I condemn thee. Go thy way and

sin no more"—and whose devotion to her forgiver had given her the honor of being the first witness of the Resurrection.

Those of us attending the service waited patiently for the tourists to leave and the procession of ministers to enter and then took our seats in the choir and nave. Looking up into that gloriously vaulted ceiling, I felt the burdens of my heart begin to lift. Then they completely vanished as choir and congregation sang the opening anthem, "Light's Glittering Morn Bedecks the Sky" (set to the tune Mormons sing as "All Creatures of Our God and King") with its repeated "Alleluias." Westminster Abbey is a church for singing "Alleluia" with full heart and voice:

Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky;
Heaven thunders forth its victor-cry:
Alleluia
An angel robed in light hath said,
"The Lord is risen from the dead":
Alleluia

The setting for the mass was Mozart's *Missa Brevis* in F (K 192), one of the most lyrically melodious of the small masses, and my personal favorite.

Even though the invocation was a set prayer (there was no reference to our having gotten there safely!), I listened carefully to the words and felt their import in my heart: "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

As the priest intoned the *kyrie*, I thought of how often in life I had asked for mercy, had pleaded repeatedly for forgiveness for my contribution to the *peccata mundi*—the sins of the

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.

world. What a heavy phrase that is—"the sins of the world"—the agony of the world, the exquisite suffering of the world, the dark and violent acts of the world—an enormous and yet unimaginable weight borne somehow by one man.

After the *gloria*, there was a scripture reading from 2 Corinthians about the transformation that comes from the love of Christ. The choir sang a gradual motet (set also by Mozart), and then there was a reading from the Gospel of St. John about Mary's seeing the risen Christ. The reading was preceded by the priest saying, "Glory be to thee, O Lord," and it was followed by the reader saying, "This is the gospel of Christ," and then the priest singing, "Praise be to thee, O Christ."

The sermon was centered on Mary Magdalene and her relationship with Christ. The minister spoke of Mary's sinful life, of her wandering in a wilderness before she met Christ. He then said, "We all know the wilderness. Everyone in this church today has wandered in the wilderness, and we will all wander in the wilderness again." I thought of my own wildernesses, past and present, and how through them I had come to know God and myself better.

The minister then postulated that Christ could be so forgiving of Mary because he was himself acquainted with the wilderness. He said, "I could not believe in a God who had not been in the wilderness." It was, I thought, precisely because Christ had gone into the wilderness and come out of it triumphant over the temptations of both the flesh and the spirit that we have hope that he can reclaim us from our wilderness wanderings.

Following the sermon, the choir sang a thirteenth-century hymn about Mary weeping for her dead Lord at the tomb and then recovering from her grief and lamentation when she saw him standing before her. Bowing before him, she washed his feet with her tears. The last stanza is:

Glory be to God and honor,
who, preferring sacrifice,
Far above the rich man's bounty
sweetness found in Mary's sighs,
Who for all, his love foretasting,
spreads the banquet of the skies.

As the priests prepared the bread and wine, the choir sang the *Sanctus*:

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts,
Heaven and earth
Are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee,
O Lord most high.



"Looking up into that gloriously vaulted ceiling, I felt the burdens of my heart lift as the choir sang 'Light's Glittering Morn Bedecks the Sky' with its repeated 'Alleluias.' Westminster Abbey is a church for singing 'alleluia' with full heart and voice."

Meditating upon these words, I considered whether I would rise with the others and go to the altar to partake of the sacramental emblems. I was still undecided as it came time for my row to rise, but at that moment, the choir began singing the *Agnus Dei* ("Lamb of God"), and it seemed as if joining that procession of saints seeking renewal at the Lord's table was not only a logical step in what I was feeling but also a necessary step in the spiritual renewal I sought that day. As I rose and walked to the altar, Mozart's music made me feel at one with

the Lord, enveloping and lifting me on the wings of his love.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

As I knelt at the altar, one priest placed a wafer in my mouth, and a few moments later, another offered the chalice of wine. I meditated for a few moments upon these emblems of the Lord's sacrifice for me and then returned to my seat. As I did so, the choir sang the *benedictus*:

Blessed is he that cometh
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The priest prayed that the Lord would accept our "sacrifice of praise" and sanctify the sacramental emblems to us. He then concluded, "Grant that we may so eat and drink of these holy things in the presence of thy divine majesty, that we may be filled with thy grace and heavenly blessing." After a moment's silence, we all said the Lord's prayer, and it had fresh and wonderful meaning for me.

Following communion, the priest said a prayer of thanksgiving and pronounced a blessing on the congregation. The service ended with the choir and congregation singing:

Come down, O love divine,
Seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

Finally, the priest pronounced a benediction on the congregation:

Go in peace and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

I walked out of the service with a new awareness of belonging to the larger community of Christians throughout the world, with a renewed hope in my ability to be a faithful disciple, and with a renewed devotion to the Lord and his gospel. Outside the Abbey, I immediately took a taxi to South Kensington so that I could attend sacrament meeting at the Hyde Park chapel.

HYDE PARK WARD is a wonderful place to worship, not only because it has an excellent pipe organ that sustains the singing but also because it is one of the most international wards in the Church, its congregation filled with Saints from many nations, including a number people of color. I met, for example, a brother from Trinidad who had joined the Church as a young man because as a child he had been taught the gospel by his Methodist minister father from "Josephus, St. Aquinas, John Wesley, and," he added with his

eyes widening, "*Talmage!*" Somehow, his father had gotten a copy of *Jesus the Christ*, from which he had taught both his congregation and his family.

The service at Hyde Park was as plain and ordinary as the one at Westminster Abbey had been elaborate and elevated. The choice of hymns was undistinguished, and the speakers—an older missionary couple—banal and uninspiring. The brother, the concluding speaker, emphasized the importance of missionary work and then told a story about being in a high priest group in a ward somewhere in Utah that met in a historic chapel on a hill. The stake president wanted to tear the building down, sell the land, and build another chapel elsewhere. In the vote to sustain this action, this brother was the lone dissenter. He thought it was wrong to lose such a historic building, and so he wrote his concerns to the general authorities. As a result of his letter, a general authority came down and persuaded the stake president to reverse his decision.

It was refreshing, I thought, to hear such an example of individual will and strong conviction that would risk countering local authorities, but just as I was thinking this, the brother concluded, "But since then, I have decided to follow my leaders no matter what they say and to sustain their decisions, even if I don't agree with them." I was flabbergasted. Apparently he felt so guilty about this one act of independence that he had to rectify it with a vow never to do something like that again.

The entire service at Hyde Park was flat—in terms both of its general spiritual tone and in its direction. That is, the service at Westminster Abbey was vertical, the emphasis on praise and glorification of God and Christ, a looking up, a lifting up. The service at Hyde Park was singularly horizontal and mundane. There was a good deal of talking to one another, but very little sense of singing or expressing praises to God, an emphasis on the works of the Church, but no mention of the grace of Christ.

AFTER church, I walked along the Thames, trying to sort out my feelings about the two services. The one at Westminster Abbey certainly appealed to my imagination, and its beauty and structure helped me order my feelings in a deep, significant way. Robert Frost says that poetry is "a thought-felt thing," and it was that combination of thinking and feeling the service inspired that made it a profoundly poetic as well as profoundly spiritual experience.

I have often regretted that the Restoration could not have taken place in a "high church" or liturgical context rather than a "low church" or more evangelical one. That is, if Joseph Smith's religious roots had been Anglican rather than Methodist, our present form of worship might have been dramatically different.

I realize that such an outcome was improbable. Even though the Episcopal Church (the American branch of Anglicanism) was established in the United States in 1789, because of its close identification with the Church of England, it would have been suspect as having loyalist ties and therefore

would not have been popular on the frontier. Although Zion Palmyra Episcopal Church was established in 1822, just two years after the Prophet's first vision, according to David Sisson, the Episcopal archivist of the Rochester Dioceses, it would not have had much to do with the Mormons. Nor is it likely that Joseph Smith's family would have felt comfortable in Zion Palmyra Church since its congregants more likely would have been business and professional people than farmers and millers, the class to which the Smiths belonged.

Perhaps the seeds of the Restoration could have taken root only in soil that had been nurtured by the evangelical fires that had swept through what historians call "the burned-over district" where Joseph Smith lived. Just as a prairie is regenerated by the nutrients resulting from grass fires, so the conflagration of spiritual fervor that swept through western New York in the early 1800s enabled Joseph Smith and his family to be receptive to God's penultimate intervention in history. Nevertheless, it is tempting to contemplate what our services would be like if our founders' traditions had been more liturgical.

But I also realized that it is the openness to the possibilities of invention, improvisation, and inspiration that makes our form of worship so inviting. That we seldom rise to the occasion presented by these possibilities probably says more about our spirituality than the form and structure of our worship services. That is, when our sacrament meetings really work the way the Lord intended them to, they may have the power not only to lift us to heaven but also to unite us on earth in a way that may be more difficult in a highly liturgical service. It is that combination of vertical and horizontal—uniting the glorification of God with deep fellowship—that makes a Mormon service so promising.

There wasn't as much of a sense of intimate community at Westminster Abbey as there was at Hyde Park—or perhaps more accurately there was a different sense of community *for me*. At Hyde Park, I felt a close kinship with the assembled saints. Though I didn't know any personally, I felt we belonged to the same family. What bonded us was that special witness of the Restoration we Mormons call "testimony." At Westminster, I felt connected to the broader Christian community—the



"Possibilities of invention, improvisation, and inspiration make Mormon worship so inviting. That we seldom rise to the occasion presented by these possibilities probably says more about our spirituality than the structure of our worship services."

body of Christ, his church, in the larger sense. We who came to worship at this most famous of Abbey churches were for the most part strangers and foreigners, although for that hour we felt a definite connectedness as we became "fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God." (At Hyde Park I was aware of my Mormonness in a deep, personal way. At Westminster I was in touch with my Christianity in a no less profound way.)

I value both experiences. I am Mormon to the marrow of my bones. Mormonism is my church, my people, my faith tradition. Members of my family were converts to the Church in four separate generations, beginning with my great-great-grandfather, who joined the Church in Fishguard, Wales, in the middle of the nineteenth century. My great-grandfather left the Church and joined the Reorganized Church. His son, my

grandfather, never joined the Church, but his son's wife, my Grandmother Rees, was converted to the gospel by missionaries traveling through Southwestern Colorado in the early part of this century. My two aunts were baptized at the same time, but my father was not. Later, after I was born and my parents were divorced, he was converted to the Church through a miraculous healing. After the Second World War, he taught me the gospel, and I was baptized. I feel blessed to be one of only four descendants of my great-grandfather from my generation who are active in the Church today.

Before they joined the Church, my forebears were Anglican. The sarcophagus of at least one of my ancestors rests at St. David's Cathedral near Fishguard, Wales. Members of my family in Wales and England still belong to the Church of England. At least one, Hyrum Rees (named after the Prophet's brother), was an Anglican minister. They were and are good Christian people. I also identify with their faith tradition and have been grateful for the opportunity to worship with members of that tradition in small parish churches, cathedrals, and abbeys in Great Britain and in the United States. When I go to Good Friday services or Midnight Mass, I go to an Anglican church. It is a part of my heritage, which I honor.

I love the restored gospel of Christ. It is so much a part of me that I can't imagine myself not a part of it. I love the Church as well. It is my spiritual home. But the village in which my home rests is the Christian church. I also belong to it and it to me. Beyond that village is the wider world of faithful people—Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, as well as many other religious traditions who love God and try to serve him and others. These also are also my people, and I am one with them. As Coleman Barks's translation of the thirteenth-century mystic poet Rumi puts it:

We can't help being thirsty.
 Moving toward the voice of water
 Milk drinkers draw close to the mother.
 Muslims, Christians, Jews,
 Buddhists, Hindus, Shamans—
 everyone hears the intelligent sound
 and moves with thirst to meet it.
 Clean your ears.
 Don't listen for something you have heard before.
 Invisible camel bells, slight footfalls in sand,
 Almost in sight, the first word they call out
 Will be the last word of our last poem.

This poem is based on one of Rumi's sayings, "If you think there is an important difference between a Muslim and a Jew and a Christian and a Buddhist and a Hindu and a Shamanist then you are making a division between your heart and your ability to act in the world." I believe there are important differences between what I believe and what others believe, but I do not want there to be a division between what my heart knows and how I act in the world. So I believe that in spite of important differences, what is at the heart of every religion is not different—that the highest form of worship is to love God with

all of our hearts, minds, and souls and to love others as we would want to be loved. Wherever we find these practices, we find fellowship. 



TEMPLE OF THE MONOLITH

Here, my big Atlas says,
 Was earth's first great trough,
 River wide as an ocean,
 One land mass, one race upon it.
 This remains, this rugged valley
 Where boulders lay scattered.
 Through them
 A new river is running,
 Its gravel flood plain supporting
 Water birch and sycamore,
 Golden rod and brown eyed susan.

Lucid and green
 It races into a bend,
 Drops over a spillway
 Into a pool famous to fishermen.
 A rock has been thrust up against it,
 A monolith in the shape of an arch,
 Half moon reflection on the water.

We stop, remove our shoes
 And wade into this natural font.
 We know after all this time
 Our nature and our faith.
 Here is what is left
 Of the original flood, the old earth
 On which it rained; the monolith
 Our floating rainbow, made from us
 And we from it.
 We wade on, deeper into the arch,
 Pass beneath
 And enter.

—ROBERT JONES

Sunstone Award Winner
1997 Brookie and D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest

WRECK

By Jason Lindquist

MICK STARED AT THE CEILING, SPLAYED HER skinny legs out across her bed, and sighed into the phone at what Connell was saying to her. She jammed the phone deeper between her shoulder and ear. Why couldn't she gain weight where she needed it? She was tired of picking clothes to make her look thicker. Mom used to say that getting thicker would come along just fine by itself.

"I'm sorry if I made you mad," Con said.

Mick didn't acknowledge. She thought she saw a cockroach moving along the wire hanging down from the spider-crack in the ceiling. Her father had run a phone cord over from the kitchen.

"What's wrong, Mick?" Con said.

Mick didn't like that question. She groaned. Like she couldn't take care of herself.

"You're a church boy, Con," she said.

"Huh?" he said. Con was too sensitive, always acted like it was his fault. It never was. He would have known, of course—and right away—if he had done her dirt.

"If it was something I did, I'm sorry," Con said.

Mick hung up on him. "Sorry" made her crazy. She could almost see his soft, brown eyes misting up at her click. He needed to toughen up.

Mick's dad was in the next room: a big, cracked man without a shirt, hunched over a stove, splitting brown eggs over oily, rumped sausage. The eggs smoked, kicking hot oil out onto the counter. Her dad's name was Carry, but it should have been something different. He had big, hunched shoulders

that rolled when he walked. Fat sat thick on his haunches, but you couldn't tell it when he was dressed.

Mom had left two years ago, but Mick stayed in Utah with her dad so she could finish school. They lived in the small old place her dad had bought when Mom had wanted to come in out of the Utah wilderness. "Time to cross over into the promised land," Mom had said. Mom had never liked living in rural Utah. Dad did, and he and his small-time crew drove all over the state doing road work nobody else would drive that far to do. Now they lived here, in the forgotten part of a growing Utah Valley town which was piling nice suburbs up against the mountain. But it still had this part: Half-block from the trailer park, half-block from the tracks, and a block from the oldest church in town. On nice Sundays, Mick had walked up there with her Mom.

From the kitchen, Dad said, "Get off the phone, Mick. I have to call my crew."

"You can call your crew later," Mick said. She sat the cordless on the bed. He'd find out soon enough she wasn't even on the phone. Dad had partnered up with an old friend, and they'd started working near the valley. They were almost over the hump: two crews, looking for a big contract. Mick knew the only reason they hadn't moved into a nice house up on a hill somewhere was that Dad was too lazy to sell the place. "I don't like paper work," he'd say.

Dad stumped around the kitchen and shut a cupboard door; its hinges squawked like a kicked chicken. Five minutes later, he swung her door open, one-handing his plate, pinning his fork to the old, chipped ceramic with his thumb. He smelled like road tar, sweat, and orange juice. On his way in, he banged the plate against the door—damn near tossed egg and oil all over Mick's bed. He looked at the phone.

"Thought you were in here gushing at your boyfriend," Carry said.

"Nah," Mick said.

JASON LINDQUIST is a first-year student in the MA/Ph.D. program in literature at Indiana University. Jason misses the Wasatch mountains, but finds some solace in the forests of southern Indiana and in the company of his wife, Danille. The author welcomes comments and criticism and can be reached at <jhlindqu@indiana.edu>.

He walked out with the phone. Mick looked at the fake-woodgrain electronic clock. 9:15 P.M. Dad didn't like graveyard. Tonight he wanted to get down to the site and double-up with the end of swing shift so he could get home earlier. Dad said he couldn't sleep with sunlight streaming through his window—it made him think he was having a vision. He'd get up in the middle of the day, looking for angels.

Outside Mick's door he said: "Well, wake up, drive over there, drag idiot-brain out of bed, and be at the site in twenty minutes. I'll pick up Hansen."

That night, it snowed in Mick's big valley.

IN a wrecking yard out by the lake, Connell tore the souls out of dead cars. He'd walk through the wrecking yard, looking thin in his faded overalls—looking like he had room to move. It wasn't a bad job in the summer: the heat came off the cars, and Con walked between them tenderly, as through a rose garden, bending and twisting to avoid the blunt, ominous bumpers and metal tendrils that launched themselves across the winding, narrow paths between cars. But it was December, and the cold would come in off the lake and hunker down over the yard. The mud turned gray—something about oil and antifreeze soaking into the dirt.

He and Jeb worked the same shifts, and Jeb was good company. Sometimes in the winter, Con and Jeb would find stray dogs or coyotes dead among the wrecks, candied anti-freeze still dripping from their tongues.

"Poor lap-dog," Jeb would always say.

"Yeah," Con would say, "They can't stay away." Con and Jeb would chip away at the frozen ground behind the utility vehicles until they dug deep enough to bury the dogs.

"Con, you think those dogs go to heaven?" Jeb would ask.

"I don't know that one."

"It ain't in the book?"

"Nah," Con would say.

"I wouldn't give a damn for a religion that don't care for its dogs," Jeb would say.

This time of year, it got dark two hours before his shift ended, and no one came to a wrecking yard after dark. So sometimes, unless Phil had an engine for them to break down or some die-hard came looking for a headlamp assembly for an '83 Buick Regal, Con would sit on the concrete just inside the split-plywood door where the heat came off the old radiator. Other times, he would patrol the lot with a black flashlight, straightening up a little, locating cars, or just flashing the beam down rows of late '80s Ford Tempos with their hunkered-down hoods and cramped torsos. He'd look up the pile of long-snouted Monte Carlos and down where the truck cabs popped up against the sky, round and dented like heads in a whack-a-mole booth.

Con didn't mind the swing shift—it meant that before graduation he could earn some money for his mission. Phil owned the place, and he was Con's priests' quorum advisor and scoutmaster. Phil had taught him how to break down a lawnmower when Con was eight, so it hadn't been a question of getting hired.

THE next night Con was back on the phone with Mick. "Didn't see you today," he told her. "Yeah, I was in hiding," Mick said. "I'm being stalked."

"You've been watching too much TV," Con said. His own brother's TV growled through the drywall. Con lived up on the hill overlooking the high school, two miles from Mick's house. Sometimes it was a long walk home.

"You saying no one would want to stalk me?" Mick said.

"No ma'am," Con said. He stared at the spackle up on the ceiling, wondering how they did that. Mick's dad could probably tell him. His brother was watching some kind of police drama. "I think you're worth stalking," Con said.

"Don't joke about stalking me," Mick said, "my dad would shoot you. He packs a shotgun in that truck." Con knew that Mick's dad would probably shoot him, if provoked. Mick spoke again, "Could you meet me?"

MICK and Con sat on the cold front steps of the old chapel, tangled in blankets. Con had his arm around her, and she curled up to his skinniness. It was a clear night.

They were talking about the church behind them. "I don't want to come up here Sunday. It makes me nervous," Mick said.

"You used to go all the time," Con said.

"Yeah, with Mom."

"And sometimes your dad," Con said. "You look good in a dress."

"I hate dresses."

"You look good in a dress," Con said. He tightened his hands into the blanket wool and pulled against her.

AT work, Phil said, "Con, go check on my babies," like he always did, rubbing his bald head, worrying that someone might be prowling around the yard. Some days, Phil would walk around all day with long, black oil smears running from forehead to hair line, way-back where the baldness met his black hair.

Sometimes, when Con was checking the yard alone, and if the wind was right, or when there was just a cold, bright moon casting gargoyle shadows, the cars would sway and creak and cry faintly, like tearing metal. He'd poke around for the sound but would lose himself in the tangle of iron.

Jeb always said that unless you had time, know-how and equipment, you couldn't steal anything from this place anyway, and guys with equipment and know-how had real jobs. Even if Jeb was right, the place still scared Con. Besides, the stuff out there wasn't worth stealing, not worth a thing. On this night, Jeb came with him.

"How's the girl?" Jeb said.

"Who?"

"You know who," Jeb said. "Doctor said you in love yet?"

"You know it's not like that," Con said; he shone his flashlight down between two Impalas and grunted like he saw something.

"Only way I can get you to say anything," Jeb said. They



Dad would stand there like a mountain, staring at Mom, saying, "Come on, I know you can forgive me." Mom kept on forgiving him until one day she was gone.

sidestepped a hole where a torn-out muffler stuck out from thin, milky-white ice.

"She says I'm too apologetic," Con said.

"I'm sorry about that," Jeb said.

"She won't go to church with me."

"Neither will I, but I still wuv you," Jeb said, scrunching his face up into an obscene pucker.

"I'm not going to kiss you, Jeb."

"Then you'll never see me in white."

A late-model suburban loomed ahead, right side jammed in as if somebody had tried to put the passenger door through the opposite side. There was still blood in that one, and most of the good parts were already stripped. You didn't see an untouched front-end like that too often, though.

"Guy come in here yesterday looking for a hood for a '69 Camaro," Jeb said. "Like he's going to find any of those that haven't been stripped to the wiper blades. Said he was restoring it."

"He should have known better," Con said.

"He come *down* here. That's what I don't understand. Then he asked if he could come out and look around the lot himself."

"Guess he's desperate."

"Yeah, I guess," Jeb said.

TWO weekends before Christmas, Mick's dad brought home another woman. She was pretty and wide with long, black hair, not a day over twenty-five.

"This is MaryAnn," Carry said. "That's Mick."

MaryAnn squealed.

"Nice to meet you," Mick said. "You work asphalt with Dad?" MaryAnn was digging around in her purse and pretty soon started combing out her black hair, thinking about Mick's question.

"She doesn't work for me, Mick," her dad said.

"I cut Carry's hair," MaryAnn said. "I could give you a make over."

Carry said, "We're going out to Wendover. I don't think we'll be back tonight."

"We're going to gamble."

"You won't be at church, then?" Mick asked. He just looked back at her.

Carry and MaryAnn left in his truck. Carry left ten bucks for her dinner. After they walked out, Mick lay down on the frayed sofa, wedged her head up against the arm and back and grabbed the remote. She sat back up and looked around.

"What this place needs a Christmas tree."

A week later, on the last morning of school before Christmas, Mick waited for Con in the slush outside the shuttered trailers behind the main building. She hadn't spoken to him all week, and he was moping around. Picking him out of the stream of kids, she pulled him between two trailers and pushed him up against the wall. She was strong and almost put him through the thin, flaking plyboard. She pressed her nose against his cheek and breathed on his face, looking like a blue-eyed hawk.

"I'm sorry I wouldn't talk to you last night. My dad was

being an idiot," she said.

"Yeah?" Con said.

"He was walking around swearing at the TV," Mick said, "yelling at his crew on the phone."

"Could be worse," Con said.

Mick smiled, pushed her mouth up against his, and walked away.

BY the end of school that day, Mick was throwing Con out of her locker. "I don't care who she was, and I don't care what you were studying," she said. "Is she in your ward, Con? Do you love her, Con? Does your mom love her? Is she a Laurel?"

"Come on. I don't even know her last name," Con said.

"It's even worse that way." She launched his American history across the locker hall. It hit the wall right above some bug-eyed freshman and dropped onto the carpet.

"I have never been so humiliated," she said. She wrenched open the metal loops of his three-ring binder, opened it above her head like an A-frame house or an umbrella, and took three wobbling hops around, shaking all of his papers loose.

Con pursed his lips. "I didn't do anything."

"That's what my dad used to say," Mick said.

"I didn't do anything," Con said. A crowd was gathering.

Con kept looking at Mick, but he saw all their faces, Carson, Maxfield, Whitman. Moore. A slug-nosed junior said, "She's on fire, Con." Mick was sobbing, throwing things around.

AFTER the last day of school, Mick didn't see Con. It was hard to get up the hill to his house without stealing Carry's truck, and she refused to go to church that Sunday. Besides, Con kept sending her lame notes about forgiveness, which just made her angry. Of course he hadn't done anything with that girl she'd seen him with.

So she kept busy. She bought a tree and decorated it. Carry grunted at it when he came home in the morning and the tiny, colored lights were blinking off and on. Mick made dinners for him.

On the twenty-third, Dad got on the horn: "We've got work to do tomorrow, gentlemen. A little overtime." "Dad, don't ask them to work on Christmas Eve," Mick said. "Their wives will kill them."

"It's up to them," Dad said.

"They'll do whatever they think you want them to." She was on the couch, stringing popcorn together, the way her mom used to do every Christmas. She had already made two wreaths. "Don't do that," Carry said.

"The popcorn?"

"Yeah," Carry said. "What happened to Con anyway?"

"I don't know," Mick said.

"If you don't kiss and make up soon, you're going to bury this house in Christmas."

"Yeah. So?" They hadn't had this much Christmas in five years. Dad sat with his back to the tree. The lights blinked softly.

"It might break my heart," he said.

CHRISTMAS had come and gone, and Phil had taken down the string of Christmas lights hanging in the office, had taken the bows off the two gutted Oldsmobiles that watched the yard like rusty sentinels, flanking the wide gate where Phil dragged wrecked cars into the yard.

"Oldsmobile station wagon, 1968. Best car I ever seen," Phil said about one. "Wish I had ten of 'em."

"Yeah, Phil," Jeb said, "real flashy."

That day, Con and Jeb found a body at the wrecking yard. It was all over the news pretty quick—how Con and Jeb had been out among the sedans, looking for a passenger door on a Chevy Caprice, and had seen it. Three-day old corpse, shot through the chest a dozen times, still dressed for Wall Street with hundred-dollar shoes; he was set up like a joke in the driver's seat of a Lincoln, hand up on the steering wheel as if he were going on a road trip, only slumped forward a little.

"Apparently fell asleep at the wheel," Jeb had said to Con, only that didn't make the papers. Con had just stood there and stared wild-eyed at it, flashing his beam around in the cold, twilight air. The news just said two unnamed workers found the body, so as to protect their anonymity, prevent them from coming to harm.

"Anonymity, hell," said Jeb. "Only two guys are ever here evenings. Everybody knows that."

IT was late afternoon in early January when Mick ran away. She ran down the street past the Christmas trees piled neatly on the sidewalk, out through the trailer park and the scattered trees behind it, over a fence and south through the vacant lots until she came to the railroad bridge. It was a bright, winter afternoon, and Mick looked down at the cars passing through the dugway beneath her, and out towards the west.

She'd never been here, so she stopped. She stood on the railroad causeway, watching the windshields catching the sun and casting it up at her. Every time mom had been ready to leave, Mick had heard her father saying the same thing. "I'm sorry." She still wondered why Mom took it.

Now, whenever Con said he was sorry, all she saw was her father, leaning over the kitchen table, arms splayed and gripping the Formica, forearm muscles tensing and flexing. Dad's arms never went completely pale, even in the long winter. A lot of women thought those strong arms were beautiful. Mom thought they were beautiful. And he'd stand there like a mountain, staring at mom, saying, "Come on, I know you can forgive me." Mom kept on forgiving him—until one day she was gone.

Mick looked down at the cars. She could have perched on the edge of the causeway, dangling her legs over the traffic; she could have tossed pebbles off and cracked windshields like a wayward deacon. But she started running again, out over the bridge, above the traffic, onto the other side.

As she ran south, a warm wind blustered up out of the west,

sweeping the haze out of the valley. It pushed clouds up over the mountains, and they spilled down towards the valley floor. It was a storm-bringer—she'd seen it on the news. But for now, it was just a sweet wind clearing the sky and breaking the clouds over the lake so the sun could shine through and light it up. If you didn't look at the steel mill out by the lake, the mountains and the clouds looked like a picture. But the railroad tracks always led her eyes toward the mill.

Mick stayed with the tracks. Sometimes she ran, sometimes she skipped from railroad tie to railroad tie, or balanced on the rails, arms waving like a scarecrow in the wind. No trains ever seemed to come through here any more, and she kept running—past the warehouses, the small-time manufacturing, the slag piles, and the grey heaps of gravel—out past scrap-iron dealers and wrecking yards.

THE police had cordoned off the Lincoln and were walking around with tape measures, cameras, and walkie-talkies. The important ones carried cell phones. Jeb and Phil stood next to the yellow tape, leaning over it and staring at the officers like kids at the zoo. Con was off looking for a side mirror for one of the police Broncos.

The cop had his story. "Broke the thing off on a telephone

pole in Heber. Suspect proceeded to turn off the main road and out into an alfalfa field. I proceeded to pursue the suspect. Misjudged the angle. Forty-mile chase with no scratches," he said, "then that happens. It'd be nice if my office could replace it real cheap."

"Probably knocked it off proceeding out of his own damn garage," Jeb later said.

Con wasn't sure why the police were here. They weren't going to find anything; they'd taken the body away days ago. A couple of old-timers were poking around the sedans near the yellow tape, pretending to check an old Chevy Malibu for windshield wipers. Soon they stopped pretending and just stood there, hands in their pockets at the edge of the tape, talking about the storm moving in from the Pacific.

"I seen it on TV," one old farmer said, "Two feet of snow tonight."

Con was cutting through the trucks towards the utility vehicles when the wind came up, blowing the car stink off the wrecking yard like a picnic blanket. The afternoon sun glinted off the shattered glass under his boots. Off to the west, out where the sun was brightest, against the iron towers of the steel mill, Con thought he saw someone running south along the railroad tracks. 



PORT CALL

Ravens rasp the leading edge of day.
 Gulls curette the sleeper out of sleep,
 curling out of fir tops to a bay
 face bearded in sine and countersweep
 of tides the water, salt and air play
 as long as aeons allow. We come to keep
 connected. New neighbor boys spray
 each other on their tethered float, then leap—
 screeching dares—into the wet. Geese
 honk north for Canada. Grand niece
 shies from strangers. Greying gossip gives
 the list of schooled, married, jobs, who lives
 where, who's ill, retired, or soon to wed—
 all under portraits of the distant and the dead.

—R. S. CARLSON

Mormon kitsch borrows extensively from American culture, yet it teaches us to remain socially and theologically distinct. This is perhaps most evident in how our mass-produced art teaches traditional gender roles. To be Mormon, it would seem, is to be particularly masculine or feminine.

STRIPLING WARRIORS CHOOSE THE RIGHT

THE CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS OF CONTEMPORARY MORMON KITSCH

By Jana K. Riess

ROBERT KIRBY, *SALT LAKE TRIBUNE* HUMOR columnist, once wrote about finding a new “Mormon” product in his local discount store: beer mugs and shot glasses emblazoned with images of the Salt Lake Temple.¹ The irony, of course, is that a distinctively Mormon image was being used to sell items that no temple-going Mormon should use. Kirby’s is an extreme example, yet it illustrates an important transformation in Mormon material culture of the 1980s and 1990s. Latter-day Saints are now inundated with mass-produced and cleverly marketed images, scripture paraphernalia, clothing, and toys—many of these not always in step with declared Mormon values. Such “kitsch” is emblematic of larger social changes within the Mormon community, and it offers a useful lens for examining how United States Mormons in the late twentieth century perceive their cultural position.

“Kitsch” is a problematic term. It evokes prejudices about “low” art being overly sentimental or even maudlin. Because kitsch is generally inexpensive, highbrows routinely ignore it, or denounce it as an art form unfit only for the sophisticated (“not mainstream”) of society.² But such elitest and perfunctory class stereotypes should give critics of kitsch pause. Although kitsch is mass-produced, it is not necessarily “inferior art,” and it is worthy of study because it reflects how ordinary Latter-day Saints express their religious selves. Kitsch also reflects the class and gender prejudices of its owners. Historian Colleen McDannell has observed that to many people, kitsch represents “stereotypical feminine qualities: sentimentality, superficiality, intimacy.”³ Perhaps the association of kitsch with the

feminine has precluded it from serious scholarly attention.

This essay does not evaluate the aesthetics of Mormon objects, nor does it speculate about the taste of their buyers. My purpose is not to denigrate or celebrate Mormon kitsch, but to contextualize it historically and culturally. Why do Mormons embrace kitsch? How can material objects confer a sense of Mormon identity? How important are objects in defining Mormon practice and spirituality? And finally, what do some of these objects tell us about Mormon values and culture?

COMING OF AGE

A rapid, twenty-year evolution of kitsch.

SINCE the 1970s, Mormon kitsch has changed dramatically, appropriating various trends in mainstream popular culture, especially as presented in television, movies, and the Internet. Mormon kitsch has evolved from homemade bandelos and bracelets a quarter century ago to sophisticated (and more expensive) mass-produced objects that are aggressively advertised and sold in Mormon specialty stores. As Mormons have moved out of Utah’s Wasatch Front and into other geographic regions—as well as into the upper middle class—Mormon kitsch has become more worldlywise. Less than a quarter of Mormons now live in the Intermountain West, and U.S. Mormons have “achieved an average socioeconomic status that . . . compares favorably to that of Episcopalians and Presbyterians.”⁴ Mormons have become acculturated to a greater degree than ever, but this apparent ease with U.S. society has been accompanied by a simultaneous attempt by LDS leaders to re-emphasize what is recognizably Mormon. In postwar Mormonism, cultural *rapprochement* has

JANA RIESS is a Ph.D. candidate in American religious history at Columbia University in New York City.

gone hand in hand with a theological and social retrenchment.

Meanwhile, the objects used and sacralized by Mormons have retained their didactic function. Much of the recent marketing geared toward children, teenagers, and young adults continues to inculcate Mormon religious and cultural values. However, the means of this inculcation are new and demonstrate Mormonism's apparent comfort with popular symbols and cultural vehicles. Also, Mormon kitsch increasingly emphasizes gender differences: discrete values are touted as "religious" for boys and girls. Objects impart gender expectations along with religious and behavioral codes. Mormon kitsch confirms that while Mormonism is willing to borrow images and slogans from popular culture, it does not accept some of the perceived values of that culture—including commensurate roles for girls.

In the 1990s, LDS material culture has stepped confidently into the "mainstream" of U.S. popular culture. Increasingly, mass-produced objects directed toward Mormons borrow ideas, images, and slogans from popular media. An early product was a T-shirt that adapted the distinctive graphic design from the hit television series *Northern Exposure*, proclaiming that the wearer was engaging in "Mormon Exposure." Not only did the shirt demonstrate its model's Mormon identity, thus "exposing" religion for a public audience, it also suggested that the wearer knew one of the most popular TV shows—yet the program, which at various points featured an unmarried couple cohabiting, a young single woman's sexual affairs, and the existential angst of an ex-convict deejay, diverged from core Mormon values.

This tension between popular culture and Mormon values also manifests itself in some of the more recent appropriations of media images.⁵ For example, the popular LDS slogan "Choose the Right" has spawned an array of merchandise reminding Mormons to make valiant moral choices. Yet this marketed "CTR" slogan flirts with some of the very dangers in U.S. culture that orthodox Mormons might otherwise avoid. One commercial line of rings and T-shirts, for example, has the "CTR" slogan, in the same typeface as the highly visible "CK" logo of Calvin Klein. Calvin Klein's advertising is often at odds with stated Mormon values such as chastity and modesty. In another example, the Nike Swoosh symbol has also prompted a Mormon imitation, except that the tapered end features the trumpet of the Angel Moroni. Even the Nike slogan of "Just Do It,"—which echoes the late LDS President Spencer W. Kimball's motto, "Do It"—has found its way onto T-shirts heralding a muscular Book of Mormon hero, Nephi. Instead of Nephi's declaration "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded" (1 Ne. 3:7), this Nephi declares, "Just Go and Do It."

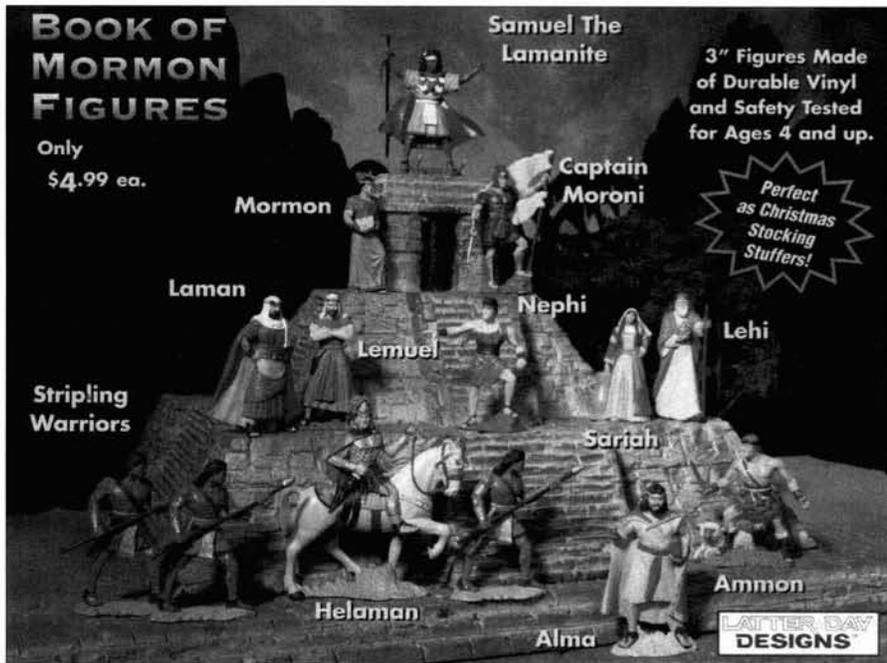
Cultural friction seems strongest in the vast array of objects specifically directed to missionary experience. One T-shirt uses



This shirt "exposes" religion to a public audience, but it also suggests that its wearer is hip to a popular TV show.

Contemporary Mormon kitsch reflects a desire to be accepted into the larger culture, but on Mormon terms.

the HardRock Cafe logo to proclaim, "Hard Work All Day," thus juxtaposing the often unglamorous missionary life with hamburgers and rock music. Just months after 1997's summer blockbuster *Men In Black* monopolized the box office, T-shirts appeared with two "Men In White"—male missionaries in dapper suits and sunglasses. These missionary-directed objects reveal tensions between Mormon and popular culture, because LDS missionaries are essentially removed from popular culture during their service. They are not allowed to read newspapers, watch television, go to movies, or listen to secular music. What irony, then, to see *Men In Black*, a film that full-time missionaries would not be permitted to attend, appropriated to describe the missionary experience. Of course, the mission-related objects are not simply intended to appeal to current missionaries. They are to encourage younger teens, especially boys, to serve missions in the future. Such objects announce that missionary work is exciting, culturally relevant, and adventurous.



The instant success of Book of Mormon action figures surprised even long-standing observers of the Mormon market.

The popularity of Mormon toys suggests they are being used as teaching tools to help children—especially boys in the case of action figures—identify with the Book of Mormon.

Missionary paraphernalia is sold at the many Deseret Book and other Mormon-oriented stores. A special chain of mission-oriented stores, the Missionary Emporium, has arisen, including one only a few miles from the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Provo, Utah. Most items are aimed at missionaries themselves. Mormons can purchase official LDS tracts in many languages, and “survival guides” help potential missionaries prepare to share the LDS message in their assigned areas of the world. Yet much merchandise is not directly related to teaching the restored gospel. Family members and love interests can purchase temple wall charts to help them count off the days until their missionary’s return. (On the flip side, prefabricated “Dear John” letters are also available. Primary children can find coloring books, stickers, videos, and countless other products, not necessarily related to the missionary experience, but to the larger Church experience of the Restoration, family life, scriptures, and so on.

A best-selling line that recently appeared in Mormon bookstores are Book of Mormon action figures, introduced by

Latter-day Designs in 1996. Even long-standing observers of the Mormon market were surprised at the instant success of these figures, available in vinyl, pewter, and 24k gold plate. According to Deseret Book’s retail figures, the quickest sellers are, predictably, Book of Mormon war heroes Nephi, Alma, Moroni, and Helaman. The “negative” figures, such as Laman and Lemuel, lag considerably.⁶ This discrepancy may at least partly be due to the fantasy inherent in the action figure genre. The popularity of the “righteous” figures also suggests these action figures are being used as teaching tools. They are to help LDS children, especially boys, identify with the central heroes of Mormonism’s most distinctive sacred text.

Significantly, few of the aforementioned items are actually produced by Deseret Book, whose policy has been to retail creations that smaller companies appropriate from popular culture. Yet these appropriations are often the swiftest sellers at Deseret Book, far outstripping items with motivational or scriptural messages. Recent popular images have adopted the logos of teen fashion arbiters Tommy Hilfiger and the Gap to try to appeal to the Mormon youth market. As one company buyer at Deseret Book put it, “Kids don’t have a problem standing up for what they believe in if it doesn’t look hokey.”⁷

Even obvious LDS symbols such as CTR rings can be used multivocally, simultaneously reflecting their wearers’ Mormon affiliation and their stubborn individuality. One University of Utah professor tells of a female student who came into the office sporting a CTR ring—pierced through her eyebrow.⁸ CTR rings, in fact, have moved far beyond their initial purpose as a learning tool for children. They have become a stunningly popular cultural signifier for Mormons of all ages. Beginning in 1970, CTR rings were given to seven-year-old children in preparation for baptism. All one size, they were constructed of cheap, adjustable aluminum.⁹ One recipient noted that these early CTR rings were “Cracker Jack box” quality and intended to be worn only by young children.¹⁰ Another observed that during his teen years in the late 1970s and early ’80s, he “never saw anyone wear a CTR ring except for the week they got it” as seven-year-olds. On the other hand, he added, his parents purchased a very nice Portuguese CTR ring when his younger brother left for a Portuguese-speaking mission in 1995, demonstrating the rapid evolution of the ring as a desirable young adult commodity.¹¹

CTR rings were first hawked for profit by vendors working part-time out of their vans in the early 1980s. By 1985, the BYU

bookstore was selling a permanent, non-adjustable version, and by the late 1980s, Deseret Book had begun to market them in different materials and colors.¹² They are currently available in forty languages and represent a favorite gift item for foreign-area missionaries. Their popularity extends to young parents and empty-nesters. To cater to this older market, CTR rings have become available in various permutations of sterling silver and gold costing up to \$500. In 1996, Ring Masters Inc. made *Inc.* magazine's list of the five hundred fastest-growing companies in America. Nearly half of its \$2.5 million annual sales was due to CTR rings.¹³

Among teenagers, part of the wider appeal of the CTR rings in the late 1990s may be their cultural resonance with the "chastity rings" sometimes worn by young evangelicals. Although the CTR logo offers a general encouragement to moral behavior, many Mormons link it specifically to sexual virtue. A Utah doctor, for example, reportedly professed dismay that so many of the young women who came to his office for teenage pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases were wearing CTR rings.¹⁴ Whether they guarantee sexual purity or not, CTR rings offer Mormons an instantly recognizable symbol of cultural and religious identification.

So Mormon kitsch's appropriations from popular culture are both selective and carefully aimed at specific audiences. To a certain degree at least, reworking popular logos and symbols with a Mormon twist creates the indirect but persistent message that Mormonism has "arrived." Any group that has power to borrow, and subtly change, symbols from the larger culture is powerful. To do so is subversive. When Mormons take a Nike symbol and slap an Angel Moroni on it, they are declaring a kind of ownership of that symbol.

MORMON KITSCH
AND THE INCULCATION OF
GENDER VALUES
Sexualized bodies are very common.

WHILE the foregoing arguments show Mormonism's delicate engagement with U.S. cultural symbols, the presence of Mormon kitsch does not mean Mormons are in a headlong drive toward cultural assimilation. Nor is such borrowing anything new. From Scouting to many of our hymns to our businessmen's attire, since its beginning, Mormonism has been able to creatively and selectively borrow



CTR rings, a stunningly popular cultural signifier for Mormons of all ages, are available in gold and sterling silver and can cost up to five hundred dollars.

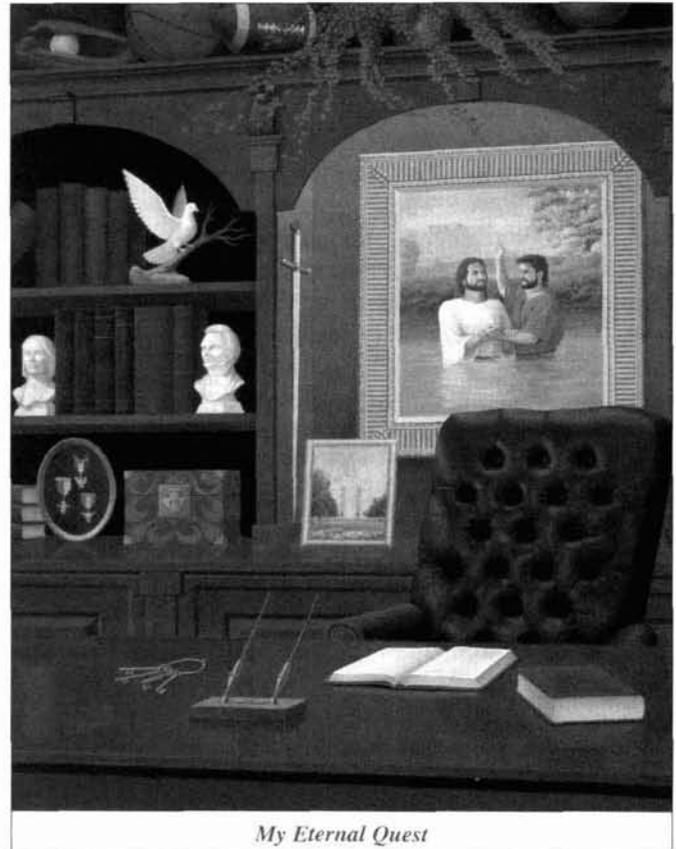
Mass-produced images and objects can be reassuring by their ubiquity; with the Church's rapid expansion, Mormon identity has become as much an issue of confluent objects as of unified belief.

from its larger culture and maintain its separate identity. As a sectarian religious movement, Mormonism must carefully maintain boundary distinctions so that it retains its identity and does not become engulfed by the cultural values that surround it. Tangible objects can help to preserve this cultural distinctiveness in the face of threatened assimilation. The aim of many of these objects, especially those geared toward youth, is to inculcate LDS religious and behavioral values. Although some objects seem curiously in harmony with the norms of U.S. culture, they also contain elements that declare the socially and theologically acceptable boundaries for Mormons. Such lines of cultural demarcation often crystallize around the issue of gender.

Two Church-produced posters, one directed to young women and the other to young men, exemplify how Mormon mass-produced images help make concrete the expectations of masculine and feminine behavior.¹⁵ The girls' poster depicts three white dresses hanging in a blue and white bedroom. A framed baby's blessing gown hangs on the rear wall. From the bedpost, a young girl's baptismal dress offers a reminder of covenants made. The culmination of this ritual development is



My Three White Dresses



My Eternal Quest

Set in a bedroom, the girls' poster shows three dresses, representing infant blessing, baptism, and temple marriage, and emphasizes domesticity. The boys' poster, set in an office, prominently includes keys and scouting awards, emphasizing public religious authority.

Gender conservatism is not exclusive to Mormons. What is unique to Mormonism is the insistence that gender roles are eternal, just as human spirits are eternal.

the long wedding gown, which the young woman wears as she is sealed to her husband for time and all eternity in an LDS temple. In fact, a framed print of the Logan temple rests on the table in the picture, next to a vase of pink roses. The three flowers—one unopened, one partially opened, and one in full bloom—represent the stages of infancy, girlhood, and womanhood.

Worthy LDS boys are also expected to participate in rites of infant blessing, baptism, and temple marriage. Yet the boys' poster does not refer to these three specific rituals. It depicts not a boy's bedroom, but an executive desk in a library. On the desk are open scriptures and a set of keys, symbolic of the priesthood authority a young man generally assumes at age twelve. Also on the desk is a framed print of the Salt Lake Temple. On the wall is a larger portrait of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus. The bookcase behind the desk displays three framed Boy Scout medals, demonstrating the achievement of

the highest levels in Scouting. The bookcase also contains many leather-bound volumes; a football and a baseball glove rest somewhat peripherally atop the bookshelf.

The most prominent objects—the priesthood keys and the temple—emphasize a young man's public religious authority. Moreover, the overall picture suggests that young men will pursue meaningful activities outside of their religious and home lives. They can be Scouts, athletes, intellectuals, and successful businessmen. In contrast, the girls' dreams are confined within church (the three ritual dresses) and home, and specifically, the most private room of the home. The overall impression is one of private space, of home as a feminine domain. Together, the posters convey the subtle message that although a young woman's life will be circumscribed by religious rituals, the young man who has the authority to perform those rituals will also enjoy having outside interests and achievements.

In contrast to the intimate female bedroom, the male library/office contains little personalization. The site is ambiguous; the library could be in a home or business building. The immaculate neatness of the study, the marginalization of the sports paraphernalia, and the expansiveness of the chair behind the desk all suggest this is a man's room, not a boy's. The male poster emphasizes achievement, action, and worldly success, associations reinforced by the conquest-oriented language of the poem on the poster's reverse side. At "war" with Satan, the boy pledges to fight with Christ's "sword" and remain "brave and strong."¹⁶

The two posters also hint that standards for sexual chastity, while normative for both boys and girls, are more commonly impressed upon girls in LDS material culture. The poem on the reverse of the girls' poster emphasizes:

Just as mud would stain my dress,
Sin would stain my soul.
The key is to repent or bleach,
For whiteness is my goal.¹⁷

Terms such as whiteness, purity, morality, virtue, and chastity occur interchangeably in LDS discourse about abstinence from sexuality, especially female abstinence.¹⁸ In March 1998, for example, in speaking to the Young Women of the church via satellite, First Presidency First Counselor James E. Faust opened his remarks with a plea for their chastity. "Virtue has many definitions," he said, "such as moral excellence, right action and thinking, goodness of character, or chastity in women. . . . the virtue of young women should be equal to the angels." Moreover, he added, sexually permissive girls risk losing the favorable opinions of their male contemporaries: "young women should realize that young men they date will not honor and respect them if they have been involved in moral transgression."¹⁹ Here, the responsibility for chaste behavior is placed squarely upon the shoulders of young women, not their male counterparts, who stand instead as judges and accusers. LDS-purchased objects subtly echo



• Eve •

Choice and Accountability

Eve made one of the most difficult decisions of all time and was held accountable. When Eve made the correct choice to partake of the Forbidden Fruit and became the mother of all living she set in motion God's plan for our salvation.

©1994 AUTHOR AND ARTIST
CAMARY WYNN 303/243-8284

In this bookmark, one of seven illustrating the values of the LDS Young Women's program, the nude Eve is artfully concealed behind the lamb she clutches to her breasts. Her hair is perfectly coiffed, and she sports eyeshadow, rouge, and lipstick. She is sensually alluring.

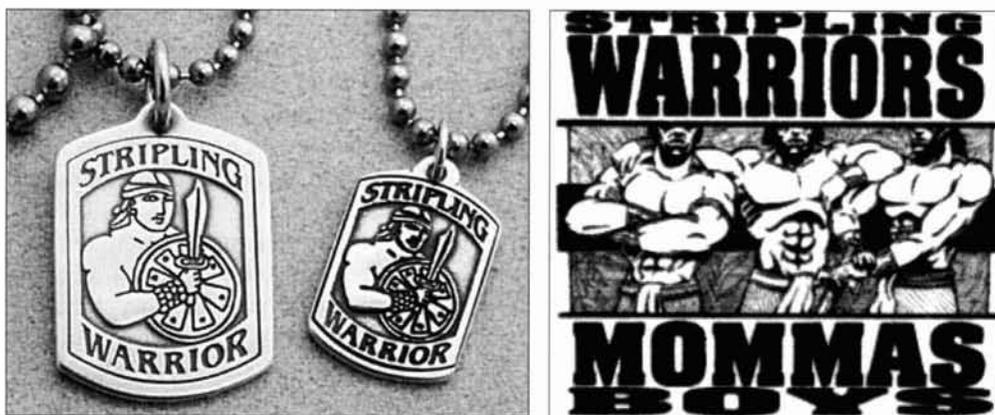
Stereotyped and sexualized "male" and "female" bodies are discernable in much contemporary Mormonism kitsch.

bols of romance—hearts float up from her head as she tries to engage the eyes of the young missionaries. They, however, remain protected from her wiles by a quartet of very masculine-appearing angels, one of whom uses his cloak to shield the tartlet from view. The message beneath the image is from the

these different emphases. Chastity is most often represented in our material culture as a female virtue. For example, a pink "chastity" bookmark is available in Deseret bookstores as a reminder to young women, but no such admonition is being marketed to LDS boys.

Although Mormon material culture explicitly encourages young women to practice chastity, it sometimes also sends a simultaneous message of sexual desirability and allurements. Another available bookmark depicts Eve, whom we Mormons regard as the mother of the human race. This bookmark is one of seven that illustrate the values of the LDS Young Women program: faith, divine nature, individual worth, knowledge, choice and accountability, good works, and integrity.²⁰ In the accompanying picture, a Nordic-looking Eve represents the value of choice and accountability because she made "the correct choice to partake of the Forbidden Fruit . . . [and] set in motion God's plan for our salvation."²¹ Eve's choice itself carries decidedly sexual connotations in Mormon theology, as by eating the fruit, she was responsible for introducing sexuality and childbearing. The bookmark portrait of Eve makes this association clear. She is nude, but that nudity is artfully concealed behind the lamb she is clutching to her breasts. A tiger stands at her side. Her hair is perfectly coiffed, and she sports eyeshadow, rouge, and lipstick. She is sensually alluring.

Other images portray women as sexual temptresses who lay traps for men laboring in the service of the Lord. One T-shirt displays two missionaries striding through the rain, presumably on their way to teach the gospel. To one side crouches a young woman, dressed only in lingerie, watching them intently. Her figure is extremely voluptuous, Betty Boop style. Drawn above her is a thought balloon filled with sym-



These sterling silver warrior pendants are advertised as being available in "a very masculine gun metal color," while Deseret Book's most popular T-shirt leads the viewer's eyes in a quasi-homoerotic style not to the warriors' whole persons but to their torsos only.

In the popular "stripling warriors" motif, Mormonism's ideals of masculinity and motherhood both find a voice. The warriors' strength is coupled with the mothers' piety.

Doctrine and Covenants: "and mine angels round about you to bear you up" (D&C 84:88). So the shirt shows a woman as a seductress who seeks to impede the Lord's work, carried out exclusively by men. Only divine intervention can save the missionaries.

Highly stereotyped and sexualized "male" and "female" bodies are discernible in much mass-produced art of contemporary Mormonism. Generally, LDS artists tend to depict male Bible and Book of Mormon figures as extremely muscular. A decade ago, Allen Roberts, a former editor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* and *SUNSTONE* and a longtime observer of the Mormon scene, commented that LDS prints and figurines parallel Mormons' gender expectations:

Mormons . . . give their heroes mental and spiritual qualities of extra human proportion, but must they look like Rambo or Schwarzenegger to merit our respect? In contrast, the portrayals of Mormon women (none cast heroically) range from Dolly Parton types to emaciated models in long dresses, usually in servile or submissive poses — our culture's ambivalence over the role of Mormon women . . . clearly presented.²²

Such gender demarcation also extends to the portrayals of Christ. As Colleen McDannell has observed, when the LDS Church commissioned Utah artist Dale Parsons to paint the head of Christ, Church authorities stressed that the initial sketches should be "masculine" in tone.²³

Masculine imagery sells well in Mormon circles. Since its introduction in 1996, an extremely popular Mormon T-shirt

has been the "Stripling Warriors/Mommas Boys" design created by Latter-day Specialties. The shirt features three scantily clad, brawny "stripling warriors" flexing their highly developed muscles. The caption refers to the famous Book of Mormon story of the two thousand valorous stripling warriors who accompanied the righteous Helaman into battle. These men held fast to the teachings of their mothers, "that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them" (Alma 56:47). In this T-shirt illustration, Mormonism's ideals of masculinity and motherhood both find a voice. The warriors are courageous, strong, and true, but they only gain the victory when they follow the advice of their pious mothers. Perhaps because of this dual message, the shirt has become Deseret Book's best-selling T-shirt. It sells in all sizes, though for a mostly male market.

The stripling warriors on this shirt, and in fact on *all* of the masculine imagery produced by Latter-day Specialties, are missing half of their heads. In a quasi-homoerotic style, the artist leads the viewer's eyes not to the whole person but to the torso only. The rest of the figures are cropped, dehumanizing the subjects. Even the intact body of a righteous warrior is missing the head above the mouth.

The stripling warrior image has proved to be a favorite motif for other designers as well. In December 1995, a small jewelry company, Lyon Design Studio (LDS), began marketing a line of trinkets based almost entirely on the stripling warrior image. Men can purchase sterling silver warrior rings and pendants in a "very masculine gun metal color," according to the promotional brochure. Another ring is advertised as able to spur "missionary discussion": "a provocative ring, begging the question, 'What is a Stripling Warrior?'" These rings acknowledge that male buyers can feel comfortable wearing jewelry, as long as it is the color of a weapon. (To add to the "warrior" image, the pendants hang from the same type of chain as do soldiers' dog tags.) More important, the underlying message is that masculine imagery, like the "ripling [sic] muscles" advertised, is an effective missionary tool that will help to bring others into the Church. Exaggerated manhood will be an attractive selling point for religion. Women are not neglected, however. The company also markets a keychain and pendant "just for girls," with the message, "Waiting for my Stripling Warrior." Objects with their emphasis on waiting reinforce ideals of feminine passivity and submissiveness. Girls are not to become stripling warriors; they are to wait for warriors to



Even the Nike slogan "Just Do It"—which echoes President Kimball's motto, "Do it"—has found its way onto T-shirts heralding a muscular Book of Mormon hero, Nephi. The variation on the Nike slogan replaces Nephi's declaration "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded" (1 Ne. 3:7).

Paradoxically, mass-produced kitsch can and does permit its owners to express uniqueness and individuality.

appear in their lives.²⁵

The gender imagery employed in these objects is by no means unique to Mormonism, although its expressions such as Stripling Warrior merchandise often are. Similar objects surface in the material culture of other religious groups, along with the cultural values that accompany them. However, the rhetoric of LDS leaders suggests that they suspect that similar gender values don't exist in the non-Mormon world. Leaders routinely emphasize the deterioration of the family, the confusions brought by feminism, and the need to rescue the nuclear family from its many "outside" destructive forces.

Gender conservatism is not Mormon-exclusive. What is unique to Mormonism is its insistence that gender roles are eternal, as human spirits are eternal. More than ever, LDS doctrine has articulated the idea that men and women made certain promises when they decided, as premortal spirits, to inhabit mortal bodies and thus become more like their Heavenly Parents. They knew in advance what would be required of them and what gender roles they would have to fulfill.²⁶ In the 1990s, LDS women and girls have been told, through both objects and words, unofficially and officially, that their life's role is at least partially predetermined. This theological retrenchment demonstrates that gender lingers on as one way in which Mormonism has chosen to carve out a recognizable identity in a culture that is perceived as simultaneously attractive and somewhat perilous.

THE PROLIFERATION OF MORMON KITSCH *A 1990s explosion of distinctively Mormon objects.*

As it has evolved, Mormon material culture has reflected the beliefs, aspirations, and cultural location of Latter-day Saints. So, tracing the historical development of Mormon material culture, it is important to include the mass-produced kitsch that represents its most recent manifestation. We can identify three rough periods of postwar Mormon material culture. I'll elaborate by focusing on youth items. The first period, stretching perhaps into the early 1970s, emphasized the homemade nature of the objects. Mormon children were encouraged to construct their own banners, bandelos, tithing banks, and other paraphernalia, often as a group project during Primary, which was held after school on a weekday. The second period, the 1970s and early 1980s, represent a transitional period; the Church manufactured many youth-directed items in Salt Lake City, then widely disseminated them at the ward level, encouraging individuals to personalize and embellish the objects. For example, Merrie Miss²⁷ bracelets were popular demonstrations of girls' achievements in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The girls would receive bare bracelets, ordered from LDS Distribution, but paste on the multicolored plastic "jewels" themselves as they achieved the goals established for their age group. Merrie Miss banners worked much the same way, with girls receiving the

them from Salt Lake and embroidering adornments themselves as they completed their objectives.

By the 1990s, the third period, LDS material culture was more often prefabricated than homemade, and produced in unprecedented quantities. Within the Church-run programs, formerly hand-crafted items were replaced by standardized, mass-produced objects. In the Young Women's organization, for example, the late 1980s saw the introduction of identical, ready-to-wear necklaces as rewards for the completion of the various stages of the Personal Progress program.

Moreover, as noted above, LDS material culture was no longer confined to those objects produced by the Church for Church use. It had spread into new areas, with individual tastes and preferences directing the market. By the late 1980s, the demand for Mormon books and paraphernalia netted approximately \$35 million annually, a figure that has grown substantially in the last decade.²⁸ More than half of the market share is controlled by Deseret Book, the official retail for-profit publication arm of the LDS Church. Deseret Book currently operates thirty-three stores in nine states. The company has expanded its annual offerings of new books from sixty to seventy-five in the late 1980s to over one hundred new titles in the late 1990s.²⁹

The demand for distinctively Mormon objects has also led to a 1990s explosion of small mom-and-pop companies, unaffiliated with the institutional Church, which offer games, toys, books, videos, and clip art for Mormon youth. Deseret Book has intentionally refrained from producing these "sideline items," though it provides the primary retail outlets that sell the products to LDS consumers. Apart from the retail outlets, some of these smaller or home-based businesses do an increasing amount of commerce on the Internet, dealing directly with Mormon consumers.

WHY THE BOOMING SALES OF KITSCH?

Five possible reasons.

SEVERAL reasons for this recent proliferation of Mormon kitsch can be identified, considering both the production issues alluded to in the previous paragraph (who is manufacturing and selling these items?) and consumption issues (who is buying these objects and why?). First, we must recognize that the Mormon penchant for mass-produced objects has ridden the coattails of the heady expansion of the evangelical Christian kitsch market in the 1980s. By some estimates, Christian bookstores nearly quadrupled their sales from 1980 to 1990 and currently net several billion dollars annually.³⁰ Certainly, the success of the Christian market has provided a model for Mormon entrepreneurs. The LDS Booksellers Association was partly modeled after the Christian Booksellers Association, and some cross-vending occurs between them. Still far more commonly Mormon bookstores sell evangelical merchandise than vice versa, such as the LDS adoption of the WWJD necklaces ("What Would Jesus Do?"). Mormons and evangelicals have both followed the larger market trend toward promoting youth items, devoting an increasing segment

of their product lines to children's and young adult merchandise. (The unprecedented recent sales of *VeggieTales* Bible story videos for evangelical children, for example, reflect a tremendous evangelical interest in imparting biblical knowledge and "traditional" values through entertaining and culturally relevant means.³¹)

Yet the explosion of mass-produced Mormon kitsch cannot be explained as simply an imitation of the evangelical experience. A second and significant explanation lies within the growing Mormon community itself. Obviously, LDS demographic changes have sparked at least some of this expansion in Mormon material culture. Mormonism in the United States is growing, though not as rapidly as in Africa and Latin America. In November of 1997, LDS membership passed the ten million mark, with slightly less than half of these members living in the United States.³² Moreover, the Mormon subculture is a youthful one, a fact that only reifies the youth-directed orientation of marketplace for religious kitsch and which raises interesting questions: Is the youth focus of Mormon kitsch because youth today have disposable income? Is it due to our agenda to indoctrinate young minds (marketing-driven)? Is it inherited from the youth-focus of official, Church-produced objects of earlier decades? Is it due to something else?

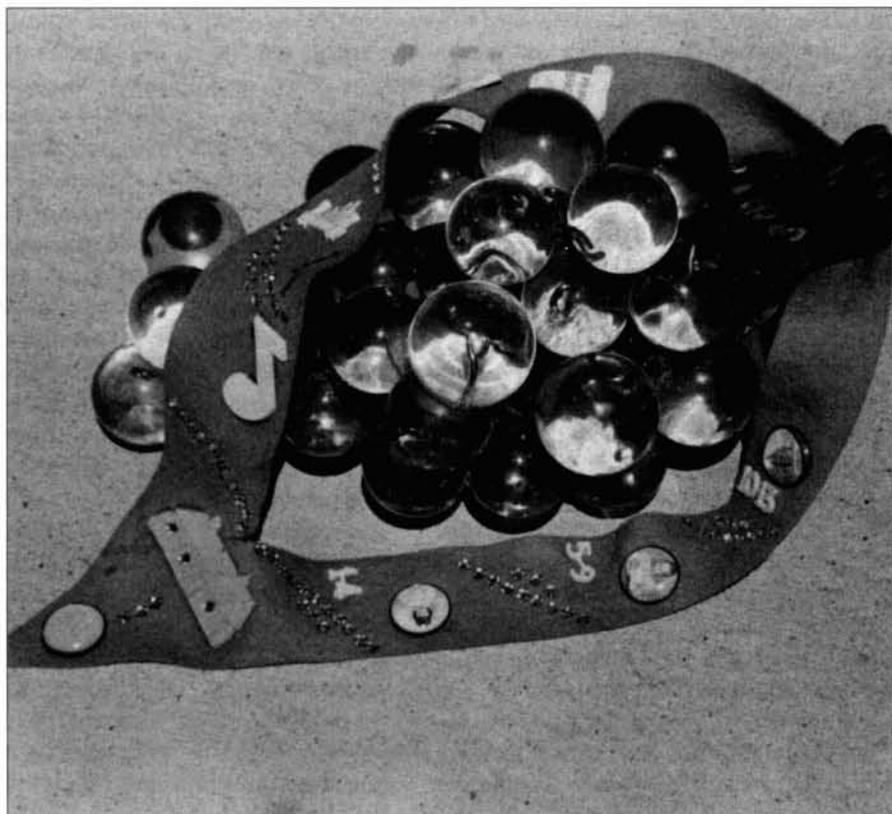
A third interpretive angle suggests that the upsurge in Mormon kitsch represents a larger historical Mormon trend toward consumption and genteel aspirations. Historian R. Laurence Moore has noted that from its earliest manifestations in U.S. life, Mormonism offered its adherents an "easier conscience about leisure than the American culture from which they were exiled."³³ But what Moore and others have routinely missed is that the Mormon penchant for recreation has generally coexisted with a theologically comfortable relationship with the monetary acquisition that makes leisure possible.³⁴ In other words, as a people, postwar U.S. Mormons have demonstrated a flexible, positive attitude toward having money and attaining "secular" success. Such entrepreneurialism has not ordinarily been supplemented by the cultural frugality manifested by other economically successful religious groups such as the Puritans. Although admonitions to avoid debt are common in general conference talks and *Ensign* articles, these warnings are almost never accompanied by characterizations of money itself as dangerous. LDS leaders routinely portray money as positive, encourage Church members to use it wisely, and emphasize the importance of tithing. This sanguine approach to money is supported by the prevalence of successful businessmen and entrepreneurs among general authorities, whom Mormons are taught to honor and emulate.

In such a subculture, where affluence is at least subtly perceived as a blessing and vigorous asceticism is virtually unknown, material objects speak of both a family's spiritual priorities and economic success. Mormons have displayed tastes and gentility using a variety of home decorations, from the hand-crafted Relief Society grapes that adorned coffee-less coffee tables in the 1960s to today's framed, parchment copies of the 1995 Proclamation on the Family. Almost all religious

groups use objects to some degree to express religious values in the home. And this use is doubly true of Mormonism, which subtly encourages the acquisition of material things and also upholds the home as a comfortable, sacred refuge.

A fourth reason for the expansion of mass-produced Mormon kitsch is the Correlation Movement. Since the 1960s, the LDS church has sought to consolidate all of its programs, auxiliaries, and activities under the priesthood-directed banner of Correlation. In practical terms, Correlation encourages that the same Relief Society lesson will be taught the same Sunday, in every Mormon ward from Tonga to Tokyo. The Church provides the necessary curriculum, and the program is intended to enhance the unity of the Mormon experience across cultures. Standardized visual experiences are an important part of this uniformity. As art historian David Morgan has shown, mass-produced images and objects can be reassuring by their ubiquity; they provide “the very means of making concrete, uniform, and universal the memories and feelings that define the individual.”³⁵ With the Church’s rapid expansion, Mormon identity has become as much an issue of confluent objects as of unified belief. “Approved” religious art, official photographs of the First Presidency, framed copies of the Proclamation on the Family, and representations of temples are common adornments in ward meetinghouses and LDS homes. They are instantly recognizable to other Mormons, creating an important universal bond through shared representation.

On the other hand, the uniformity of Correlation may have also encouraged individual Mormons to express their religious faith in unprecedented—almost carnivalesque—ways. Based on the objects collected and examined for this study, Correlation has also seemed to provoke a sort of independent backlash, especially among adolescents and young adults. Mormon kitsch, purchased individually to express personal tastes, can provide a means to retain personal distinctiveness in a standardized program. Remember, the huge upsurge in Mormon kitsch is not promoted by the institutional Church but by small-scale entrepreneurs and companies that offer Mormon-related objects to suit a wide variety of tastes and clientele. Individual choice drives the market. For example, all Young Women receive the same Church-produced medallions through the Personal Progress Program, but the same adolescent girls express their Mormonism individually by selecting the style, color, and language of their CTR rings or the logos on their T-shirts that they purchase with their own money.



Mormon material culture was once hand-crafted or assembled items, such as Relief Society resin grapes and Primary bandelos, but now it is mass-produced.

How can material objects confer a sense of Mormon identity, and what do they tell us about Mormon values?

Paradoxically, mass-produced kitsch can and does permit its owners to express uniqueness and individuality.³⁶

Finally, religious kitsch may also be thriving in Mormondom because of the relative absence of formal sacred rituals in Mormon homes. In contrast to other religions, such as Judaism, Mormonism lacks a tradition of special religious holidays, weekly Sabbath meals and rites, formulaic family prayers, or traditional cultural foods³⁷ (lime Jell-O notwithstanding). More formal LDS rituals, such as infant blessings, baptisms, missionary farewells, and, of course, sacrament meetings generally take place within the sanctioned space of the ward meetinghouse, not the home. Moreover, Mormons invest an additional layer of sacralization in the very private and revered space of the temple, where the most hallowed rites of the faith (endowments and sealings) are conducted. With the clear exception of the temple garment, LDS practice rarely permits Mormons’ most sacred ritual moments to spill over into the everyday spaces where they work, eat, and play.³⁸

The absence of formal home-based rituals does not indicate that Mormon spirituality is divorced from the home. On the contrary, devotional practices such as daily private prayer and scripture study, regular family prayer, weekly family home evening, and blessings before meals all reflect Mormons' desire to sacralize the home and uplift the individuals who inhabit it. And, as in most other religions, objects offer a way to remind their owners of their beliefs and tie them more concretely to the sacred rituals that occur outside the home. For Mormons, objects are chosen to reinforce the rituals that take place in chapel and temple: a framed Proclamation of the Family may remind parents of covenants made at their temple marriage, or a CTR ring received as a baptismal gift may spur a teen to remain accountable to baptismal promises.

Demographics, larger trends in the religious marketplace, Correlation, and the desire to sacralize the home all help to explain why mass-produced kitsch has proliferated recently in Mormondom. A broader explanation is that contemporary Mormon kitsch reflects a desire to be accepted into the larger culture, but on Mormon terms. When a subculture asserts its right to copy and subtly change images from its host culture, that subculture has *arrived*. This has been especially true of Mormon youth, who are consumers in their own right and have demonstrated their preferences for objects that herald both their Mormon values and their own, up-to-the-minute cultural panache. The inherent moral tensions of some of these objects, however, reveal how they simultaneously reveal young Mormons' comfort and unease with U.S. culture.

AND THE FUTURE HOLDS?

Kitsch as an increasingly visible barometer of just how much Americanization Mormons will accept.

In 1994, sociologist Armand Mauss suggested two enduring Mormon symbols that best reflect Mormonism's struggle to remain theologically distinct yet culturally relevant—Angel Moroni and the beehive. The angel Moroni, Mauss observed, calls to mind all that is theologically unique about Mormonism—its claims to latter-day revelation, and its adherence to a contemporary prophet. The beehive, however, “represents the borrowings from the outside world that have always been a part of the Mormon subculture.” These two symbols have been held in careful tension throughout Mormon history. In the twentieth century, Mauss writes, Mormonism has veered more toward the “beehive” motif of cultural assimilation. However, Mauss notes that in the last few decades, the pendulum has shifted in the other direction, once again emphasizing “the prophetic and revelatory claims of Mormonism.”³⁹

Mormon material culture demonstrates our desire to place both of these symbols in a delicate balance. If a Mormon youth is perceived as drawing too heavily from “the world” for cultural and spiritual values, objects such as Young Women's value bookmarks and CTR T-shirts offer constant reminders that a Mormon is different, special, set apart. If, however, that youth craves acceptance into the wider culture, the very same

objects can provide an alternative signification: the value bookmark hints that a latent sensuality lies concealed beneath the veneer of Mormon discourse on female chastity; the CTR T-shirt intimates the popular logo of Calvin Klein to declare its message of gospel living.

Mormon kitsch, then, reflects Mormonism's current dilemma of cultural relevance versus social and theological distinctiveness. A recent locus for this dichotomy is these objects' inculcation of gender values; increasingly, objects declare Mormon distinctiveness by means of traditional gender roles. For material culture directed toward Mormon youth, such gender expectations are particularly pronounced.

As Mormon kitsch continues to proliferate, Latter-day Saints will need to examine their devotional material culture carefully as they balance the delicate parameters of the “angel” and the “beehive.” Mormons will always invest purchased objects with unspoken and unwritten feelings about their religious identity, degree of comfort with mainstream culture, class consciousness, and gender expectations. Although created by an independent marketplace, these objects reinforce the evolving standards of Mormon theology and are shaped by the beliefs of Mormon leaders and followers. Mormon kitsch will increasingly be a visible barometer of what constitutes acceptable cultural engagement for Mormons in the twenty-first century. ☐

NOTES

The author acknowledges the assistance of those who lent objects or critiqued versions of this paper: Malissa Arnold, Angela Black, Kathryn Dahl, Karen Lynn Davidson, Eric Eliason, Craig Foster, Tona Hangen, John Lyon, Tania Rands Lyon, John Needham, Phil Smith, and especially Judith Weisenfeld. She also thanks Deseret Book personnel and Internet listmembers of lds-grads for granting telephone and e-mail interviews.

1. Robert Kirby and Pat Bagley, *Sunday of the Living Dead: A Collection of Mormon Humor* (Carson City, Nev.: Buckaroo Books, 1995), 99. Kirby suspected the items were produced not for Mormons but tourists.

2. See Robert Solomon, “On Kitsch and Sentimentality,” in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49:1 (winter 1991), 3–4.

3. Colleen McDannell, “Mormon Garments: Sacred Clothing and the Body” chapter in *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 222.

4. Armand L. Mauss, “Refuge and Retrenchment: The Mormon Quest for Identity,” in Marie Cornwall, Tim B. Heaton, and Lawrence A. Young, eds., *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 29–30.

5. Mormon kitsch does not always re-appropriate images from sources whose morals are questionable; it also has borrowed designs and representations from more generically “Christian” wellsprings. One advertisement at the Deseret Book website promises that “if you enjoy Precious Moments®, you'll love this adorable 4" Stripling Warrior.” The figurine is painted with a chubby, cherubic child's face. He carries a CTR shield, which is almost as large as his body, and wields a white sword. Here, the distinctively Mormon image of the Stripling Warrior (see below) has been grafted on to the wildly popular, dew-eyed models for Precious Moments collectibles. In another example, 1998 saw the Liahona company release a line of T-shirts with the “Touched by an Angel” logo, borrowed from the inspirational CBS television show. In this case, however, the angel depicted was Moroni. The wearer of this T-shirt could simultaneously express an easy comfort with mainline Christian values and a stubborn Mormon theological distinctiveness.

6. Kathy Murray, assistant buyer, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 6 Apr. 1998.

7. Kim Sparks, buyer, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 6 Apr. 1998.

8. Martha Sonntag Bradley, panelist, "Colleen McDannell's *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America: Author Meets Critics.*" Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, Aug. 1996.

9. "CTR: Many LDS Adults Choosing Kids' Ring," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 5 July 1997, A.

10. lds-grads list query, interview 5.

11. lds-grads list query, interview 1.

12. Gayle Evenson, buyer, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 6 Apr. 1998. In a 1991 article, the Church-owned *Deseret News* observed that although they had initially been directed toward Primary children, it had since "become trendy for some teenagers and adults to wear grown-up versions" of CTR rings. Ellen Fagg, "Conference Changes the Face of Mormon Mecca," *Deseret News*, 6 Apr. 1991, B2.

13. "CTR," *Standard-Examiner*, 5 July 1997.

14. Gayle Evenson, buyer, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 6 Apr. 1998.

15. The Young Women's and Young Men's organizations involve LDS youth between the ages of twelve and seventeen.

16. Michelle Romney, "My Eternal Quest," © 1994.

17. Linda Gay Perry Nelson, "My Three White Dresses," © 1993.

18. "Whiteness" is the color commonly associated with the temple; men and women are clothed from head to toe in white during all temple ordinances. Recently, a Mormon woman entrepreneur has created White Elegance, a line of "modest white clothing for women to wear while doing LDS temple work or participating in sacred ceremonies." Lisa Carricaburu, "Inspiring Wardrobe Worthy of Temple Use," *Standard-Examiner*, 23 Sept. 1995, A1. See also "Retail Temple Clothing Stores Opening for Business," *SUNSTONE* 22:1 (Mar.-Apr. 1999), 76.

19. President James E. Faust, "How Near to the Angels," Young Women's meeting, 28 Mar. 1998. Reprinted in the *Ensign* (May 1998), 95. LDS leaders' discourse about sexual abstinence is not exclusively directed to girls. A week after the Young Women's broadcast, President Gordon B. Hinckley delivered a talk to the Aaronic Priesthood in which he laid out expectations that boys must be "absolutely clean" before marriage. However, only a small portion of the talk discussed sexual abstinence (never using the word "chastity"), with the rest of the talk devoted to issues such as controlling anger, keeping the Word of Wisdom, and earning enough money so that the boys' future wives could be homemakers. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry," *Ensign*, May 1998, 49-51.

20. Many of the objects for the Young Women program relate to these seven values; each value has a color and a flower assigned to it.

21. CaMary Wynne, author and artist, 1994.

22. Allen Roberts, "Selling the LDS Sacred: A Visit to the LDS Booksellers Convention," *SUNSTONE* 13:5 (Oct. 1989), 38.

23. McDannell, 240.

24. Kim Sparks, buyer, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 6 Apr. 1998.

25. Lyon Design Studio website, <http://www.lyonde-sign.com/products.html>. The message "Looking for my Stripling Warrior" is also marketed for girls. In late 1998, the company introduced a heart-shaped pendant for particularly successful girls with the message, "Found my Stripling Warrior."

26. Faust, "How Near to the Angels," 95; see also the Sept. 1995 document, "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

27. Before the names of Primary classes were changed in the mid-1990s, a "Merrie Miss" was an 11-year-old girl. As part of Correlation, Primary classes are now designated only by age and, where appropriate, gender. Merrie Misses are now called "11-year-old girls."

28. Greg Kofford, "LDS Booksellers Meet, Plot, and Plan to Expand," *SUNSTONE* 13:5 (Oct. 1989), 50. Deseret Book declined to release more current marketing statistics for this research.

29. Bronwyn Evans, publicist, Deseret Book. Telephone interview, 3 Apr. 1998. This figure includes cloth, paperback, and audio books.

30. Randall Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 199.

31. "The 'Veggies' That Kids Actually Like: A Bumper Crop of Animated Bible Videos," *Newsweek*, 7 Dec. 1998, 67. VeggieTales videos retell Bible stories using animated vegetables as the main characters. They have been lauded by parents and critics alike for their sophisticated animation, memorable songs, and biblical values. Sales topped the four million mark in 1998.

32. *Deseret News* 1999-2000 Church Almanac (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1998), 13, 121. See also, "Church Reaches Ten Million," *SUNSTONE* 20:4 (Dec. 1997), 78.

33. R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 95.

34. Scholars have previously focused their attention on Mormons' roles as economic producers, not consumers. See especially Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958). Arrington's excellent study does not consider Mormon consumption, the other half of the economic equation (though Arrington's book concludes with the end of the nineteenth century, before Mormon consumption achieved significant historical importance). In the forty years since Arrington's history was published, no historical work has adequately treated the Mormon consumer presence. More recent studies have examined the wealth of the corporate LDS church but have not addressed patterns of wealth and consumption among individual Latter-day Saints.

35. David Morgan, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 17.

36. See Morgan, 17, 134.

37. Compare the Mormon experience to the cultural traditions as described in Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

38. See especially McDannell, *Material Christianity*, 246-269.

39. Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 197-198.



THE DREAM YOU WAKE FROM

"A steady stream of correspondences!"
—Theodore Roethke

The dream you wake from matters less, it seems,

than the river flowing like moon rays
through the glass. There's no sleep now.

Suddenly you see the gnarling tree below
the grayish water, how it swells and joins,
and where the cottonmouth lurks.

Next you know exactly how to change
your cove, then an acre, then a sweep.

Who knows you sit in darkness

with cocoa steaming into smoke from sage.

Ask anything. Scan the round horizon.

By daylight you'll see only what is here.

—LINDA SILLITOE

Twenty-five years ago, a group of Mormon college students decided to start a student journal. Their grasp exceeded their reach, but their idealism and grit produced an enduring and expansive tradition.

History of Sunstone, Chapter 1

THE SCOTT KENNEY YEARS

SUMMER 1974 – JUNE 1978

By Lee Warthen

A NEW SHIP ON A ZIG-ZAGGING, MAIDEN VOYAGE is an apt metaphor for the early history of The Sunstone Foundation. Its first four years embrace the tenure of founder Scott Kenney, a divinity student, who launched and captained the Sunstone ship as it navigated the hazardous channel of new magazines, encountering shoals and rocks on its route toward mature confidence on the open seas. The Sunstone ship always staffed a sizable albeit inexperienced crew—it was never the odyssey of a single individual. Each early magazine issue was the product of a helmsman-editor on his or her single-issue watch. And while Sunstone's overseeing board recognized the broader challenges of charting a stable, predictable course for the magazine, the actual, seemingly erratic course was primarily determined by the ever-changing roster of editors and other volunteers whose course corrections reflected their personal interests. Still, by the end of this period, Sunstone—the magazine and the organization—had mastered the general magazine format that still serves us well twenty-five years later.

THE CONCEPT

The need for a forum for students to share emerging ideas.

SUNSTONE was Scott Kenney's brainchild. Kenney had already distinguished himself as a violist with the Utah Symphony and had graduated with an M.A. in musicology from the University of Utah. Under the tutelage of Reed Durham at the University of Utah LDS Institute, he had developed an interest in history of religion and biblical studies.

LEE WARTHEN is an assistant director of the Quinney Law Library at University of Utah College of Law. He may be contacted by e-mail at <WarthenL@Quinney.law.utah.edu>.

Hoping to become an Institute teacher, Kenney had been pointed toward the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, by BYU philosophy professor Truman Madsen, who knew GTU's founding president John Dillenberger. Dillenberger became Kenney's mentor.

In the summer of 1974, while vacationing in Salt Lake City, Kenney and mission buddy Keith Norman, who was attending Harvard Divinity School, envisioned mimeographing a circular letter to keep in touch with other thoughtful, Mormon students' thoughts and experiences. Kenney and Norman had served together in the New England Mission, where Elder Boyd K. Packer had been their mission president. Kenney had been secretary, public information director, and assistant to the president.

By 31 August 1974, their idea had evolved. Kenney wrote to Norman:

I have been thinking of the best way to set up a communications network. This may sound far-fetched to you, but here's my idea: a new participatory publication to come out at least four times a year (the first for Thanksgiving) with a rather unstructured (at least to begin with) format consisting primarily of short articles . . . on any Mormon-related subject the author wishes to be discussed; and a classified ad section consisting of questions and answers, or possibilities. . . . Special editions of longer papers could be printed and distributed as finances allow and scholarship warrants. At first I thought of this as a vehicle for just LDS seminary [divinity] students. Then it began to expand in my mind to include many friends who are deeply interested in theological and historical questions and would enjoy such a program. . . .¹

From the start, as evident in the above letter, the Sunstone way

was established—the content was envisioned in some detail, but the organizational and financial aspects were amorphous. Kenney wrote in that same letter, “I purposely want to keep it rather open-ended so that those who become involved can help set guidelines and policy. Those dissatisfied after three months can get a refund.”²

While an undergraduate at the University of Utah, before going to Berkeley, Kenney had enjoyed wonderful camaraderie in an intellectually stimulating student ward. When he returned the following summer, a new Church policy mandated that non-students should attend their residential wards, and Kenney then acutely felt the need for extra-Church structures to serve Mormons with theological inclinations. He attended his old university ward anyway, and there he discussed his idea for an independent publication to cross-pollinate the expansive intellectual, spiritual, and religious yearnings of his generation with a number of bright, young Mormons, including Peggy Fletcher (Stack), who was teaching a gospel doctrine class.

This small group soon refined the concept of a independent forum into a “new LDS student journal, quarterly or bi-monthly, \$6 for students, \$8 for non-students, to include a wide range of subjects and ideologies, (conservative, liberal, radical), aimed at getting the real dialogue going as well as dissemination of ideas, publication of good articles, and an outlet for aspiring and thoughtful students.”³ They hoped to produce the first issue by Thanksgiving 1974.

In the 1960s and '70s, many unofficial Mormon publications and societies flowered, and by 1974, *BYU Studies*, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, the *Journal of Mormon History*, and *Exponent II* all were publishing. SUNSTONE's founders felt they were undertaking something new and unique, but given the existing publications, they had to articulate the need for yet another Mormon periodical. That unmet

need was a *student* publication. Kenney had considered writing for *Dialogue*, but he felt intimidated by it. Still a student, he felt he could not write anything worthy of *Dialogue*, and he thought a lot of his friends felt similarly and would welcome a student-oriented journal in which to share their ideas.

THE ORGANIZATION IS BORN

The hard task of making an idea a reality.

**“(Mormonism’s) crying need is for thoughtful disciples who will not be content with merely repeating some of its truths, but will develop its truths; and enlarge it by that development. Not half—not one-hundredth part—not a thousandth part of that which Joseph Smith revealed to the Church has yet been unfolded, either to the Church or to the world. The work of the expounder has scarcely begun. The Prophet planted the germ-truths of the great dispensation of the fulness of times. The watering and the weeding is going on, and God is giving the increase, and will give it more abundantly in the future as more intelligent discipleship shall obtain. The disciples of ‘Mormonism,’ growing discontented with the necessarily primitive methods which have hitherto prevailed in sustaining the doctrine, will take yet profounder and broader views of the great doctrines committed to the Church; and, departing from mere repetition, will cast them in new formulas; cooperating in the works of the spirit, until they help to give to the truths received a more forceful expression, and carry it beyond the earlier and cruder stages of its development.” —B. H. Roberts
Improvement Era,
9:712-713, 1906**

This quote articulated founding editor Scott Kenney’s vision for Sunstone, and he used it to shape his inaugural editorial.

ON Sunday, 15 September 1974, at a Millcreek Canyon cabin belonging to the pioneering Mormon sociologist and philosopher E. E. Erickson, Kenney’s grandfather, seven of these students and young professionals met to further discuss the idea for a publication. Present were Scott Kenney; Doug Bennett, a University of Utah student active in the LDS Student Association; Doug’s cousin Peggy Fletcher, an English and sociology major at the U. who was thinking of attending GTU; Lorraine Gibb, a ward Relief Society president and student teacher; David Snow, a Brigham Young University MBA student who was also working on a doctoral dissertation in anthropology; Jill Mulvay (Derr), an employee in the Church Historian’s Office, and Julie Christensen (Cum-mings).⁴ These individuals had dramatically different ideas as to what should happen; nevertheless, they decided to move forward on the project. They compromised on February 1975 as the target publishing date and assigned themselves tasks to promote the idea, to send out a prospectus, and to solicit manuscripts. By the end of the meeting, Scott Kenney’s original vision of a wide-ranging publication had become incarnate; SUNSTONE, though not yet named, had been born.

The following week, the group met again and installed Doug Bennett as managing editor. At this meeting, David Snow tried to no avail to persuade the group to define the journal’s primary mission

to be a spiritual publication, rather than an intellectual and theological one. During these formative two weeks, Kenney noted in his diary that the journal had become an unwelcome obsession, and he would be glad to return to Berkeley in late September.

With the motivating "founder" off to California two weeks after the organizational meetings, a small, youthful cadre with no experience in publishing or business undertook to start a journal without money or institutional support. Looking back on the experience almost twenty-five years later, more than one of the original crew have noted with amazement that this unlikely enterprise went anywhere at all and joked that God must have wanted it to succeed. Divine providence aside, what these students lacked in skill, experience, and organization they made up in optimism, enthusiasm, and perseverance. During these first years, the journal was produced by successive waves of volunteers: some contributed Herculean gifts of time and effort, some observed and advised, and some flashed on and off the Sunstone stage so fast that most only saw their cameo appearance in the published staffbox.

During fall 1974, the Salt Lake group spent weeks endlessly debating what to name the journal. They also worked on compiling a mailing list, soliciting manuscripts, and getting printing bids. While there was a lot of wheel-spinning in these deliberations, they generated excitement, deepened commitment to the idea, and refined their understanding of what the enterprise was about. All the while, the fledgling group recruited additional help and spread the word, primarily through family and friendship networks. During this formative phase, Doug Bennett and Peggy Fletcher were valiant catalysts.

Doug Bennett had recently served an LDS mission in Berkeley, where he had met graduate student Kenney. After his release, Bennett returned to the University of Utah and attended the same student ward as did his cousin Peggy Fletcher and Kenney, who was home for the summer. On one occasion, Bennett gave Kenney a piece of paper on which he had typed and set in an oval a favorite quote by general authority and Mormon historian B. H. Roberts (see page 49). Roberts's statement about the spirit of liberal Mormonism deeply impressed Kenney, and he memorized it. Later, he made it the crux of his inaugural editorial. Because Bennett had shared the quote with him, Kenney thought of Bennett for the journal and involved him from the beginning. Throughout that summer and fall, Kenney, Bennett, and Fletcher had many discussions that solidified their vision of the undertaking. Bennett's vision and enthusiasm played a crucial role in igniting the Sunstone flame. Yet even when he agreed to be the managing editor, there were doubts that Bennett really had the time, since in addition to carrying a full load of classes, his job took him out of town several days each month, he was engaged, was head of an LDSSA speakers committee, and he taught Sunday School. Yet there was no one with a lot of time; the other staffers seemed equally busy. SUNSTONE would have to be the collaborative side project of many current and recent graduate students who also were starting careers and families.

Today, Fletcher vividly recollects how she felt that starting a

magazine was a great idea, even though at the time, naive and enthusiastic, she didn't anticipate how much work and commitment would be involved. From September 1974 until she moved to Berkeley the following January, she aggressively recruited volunteers and authors. Although later she would be the driving force of Sunstone, at this time, she saw herself as strictly a follower, a go-fer, a recruiter, and a fundraiser, one always echoing Kenney's vision and leadership. Where Kenney had a brooding, intellectual personality and a complicated relationship with the Church, Fletcher had a straightforward approach to the Church and an eternally optimistic nature. She successfully milked her extensive networks of friendships, contacts, and especially her extended, well-educated family to generate interest and support, to sell subscriptions, and to recruit authors. The student journal became a consuming interest. An idealist, as she worked to make friends and draw them into the project, she worried about whether she was exploiting people and whether she genuinely liked people or liked them only because they were good at magazine layout.

Once in Berkeley, Kenney recruited his roommates and friends, including Joe Davidson and Joe Hurley. Maria Humphrey was a very active volunteer; in fact, she had submitted a proposal to the magazine even before Kenney's return to California. As the news of their undertaking spread, they were joined by Palo Alto friends, including Elizabeth Shaw. The Berkeley group rented a post office box, debated proposed names for the journal, looked for authors, and organized as a nonprofit corporation in California.

Amid all the enthusiastic talk and ferment that fall, two concrete actions were achieved: a name for the journal was finally determined, and a plan to raise the money necessary to print the first issue was devised.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

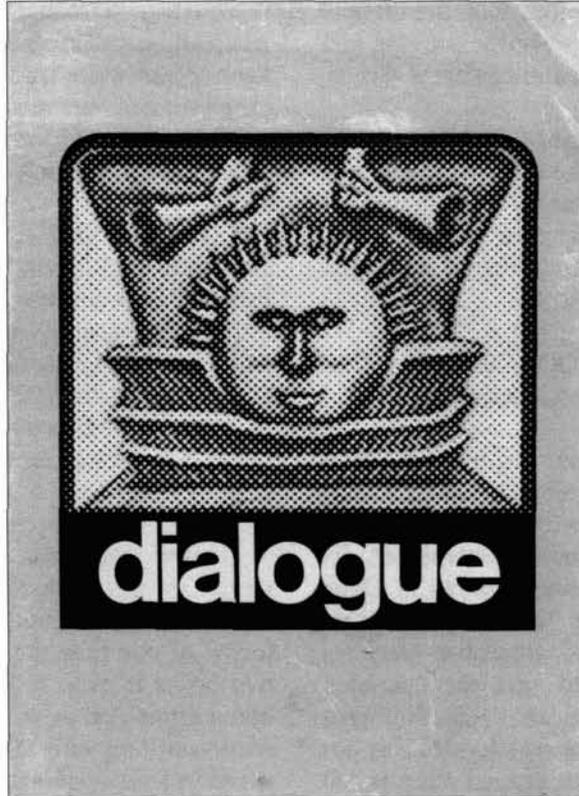
The debate over a name reveals contrasting philosophies.

FROM the earliest exploratory conversations, the lengthy deliberations over the journal's name brought focus to the competing philosophies over just what the journal was going to be about. Kenney wanted to call the publication "Rough Draft" because that's how he saw its role—a place for students to express their formative ideas. Others didn't like that name at all. David Snow suggested "Chrysalis" (the cooed pupa of a butterfly), and Doug Bennett promoted "Stradivarius." Other nominations included "The Vineyard," "The Mormon Student," "The Nouveau Expositor," and "The Harbinger." Kenney countered with "Whetstone"—a place where ideas could be honed and tested. Eventually, a consensus formed around "Whetstone." When *Dialogue* editor Robert Rees heard the working name, he pointed out that one metaphorical problem with "Whetstone" was that the name also conjures up images of sharpening one's knives (to attack the Church?). Rees proposed "Sunstone," an early Mormon image that he liked and had recently featured on a *Dialogue* cover. The weary staff accepted his proposal, and the journal was named.

The word "Sunstone" was rich with layered meanings. In designing the Nauvoo Temple, Joseph Smith appropriated and transformed the Masonic symbols of stars, moons, suns, trumpets, compasses, and squares into a Mormon-Christian symbolic world view and had them placed on the temple. Carved in limestone, a smiling sun, symbolizing the Apostle Paul's celestial third heaven, capped the thirty pilasters that formed the temple's exterior walls, which also had crescent moons carved at their bases. After the temple's destruction, a few sunstones remained, and they eventually became a symbol for many Saints of the glorious days when the Prophet Joseph reestablished God's kingdom. The sun, of course, is also a common symbol of light, truth, knowledge, and God's ever-radiating goodness. For young, idealistic students interested in Mormon history and theology, in combining revelatory light from heaven with earth-bound reason, and in celebrating the finest in LDS artistic expression, the compound noun "Sunstone" was ideal, allowing for a broad range of positive, expansive interpretations. In the end, the name they settled upon directly communicated none of the competing magazine agendas' philosophies, yet it was broad enough to embrace all of them.

THE MORMON HISTORY CALENDAR *Quality first; schedule second.*

THE calendar was the first tangible product of The Sunstone Foundation. Its genesis was from Susan Hobson, Kenney's girlfriend and future wife, who taught elementary school in Salt Lake City. She had made Kenney a calendar as a present, using copies of interesting, old photographs culled from the Church Archives. This spawned the idea of producing a calendar with Mormon history photographs as a fund-raising project for the new journal. In Salt Lake City, Cathy Gilmore and Jill Mulvay picked out pictures for the calendar, some from the Church Archives, some from a private collection. In Berkeley, Kenney gave the photos to Maria Humphrey, who arranged for the calendar's professional, artistic design and high-quality printing. She loaned her own money to cover the expenses, and then she drove the calendars to Utah in a rented station wagon through a heavy



The magazine's founders liked the name "Whetstone." Fortunately, *Dialogue* editor Robert Rees proposed "Sunstone."

snowstorm, arriving three days before Christmas.

Without a coherent marketing plan, selling the calendars became a daunting logistical challenge. Individuals took their assigned allotments and sold them any way they could. Some placed them in bookstores, some sold them to family and ward members, some sold them door to door to BYU students. On Christmas Eve, Scott Kenney hawked them in the cold rain in front of an Albertson's grocery store at Foothill Village in Salt Lake City. One of the shoppers was Charlotte England. She immediately brought her husband, Eugene, to meet Kenney. The founding editor of *Dialogue*, Eugene England agreed to speak to the group a few days later, and his remarks were a huge boost to the staff's morale. As late as the following July, there were still unsold calendars; Peggy Fletcher cut some of them up into individual pictures and canvassed Salt Lake City's July 24th Pioneer Day Parade route wearing hand-made sandwich boards and selling Mormon history photographs for fifty cents each.

Even now, twenty-five years later, those who sold calendars are proud of the product and their effort. Kris Cassity, who sold them in Provo, recalls the pictures' powerful expressions. The images were so strikingly unlike contemporary Mormonism that they took people aback. For him, they implicitly challenged a deeply rooted Mormon folk belief that our true Church never changes. For example, one photograph was of a meeting in an old-style pioneer tabernacle where the sacrament is being blessed. The prayer is being offered by a man standing, with his hands raised in the air. Another photograph showed incarcerated, polygamous Mormons in striped prison garb, proudly standing in front of the territorial penitentiary. For Cassity, these striking photographs testified of an evolving Church.

As a fundraiser, the calendars were a modest success. Unfortunately, the two thousand calendars didn't come off the press until late December, and calendar sales generally begin in October. Though some staffers aggressively oversold their quotas, most didn't fulfill their commitments. Also, since the black-and-white reproductions were printed on beige paper, they didn't pop out at people in stores. Nevertheless, by the end of January 1975, calendar receipts had not only paid for their printing, but they had also covered Sunstone's operating

expenses to date and its incorporation fees. Still, the original plan that calendar profits would underwrite the printing and mailing of the prospectus and the first issue was not realized.⁵ In all, the effort netted \$1,509.⁶

Other fundraising events such as dinners and lectures had less success. The most infamous was the outdoor showing of Mel Brooks's humorous movie *The Producers* in Salt Lake's Lindsay Gardens in June 1975. It attracted twelve people, including Peggy Fletcher's grandparents, Senator and Mrs. Wallace A. Bennett.

THE REVOLVING DOOR

The challenge of an all-volunteer organization.

ALMOST from the outset, Kenney was frustrated with communication between the Salt Lake and Berkeley groups. At the second organizational meeting in September 1974, there had been discussion of whether, despite the logistics, Berkeley-based Kenney instead of Doug Bennett should be the managing editor. That fall, progress reports from Salt Lake were sketchy and unreliable. Meetings were canceled, telephone calls missed, and the operation began to unravel. When Kenney and the Berkeley contingent returned to Salt Lake at Thanksgiving, it was decided that operations would be centralized in Berkeley. Bennett was retained as managing editor in Salt Lake, and other local managing editors were soon installed as well. After two more months, however, not one manuscript out of the twenty-one the staff had identified for possible publication had arrived in Berkeley from Salt Lake, and calendar sales had also been disappointing. Fletcher recalls that by the time she went to Berkeley in January 1975, there was no effective Sunstone organization left in Salt Lake. Most of the original people in Salt Lake were involved because of Kenney's energy, and when he was in California, their involvement had decreased. It was time to regroup.

On 7 February 1975, Kenney wrote to Bennett that they had asked Alan Nugent to succeed him as managing editor in Salt Lake City.⁷ Nugent was an energetic and well-connected former editor of the University of Utah's student newspaper. Kenney also wrote letters to others in Salt Lake to assess their interest and to ask them about their continuing involvement. No one responded except Mark Gustavson, who had been recruited by Fletcher in early November and was not acquainted with Kenney. A law student and one of the founders of the *Journal of Contemporary Law*, Gustavson contributed to Sunstone in many ways, including later helping Sunstone legally transfer its incorporation from California to Utah. Also newly enlisted in Salt Lake were John Richards and Moyne Oviatt.

Things were no better with students in Logan. In early November, Kenney had contacted Doug Alder of the Utah State University history department, and over Thanksgiving he and Fletcher had met with Alder and three of his students. They generated the names of twenty-five additional students who might help. A week later, Fletcher and Kris Cassity from

Provo returned to Logan and organized the Logan SUNSTONE group and installed Susan Madsen as local editor. In February, Kenney also wrote to Madsen wondering if he had overestimated student interest at Utah State. No manuscripts had been received or were forthcoming, no names for a mailing list had been received, and only a token number of calendars had been sold.

News from Provo was better. That group was working hard, generating and editing manuscripts and selling calendars. Eventually, the journal would be relocated there. During that 1974 Thanksgiving vacation, Kenney and Humphrey went with Fletcher to Provo and met with her sister, Tina Fletcher, and a dozen of her friends. A few weeks later, Kris Cassity was chosen as the Provo managing editor, and within a few more weeks, Cassity had recruited Orson Scott Card. Both individuals provided strong leadership in moving the organization toward publishing the journal.

Cassity's role soon expanded from leading the Provo group to being the magazine's managing editor. From Cassity, the production of the magazine gained energy and focus. At one time, he now jokes, all of SUNSTONE was in two boxes in his car. When he joined SUNSTONE, Cassity had a reputation as an idealistic, independent thinker. And while working with SUNSTONE, he was simultaneously engaged in a very public BYU debate over the role of art, the individual, and truth that sparked a dissenting response from Apostle Boyd K. Packer. Cassity recalls that he saw himself as an activist, though he did not see himself as working against the grain but as helping the Church work through some of its difficult issues, such as the priesthood ban for African-American men and the unquestioning Mormon support for the Vietnam War. He was frustrated by the prevalent LDS view that these issues were the Brethren's concerns and not the average member's.

Meanwhile, back in Berkeley, with help from Joe Davidson, Joe Hurley, and Peggy Fletcher, who had begun coursework at the Graduate Theological Union, Kenney continued to run the larger organization. Work progressed slowly on reading and editing manuscripts, with help from Liz Shaw, Sandy Ballif, and Chris Craig. But the incredible Maria Humphrey dropped out.

GARNERING SUPPORT

Leonard Arrington becomes SUNSTONE's first subscriber.

FROM the outset, SUNSTONE eagerly solicited advice and opinions. For example, Kenney visited with several University of Utah Institute teachers, including Reed Durham, who was enthusiastic, and Kent Dunford. U. Institute director Joe J. Christensen initially responded positively, but when in a second visit, Christensen discouraged the undertaking. Kenney wrote in his diary, "Joe went on about how it would be for an Institute teacher to write for our journal and then have another article come out which caused some student to lose his testimony, then the parent would call President Kimball and complain about this journal your insti-

tute teachers are writing for."⁸

In contrast, popular BYU religion professor John Hunsaker was enthusiastic. So was Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington. After he heard Kenney explain what they were up to, Arrington wrote a check on the spot for two subscriptions, becoming SUNSTONE's first subscriber.

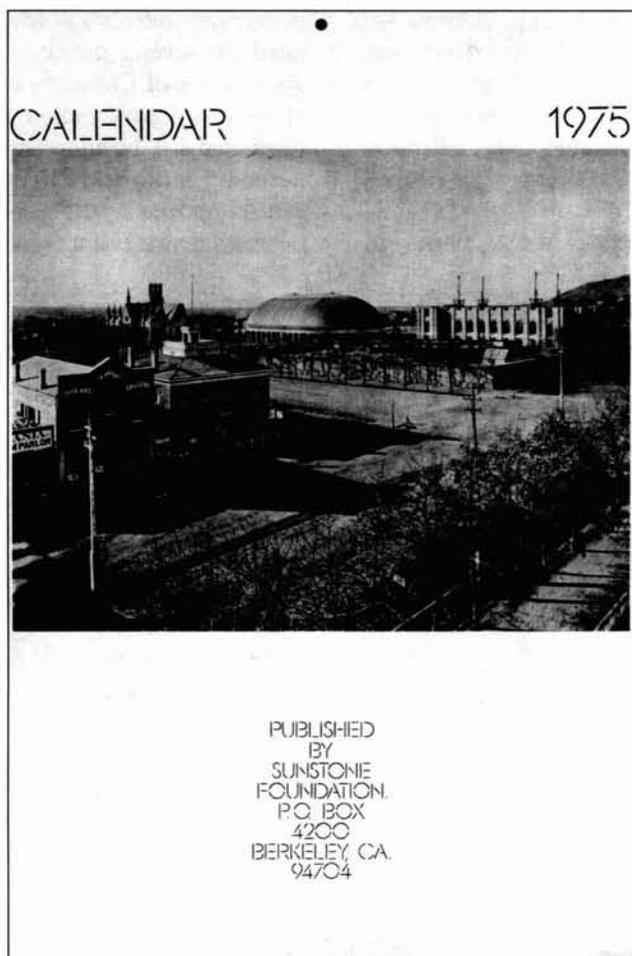
Dialogue editor Bob Rees also gave aid. In mid-November 1974, Kenney and Humphrey had driven to Los Angeles to meet with Rees and the *Dialogue* staff. They were shown office operations, editorial procedures, and collected manuscript evaluation forms and samples of past promotional materials. Rees offered to cooperate as closely as SUNSTONE wished. The *Dialogue* group even raised the possibility of publishing cooperatively—eight issues a year; four SUNSTONE, four *Dialogue*—or to have a common board of trustees or to have the *Dialogue* staff serve as consultants. Kenney and Humphrey opted for a consulting relationship. At this meeting, Rees suggested the Sunstone name.

On 14 February 1975, Kenney, Fletcher, and Joe Davidson again visited *Dialogue* while on a trip to organize a SUNSTONE group in Los Angeles. Arrangements were made for SUNSTONE to send its prospectus to *Dialogue*'s subscriber list. Fletcher felt intimidated by the *Dialoguers* who lived in big houses and had big egos, while the SUNSTONERS were just lowly students, but she left with twenty-five rejected manuscripts that might prove suitable for SUNSTONE.

MOVING TOWARD PUBLICATION

After selling subscriptions, you must produce the product.

WITH the organization beginning to gel, solid managerial leadership emerging, and a bit of money coming in, the growing resources were now directed in earnest to sending out a prospectus, recruiting subscribers, and printing the first issue. The staff continually underestimated their ability to produce the first issue. When a 28 February 1975 deadline was missed, and they were not



The 1975 Mormon History Calendar was the first publication of The Sunstone Foundation. As a fundraiser, it was modest, but because of it, Sunstone has from the start been more than just a periodical.

six hundred subscriptions.

The second strategy was to run announcements in BYU's alumni magazine, *BYU Today*, and in the University of Utah and BYU student newspapers. These ads were not successful.

Once these steps were accomplished, the staff realized that they couldn't get much more money or subscribers without having the tangible product, and a realistic deadline to bring out the first issue was set for September or October. Kenney finished his course work in Berkeley and returned to Salt Lake for the summer 1975. During that summer, the first issue finally began to take shape.

Around the same time, the SUNSTONE team gained two valuable volunteers: Allen Roberts and Craig Call, both of whom had impressed the Provo group when they had been invited to speak to them. Kenney recalls that Roberts, a young architect and historic preservationist, had good insights, sug-

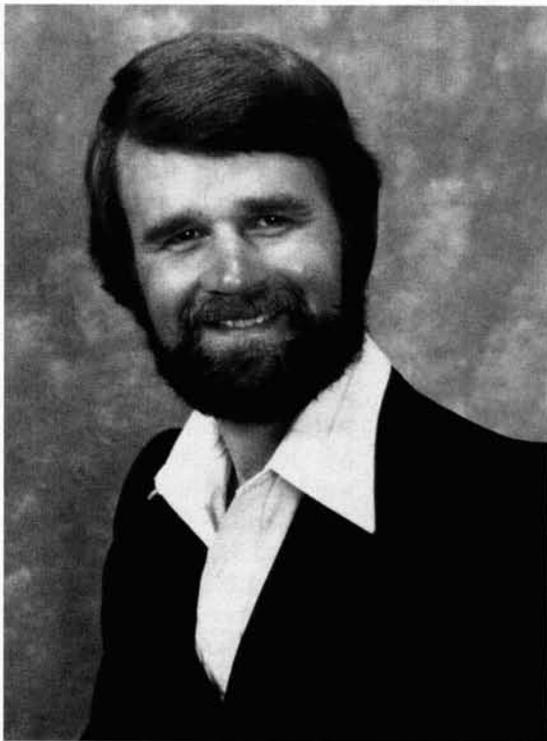
even close to being ready, many in the Berkeley group pressed for a May issue and worked toward that date. But Kenney felt that in order to come out with the best first issue possible, and to have a secure financial base, they would probably have to wait until October.⁹ Kenney wrote to the Utah group of editors that meeting a new May deadline depended on the readiness of manuscripts and the state of finances. Kenney hoped to raise the needed money through continued calendar sales, by recycling sets of calendar photographs as posters, and by getting professional and business friends to pay to print their business cards in the journal. The goal was to raise sufficient funds to guarantee one full year of publication; afterward, it was hoped, the magazine would pay for itself through increased subscriptions.

In addition to friend-to-friend networking, there were two main strategies to recruit subscribers. The first was to mail the prospectus to a select list. Local SUNSTONE editors were to collect names, especially from student branch directories and Special Interest groups. Nevertheless, most of the names used were from *Dialogue*. The first mailing went to ten thousand addresses, and it garnered

gestions, and recommendations for the group. Roberts had first heard of SUNSTONE while working for the Utah State Historical Society, then housed in the Kearns Mansion (now the Utah governor's residence), when Peggy Fletcher visited to select photos for the calendar. (While there, the exhausted Fletcher had fallen asleep in one of the large, upholstered window seats in Roberts's office.)

Craig Call had been Roberts's roommate at BYU. With com-

plementary interests in history and architecture, they collaborated on several projects, including developing the historic ghost town of Chesterfield, Idaho (featured in a subsequent SUNSTONE issue). Call, a student in BYU law school's charter class, had the business savvy that The Sunstone Foundation needed. His old home in Provo became a focal point of the organization, and by the second issue, Call was in the staffbox as business manager and a member of the board of directors.



"The Church may not have changed much in the last forty years, but the liberal strain certainly has."

WE were boomers, coming of age during the 1960s and '70s. Our generation identified with a myriad of causes—civil rights, anti-war demonstrations, gender equality, environmentalism, and the "sexual revolution." The "generation gap" was commonly discussed on television, with the rising generation identifying with "the people" as opposed to "the establishment" of their parents. "Never trust anyone over thirty," declared one student leader. Watergate confirmed our distrust of power structures. "Question authority" was one of the milder bumper stickers. Raised in traditionally conservative, Mormon

SUNSTONE: PAST AND PRESENT

By Scott Kenney

households, Sunstone founders were not radicals, but we were influenced by the spirit of the times. Encouraged by recent historical writings such as Dean Jessee's 1968 article on the different accounts of the First Vision, we were ready—eager even—to rethink Mormon history and doctrine. We rolled our eyes over the Church's ban on facial hair and mini-skirts, but we were faithful, recommending Latter-day Saints—returned missionaries and student ward leaders.

Our Church activity made us keenly aware that beyond our own wards or stakes, young people had no voice in the Church. We hoped that a forum for young people, open and self-directed, could provide

that voice. We had reasons for hope: *Dialogue* had been publishing since '66, *Exponent II* was doing well, Leonard Arrington had been named Church Historian, and the Mormon History Association had been organized. It seemed a Mormon renaissance might be rising, and if so, we wanted to be players, not observers.

As it turned out, there were not as many young people eager to jump into the fray as we had supposed. The mailing of our prospectus to *Dialogue* readers produced more than five hundred subscribers, but few of them were students. Advertisements in BYU's *Daily Universe* and the University of Utah's

Daily Chronicle did not yield a single subscription (a small but expensive ad in *BYU Today* netted four). I don't think that during my years at Sunstone, the student audience we originally targeted ever represented more than 10 percent of the subscriber base.

Similarly, it was difficult to generate articles from this group. The first issue was delayed for a year mostly for want of manuscripts. But when it finally did come out, it was an all-student issue. The second issue contained only one non-student piece, and most articles through the early years were student-authored. But as we aged, and as SUNSTONE gained credibility, the average age of contributors increased until it became age-neutral. This is probably for the best. An exclusively or even primarily student-driven publication would not have reached as many people nor had the impact SUNSTONE has achieved. Nevertheless, I worry from time to time about young and inexperienced authors being too intimidated to submit. I know current SUNSTONE editor Elbert Peck is eager to encourage their participation. I hope you will encourage them, too.

I tip my hat to Elbert's young and young-at-heart staff, unpaid and underpaid, who research, edit, and produce such a professional magazine. Every few months they turn out an issue that would have taken us six months or more. Greg, Bryan, Brian, Eric, Cherie, Malcolm, Virginia, and Carol, you do superb work.

Now, about the symposiums. Conceived in 1978 by Peggy Fletcher

CHURCH HIERARCHY NOTICES SUNSTONE

Elder Packer counsels Kenney.

IN fall 1975, when the first issue of SUNSTONE was at press, Kenney was home studying for his doctoral exam when Boyd K. Packer, his former mission president and member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, called and asked him to come to his office to discuss the new publication.

and Allen Roberts, the Sunstone symposium has become the largest forum of independent thought Mormonism has ever seen. Except for those in Church employ, there are few living Mormon scholars, writers, or artists who have not addressed a Sunstone symposium. In addition, many attend symposiums for the sense of belonging they experience as much as for the intellectual adventure. They can express their concerns and their doubts honestly and openly, without fear of reprimand. They find symposiums spiritually as well as intellectually rejuvenating.

My generation has witnessed the flourishing of creative thought in Mormonism—a renaissance, really—in mind and spirit. Sunstone has played a prominent role, and I am honored to be numbered among its founders.

NOW a digression. Forty years ago, two papers were presented to BYU's history department and College of Religious Instruction on the future of Mormon "liberals." The presenters were E. E. Ericksen, a professor of philosophy and former dean of the University of Utah's College of Arts and Letters, and Kent Fielding, a young BYU history professor appointed by his dean to chair the college's "Intellectual Climate Committee." Ericksen was a widely recognized "apostate," having been dismissed from YMMIA General Board in 1935 for producing manifestly liberal manuals and opposing the move to "spiritualize" the MIA. Three years later, he was effectually disfellowshipped by his stake presidency for a defective testimony. Fielding admired Ericksen's writings

and, fed up with the Wilkinson administration, was about to leave both "the Y" and the Church.

Ericksen was optimistic about the future of Mormon liberals; Fielding, distinctly pessimistic. Both made points pertinent to the situation Sunstone faces today.

In typical liberal fashion, E. E. Ericksen asserted Mormonism is not a body of doctrine, nor is it an association for the promulgation of a body of doctrine. . . . It is a community in which priests and theological creeds are only elements in a highly complex and diversified system of thoughts, interests, and points of view. It is a religious movement; but one in which the religious orthodoxy of the early twentieth century can hardly be regarded as the fundamental core of its faith.

As to the future, he held, Mormon historians are bound to "provide reliable factual material in which we may all work"; psychologists and sociologists to "furnish adequate conceptual tools"; poets and other writers to keep the "prophetic tradition" alive; and all to "keep the windows open for more and better light."

Ericksen believed there had been an increase of critical thinking within the rank and file of the Church, greater awareness of biblical scholarship, a decline in the emphasis on ritual, and a recognition of moral and ethical principles as essential to the gospel. "The priest and the prophet will always be with us," he concluded. "The one to advance the Promising New and the other to defend the Hallowed Old. . . . Creative thought in Mormonism is not going to be depressed."

Fielding, on the other hand, held out no such hope. Orthodox certitude

Kenney recalls that Packer received him warmly and they chatted for a few moments before the apostle came to the point. Elder Packer asked Kenney what he was going to call this new publication; Kenney answered, "SUNSTONE." Elder Packer asked if this was anything like *Dialogue*; Kenney gulped and said, "No." Elder Packer continued before Kenney could fully explain how SUNSTONE was different (it's a student effort, it's not to be the final word on things, it's for people to ex-

about the divine origin and destiny of the Church and priesthood were so firmly entrenched that lay members would not countenance unauthorized interpretations, and Ericksen's "gospel of pragmatism . . . was acceptable to church authorities only as it contributed to faith in the gospel of salvation. The Mormon liberal existed only at the pleasure of the orthodoxy and within self-imposed limitations. The liberal position had no acknowledged status unless to explicate the orthodox doctrine through a new scholasticism. I foresaw no change from these conditions in the near future."

Fielding was right, in some ways. Orthodoxy prevails in Mormonism, but that is to be expected in a conservative church and culture. Consistent with their responsibilities, Church authorities remain committed to protecting the Church against unorthodox, heterodox, and heretical views. Liberals still must exercise restraint to be accepted. And, as in other revealed religions, the function of reason is to supply proofs for that which has been revealed.

As Fielding predicted, the Church has not changed much—except that now, every year, thousands of liberals gather to freely exchange experiences, perspectives, and research. They present hundreds of papers with responses, and sessions are taped for broad distribution. The Salt Lake symposium regularly features an art auction as well as humorous, musical, and theatrical presentations. Many papers are published in a magazine that is read by thousands, a magazine with great cartoons and all the news not fit to print in the *Church News*. The Church may not have changed much in the last forty years, but the liberal strain certainly has.

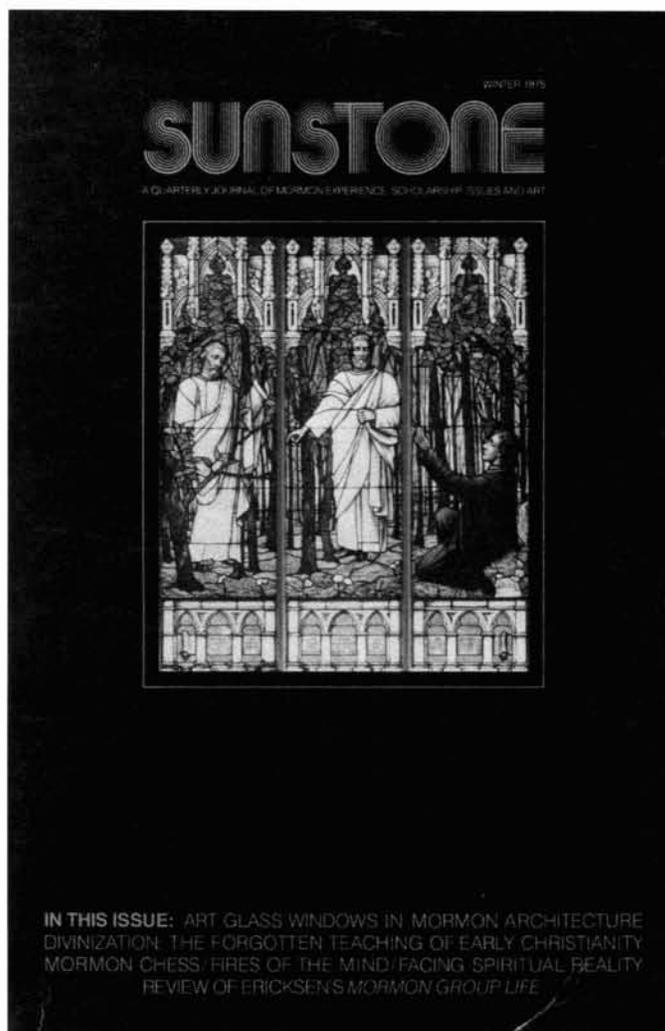
change evolving ideas and to share experiences).

Elder Packer went on to talk about *Dialogue*. First, he said that he didn't like its graphics. Then he discussed Lester Bush's ground-breaking article on the history of the Church and the ban on ordaining Blacks to the priesthood.¹⁰ He said, in principle, he wouldn't have minded *Dialogue* publishing the article, but he objected to its timing because the Church then had security issues arising out of the race issue and some individuals were concerned that the Tabernacle may be bombed. And so Church leaders had asked Bush not to print it. Kenney was struck by the fact that Elder Packer emphasized that he wouldn't have minded the article coming out (just the timing) and that the editors wouldn't take counsel but went ahead in spite of being asked not to. Kenney recalls Elder Packer didn't directly say that the editors had been asked to only postpone it, and he guessed they hadn't been.¹¹

Elder Packer also said the Church needed independent publications. For an example, he said that someone needed to write an article on mercy but that Apostle Packer could not talk about mercy in stake conference or general conference because some people might misunderstand him and avoid repenting.

At the end of their twenty-minute meeting, Elder Packer asked to see a copy of the forthcoming publication, and Kenney promised personally to deliver one. Kenney offered him a subscription, provided he would contact Kenney directly if he read something in *SUNSTONE* that offended him, or if he thought it was taking a wrong direction, which he agreed to do.¹² Kenney left the meeting feeling that Elder Packer had encouraged him to proceed with the publication but to be responsible and not venture off into the speculative or derogatory.

A few days later, Kenney lunched with Lavina Fielding (Anderson) and *Ensign* editor Jay Todd. Kenney wrote that



With full color reproductions on the cover and inside, plus a confident balance of scholarship, art, humor, and opinion, the first issue set a high professional standard for the student journal that exceeded the expectations of both subscribers and staff.

Todd "was very interested to hear of my conversation with Elder Packer because for the past several months, he had sensed a changing in the winds that led him to hope the *Ensign* might venture out a little more aggressively in its format and approach."¹³ Some time later, while researching in the Church Archives, Kenney heard from a Church employee that Elder Packer had told others that he had tried to talk Kenney out of publishing *SUNSTONE*.¹⁴

THE FIRST ISSUE
Exceeding all expectations.

THE first issue of *SUNSTONE* was delivered by the press on 7 November 1975. It was 104 pages printed in a six-by-nine-inch journal format. Underneath the masthead was the subtitle: "A Quarterly Journal of Mormon Experience, Scholarship, Issues and Art." Scott Kenny's editorial expressed the new journal's mission: "*SUNSTONE* is a forum for the participation of Latter-day Saint youth in the intellectual and spiritual life of our times."

Beautifully designed by David Canaan, a young Provo graphic designer, the magazine featured a glossy, full-color reproduction on the cover. Its quality surprised not only subscribers but many volunteers who had worked hard to see it come to life. The cover article,

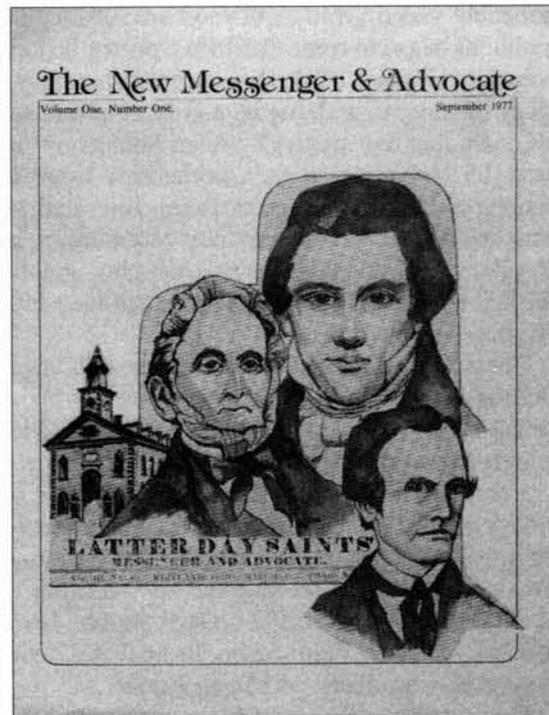
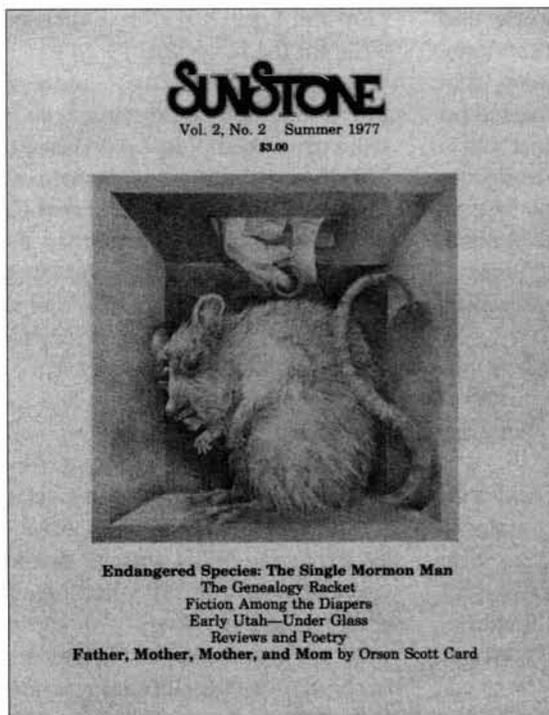
"Art Glass Windows in Mormon Architecture," written by Allen Roberts and photographed by Duane Powell, featured lavish color reproductions *inside* the magazine. The bulk of the issue was dedicated to Robert Elliot's play *Fires of the Mind*, in 1999 still considered to be one of the best Mormon plays ever written. A year earlier, the BYU theatrical premiere of this story about a doubting, intellectual missionary who leaves his mission had caused controversy, but the vivid and humorous depiction of mission life had also resonated with the faithful audience. (*SUNSTONE*'s connection to Elliot had been made in a University of Utah English class by fellow classmate Peggy Fletcher.)

In the letters to the editor section, Claudia Bushman, editor of *Exponent II*, wished the journal good luck, Glen Schwendiman noted that unofficial publications should not be substitutes for the Church magazines, Robert F. Bennett (Fletcher's uncle, now a U.S. senator from Utah) warned against institutionalizing the student condition, and *Dialogue* founding editor Eugene England affirmed the need for publications such as *SUNSTONE* and *Dialogue* but counseled that loyalty to saving souls must come before everything.

The first issue represented more than a year of hard work. Staff, editors, and contributors gathered at Kenney's place to celebrate. Earlier that day, Kenney had distributed copies to subscribers in the Church Office Building and received enthusiastic compliments and expressions of high hopes for their survival, "not only for the sake of *SUNSTONE*, but to get rid of the negative image of independent and specialized publications."¹⁵ By late December, the issue had been distributed to nearly seven hundred subscribers, about 270 copies had been sold to eleven retail outlets, 300 had been used for promotional purposes, and 250 remained.¹⁶ Subscription rates, a subject of long debate, were finally listed as \$11 per year, or \$8 for students, missionaries, and retired persons. Today, it is the rarest *SUNSTONE* issue; in good condition, a copy retails for about thirty dollars.

FORWARD MOMENTUM—THE JOURNAL *SUNSTONE* The five "small" *SUNSTONES*

THE challenge for the next five issues was to maintain the high standard of quality set by the first issue, while coming out regularly, increasing the subscription base, and strengthening finances. According to *Sunstone* lore, the costly, extravagant, full-color first issue drained the organization's coffers and started the enterprise off in debt, but Kenney wrote after its publication that they had sufficient funds to pay for the second issue, then at the printer, and that sales of the



At issue editor Orson Scott Card's urging, with its sixth issue, the "Rat Issue," *SUNSTONE* enlarged its size and changed its mission to be a Mormon magazine. In the next issue, *SUNSTONE* combined with the fledgling Mormon news magazine the *New Messenger & Advocate*, and after a rocky honeymoon, news became a major ingredient in the *Sunstone* recipe.

second calendar, for 1976, were proceeding well. Paid subscriptions were almost halfway to the point of covering costs. Plans to sell advertising, conduct another direct mailing, and place more notices in other publications were also being considered.

Meanwhile, to more effectively spread out duties among the all-volunteer staff, the board of directors was expanded and individuals were given rotating assignments. An editor was to be appointed for a specified period of time and would be free to appoint associate editors and staff, but each issue would be approved by the board before publication. Under this arrangement, Peggy Fletcher was to edit the second issue, followed in order by Kris Cassity, Norman Mecham, Elizabeth Shaw, and Orson Scott Card. As a result of this arrangement, the names in the staffbox changed dramatically from issue to issue; Kenney and Fletcher disappeared altogether in the fourth issue. The staff wanted the magazine to be self-sustaining and not become dependent on just a few overworked individuals. Kris Cassity recalls that from the outset, it seemed to him that both Kenney and Fletcher were trying to get someone to take over the endeavor, that Kenney wanted to be the vision guy and get other people to pick up the ball and run with it.

With rotating editors, the content from issue to issue under-

standably varied greatly, but most of SUNSTONE's forms and traditions began to come into focus: poetry, fiction, interviews, opinion columns, book reviews, contemporary issues, theology, history, art, and drama. A great emphasis was placed on art, including two articles by Allen Roberts on pioneer architects, Jill Mulvay on women in the arts, James D'Arc on the making of the movie *Brigham Young*, Peter and Marie Myers's lengthy treatise on contemporary Mormon art, and William Slaughter and Randall Dixon on Utah photographers. Three of the first ten issues have color inside; half have full-color cover illustrations.

These early issues published three full-length plays, including David Lane Wright's *A Summer in the Country* and Orson Scott Card's *Father, Mother, Mother and Mom*. They are also replete with reviews of Mormon drama.

Compared with other LDS publications of its day and with today's SUNSTONE, the articles were very short, often one to three pages. Many of the authors were young scholars who have continued to contribute to Mormon scholarship: Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Davis Bitton, Lavina Fielding, Jeffery O. Johnson, Stan Larson, D. Michael Quinn, Thomas F. Rogers, Karl Sandberg, and Doug Thayer.

One notable letter was *Dialogue* editor Robert Rees's criticism that it was difficult to know where SUNSTONE stood: "There is no declaration of purpose that seems clear cut, nor is there any focus or indication as to the direction the journal will go." Rees admonished SUNSTONE to "be bold!" In reply, Kenney wrote, "SUNSTONE is a journal of Mormon experience, scholarship, issues and art. Written, produced and promoted by young Latter-day Saints, it is independent of official Church direction, but not of Church teachings. . . . SUNSTONE has chosen the difficult road of the generalist. . . ." Recalling the experience of the bold editors of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, Kenney concluded, "Boldness I shall be happy to leave for other publications."

If what Kenney meant by wanting to avoid "boldness" was to avoid controversy, then by today's standards the Kenney SUNSTONES are not controversial, and their overall tone is a celebration of faith. There is no hint of an agenda to reform the Church or to get leaders' attention. Still, some articles had controversies imbedded in them, even if they weren't in your face, such as Kenney on E. E. Ericksen, Elliot's *Fires of the Mind*, and Stan Larson on King James language in the Book of Mormon. Yet the Kenney issues are engagingly bold—they have a passion for exploring Mormon theology, a love of beauty, a pride in history, and a zeal for anything virtuous, lovely, of good report, or praiseworthy. Given that quite innocent boldness, and after Mormonism's intellectual battles of the last two decades, it is difficult now to understand how in the mid-to-late 1970s SUNSTONE was often met with suspicion from apostles to general members, and occasionally a local leader advised someone that associating with SUNSTONE was inappropriate. Even then, individuals associated with SUNSTONE regularly had to explain and defend their participation in this independent forum, although the costs and boundaries were much lower. After all, people easily went from the SUNSTONE staff to the *Ensign's* em-

ploy, and Church History Department employees could openly write for the magazine.

In 1976, SUNSTONE's address moved from Berkeley to Provo. The irony of moving from liberal Berkeley to conservative Provo was not lost on Allen Roberts and others; nevertheless, the critical mass of workers was now in Provo, including Elizabeth Shaw and Orson Scott Card.

Elizabeth Shaw (Smith) had been recruited to work with the Berkeley group when she was working across the Bay as a secretary in Palo Alto. She helped sell the first calendars. Shortly after that, she moved to Provo, working as an editor for BYU Press. Kenney soon signed her up to edit for SUNSTONE, too. She proofread all the galleys for the first issue. Four or five people were doing most of the work on the magazine, meeting in Craig Call's home in Provo. Alone in the attic, Shaw spent hours updating address and subscription information, then they would meet to discuss articles and finances. Shaw recalls that she didn't want to be the magazine's editor, but she was the only one who had any publishing experience. She spent many late hours with the designer doing layouts and writing captions. When Kenney went to Europe in 1977, most of the day-to-day editorial responsibility fell on Shaw's shoulders. When she took a job with Church magazines in the middle of the year, she considered SUNSTONE a conflict of interest and ceased volunteering.

Orson Scott Card was a student employee for BYU Press in January 1976 when Kris Cassity recruited him. Now a best-selling fantasy writer, even then he was a tremendous writing talent; amazingly prolific, full of ideas, a fast writer good enough to be able to publish first drafts. When he did take time to polish his prose, it was fabulous. Card wrote for the magazine in numerous genres and so frequently that some issues had articles under his own name and several pseudonyms. With his "Saints-Eye View" column, he became SUNSTONE's first regular columnist. Additionally, he was drama reviewer extraordinaire, beginning with his classic 1976 comprehensive overview of contemporary Mormon theater, written under his co-author pseudonyms, P. Q. Gump and Frederick Bliss. In "Mormon Shakespears: A Study of Contemporary Mormon Theatre," Card pseudonymously reviewed his own play, *Stone Tables*, which had been performed at BYU, in addition to dozens of plays by others. Card continued to write for SUNSTONE, even after he began working for the *Ensign*.

WINDS OF CHANGE *SUNSTONE becomes a magazine.*

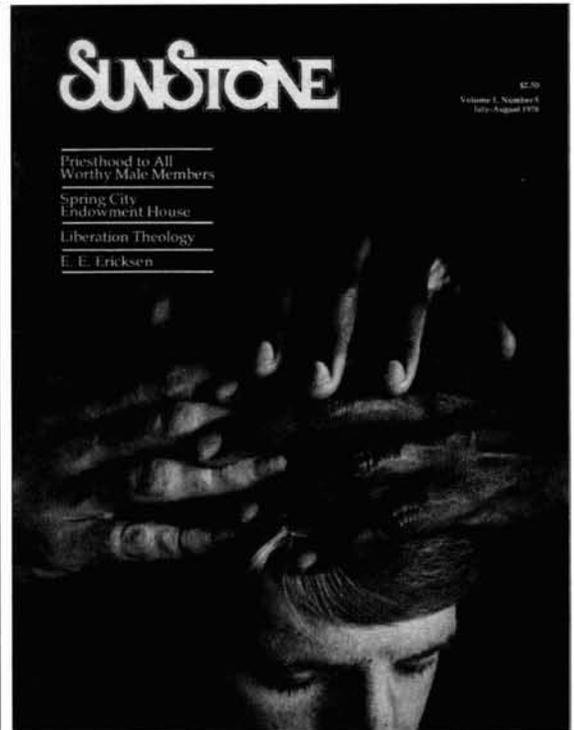
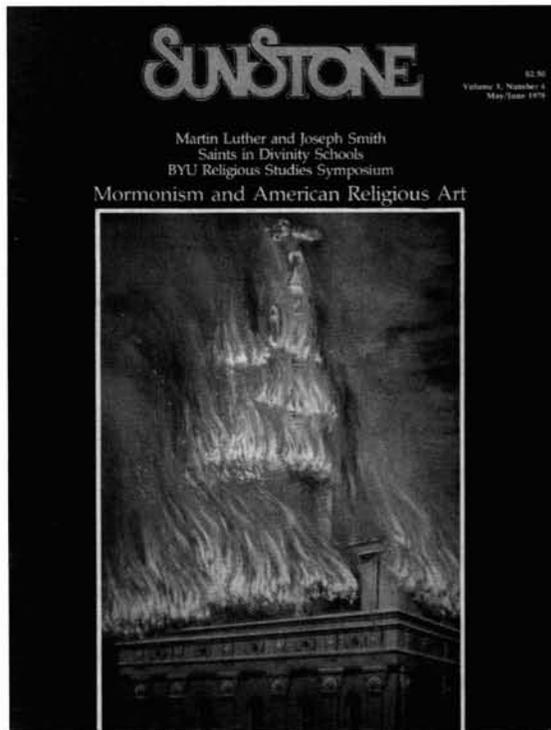
THE rotation of editor from issue to issue had not been without its organizational challenges; still the issues continued to come out. But after publishing the first five issues, SUNSTONE's finances were the worst ever and were spiralling viciously downward. After Shaw's issue, number five, the foundation was in debt almost three thousand dollars, and Kenney, seriously depressed, was planning the funeral. For some time, Card had been pushing Kenney to change the

publication from the small journal format to an 8½-by-11-inch magazine format. By spring 1977, the board approved Card's offer to produce an economy issue for mid-June. Subscribers received letters that explained the situation and asked for donations and more subscriptions to keep the magazine on schedule, but they received only two of the four planned issues for the 1977 volume. The second 1977 issue implemented Card's idea to rescue the failing publication by changing it to a magazine format that was less highbrow, accessible to more people, and cheaper to produce (less inside color).

The first iteration of *SUNSTONE* magazine was the famous and extremely hard to find

"rat issue." In it, *SUNSTONE* dramatically changed its look and self-concept. Card was uncredited as issue editor, perhaps because much of the issue was written by him, some of it under pseudonyms, including a controversial article on homosexuality that divided the staff. The cover story was by Jeffery O. Johnson and Lavina Fielding on "endangered" single Mormon males ("rats"). All in all, the new product looked and felt like a magazine. While the content was not dramatically different from the earlier "journal" issues, Card's changing *SUNSTONE* to openly being a magazine instead of a journal set the enterprise off in a new editorial direction. At its start, *SUNSTONE*'s self-proclaimed unique niche, what distinguished it from the other publications, was that it was of, by, and for students; now its special role was that it was a magazine, with departments and targeted to a more popular, albeit still intellectual, LDS audience. Soon, as its founders and authors matured or were replaced, the student emphasis would be dropped altogether.

Card's vision for *SUNSTONE* as a expansive magazine would be the future, but after the "rat issue" appeared, there was a long silence as *SUNSTONE* battled its troubled finances. Rumors of its death spread, and many expected it to fold. When the next issue did appear, it was not the magazine subscribers had come to expect. In the interim, *SUNSTONE* had



In its third year, less and less a student publication, *SUNSTONE* finally settled into a predictable, handsome, and standardized magazine format with generously illustrated feature articles, news departments, and reviews. But the all-volunteer staff was burned-out, and the checkbook was in the red.

merged with the *New Messenger and Advocate*, a two-issue-old, LDS news magazine.

Messenger publisher Kevin Barnhurst, a graduate student in communications at BYU, had started the *Messenger* as a master's project. With the help of Janet Thomas, he had amassed an impressive mailing list and sent out an announcement of the new publication to potential advertisers. Barnhurst and Thomas were amused when advertising money started rolling in. The "preliminary issue" was sent gratis to ten thousand names. Except for typesetting, Barnhurst did all the labor himself, and therefore its costs were extremely low. As a master's project, his project bombed; he got a C grade with an admonishment that it was not graduate-level work. So after the second issue, he was looking for a way out.

Barnhurst had been associated with *SUNSTONE* as early as April 1977, when there had then been discussions about turning the editorship over to him. Now, at the end of 1977, he had proved that he could publish a magazine and not go into debt. With *SUNSTONE* on the financial brink, its board of directors agreed to a joint issue, edited by Barnhurst. It was supposed to combine some of *SUNSTONE*'s content with some that he and Thomas had produced. Combining the two different approaches to publishing was not just culture clash but culture war. Barnhurst thought the *SUNSTONE* staff erudite, in-

tellectual, and aloof while he dirtied his hands with layout and paste up—the things that produced issues and paid bills.

The issue he produced was a different publication—thin, printed on cheap matte paper with an unattractive cover and an inelegant graphic design. It was full of tacky advertisements for wheat grinders and cassette tapes. All but gone were the thoughtful features of the former *SUNSTONE*; most of the content was from the late *New Messenger and Advocate's* departments: “The Law of the Land: Legislation and Legal Issues Affecting the Latter-day Saints”; “Pornography Report”; the “Keep a-Pitchinin’” column, devoted to the activities of Mormon professional organizations; “The Family Report”; “Saints in the News”; and Barnhurst’s creation and personal favorite, “Mormon Media Image,” which culled LDS-related tidbits from news articles.

Reactions to the new *SUNSTONE* format appeared in the next issue, which was also edited by Barnhurst. They ranged from “I love it” to “I feel totally betrayed.” One letter observed, “Unfortunately, the first issue of *SUNSTONE* following the merger seems to be a sign that you have opted to be a news magazine rather than a proving ground for young Mormon scholars.” Another lamented that “these news capsules took more than their share of the magazine.”

Kenney wrote an editorial responding to the complaints. He noted that “with all its faults, the last issue of *SUNSTONE* generated more than twice as many new subscriptions as any previous issue.” Kenney explained in detail *SUNSTONE's* financial dilemma and its inability to meet production costs. A magazine format with “coverage of current events, coupled with in-depth feature articles on church history, scripture and doctrine, social issues and art now give it a unique position among Mormon publications.” *SUNSTONE* had distinguished itself from, and was no longer forced to directly compete with, the half-dozen other unofficial Mormon scholarly journals. With its financial crisis now behind it, Kenney promised, *SUNSTONE* could retain its commitment to publishing full-length articles.

In the end, *SUNSTONE's* detour with the *New Messenger & Advocate* had stretched its vision, and the long-term result was that Mormon news was now ingrained as an integral part of the magazine.

SUCCESS AND SUCCESSION

SUNSTONE matures as a Mormon magazine.

THROUGH the next three issues, the last of Kenney’s tenure, *SUNSTONE* settled into a format vaguely recognizable to today’s readers. The focus returned to feature articles on art, theology, history, and contemporary issues. Some of the *Messenger's* news columns were retained: “Update” (Church-related news); “One Fold,” (general religious news of interest to Mormons); and “Mormon Organizations.” Book and theater reviews remained, of course. Feature articles included D. Michael Quinn on the Mormon community, John Dillenberger’s “Grace and Works in Martin Luther and Joseph Smith,” and Allen Roberts on the Spring City endowment house (which got him in trouble with his stake president).

The cover stories featured Karl C. Sandberg’s long poem, “Requiem for a Town” (the only poem ever to rate a cover illustration), Jane Dillenberger’s “Mormonism and American Religious Art” with cover and inside full-color C. C. A. Christensen reproductions, and Janet Brigham’s “To All Worthy Males” illustrated with an impressive, sepia-toned photograph of black hands ordaining a young, freckled white man. (The LDS church later requested to use the photograph in its official publications.)

In the stability of these three issues, *SUNSTONE* outgrew its identity crisis. There was now a regular rhythm to its content; gone were radical design and content reinventions from issue to issue. But it was still an all-volunteer effort produced in basements and attics, on nights, weekends, and other stolen hours, and that meant rapid burnout as loyal staff eventually had to make time for their studies, families, and careers. A magazine can’t run forever on idealism and also expect to consistently improve its stability and quality. Not surprisingly, the next generation of editors would get *SUNSTONE* a permanent home and some (under)paid staff, but before then, finances and burnout brought the Kenney years to a close and forced a succession crisis.

Many who worked on *SUNSTONE* wrestled with the unavoidable stresses—time, finances, emotions, relationships, theology, and philosophy. Different people reacted in different ways. The dutiful Kenney struggled with time constraints from inception. Finances were a threatening bane since subscriptions were never able to cover the relatively modest expenses of even this all-volunteer project. In the May–June 1978 issue, a “note to subscribers” reminded them that the \$12 subscription rate covered half of production expenses, with the calendar sales making up the difference (so buy calendars!). The constant financial demands, along with the draining task of constantly recruiting and motivating ever-changing volunteers had been bearable—in the short run. But by summer 1978, Kenney had married Susan Hobson, they now had a child, Kenney was again playing with the Utah Symphony, and he was working on a doctoral dissertation. Something had to give.

At a board of directors meeting on 23 June 1978, Kenney offered them a choice: He would stay with *SUNSTONE* until all its obligations to all its subscribers were met by either putting out enough issues to fulfill their subscriptions or by finding a way to refund their money. Then, that would be the end of *SUNSTONE*. Alternatively, if anyone on the board wanted to take responsibility for the magazine and keep it going, they were welcome to it. No one wanted the magazine to die, but no one really wanted to assume the draining responsibility, either. After the meeting, it looked highly likely that *SUNSTONE* would fold. Peggy Fletcher and Allen Roberts sat outside on the lawn and reminisced and dreamed. After a long talk, they decided to jointly take on the responsibility. The board agreed, and the torch was passed.

Looking back on the Kenney years, Roberts summed up his feelings, which probably parallel those of many who worked on *SUNSTONE* during that time:

Had we had the funding, if we had managed to get

some donations or loans or something at the beginning, we wouldn't have struggled so much. However, I'm not sure that was that big of a negative. Maybe the struggle itself caused the hardiness and the dedication to the cause that was most responsible for SUNSTONE's endurance. If things had been easier for us, maybe we wouldn't have been put in the crucible. It did survive. Some of the issues could have been more on time, and some of them could have been larger, but looking back on it, I guess I wouldn't want to rewrite our history too much.¹⁷ ☞

NOTES

1. Scott Kenney to Keith Norman, 31 Aug. 1974, copy of letter in possession of Scott Kenney.
2. Kenney to Norman, 31 Aug. 1974.
3. Kenney to Norman, 10 Sept. 1974, copy of letter in possession of Kenney.
4. Kenney to Norman, 10 Sept. 1974.
5. Kenney to Moyne Oviatt, 31 Jan. 1975, copy of letter in possession of Kenney.
6. Sunstone financial statement, 24 Jan. 1976, in possession of Kenney.
7. Kenney to Bennett, 7 Feb. 1976, copy in possession of Kenney.
8. Kenney also commented in his diary that Christensen called Reed

Durham on the carpet for Jan Shipps's article about Joseph Smith in the *Journal of Mormon History*, which Durham was editing, and for a talk he gave on Masonry and Mormonism in Nauvoo.

9. Kenney to Brent C. Miller, 27 Feb. 1975, copy of letter in possession of Kenney.

10. Lester Bush, "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8 (spring 1973), 229–271.

11. Lester Bush recounts discussions with Boyd K. Packer regarding publication of the article in "Writing Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview" (1973): Context and Reflections, 1998," *Journal of Mormon History*, 25:1 (spring 1999), 229–271.

12. Interview with Kenney, 19 Dec. 1998. Even now, Kenney's recollection of this meeting is vivid. He made typescript notes within a day of the event; unfortunately, the typescript has been mislaid. Lavina Fielding Anderson, who read the typescript at the time, confirmed the accuracy of Kenney's account, to the best of her recollection.

13. Kenney to Peggy Fletcher and Joe Davidson, 7 Nov. 1975, quoting Jay Todd, in Sunstone Archive, University of Utah.

14. Lester Bush records a similar incident in the form of a telephone call from Academic Vice President Robert K. Thomas at BYU to *Dialogue* editor Bob Rees, saying the Brethren were upset by Bush's article and that if it were published, they would consider *Dialogue* to be hostile, his meeting with Packer notwithstanding. See Bush, 260–262.

15. Kenney to Peggy Fletcher and Joe Davidson, 7 Nov. 1975, letter in possession of Kenney.

16. Kenney, "Suggestions for a Newsletter," n.d., probably Dec. 1975, in possession of Kenney.

17. Interview with Allen Roberts, 13 Mar. 1999.



BREAKING SUBURBAN

Behind a house above the freeway
 rises a ridge as scrub and stark with pine
 as any western butte.
 Stars seem mesquite-hung
 since things began to fall apart
 inside the house.
 The kids wear faces
 of windless plains and even the dog
 howls at open moons
 that make neighbors draw the blinds.
 Now the mother shows a frontier look
 of dried creek wrinkles,
 her apron tied up
 by nervous hands—settlers
 wishing for a dirt road
 where a cabin should do.

—RAY GREENBLATT

LIGHTER MINDS

FLASH—BYU IN CHAOS;
UNIFORMS DECLARED

By C. K. Woodworth



*Can a man in a skirt possibly honor his priesthood?
Can a woman with a beard fulfill her eternal measure?*

C. K. Woodworth, aka the Remote Correspondent, began the Internet news flasher commentaries on Mormonism in the spring of 1997 with a satirical (and fictitious) report of a Farmer-in-the-Dell scandal in Brigham City, Utah. The adventures and misadventures of this story as it spread through cyberspace were traced in the October 1997 issue of SUNSTONE ("Accidental Author of an Internet Legend"). Since then, more than fifty other fictions have come from the keyboard of the Remote Correspondent, all clearly labelled as fiction but too often taken by unwary readers as true. Many have appeared on the Mormon humor list, which can be subscribed to at <majordomo@Mailing-List.net>. Selected news flashes can also be accessed through the web page of Student Review <www.Studentreview.com>.

MORMON CHURCH-OWNED BRIGHAM Young University has declared a universal campus uniform in the wake of a clothing controversy which has caused this normally quiet campus to disintegrate into chaos.

"Every university must maintain a minimum of order and control in order to accomplish its business," the BYU administration announced on Monday in a decree posted across campus. "For this purpose, therefore, all faculty, staff and students will henceforth be required to wear the following uniforms while on campus or while engaged in university business." The decree stipulates dark trousers and white shirts for men, long dark skirts and white blouses for women, and ends with 126 points enumerating the

details of licit and illicit dress.

The move was prompted by a campus protest that began following a *Student Review* story about an underground women's movement calling themselves "Lady Levites." The original Levites were the tribe of hereditary Jewish priests in biblical times.

As badges of their secret sorority, the BYU women wore Levi's blue jeans, with rank designated by the red, orange, or gold tabs on their pockets. Although *Student Review* stated that the "Lady Levites" did not claim any priestly prerogatives, BYU officials nevertheless began a comprehensive investigation after an anonymous informant declared the blue jeans to be a sign of campus-wide sartorial insubordination.

In the days immediately following the story, covert surveillance by BYU security forces found that nearly 40 percent of the university's co-eds were wearing Levi jeans, and another 70 percent of the male students were also wearing Levi's, presumably in complicity.

On 8 January, BYU president Merrill Q. Baitman issued a statement banning women students (though not men) from wearing any blue jeans while on or off campus.

This new rule, however, was met with a wave of resistance from the normally docile student body.

In an act of protest and solidarity with their female fellows, male BYU students began appearing in class dressed in skirts. Approximately two dozen law students and fourteen football players were subsequently suspended for initiating the action, but this response failed to quash the protest.

Although BYU does have a strict code of dress and grooming standards, officials found that men in skirts were not covered in the detailed guidelines. President Baitman correspondingly issued a second statement on 10 January, banning the wearing of any female attire by male students.

Female students responded to this decree by coming to campus wearing glued-on theatrical beards. BYU's rules prohibit men, but not women, from wearing beards. Approximately forty offending students were suspended for insubordination, and an unknown number were escorted from campus by BYU police while university officials scrambled to write this latest infraction into the official dress code.

Seeking to prevent further disturbances with a catch-all generalization, the new regulation stated that BYU students were forbidden to wear anything "inappropriate or unbecoming to their respective genders."

University officials later regretted their ac-

tions when male students appeared on campus the following day wearing homemade codpieces attached to their trousers.

The students argued that the objects in question had a long history as proper male attire, but they were ejected from campus and their codpieces confiscated. Sixteen students were arrested for failing to surrender the suspect items on demand, though police later reported that most of these had been arrested in error and were subsequently released.

Although most students were apparently

ready to abide by the new uniform standards, a statement issued by "Ms. Merkin" on behalf of the Lady Levites claimed that female students would continue to wear beards underneath their clothing and challenged the administration to stop them.

Meanwhile, at a mandatory student assembly on Thursday, President Baitman upbraided the student body and admonished them to abide by the new dress regulations, saying that they represent "the natural and eternal order and are made in the image of our Heavenly Parents." Baitman especially

condemned the male students in skirts, saying "Amen to the priesthood of that man."

President Baitman's address will be published in a special issue of *Brigham Young Magazine* under the title, "The Unnatural Woman Is an Enemy to Man, The Unnatural Man Is an Enemy to God."

C. K. WOODWORTH, remote correspondent

(I regret to inform you that none of this is true.)



WINTER SONG

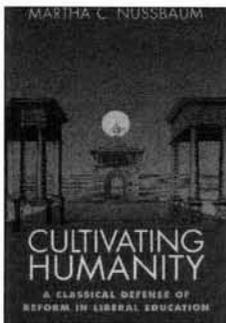
Night comes closer with trains
that rattle my windows as they
trip all the crossing switches
on their way through town.
Outside the light at 5 p.m. cools,
spills over the clouds in pinks and blues
before the sky crystallizes with stars.
The earth freezes in its rotation
and the house in its heat hums
with the breathing rhythm of my parents
who sleep in a world that collapses
in cold. Alone on my bed, I'd stare
at the ceiling until my eyes frosted over
and long for the love trees receive
through the leaves in the spring,
then I'd lose myself in the sung libretto
of silence and wait until morning
arrived with another day draped in ice,
my hands overflowing with snow.

—DOUG MCNAMEE

R E V I E W S

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
IN A LIBERAL WORLDCULTIVATING HUMANITY: A CLASSICAL DEFENSE OF
REFORM IN LIBERAL EDUCATIONby Martha C. Nussbaum
1997, Harvard Press
328 pages, \$26.00

Reviewed by R. Dennis Potter



Mormons will find this book engaging since it explores the philosophical roots of the "culture wars" that have been particularly interesting at BYU in the last decade.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO Ernst Freund Professor of Law Martha Nussbaum has written an engaging discussion of the cluster of issues surrounding the "culture wars" in U.S. liberal education. She offers a fresh perspective, and where her new book lacks specific analytical argumentation, it compensates with a powerfully persuasive picture of how education should be carried on.

Nussbaum's book is of special interest to Mormons because it includes a chapter on religious education that discusses Brigham Young University and Notre Dame as alternative models of a religious university. Mormons may also find the book engaging

R. DENNIS POTTER received a B.A. in philosophy from Brigham Young University and is a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at the University of Notre Dame. He may be contacted by e-mail at <potter.9@nd.edu>.

since it explores the philosophical roots of the "culture war" controversies that have taken a particularly interesting guise at BYU in the past decade. From considering Nussbaum's views of ideal education, we Mormons can better articulate our own visions of the goals of higher education.

This review focuses on Nussbaum's discussion of religious education, but it is necessary to begin with an overview of the rest of the book.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Producing "ideal citizens" is higher education's goal—but how?

IN two respects, Nussbaum's book stands out from other recent literature about cultural issues in education. First, she uses concrete cases from real universities to reach her conclusions. Second, she argues for reform in liberal education on the basis of

Classical philosophy, not by way of postmodernist or relativist assumptions. That first unique aspect of this work makes it engaging. And while anecdotal evidence is notoriously problematic—individual experience may mislead about general experience—the conclusions Nussbaum draws from her anecdotal evidence about BYU and Notre Dame square fairly well with my own first-hand experience of them.

The central argument of *Cultivating Humanity* follows the Greeks'—that the fundamental purpose of our institutions of higher education is to produce ideal citizens whose primary loyalty is to humanity as a whole. In order to achieve education's lofty purpose, citizens must exhibit three capacities: (1) a critical examination of oneself and of one's community, (2) an ability to see oneself as tied to the rest of humanity, and (3) a narrative imagination that allows one to put oneself in another's place.

Nussbaum's claim about the purpose of higher education contrasts starkly with the common view of many Americans, who treat higher education as fundamentally vocational: at the university, students learn skills necessary to succeed in careers. Nussbaum rejects this view. The argument is, then, that liberal education as currently practiced requires certain reforms to satisfy these goals.

Her introduction, "The Old Education and the Think Academy," begins with contrasts in Aristophanes' *The Clouds* between the traditional Greek education, which is a disciplined and controlled indoctrination ("the old education"), and the "new" Greek education, which encourages youth to think for themselves and to question the dominant values. Aristophanes' picture of Socrates is wildly distorted, she points out, and then she draws a parallel to the picture that many American conservatives paint of modern secular academia, i.e., one in which left-wing, elitist professors force political correctness on their students, trying to subvert their traditional values and religious beliefs. The distortion, she claims, is similar to Aristophanes' of Socrates.

In the first chapter, "Socratic Self-Examination," Nussbaum continues by discussing the first capacity of an ideal citizen—a critical focus. Again the dichotomy is between the old education, which holds up tradition, and the think-academy, which questions it (16). And those resisting a reform of traditional liberal education are resisting Socratic reform. Nussbaum argues that despite Socrates' personal objection to democratic government, his way of doing philosophy is uniquely (for his time) democratic: he practices it in the streets and

anyone can engage in it. Not only is Socratic inquiry democratic, but democracy actually depends for survival on good Socratic inquiry. She says, "The successful and stable self-realization of a democracy such as ours depends on our working as hard as possible to produce citizens who do examine tradition in a Socratic way. The successful integration of previously excluded groups as citizens with equal respect depends on realizing their capacities for rational autonomy and Socratic self-examination." (27)

Although Socrates does not explicitly discuss education, the Stoics applied his thinking to education. And, according to Nussbaum, the Stoics make four claims about Socratic education: (1) Socratic education is for everyone; (2) it should be suited to the circumstances of the pupil; (3) it should be concerned with a variety of different traditions; (4) it should ensure that books do not become authorities.

Nussbaum's claim that there are both left-wing and right-wing opponents of Socratic education certainly seems correct (37). (The conservative opposition defends traditional values and religion and worries that Socratic inquiry will undermine them.) Her discussion of postmodernist attacks on Socratic inquiry is good (37-41). Her arguments for reform do not come from the knee-jerk postmodernism so popular these days nor from the relativism that most often accompanies it. She says, "The search for truth is a human activity, carried on with human faculties in a world in which human beings struggle, often greedily, for power. But we should not agree that these facts undermine the very project of pursuing truth and objectivity." (40)

Interestingly, conservatives can unknowingly buy into a kind of cultural relativism by insisting that the received cultural tradition is not questionable, thus implying that there is no objective fact that would ground and justify it. (This situation is especially interesting for those of us familiar with recent trends at BYU, where the postmodernist emphasis on subjectivity and historicity is used more often to defend the tradition than to criticize it.¹) Indeed, if one thinks that truth is relative to one's cultural framework, then one has no space from which to criticize.

Nussbaum's second chapter takes from Diogenes' idea that we should consider ourselves "citizens of the world." Here, she argues for our fundamental priority to all humanity and compares culture to language (61-62). While Nussbaum argues that our fundamental priority is to humanity and not our particular culture, she wants to avoid the position often associated with multicultur-

alism, i.e., that each culture is of equal worth (82). Instead, she advocates "interculturalism," the doctrine that there should be a comparative study of all cultures, recognizing common human needs and discussing dissonance and criticism within cultures (82). Unfortunately, she stops short of admitting that we can make moral pronouncements about other cultures.

In the third chapter, "The Narrative Imagination," Nussbaum makes a case for the importance of a variety of intercultural literature. She asserts that through the imaginative abilities of fiction, we begin to understand others. Literature teaches us to feel sympathy, to open up to other possibilities. In this way, literature teaches us morality. A mere study of history cannot do this. She admits this role of literature involves a political agenda, but the alternative is a sterile formalism in literary criticism (89). SUNSTONE readers will be interested in her discussion of Wayne Booth's *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (100ff).

The introduction and these first chapters, then, provide the bulk of her argument. Chapters 4 to 7 discuss possible reforms and illustrate her arguments with particular cases. In the process, she discusses the study of non-Western cultures, African-American studies, women's studies, and the study of human sexuality, including gay and lesbian studies. Of note is her discussion of Cristina

Hoff Sommers's criticism of contemporary feminism, such as that by Catherine MacKinnon (215 ff). Nussbaum persuasively rebuts Sommers's claims that the goals of contemporary feminism are illiberal.

In chapter 7, on human sexuality, Nussbaum engagingly discusses the theory that sexual mores are being eroded by the study of human sexuality because of the presumed moral relativism in contemporary academic discussions. Nussbaum points out that although the study of human sexuality does involve the doctrine of social constructivism—i.e., the claim that how we think about sexuality is a social construct—this approach still allows for normative ethics, since we can criticize better and worse constructs, depending on their utility (226 ff). Of course, conservative and religious readers must ask whether that approach is sufficient. Social constructivism is itself a controversial philosophical doctrine that should be subjected to scrutiny.

Nussbaum's comment that it is virtually impossible for faculty members at BYU to discuss homosexuality in an unconstrained manner seems right, but might need some qualification. In my experience at BYU,² only in Samuel Rushforth's classes did the issue arise. Nevertheless, an open philosophical debate about the Church's position on homosexuality would probably not be administratively approved at BYU.³



"Joyce still opens every set with 'Who Are These Children Coming Down?'"

KENT CHRISTENSEN

“Education is a sacred obligation. It is only natural that we require high standards of those to whom we accord this responsibility.”

SOCRATES IN THE
RELIGIOUS UNIVERSITY

Unity of purpose and spirit—not of opinion.

NUSSBAUM opens the chapter on religious education with an anecdote about the 1996 directive that BYU faculty be annually certified by a bishop as temple worthy, and she quotes an anonymous BYU alumnus who calls the order “sickening.” She follows this with a brief account of the Notre Dame administration’s denial of official status to a gay and lesbian organization and the faculty senate’s vote condemning this action. The two accounts set the stage for her contrast of BYU and Notre Dame as examples of religious universities. According to Nussbaum, Notre Dame has done a good job of balancing the educational goals of the academy with the demands of its church to reinforce its religious tradition, and BYU has not. Two questions arise at once. First, are these accounts really indicative of the atmospheres of BYU and Notre Dame? Second, is BYU’s requirement of ecclesiastical endorsement so wrong?

Before answering these questions, here is her argument:

Notre Dame and Brigham Young lie in many ways at opposite ends of a spectrum on issues relating to academic freedom, Socratic inquiry, and diversity in religious higher education. . . . Drawing on a long Roman Catholic tradition of inquiry and higher education, Notre Dame has constructed a genuinely religious education with a first-rate research university with strong guarantees of academic freedom and a commitment both to Socratic searching and to international study. Issues concerning women and sexuality continue to be deeply divisive, both in curricular matters and in campus life; but faculty feel free to state their views even where those conflict with official church doctrine. (261–262)

Evidence for this claim is based on Nussbaum’s interaction with the faculty and students on campus. For example, she cites Phillip Quinn and Paul Weithman, Notre Dame philosophy professors who have both criticized the administration and the church on certain fundamental issues (268). She

notes the presence of religious concerns among the faculty and in the community in general. Anyone who has attended Notre Dame would also be keenly aware of these concerns. Indeed, conferences discussing creationism and evolution and theology and world peace made headlines just last year. She also discusses the long-standing Catholic tradition of commitment to higher education. She does note some episodes that are problematic for her—for example, the extremely divisive issue of the gay and lesbian group that was refused official recognition (277).

Regarding BYU, she is not impressed:

The case of BYU shows a university far more disposed to restrict scholarship and inquiry in the name of a religious belief. An attitude of anti-intellectualism increasingly shapes the course of the institution. This state of affairs, rather than promoting a strong, distinctively religious institution, threatens to stifle its academic spirit and thus jeopardizes its status as a religious institution of higher education. (262)

As evidence, she cites the well-known cases of Scott Abbott, Gail Houston, Cecilia Farr, and David Knowlton and also the university’s decision not to invite Pulitzer Prize-winning Laurel Thatcher Ulrich to speak on campus. Nussbaum also discusses the authoritarian nature of LDS church governance (which is not all that different from Catholic hierarchy), the strict moral standards of Mormon culture, and the status of women with respect to the priesthood. She also argues that despite the missionary program, BYU students learn very little about other cultures compared to those at other institutions.

Having been an undergraduate at BYU from 1987 to 1993 and a philosophy Ph.D. student at Notre Dame since 1995 to the present, I have little criticism of her claims about affairs at BYU and Notre Dame. She is generally right about the respective atmospheres at both institutions. While her description is about on target, there are underlying philosophical issues she leaves untouched that might have affected the way she evaluated these two schools. The larger issue here is how religious persons should relate to the broader, non-religious culture. One extreme would claim that religion should entirely

accommodate to the general culture. Another extreme would insist that religion should entirely reject the general culture. Early Mormonism clearly opted largely for rejection. But more and more, Mormonism has moved toward an accommodationist stance. Regarding BYU and its peculiar role as a religious university, this question is particularly thorny: What sort of higher education should Mormons—or Catholics—pursue and endorse? Since such institutions are part of the larger culture, how does a church as a religious community and a governing institution interact with its university, particularly when religious life, learning, and tenets are in tension with the surrounding culture?

Because Nussbaum holds a moral and intellectual allegiance to classical philosophy and the liberal political tradition, she advocates greater accommodation by religions to the larger intellectual culture. But for the religious traditions, I would argue, such accommodationism might not be best. Indeed, an overly ardent accommodationism might well kill the religious culture. So from within a religious tradition, it seems that the central goal should be the flourishing of that tradition. This goal need not clash with the ideal citizen goal that guides Nussbaum’s book, i.e., an overarching commitment to humanity. But the goal of preserving the religious tradition gives a certain perspective on how best to achieve the goal of being an ideal citizen.

Both Mormonism and Catholicism give similar answers to just how much accommodation of the outside culture should be accepted. Mormons and Catholics are convinced that much truth is to be found in worldly research and that criticisms of the faith from outside can serve to strengthen understanding of faith. Lowell Bennion’s remarks in *The Religion of the Latter-day Saints* are typical of the Mormon attitude toward education and intellectual pursuits:

No person can comprehend the whole of life in its beauty, depth and breadth through a single one of these humans interests [i.e., art, science, philosophy, religion] to the exclusion of the others. (17)

From the point of view of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as interpreted by Latter-day Saints, there is

no justification for dogmatism, in the sense of unwarranted positiveness, even in religion. (23)

But even though Mormons or Catholics should learn as much from the world as they can, they should do so as Mormons or Catholics. Indeed, both traditions have a commitment to the ideas that God has revealed his will to his people and that understanding his revelation is paramount to salvation. The ideal citizen's concern for humanity is then transformed by these religions into a concern for the salvation of humankind.

Such worldly accommodation within a religious tradition allows for academic freedom not because we are committed to an individual's right to think as she or he pleases but because a frank and open discussion of our religion is the best way to ensure that it flourishes intellectually. Such accommodation also calls for academics who are not only deeply committed to the religious tradition but whom others of the community can trust to do their best to contribute to its flourishing. All may not have the same idea about what contributes to such flourishing, but allowing a broad amount of freedom in trying to define this goal is clearly the best way to ensure that it will happen. Trust among the individuals involved in a religious intellectual community allows for the best discussion.

From this perspective, in contrast to Nussbaum's, a different evaluation of Notre Dame and BYU emerges. Clearly, Notre Dame allowed an open, frank discussion of the gay and lesbian issue. All viewpoints were heard; faculty and student groups openly opposed the administration's decision, and no action was taken against them. This situation has allowed Catholics the opportunity to develop more sophisticated apologetics for their own religious position. It also allows them to clarify their own positions and reinforce their commitments. Nevertheless, the Notre Dame community, as a Catholic community, had to take a stance consistent with its Catholicism. And not allowing on campus a gay and lesbian group that advocates the moral neu-

trality of homosexual behavior is an appropriate reinforcement of the Catholic ethic.

On the other hand, the issue caused great contention; neither side now seems to trust the other. Instead of having people united as a Christian community should be, Notre Dame is deeply divided on this issue. And this is a symptom of a deeper division between those who are committed to the Catholic nature of the school and those who want a secular school with a Catholic name. In this way, Notre Dame is two universities, religious and secular. Ironically, the existence of the secular university enables the religious one to achieve its goals in certain ways not available at BYU.

Similarly, a different evaluation of BYU emerges once we see the purpose of education in terms of religious flourishing. From Nussbaum's view, BYU is wrong in not allowing enough academic elbow room. But academic elbow room should not be the primary issue. The real issue is whether BYU helps the Mormon intellectual tradition to flourish. Here, the judgment against BYU may be even harsher than Nussbaum indicates. For Nussbaum, BYU is flawed because it is just a bit too Mormon. But if we have in mind the goal of encouraging a flourishing of Mormon tradition, then the real problem is that BYU is not Mormon enough. BYU stifles the flourishing of the Mormon tradition by stifling any substantive discussion about Mormonism. This is a strong claim, so I'll make an argument for it.

Notre Dame enables the flourishing of the Catholic tradition by allowing the open discussion of homosexuality and theology.

Through the open discussion, a Catholic apologetic is articulated and developed. Indeed, the Catholic intellectual tradition itself is carried to new generations by inculcating the methods and tools of the traditional apologetic.

BYU has some of this. Hugh Nibley, Eugene England, and researchers at FARMS come to mind. Instead of accommodating secular scholarship by reinterpreting the faith in the academy's terms, such scholars re-evaluate the foundations of their respective disciplines and try to rebuild their disciplines in light of their Mormon beliefs. Although this type of intellectual enterprise occurs at BYU, it is the exception rather than the rule.

Consider the case of Scott Abbott. His controversial SUNSTONE article challenging the traditional dichotomy between faith and reason had a lot to do with his being denied a promotion to full professor (despite being unanimously recommended by a committee of his peers).⁴ This dichotomy between faith and reason is traditionally accepted in academia. But we Mormons believe, of course, that another religious perspective, apostate Christianity, led to this dichotomy. Accepting this dichotomy, instead of re-evaluating it in light of the restored gospel, is thus accepting a peculiar form of accommodationism. Here, the effect of the BYU administration's stifling of Abbott's views is not the strengthening of Mormon orthodoxy, as it seems at first, but the defense and re-entrenchment of the orthodoxy of an apostate tradition. Now, clearly Abbott's views might be wrong. Catholics and Protestants may have a good reason to distinguish between reason and



"Well, I still think Saving Private Ryan is a better picture than Shakespeare in Love."

***“We can afford to make mistakes in our academic conclusions,
but we cannot afford to avoid mistakes if that means that we avoid thinking.”***

revelation. But the point is not the correctness of Abbott's view, but the intent behind his project to rethink this traditional distinction in terms of his Mormon beliefs. This ongoing rethinking of the tradition in terms of Mormonism is essential for a Mormon academic tradition to flourish. In punishing those who try to do so, we kill our own tradition. We can afford to make mistakes in our academic conclusions, but we cannot afford to avoid mistakes if that means that we avoid thinking.

This situation in Mormonism is sad. Indeed, in my own discipline, philosophers often ask me from what Mormon writings can they read about the philosophy of religion. Sadly, little work has been done by Mormon philosophers on theological issues and even less in the philosophy of religion.⁵ Even Sterling McMurrin's famous theological and philosophical *Foundations* are merely historical works and quite outdated.

Why the dearth of Mormon work in this field? Is it because we are afraid of developing our own tradition? Or is it because we are satisfied with the philosophical tradition we have established? This lack of Mormon philosophy is certainly not due to a lack of Mormon philosophers. But for some reason, few of them have done serious work in their field that would relate to their religious beliefs. When there is a lack of Mormon philosophy, Mormon philosophy students read only non-Mormon philosophy; instead of flourishing, the tradition dies.⁶

So, instead of criticizing BYU for not living up to a standard of the worldly academy, as Nussbaum does, one ought to criticize BYU for discouraging the development of uniquely Mormon thought. We cannot expect Nussbaum to do this. We can only expect her to critique BYU from her point of view. But we can also criticize “liberals” who take her position. If the goal of a religious (academic) institution is the flourishing of the religious (intellectual) tradition, then Nussbaum's notions about what a religious university should do are untenable.

Moreover, the very idea of academic freedom takes on a new meaning. A religious education is a particular kind of education—and that necessitates that it be conducted in a certain way, according to certain constraints. This does not mean that professors should not have elbow room. Indeed, I am arguing

that more elbow room for BYU professors is needed for the flourishing of the tradition. But it does mean is that professors use their elbow room in a certain way.

One important criticism of Notre Dame is that it is deeply divided. In some ways this division helps to avoid the dogmatism that would stifle religious flourishing. But it doesn't create a desirable community for a religious institution. Instead, there should be a sense of unity. Such a sense is clearly present at BYU. Unfortunately, BYU has achieved this unity by encouraging a unity of opinion, not of purpose and spirit. This is a false unity. What is needed is a sense of trust between faculty members and the administration, trust that all are committed to building the kingdom of God. If such trust truly existed, then the incidents with Abbott, Houston, Farr, et al., may not have happened.

The clear boundaries for Mormon academic freedom should not be defined by the highly politicized, faddish academic views that are current controversies in Mormon thought. Instead, the boundaries should be ones of intent and purpose. If we can trust each other's intent and purpose, we can achieve the sort of unity required for a religious community.

This point leads to my response to Nussbaum's assumption that BYU's requirement of ecclesiastical endorsement is wrong. For Mormons, part of being involved in building the kingdom of God is being temple worthy. So, this requirement is an acceptable way (although not the only way) of ensuring that intellectual trust exists among members of our religious institution. To Nussbaum and other non-Mormons, it may seem odd to require a temple recommend to teach at BYU. But from within Mormonism, it seems only natural.

Some from within the tradition might object that ecclesiastical endorsement “cheapens” the sacred nature of the temple recommend interview. I welcome such criticism from within and think it is healthy that we openly discuss the issue as Mormons. However, I can respond that the Mormon insistence that even the mundane is sacred blunts the force of this challenge. Education is a sacred obligation. It is only natural that we require high standards of those to whom we accord this responsibility.

(On the other hand, absurdly, ironically,

when I was hired as a research assistant last summer, BYU's employment office did not accept my temple recommend as evidence that I was temple worthy. This stance undermined the very sort of trust that exists between me and temple officials, who do take my recommend as evidence of worthiness.)

Of course, this radically different evaluation of BYU and Notre Dame emerges from a perspective not available to Nussbaum since she admits that her religious commitments are of a moral and not a theological nature (262). I have, however, other minor criticisms of her conclusions that do not arise merely from our different theoretical approaches. Nussbaum claims that the missionary program and the apparently cosmopolitan atmosphere that results at BYU is only superficial and does not contribute to a true multicultural understanding (286). Since the missionary program is set up for evangelization, and since this is the central reason for BYU's strong commitment to foreign instruction, the motivation for foreign instruction is not at all cosmopolitan (286).

Nussbaum apparently mistakenly conflates language training at the MTC with language training at BYU. And she is right about the MTC, but not about BYU. Most students in my 400-level Portuguese class were returned missionaries. They were not preparing to leave on a mission, so proselytizing could hardly have been their primary reason for continuing to study the language and culture. Instead, these good missionaries apparently fell in love with the foreign culture in which they preached the gospel. And love happened despite when leaving for their missions, they may have had delusions about the supremacy of American culture.

Perhaps Nussbaum is right to say that BYU could do a better job of teaching about other cultures and of instilling narrative imagination in its students. I am not qualified to say. Nevertheless, the missionary program, even if unintentionally, helps to broaden cultural horizons within Mormonism—perhaps better than any academic program could.

Another minor point is, though not her fault, Nussbaum seems to get the Mormon position on homosexuality wrong. She seems to assert that Catholic theology has a rationale for its position on homosexuality and

Mormon theology does not. But she is wrong. If "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" is taken as doctrine⁷ then gender is eternal. Part of what constitutes Mormon exaltation is being able to spiritually procreate. This does not mean that each sex act must be procreative, but it does mean that the procreative capacity must be there. So it follows that in order to attain the highest degree of glory in God's kingdom, Saints must be in a marital relationship with the possibility of procreation. A same-sex relationship will not allow people to attain their full potential. Of course, this argument presupposes much that would be controversial. But it is still a solid, internal justification for the Mormon position that same-sex sexual relationships are sinful.⁸

Nussbaum's ignorance of Mormon theology again points back to my contention that we need to discuss and articulate our beliefs, and we should allow BYU professors to do so. In order to have that articulation, we must broach the topic of homosexuality. And although we must ultimately defend our theological position as it is stated in revelation, along the way we must be willing to explore different defenses, criticisms, and interpretations of the fundamental position.

This attitude requires the frank and engaging discussions that occur at Notre Dame but not at BYU. If we refuse to articulate our position as academics—and not merely as preachers of the gospel—then we cannot expect others outside our faith, like Nussbaum, to understand our rationale for our view. In this way, we have much to learn from Catholicism.

Unfortunately, this kind of intellectual interchange is discouraged in our intellectual community, which—like it or not—is defined and maintained by BYU. We should all find ourselves chastised by First Presidency Counselor James E. Faust's recent comment:

As a means to coming to truth, people in the Church are encouraged by their leaders to think and find out for themselves. They are encouraged to ponder, to search, to evaluate, and thereby come to such knowledge of the truth as their own consciences, assisted by the Spirit of God, lead them to discover.⁹

This is not the comment of one who believes it is good to deny tenure to those who do their level best to articulate their Mormon beliefs. This comment is by one who believes that a flourishing of the Mormon tradition requires thought and elbow room within which to carry on this thought.

NOTES

1. David Bohn's essay, "The Larger Issue," *SUNSTONE* 16:8 (Feb. 1994) 45–63, is an extreme example of this tendency.
2. My experience counts as anecdotal evidence as well. So the reader should beware!
3. I would be delighted if someone were to show me that this is not the case.
4. Scott Abbott, "One Lord, One Faith: Two Universities: Tensions between 'Religion' and 'Faith' at byu," *SUNSTONE* 16:3 (Sept. 1992), 12–23.
5. Some work done by David Paulsen and also Blake Ostler is an obvious exception. James Faulconer, Rex Sears, Benjamin Huff, Keith Lane, James McLachlan, and I (perhaps among others) are all presently doing work in this area. I hope this is a sign that this trend is changing.
6. One might cite an anti-theological strain in Mormon

though that could account for the lack of work done in theology and philosophy of religion. Indeed, with continuing revelation, it is difficult for there to be an *official* theology. But even if we grant that there can be no official Mormon theology, that does not mean that there should be no theological discussion. Doing theology and making it official are two different projects.

7. Whether or not it should be is a thorny issue that I can't treat here.

8. Of course, the question arises here as to whether or not same-sex sexual relationships can be analogous to heterosexual civil marriages (which also keep one out of the highest degree of glory), or whether something is more intrinsically immoral about same-sex relations. One might argue that although we often treat those who live in such relationships as if the latter were true, there is only theological justification for the former.

9. James E. Faust, "The Truth Shall Make You Free," *Ensign*, Sept. 1998.



NIGHTLINES—5

Night:

death seems not too far
after all.

Do I hear
its thumping boots
ascending the staircase?
Its soft, gentle knock on the doors
of my loneliness?

Or, will it come down
just like the shining saws
of the guillotine?

Life is a lonely bird
trapped in body's cage.

Moon's vigilant eyes
trail me wherever I go.

And the arrogant trees at my courtyard
stand defiant
like masked terrorists
tilting their stengun branches
towards me.

—DURGA PRASAD PANDA

REVIEWS

NOTHING LEFT TO THE MORAL
IMAGINATION

FATHER OF LIES

by Brian Evenson

1998, Four Walls Eight Windows Press

185 pages, \$22.00



Reviewed by Michael Austin



“This novel asks important questions, yes, but it also answers them so that, rather than provoking us to think for ourselves, it merely provokes us to share in the author’s anger.”

To be confronted with situations without being told what to think about them—which is what I do—is truly unsettling. My assumption is that all of you have a moral code that you go through life armed with and that you are able to interpret what is put before you in a book the same way you would interpret events in life. A book should be an opportunity to exercise your moral imagination or your moral will.

—Brian Evenson, “Moral to Read, Moral to Write”¹

AS A GREAT fan of Altmann’s *Tongue*, Brian Evenson’s collection of short fiction, I began *Father of Lies* prepared to give a favorite author the benefit of the doubt. Despite pre-publication buzz to

the contrary, I fully intended to believe the lawyerly disclaimer on the title page: “This is a work of fiction. It approaches a problem common in a wide range of religions. Any specific resemblance to actual persons or to

any actual events is incidental.” By the end of the first chapter, however, I had to abandon the pretense. I could not take as “incidental” the author’s references to “Disciplinary Council(s)” (156), “general authorities” (197), “temple approval interviews” (113), “the Church’s recent *Statement in Support of Family Values*” (87), “The Committee for the Strengthening of the Church” (83), and dozens of other thinly disguised Mormon idioms. Few Mormon readers, I suspect, will see *Father of Lies* as a book about a nondescript Everychurch, and nobody familiar with the “actual person” of Janice Allred, or the “actual event” of her excommunication, will be likely to miss Evenson’s reference to a woman excommunicated for writing an article containing “the unthinkable opinion” that the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead, might be female” (21). *Father of Lies* is a work about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Any resemblance to problems faced by other religions is incidental.

Technically, “the Church” in *Father of Lies* is “The Corporation of the Blood of the Lamb,” a rigidly hierarchical, strictly patriarchal religious community whose members are nicknamed “Bloodites.” The principal narrator of the story is Eldon Fochs, the lay “provost” (like a bishop) of a local congregation. Externally, Fochs is the model of Bloodite/Mormon respectability: a clean-shaven accountant and a devoted family man who volunteers much of his time to his church calling. But Fochs (as anyone familiar with Evenson’s writing might well suspect) lives a double life. He is also a violent pedophile who preys on the youth of his congregation and commits murder to cover his tracks. Fochs narrates about three fourths of the book, and through his narrative, we catch glimpses of his dementia, which includes a parade of hallucinatory characters who instruct him, alternately, to sin and to repent.

Much more interesting is the secondary narrator, Alexander Feshtig, a psychologist who treats Fochs in the church-owned Zion Foundation Institute of Psychoanalysis. We meet Feshtig largely through his case notebooks, paper outlines, conversation transcripts, and several disturbing exchanges of letters with both his direct superior and with an “apostolic elder” of the church named Aaron P. Blanchard. From these fragments, we come to know Feshtig as just the sort of person that any religious community should consider an asset: a conscientious academic, devoted both to church and profession, who genuinely desires to use his intellectual gifts to serve his faith. However, unlike many of

MICHAEL AUSTIN is assistant professor of English at Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where his wife, Karen, is director of the Writing Center. He may be contacted by e-mail at <austin@intrepid.net>.

his colleagues, Feshtig will not sacrifice his professional integrity to religious orthodoxy. Initially, his supervisors fault him for refusing to practice "Christianity," a form of psychoanalysis "which operates according to the inspired truths which our sacred books and church leaders have revealed to us."² He becomes a full-fledged enemy of the people, though, when a general authority (Blanchard) discovers that he plans to publish a paper on Fochs—a psychopathic provost with the potential to seriously embarrass the church. Both Feshtig's supervisor and his ecclesiastical leaders do everything in their power to silence him and obtain his files: they harass him, spy on him, burglarize his office, demand his resignation, and threaten his standing in the church.

Though *Father of Lies* works perfectly well as a straightforward story about sexual abuse in a religious hierarchy, it can be read in other ways as well. And one particularly intriguing way to read it is as an allegory of Evenson's own experiences at BYU. Blanchard's stern warning to Feshtig—"If you choose to publish, there will be severe repercussions" (83)—sounds suspiciously like the warning that Evenson received after an anonymous student complained about the violence in *Altmann's Tongue*. And Feshtig's response—"I will not have someone who knows absolutely nothing about my profession dictate what my actions should be" (88)—sounds just as much like Evenson's own response to the BYU administration in his open letter of resignation to English Department Chair Jay Fox (pronounced *Fochs*).³ For those who miss these references, Evenson provides other clues. The title of "provost" Evenson gives to his abusive religious leader normally describes a university administrator, not a religious one, and Fochs's final fate in the novel, after all of his sins have been discovered and covered up by his ecclesiastical superiors, is to become a professor at the church-owned college—despite the fact that he has no academic credentials, training, or experience.

But the most satisfying way to read *Father of Lies* is as an ethical argument. And perhaps the book's most important point is that whenever an institution wholly equates loyalty with integrity, abuse of some kind becomes in-

evitable. In the Corporation of the Blood of the Lamb, the only real moral virtue is obedience. Any action done in the name of obedience—no matter how morally or legally reprehensible—is deemed "good," and any action perceived as disobedient—no matter morally or legally justified—casts doubts on one's loyalty and therefore one's moral worth. An institution based on this model, Evenson implies, has no way to check official misconduct within its authority structure, since one cannot call attention to a leader's even serious ethical violations without appearing disloyal.

One of the novel's most disturbing scenes dramatizes this problem by depicting the excommunication of the two women whose adolescent sons Fochs molested. When they report this abuse to authorities, the women are charged with trying to embarrass the church and brought before a disciplinary council. This "council of love" (156) quickly degenerates into an exhibition of ecclesiastical malfeasance: the area rector (stake president) assumes the women's guilt from the outset; he presents no evidence against them, he forbids them from speaking in their own behalf, and he wins over reluctant jurors by

alluding to "things about these women . . . that is reliable but which is of such a sensitive nature that he is not free to share it" (158). When one of the "area councilors" still refuses to vote for excommunication, the rector has him forcibly removed from the room and replaces him with Fochs himself, thus assuring a unanimous verdict.

Whether read as a work of psychological realism, as an allegory, or as a moral treatise, *Father of Lies* has many strengths. First and foremost, it is a good read—a fast-paced book with few unnecessary words or scenes. It can be read easily in one sitting, and it will hold most reader's interest throughout. Furthermore, Evenson is perhaps as skilled in using the unreliable first-person narrator as any writer since Nabokov, and, as he does in his earlier story, "The Munich Window," he manages to draw readers into a pathological character's world without ever allowing them to forget how reprehensible that character is. The novel contains a number of graphic and disturbing scenes, but none is gratuitous. There is exactly as much violence as there should be. And though *Father of Lies* will disturb most readers, it will also raise im-



"I don't always vote yes when they ask for a sustaining vote, but when I vote no, I act like I'm scratching my temples."

portant questions about authority, obedience, spirituality, and integrity.

These strengths, however, are not quite enough to overcome the novel's greatest weakness: that its author breaks his own rules and tells us what to think about the situations he confronts us with. In his numerous defenses of *Altmann's Tongue*, Evenson argues that the purpose of literature is to provoke us to thought, not to do the thinking for us:

I think the strength of the book lies in the openness of the field it creates. It presents situations which the reader is forced to bring his or her moral context to bear. In that sense, it does not ensure any specific response on the part of the reader, which, I think, is very close to the freedom that God gives us in this life.⁴

In *Father of Lies*, this compelling approach to fiction goes out the window. Evenson uses Feshtig to tell us exactly what to think about all of the book's important issues. He tells us what to think about Fochs: "a provost involved in the destruction of children, who feels no re-

morse, and who has used his church position to prey on the innocent" (84). He tells us what to think about his local church leaders: "There is always someone willing to serve the Lord who feels that his obedience to God justifies taking every liberty" (84). He tells us what to think of general authorities: "Though apostolic Elders are men of God, that does not make all they do (or that you do on their behalf) godly. They are human: they can, and will, make mistakes." (2) And he tells us exactly what we should think about the Church: "It is a good religion. . . . There are good things about it, good values, even though there are problems as well, even though its leaders often choose to operate by coercion. The Church makes a lot of people happy. But it destroys people as well." (102).

Despite its considerable narrative indirection, *Father of Lies* lacks subtlety. Beneath its broken narratives, experimental techniques, and magical-realist flourishes lies a conventional morality tale complete with a remorseless villain, a noble hero, and a corrupt, all-powerful conspiracy. The book gives readers few opportunities to exercise their moral imaginations: the bad guys wear black, the good guy wears white, the all-powerful

conspiracy conspires all powerfully, and the narrator tells us precisely who is who.

The novel asks important questions, yes, but it also answers them so that rather than provoking us to think for ourselves, it merely provokes us to share in the author's anger. And while well-managed anger can certainly produce powerful literature, the anger evident on nearly every page of *Father of Lies* is not well managed; it is obvious, propagandistic, manipulative, and, ultimately, disappointing. The story that Evenson tells needed to be told, and the issues that he raises needed to be raised. But both the story and the issues would have been better served if the author had, each day before sitting down to write, taken a deep breath and counted, very slowly, to ten. ☐

NOTES

1. *Annual of the Association for Mormon Letters*, 1996 (Association for Mormon Letters: Provo, Utah), 121.
2. *Annual of the Association for Mormon Letters*, 1996, 121.
3. A complete copy of this letter, dated 13 August 1996, can be found at the web site of the BYU chapter of the American Association of University Professors: <<http://ucs.byu.edu/bioag/botany/rushforth/WWW/AALP/aaupvtr.htm>>.
4. *Annual of the Association for Mormon Letters*, 1996, 121.



HOW I MET MY WIFE

The hole where the picture nail went
now has a spider.

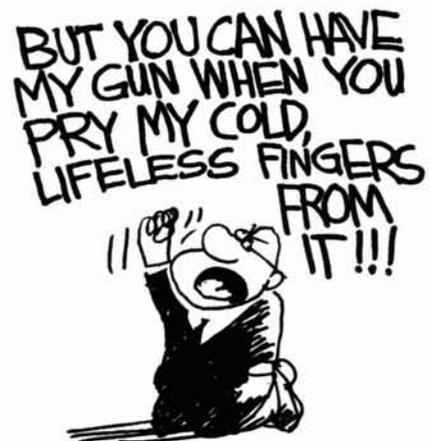
If I keep reading this book, every corner
of every page will be turned down,
dog-eared: a page listening to itself.

Meanwhile the spider has dropped down
almost to the floor. Then like a bare foot
that withdraws sensing the cold of the water,
she pulls back. She rolls up her tether
into a ball as she rises. I'm sure now

she's trying to tell me something.
I take down the other picture. By evening
that nail hole has a spider. Smaller and grayer.
Something is about to happen.

—MARK MITCHELL

UPDATE



MADMAN OPENS FIRE IN FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY; PRESIDENT HINCKLEY URGES GUN CONTROL

A CLINICALLY DEPRESSED and possibly paranoid schizophrenic man entered the LDS church's Family History Library on 15 April 1999 and began shooting with a .22 caliber handgun. Sergei Babarin, a seventy-year-old Russian immigrant, killed two people and injured three others before being shot to death himself by Salt Lake City police. Killed were library security guard Don Thomas, 62, of West Jordan, Utah, and library patron Patricia Irene Frengs, 55, of Pleasant Hill, California, according to the *Deseret News*.

On Monday, 19 April, President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke at Thomas's funeral, offering his condolences and counseled that "This terrible incident becomes a warning to all of [the] ever-present danger" in society when mentally unstable people have easy access to guns. According to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, President Hinckley expressed his sad amazement that "such a person" as Babarin, a man with a "warped mind," was permitted by society to "arm himself with an automatic weapon to cut down and kill . . ." To Thomas's family and loved ones and the other one thousand people attending the funeral, President Hinckley said there are no answers why the grandfather of twelve, a man just two months short of retirement, was taken from life.

"We cannot live and work in a bunker mentality," President

Hinckley continued. "This entire episode was gruesome . . . and we hope never to experience it again." The president further told how he had often exchanged greetings with Thomas, whom Hinckley called a self-effacing man. "It was never expected that he would be asked to give his life."

The library re-opened to somber staff and patrons the Monday of Thomas's funeral. Nearly one dozen counselors from LDS Social Services were on hand to assist any people having difficulty coping with the tragedy.

Babarin had been treated for mood disorders, but according to news reports, had stopped taking his medication. Further, Babarin had previously been charged with a felony weapons violation that he had plea bargained to a misdemeanor. After a street altercation, police had confiscated a gun from Babarin, but because Babarin's crime was reduced to a misdemeanor, he was legally able to purchase a gun identical to the confiscated one less than one month later. It was this second weapon with which Babarin terrorized library visitors.

The day of Thomas's funeral, Dave Jones (D), minority leader in the Utah state House of Representatives, called upon Utah Governor Mike Leavitt (R) to call a special session of the legislature to address the availability of weapons to mentally unstable persons. That same day, Leavitt responded that no such session was needed and that Utahns needed to take time to reflect on government's role in reducing violence. The following day, Tuesday, 20 April, fifteen people died in a shooting spree at Columbine High School in Littleton,

Colorado. After this horrific tragedy, Leavitt called upon the legislature's interim committees to study gun issues for ninety days and then report to him. Then the governor will consider calling a special legislative session.

SALT LAKE SELLS MAIN STREET BLOCK TO LDS CHURCH

SURPRISING RESIDENTS of Salt Lake City, the LDS church and mayor Dee Dee Corradini announced on 1 December 1998 plans to close to traffic a section of Main Street between North and South Temple Streets, according to the *Deseret News*. And on 13 April 1999, the city council approved the sale of the city street to the Church for \$8.1 million.

The section of Main Street divides Temple Square from the block with the Church administration buildings, including the Church Office Building and the Joseph Smith Memorial Building (the former Hotel Utah).

A December 1998 Church press release listed potential benefits to the city from the street's closure. Benefits included: expansion of the gardens of Temple Square "to provide pleasant meandering walkways . . . and space uniquely designed for cultural events" and that will enhance visitors' experiences in the state's capital city; increasing public safety for pedestrians moving between various points downtown; and allowing the Church to expand its underground parking facility in the area. The press release also noted that "professional traffic consultants" determined that the closure will have only minimal impacts on downtown automobile traffic.

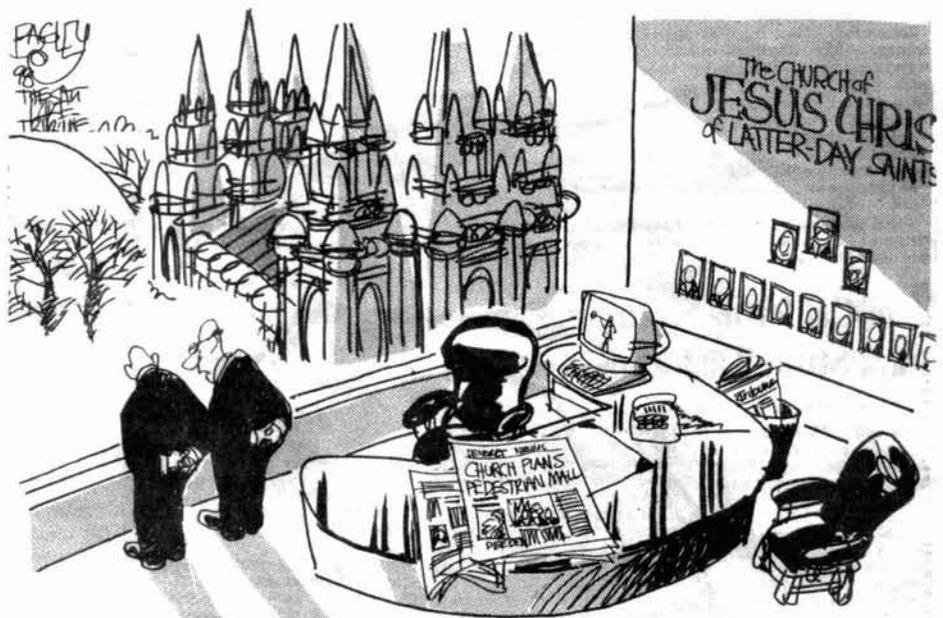
But as the public debated the closure in the months between its announcement and its final approval, all of the purported benefits were called into question and religion entered the debate.

"If the Catholics or Baptists wanted to buy this section of Main Street, you would say absolutely not," Heather Doral told the city council, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*. "This is public property. Shouldn't this be the end of the matter for the the Mormon Church as well?"

In voting to approve selling the street to the Church, the city council also approved an easement reservation that would revert the land to public ownership if the Church denies public access to the space. Still, the Church is granted the right to restrict smoking, assembling, picketing, and other activities. Commissioner Craig Mariger complained about giving the Church these rights. "This doesn't sound like public space to me. It sound like an annex to Temple Square."

In approving the sale, the city council voted along religious lines, 5-2.

Proposals to close the section of Main Street have been around since 1962. For years, however, Main Street merchants have opposed the closure, fearing that the reduced traffic would hurt their businesses. But in a controversial 1996 decision that irked many of these same Main Street merchants, the city decided to run its new light rail transit system along downtown Main Street. The tracks have now been laid, though the system is not yet operational, and the street's traffic is now dramatically reduced. And after the past two years of massive Main Street construction, the *Deseret News*



"TOO BAD THEY WOULDN'T SIGN OFF ON THE MOAT— THAT WOULD'VE BEEN COOL."

reports that many Main Street merchants are now supportive of closing the street section and creating a pedestrian avenue there. "This will create a place, and what makes uniqueness is place," city Community and Economic Development Director Stuart Reid told the *News*.

ANTHRAX HOAX HITS CHURCH OFFICES

A PACKAGE WITH A NOTE saying the parcel contained anthrax was found 3 March 1999 in the mail room of the LDS Church Office Building. Three employees were taken to a hospital as a precautionary measure, the *Deseret News* reported.

According to Church spokesperson Dale K. Bills, "The package and wording were similar to other packages distributed around the Salt Lake Valley" in the previous couple of weeks. Some if not all of the mysterious "anthrax" packages were postmarked from Lexington, Kentucky.

Bills said that the hoax did not interrupt Church administration except for mail processing.

The day before the Church Office Building scare, Neil J. Gallagher, FBI assistant director in charge of the national security division, had been quoted in an Associated Press story as saying that anthrax threats are almost a daily occurrence in the United States. Gallagher expressed fear that, because of the threats, Americans will cease to take anthrax terrorism as a real possibility.

MAN CONVICTED OF TORCHING CHURCHES

A FORMER CHURCH OF CHRIST minister who had an eight-year affair with a LDS organist in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was convicted on 23 March 1999 of ten counts of vandalism against LDS church property. One church, valued at \$2.5 million, was destroyed by fire in June 1998. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that Walter Gene Grassie, 49, faces sentencing in June of this year. Prosecutors expect Grassie to receive a prison sentence of at least fifteen.

Bob Gorence, a First Assistant U.S. Attorney, told the Associated

Press that this case is indeed sad: "Here's a man who's successful, at the top of his whole life—and then he just loses it." The breakup of Grassie's affair with Sharlene Jensen provoked his crimes. The prosecution contended that Grassie blamed the LDS church for the breakup because of Mormon teachings that convinced Jensen to ultimately forsake Grassie and stay in her marriage to her husband, Buddy Jensen.

MORMON MOTHERS SUE TO HALT SCHOOL PRAYERS

THROUGHOUT THE 1990s, Mormons have often found themselves on the conservative side of United States politics. For example, Mormons can be counted on to vote en masse for Republicans, to support proposed constitutional amendments banning abortions and outlawing flag burning, and to oppose gay clubs in public schools. Also, Mormons of the '90s typically favor prayers in schools. Ironical it is, then, that two LDS mothers recently joined with the American Civil Liberties Union in Sante Fe, Texas, to prevent local schools from allowing public prayers and other public endorsements of religion.

The *New Orleans Times-Picayune* reported that the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the Mormon mothers, banning school prayers from athletic events.

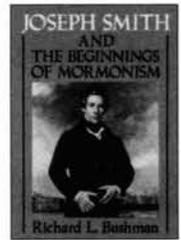
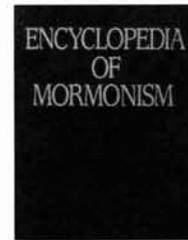
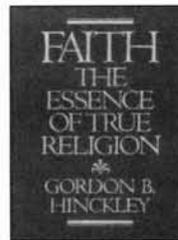
The court noted that the predominant religion had been unfairly supported by school officials. One seventh-grade teacher, for instance, had passed out in class notices for a Christian revival. When this teacher learned of one student's being LDS, the teacher condemned Mormonism as an evil, non-Christian cult.

Throughout the legal proceedings, the two mothers and their three children have remained anonymous so as to avoid community backlash. The court noted that school officials and other community persons had tried to discover the identity of the plaintiffs "by means

of bogus petitions, questionnaires, individual interrogation or downright snooping." School officials had been threatened by the court with contempt, according to the *Times-Picayune*.

"It's not so much that other people's religion offended them," Debora Perky said in the *Times-Picayune*. Perky is a former ACLU regional director who helped prepare the case. "They just wanted the school out of it. There had been several instances where their own religion had been called into question, and they wanted the schools to get out of religion, even if it had been their own religion being pushed."

Of related interest, a non-Mormon family has sued the Madison School District in eastern Idaho to prevent school prayers. Courts have thus far ruled that the school district may indeed allow prayers, though the case is still under appeal. Mormonism is the predominant religion in the area, and the non-Mormon plaintiffs in the case have remained anonymous to avoid community wrath.



The Church has embarked on a two-year mission to supply U.S. libraries and universities with accurate information about Mormonism.

CHURCH DONATES BOOKS, OTHER RESOURCES

THE CHURCH HAS BEGUN a two-year project to donate informational resources to libraries and colleges in the United States. The effort is in response to a study that revealed that many of the institutions the Church is targeting currently have only information that incorrectly portrays LDS history and doctrine, according to the *Ricks College Scroll*.

Books and other reference materials being supplied to the select institutions include the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, *Faith: The Essence of True Religion* by President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* by Richard L. Bushman, the Church's triple combination of canonized works, several video cassettes about Church history, and a Latter-day Saint library on CD-ROM, which includes more than one hundred LDS reference works.

FAMILY HISTORY ARCHIVES TO GO ONLINE

AMID RUMORS AND SECRECY, the Church has announced that in March or April 1999, a portion of its vast genealogical library will become accessible via the Internet. The announcement has family historians ecstatic. "Online genealogists have been hoping and praying for this quite some time," said Terrence Day, a Mormon who writes a genealogy column for a Washington state newspaper.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that cyberspace channels were abuzz with gossip in early March 1999 about the possibility of the library's going online. Because of the hubbub, the Church "reluctantly, and quietly, posted a terse statement about the service on its official Web site, www.lds.org," reported the *Tribune*. Church spokesperson Mike Otterson confirmed to the newspaper that the statement had

PEOPLE

DEATH

- Emeritus general authority and president of the Salt Lake Temple since 1996, **Elder Carlos E. Asay** passed away 10 April 1999 at age 72. He had served as the senior member of the presidency of the Seventy and as president of the Church's Europe Area in the late 1980s. Elder Asay was born in Monroe, Utah, in 1926. At the University of Utah, he had lettered in basketball for four years and later earned a Ph.D. in education. He was a veteran of World War II. Elder Asay married Colleen Webb on 20 October 1947. Suffering a massive heart attack on 5 April, Elder Asay was hospitalized for five days prior to his death.



TRANSFER

- Renowned Mormon historian **D. Michael Quinn** has said for quite some time that he would complete his projects at hand and then take a sabbatical from Mormon studies. The awaited day has arrived. Quinn's second edition of *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* is off the press, and he recently presented a second edition manuscript of *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* to Signature Books. His work done, Quinn is currently living in Mexico and plans to remain there indefinitely.

been prompted by the rampant speculation but that the Church would have nothing to add until the service was up and running.

The statement read in part: "Sometime in March or April 1999, the church . . . will conduct a brief beta test of a new genealogical service for the Internet. . . . The church believes this service will greatly enhance the way people trace their family history."

Karen Clifford, president of Genealogical Research Associates, told the *Tribune* a select group of top researchers had been told about the eventuality of the online service about a month before the rumors began flying. However, the Church had asked those so informed to

not let the secret out. About the future site, Clifford said, "I do know some things about it, but I am not privileged to discuss it."

POLYGAMY SAID TO BE HERE TO STAY

WHAT DO AN ISRAELI SCHOLAR and a Utah state legislator have in common? Both believe that polygamy will be a permanent fixture in Utah society.

Utah polygamy gained attention throughout the United States in 1998 when a badly beaten, runaway, fifteen-year-old girl stumbled

Pioneer Home to Be Razed. A 149-year-old Centerville, Utah, home will soon be demolished to make way for a suburban neighborhood. The home had been built by John Ford Sr., an original settler in the community twenty miles north of Salt Lake City. Ford's descendants continued to reside in the home until 1967. But current owners Jim and Bonita Robertson say they do not have the half million dollars needed to restore the old structure. When the Robertsons purchased the home for \$250,000 in 1998, they expected to restore and live in it. But a structural engineer's analysis ended their plans—hence, the planned subdivision.

California LDS Institute Bombed. An explosion shattered glass and blew a door off its hinges on 9 March 1999 at an Arcata, California, Institute of Religion. The building, 250 miles north of San Francisco near Humboldt State University, was unoccupied at the time and no one was hurt. James Mitchell, the institute's director, said no threats had been received and no motive was known for the act. FBI agents have no suspects.

Mormon Legislators in Arizona Feud over Gay Rights. In a legislative hearing, two Republicans with ties to the LDS church sparred publicly over homosexuality and its social ramifications. The debate was continued in the *Arizona Republic* by others on both sides of the issue. Representative Karen Johnson (R-Mesa) was sponsoring HB 2524, a proposal to forbid any Arizona government entity from granting domestic partner benefits to its employees. A legal marriage would be necessary to entitle an employee's partner to receive health insurance and other benefits. Johnson, a Mormon, was defending her bill when she started speaking about the perils of homosexuality to American society. When she finished, another legislator, Representative Steve May (R-east Phoenix) challenged her statements and called Johnson a liar, for which he later apologized. May had been reared a Mormon, according to the *Republic*, and he is the only openly gay Republican legislator in Arizona.

The *Republic* ran a feature story about the brouhaha and later ran opinion pieces by other Mormons both in support and opposed to Johnson's legislation. As of press time, HB2524 was still awaiting action in the Arizona House of Representatives.

Convicted Sex Offender Called on Mission. In August 1998, the Utah Board of Pardons freed a twenty-three-year-old, unconfessing-but-convicted child molester who was quizzed by board chair Michael Sibbett about his religious beliefs and his desire to serve a Mormon mission. Sibbett told the *Salt Lake Tribune* that in his nine years on the Board of Pardons, he could not recall another case in which a sex offender in denial was released early and not required to obtain counseling. But Sibbett added, "We saw Mr. [Shonn M.] Ricks as an extremely low risk to society."

The unusual case made local headlines only after the LDS father of the abused child went public in his opposition to Ricks's March 1999 mission call.

Ricks, of Benson, Utah, had served fourteen months of two zero-to-five-year terms when he was released from prison and subsequently called to Chile. Elder John H. Groberg, of the First Quorum of the Seventy, had interviewed Ricks and cleared him to serve a mission. Elder Groberg later visited the victim's father, apparently to try to convince him to support Ricks's call. The Church revoked the mission call when the victim's father, in his persistent opposition to Ricks's serving a mission, notified the *Tribune*. In a statement to the *Tribune*, the Church said: "The church does not call convicted child sex abusers on missions. In this case, normal procedures appear not to have been followed. The call has been withdrawn."

Sunday School Time Capsule Opened. On 1 April 1999, President Gordon B. Hinckley, joined by Sunday School President Harold G. Hillam and counselors Heil Andersen and John Groberg, opened a time capsule, which commemorated the Sunday Schools' 1949 centennial. Among the many items inside the box—which had been built from thirty-nine pieces of wood, one from each of the Church's 1949 missions—was a centennial scrapbook in which President Hinckley found a photo of himself. Holding the photo to the view of five hundred in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building audience, President Hinckley said, "Look at that—my hair's fuller and I'm much wiser than I feel now."



President Hinckley and the Sunday School General Presidency open a 1949 time capsule.

Church Rushing Supplies to Kosovo Refugees. In a General Conference announcement on 3 April 1999, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that humanitarian supplies were being readied for shipment to Kosovar refugees in Macedonia. "At this moment, our hearts reach out to the brutalized people of Kosovo," the president said. He also spoke of how it is difficult for Latter-day Saints to understand how Christians could treat other humans the way Serbians have treated the Kosovars. "I am grateful that we are rushing humanitarian aid to the victims of these atrocities." Seven forty-foot containers with one hundred tons of blankets and clothing will be sent through Greece to Macedonia and distributed to refugees by Mercy Corps, a Christian relief organization.



Utah State Representative David Zolman says polygamy is one of Utah's strengths.

into a rural Utah gas station asking for police and saying that she had been forced by her father to become the fifteenth wife of her uncle. (See SUNSTONE Sept. 1998, "Mormon Polygamy Capturing World's Attention.") Since then, Utah politicians have publicly discussed strategies for curbing the unconstitutional practice, and President Gordon B. Hinckley has assured questioning reporters that the LDS church has nothing to do with polygamy.

But Joseph Ginat, a University of Haifa professor who co-authored *Polygamous Families in Contemporary Society* (see SUNSTONE Mar. 1998, "Yours, Mine, and Ours"), noted in a University of Utah lecture that Utah polygamy continues to grow despite Church and state efforts to the contrary. Polygamists in Utah have large numbers of children, and polygamists are successful proselytizers, reported the *Deseret News*.

Meanwhile, Utah Representative David Zolman has been publicly arguing that not only should Utah cease all efforts to thwart polygamy, but that the state should amend its constitution to make the practice legal. Not surprisingly, Zolman is "the new darling of Utah polygamists," according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

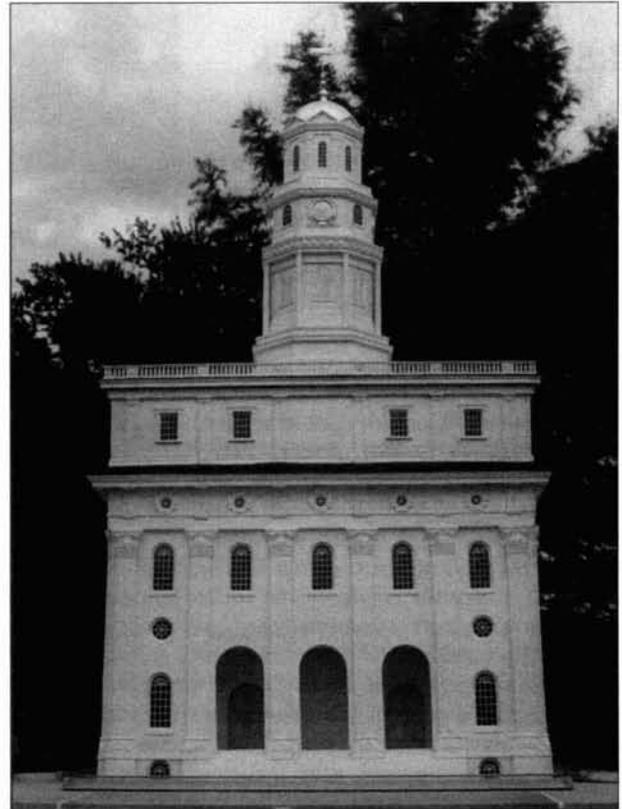
"Polygamy, if it's regarded by some as scandalous, by others it's regarded as one of our strengths," Zolman said in a meeting with polygamists and a television crew from the Fox network. For the legislator, polygamy is a civil rights rather than religious issue.

"My intent is to enfranchise a group of people who are Americans . . . and who have as much right to access state government as anyone else."

MORMON MEDIA IMAGE

ON THE WIRE

A NEWSWEEK ONLINE EDITION recently ran a section entitled "Where Wired Is A Way of Life." in which Salt Lake City was featured among other locals as one geographical nexus of high tech industries. Noting that the Wasatch Front is home to some twenty-one hundred high-tech firms and a large, well-educated workforce, *Newsweek* stated that Salt Lake City "ranks first in the nation in the proportion of households with personal computers—nearly 65 percent—partly because PCs are ideal for the genealogical recordkeeping important to Mormons." On the downside for Salt Lake's upstart companies, "there's not much of a network of wealthy angel investors, and the 10 percent tithe to the church cuts into available funds. But with growing interest from out of state investors, no one's losing sleep."



President Gordon B. Hinckley has announced plans to reconstruct the Nauvoo Temple

NAUVOO TEMPLE TO BE REBUILT

IN THIS ERA OF TEMPLE BUILDING, an announcement about yet one more temple to be built should hardly come as a surprise. But as the Church's 169th Annual General Conference drew toward conclusion on 4 April 1999, President Hinckley shocked attendees and viewers worldwide when he said, "I feel impressed to announce that among all the temples we are constructing, we plan to rebuild the Nauvoo Temple. . . . A member of the Church and his family have provided a very substantial contribution to make this possible. We are grateful to them. It will be a while before it happens but the architects have begun their work." The *Deseret News* reported that missionaries and other members at the Nauvoo Illinois Stake Center broke into gasps, claps, and sobs at the announcement. Afterward, missionaries gathered to the original temple site for spontaneous hymn singing. Although the Church is yet to make specific announcements about precisely where the temple will be built and what it will look like, various news sources have speculated that the temple will be built on the original temple site and that it will resemble the original building.

In related temple-building news, with so many new temples has come a shortage of temple clothing. The demand for such white clothing has proved impossible for the Church's Beehive Clothing to satisfy. The Church, according to the *Deseret News*, has begun contracting with private clothiers to provide white shirts, pants, dresses, and ties, allowing Beehive Clothing to focus on making ceremonial apparel. An employee at the Church's mail order department told the *News* that it will be at least five months before Utah's Wasatch Front residents will be able to again purchase the clothing.

BYU STUDENTS RESURRECT BROTHER BRIGHAM, SORT OF

A group of engineering students at Brigham Young University has recreated the school's namesake—or at least a robotic rendition of Brigham Young. The life-size, moving, talking robot was, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, the most popular engineering project on display at the university on 9 April 1999.

The Brigham Young robot was part of Capstone, the Integrated Product and Process Design Course that all senior engineering students must complete. The students are divided into teams at the beginning of the academic year. Each team must research, design, and build a project of its choosing; additionally, the students must recruit and secure funding for their projects from outside the university, the *Tribune* reported. Capstone's intent is to give students a non-university type of experience in the rigors of engineering.

The Brigham Young robot consists of a mannequin, wired internally and given an aluminum frame that allows it limited movement. In the project's presentation, the Brigham Young moved its head and right arm while delivering a recorded message about how it was constructed. The project cost \$12,000 and will be used by the university to recruit students to BYU.

Other projects built for Capstone include a workstation for Amy Renae Mahler, an artist from Fruitland, Idaho. Mahler is paralyzed from her neck down, and she paints by holding a brush in her teeth. Mahler purchased her new workstation from BYU for one dollar

MISSIONARIES WERE "BEST KIDNAPPEES EVER"

ANDREW PROPST is a former LDS missionary who, with his companion Travis Tuttle, was kidnapped in Russia on 18 March 1998 and held for ransom for five days before being released by his captors. Propst, now a student at Portland State University in Oregon, told an Associated Press reporter about his ordeal.

Propst described going to the home of a Russian who had expressed interest in the Church. But there, the two missionaries were beaten unconscious with a baseball bat, then handcuffed so tightly that a year later, Propst still does not have feeling in his right hand.

"When I asked them to loosen them [the handcuffs], they smacked me again. My concern was that I was going to lose my hands. . . . When I couldn't stand it anymore and started bawling, they put a gun to my head and threatened to shoot me."

After being moved to a rural shack, Propst and Tuttle were blindfolded and handcuffed to a radiator, where they spent five days. The Russian captors—four men and one woman—at one point told the missionaries they were demanding two thousand dollars ransom. Propst laughed and said he was worth more than that. But actually, the Russians demanded \$300,000 ransom. Adhering to U.S. policy, the LDS church refused to pay the sum.

Propst told the A.P. that the captors would periodically turn on a radio to hear news about the Church's willingness to pay the ransom. From the radio, Propst learned the kidnapers planned to kill the two missionaries unless their demands were met, and seeing rat poison and



*Thanks to modern technology,
Brother Brigham lives again.*

syringes nearby, Propst believed the reports. Nevertheless, the former missionary reported his captors would get drunk and tell the two elders they were the best kidnappees ever.

On the fifth day, the Russians surprised the missionaries by driving them forty miles in the countryside. The missionaries were commanded to lie down. Propst fully expected to be executed, but the Russians said, "Wait two minutes, and you can leave." After fleeing to safety, Propst and Tuttle spent three days in a German hospital. They provided information to authorities that led to apprehension of the kidnapers. One was sentenced to four years in prison, another, to one year. The other three were released with suspended sentences.

Of the experience, Propst said, "It changed my life. You don't know how good your life is until it's taken away from you."

CHURCH TO CONSTRUCT MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MEMORIAL

IN SEPTEMBER 1990, descendants of both the victims and the perpetrators of the 1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre joined in dedicating a monument to those who had been killed in the tragedy. President Gordon B. Hinckley, then first councilor in the First Presidency, offered the dedicatory prayer for the monument. But in 1998, President Hinckley returned to the site and found it in disrepair. "I did not like what I saw. I was embarrassed at the condition . . . I was ashamed," the president later told victims' descendants in a 30 October 1998 meeting of the Mountain Meadows Association. President Hinckley pledged that the Church would build a respectful, appropriate monument to the deceased.

"They finally have a man in the [Church] president's seat that knows the story and understands the pain and anguish that a lot of the families are still going through," Ron Loving was quoted in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Loving, a member of the Mountain Meadows Association and a descendent of thirteen of the massacred victims, was moved by President Hinckley's support and by what many in the meeting took to be the Church's most direct apology for the tragedy.

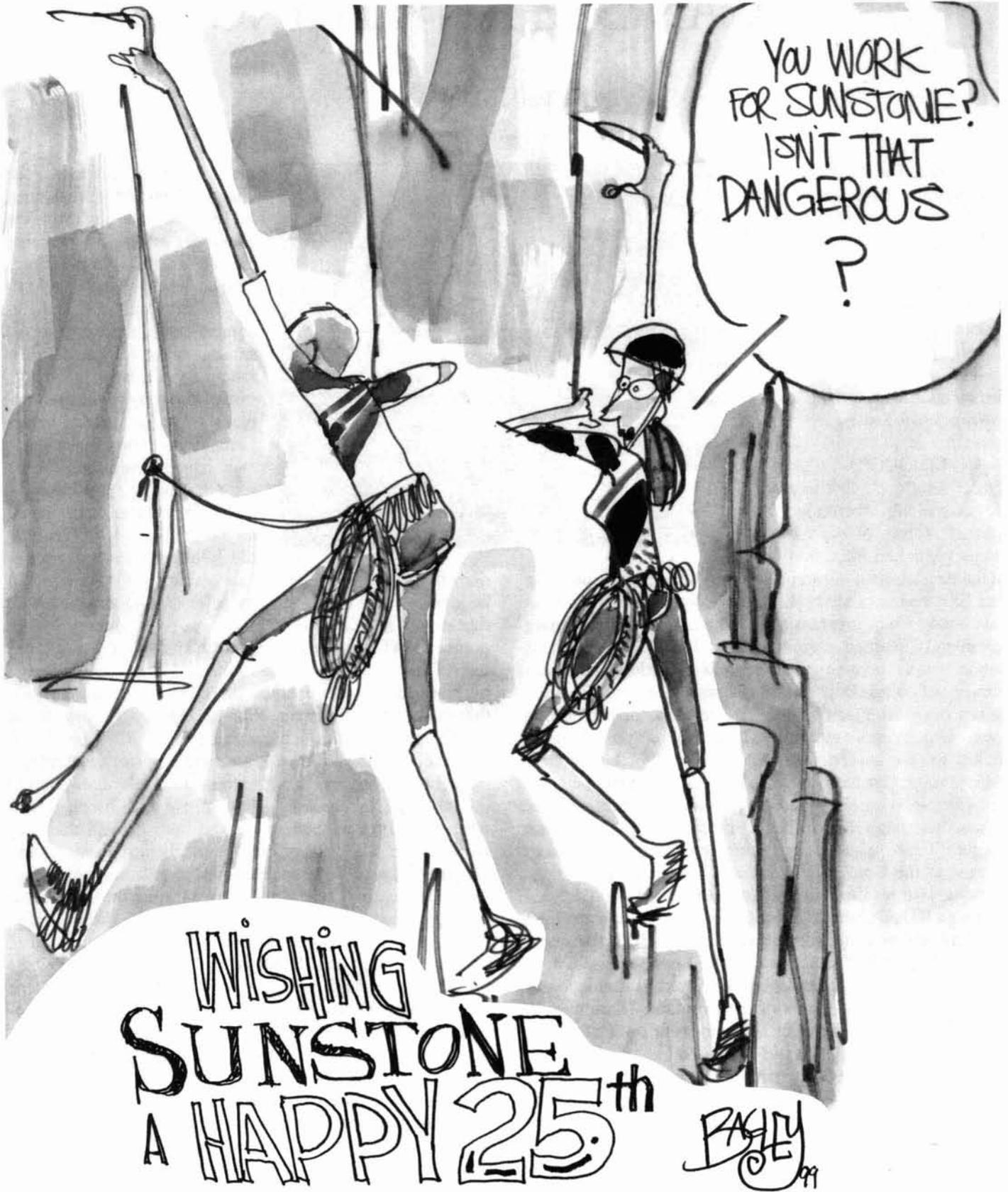
"No one knows fully what happened at Mountain Meadows," President Hinckley was recorded in the meeting's minutes as saying. "But we express our regrets over what happened there and we all need to put this behind us."

The Church and the Mountain Meadows Association plan to begin building a new, park-like monument in spring 1999 and hope to complete construction during the summer. Glen Leonard, director of the Church's Museum of Church History and Art, told the *Tribune*, "It will cost whatever it costs and we will do it so it's nice." Loving told the *Tribune* that President Hinckley had told him the monument may cost as much as \$200,000.



*In preparation for a new monument,
researchers look for burial sites at
Mountain Meadows.*

OXYMORMONS



AN OLIVE LEAF

“I CAN SEE ANY THING”

By Richard L. Bushman

Just released, *The Prophet Puzzle: Interpretive Essays on Joseph Smith* (Signature Books) looks at the Prophet from historical, theological, psychological, and feminist perspectives. The following is from Richard L. Bushman's essay "Joseph Smith as Translator." Bushman is Gouverneur Morris Professor of History at Columbia University, and he is currently writing a biography of Joseph Smith.

ALTHOUGH [JOSEPH Smith] . . . left treasure-seeking behind, the magical culture of the [seeing] stones played an important part in the development of Joseph's identity as seer and translator. The Christianity of Methodism or Presbyterianism could not have readied him for translation. In conventional Protestant Christianity, learned men translated the Bible, and pious young people became preachers like [Charles Grandison] Finney or Lorenzo Dow, not translators. The treasure-seeking stones from the magic culture, by contrast, helped Joseph move step by step into his calling. The sayer of stones looked for the unseen, whether lost objects or buried treasure. Joseph's first reaction when he brought home the Urim and Thummim was delight with the powers of the instrument. It was "ten times Better than I expected," he told Joseph Knight. "I can see any thing; they are Marvelus." Though amazed at the Urim and Thummim's power, he knew from working with his own stone what to expect; he would "see." Although he had obtained his own stone from a hole dug for a well and not by a gift from heaven, practice with the stone, looking for lost objects and probably for treasure, was an initiation into "seeing" that could be transferred to translation of the gold plates in the stones of the Urim and Thummim. In fact, as work on the Book of Mormon went on, a seerstone took the place of the Urim and Thummim, blending the culture of magic with the divine culture of translation.

As time went by, Joseph played down the place of magic and seerstones in his early life. After publication of the damning affidavits about money-digging in Eber Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled* (1834), he knew that involvement with



magic would discredit the church. Even before that time, in 1830 he gave up using the seerstones and spoke no more about them. Conventional Christianity was fighting to protect itself from the Enlightenment critics' charges of superstition, and, to prove their rationality, Christian apologists vented their anger on the remnants of magic carried down from an earlier time when magic and religion mingled. Joseph did not want to make himself a target for attacks that would cripple the work. But neither did he repudiate the stones or

deny their powers. In 1843 he wrote that a white stone would be given to all entrants into the celestial kingdom, and with that stone "all things pertaining to an higher order of kingdoms even all kingdoms will be made known." The magic culture of his early life, like his inherited Christianity, though transformed was not obliterated. He must have understood that the stones had prepared him to step into the improbable roles of seer and unlearned translator. . . .

He took on the work with great enthusiasm, developing a momentum that propelled him from the Book of Mormon to the Bible and the Book of Abraham. He told Joseph Knight when the plates were first removed from the hill that they were "written in Characters, and I want them translated," and his resolve never wavered. He loved translating and, rather than faltering under the strain of performing the impossible, valiantly labored on. Near the end of his life he described himself to James Arlington Bennett, his future running mate on the 1844 U.S. presidential ticket: "By the power of God I translated the Book of Mormon from hieroglyphics; the knowledge of which was lost to the world: in which wonderful event I stood alone, an unlearned youth, to combat the worldly wisdom, and multiplied ignorance of eighteen centuries." In that statement, made when pressures on him were mounting, we sense the burden of living an incredible life. But those glimpses were rare. For the most part, faith in his calling and his buoyant spirit carried him through the formidable task of translating undecipherable hieroglyphics. ☐

SUNSTONE MERCANTILE

A checklist for your summer vacation!



Sunstone Magazine 7 issues for \$36 (one bonus issue)

This great offer brings Sunstone's award-winning humor, fiction, history, and thoughtful reflections on contemporary Mormonism and personal faith journeys. Offer good for new or renewal subscriptions.

The Prophet Puzzle: Interpretive Essays on Joseph Smith

ed. by Bryan Waterman ~~\$18.95~~ \$17.05

What kind of a prophet was Joseph Smith? How did he and his followers understand his calling? These questions occupy this compilation's authors who write from a variety of perspectives: historical, theological, psychological, feminist. Fifteen must-read essays. (Signature Books)

Early Mormonism and the Magic World View

revised and enlarged; by D. Michael Quinn ~~\$19.95~~ \$17.95

Joseph Smith learned how to use a divining rod; a seer stone; a hat to shield his eyes in order to see hidden treasures; and amulets, incantations, and rituals to summon spirits. This impressive study demonstrates how different from current norms early American religious practices could be. (Signature Books)

Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education

by Martha C. Nussbaum, hb. ~~\$26.00~~ \$23.40

Extremely relevant to the culture wars at BYU, especially the chapter that compares BYU with Notre Dame. Philosopher and classicist Nussbaum tells how higher education can create a community of critical thinkers and searchers for truth that "transcend the boundaries of class, gender, and nation." She draws on Socrates and the Stoics to defend the core values of liberal education and such burgeoning subject areas as gender, minority, and gay studies. (Harvard University Press)

Joseph Smith: The First Mormon

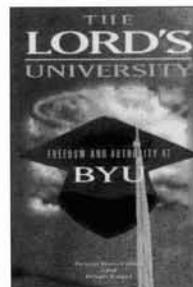
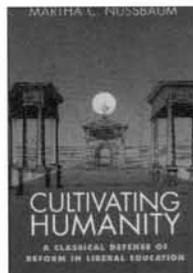
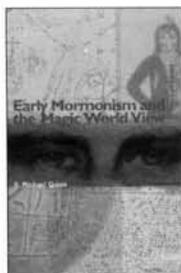
by Donna Hill ~~\$16.95~~ \$15.25

This 1977 classic biography of the Prophet, the most comprehensive to date, is at last back in print, now in paperback. Hill rejects reductionism in favor of a broader view of Smith on his own terms as prophet and man. (Signature Books)

The Lord's University: Freedom and Authority at BYU

by Brian Kagel and Bryan Waterman ~~\$19.95~~ \$17.95

For instilling orthodoxy in its students, Brigham Young University gets high marks—but low marks for limiting speech, press, assembly, and due process. *The Lord's University* chronicles two decades of BYU turmoil as it documents public announcements, intimate conversations, closed-door meetings, and more. (Signature Books)



Adventures of a Church Historian by Leonard J. Arrington, ~~\$29.95~~ \$26.95

Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Western Historian by Brigham D. Madsen, ~~\$31.95~~ \$28.75

The Best of Bagley: 20 Years of Cartoons with The Salt Lake Tribune's Pat Bagley ~~\$12.95~~ \$11.65

Brigham Young: American Moses by Leonard J. Arrington, ~~\$15.95~~ \$14.35

Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation among the Mormons by Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, ~~\$16.95~~ \$15.25

Early Mormon Documents, Vol. 2 ed. by Dan Vogel, ~~\$44.95~~ \$40.45

Faith and Intellect as Partners in Mormon History ed. by Leonard J. Arrington, ~~\$6.95~~ \$5.35

Father of Lies by Brian Evenson, ~~\$22.00~~ \$19.80

From Mission to Madness: Last Son of the Mormon Prophet by Valeen Tippetts Avery, ~~\$19.95~~ \$17.95

Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints 1830-1900 by Leonard J. Arrington, ~~\$44.95~~ \$34.45

Great Basin Kingdom Revisited: Contemporary Perspectives ed. by Thomas G. Alexander, ~~\$14.95~~ \$13.45

In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith by Todd Compton, ~~\$39.95~~ \$35.95

A Mormon Democrat: The Religious and Political Memoirs of James Henry Moyle ed. by Gene A. Sessions, ~~\$85.00~~ \$76.50

The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, ~~\$14.95~~ \$13.45

New Genesis: A Mormon Reader on Land and Community ed. by Terry Tempest Williams, ~~\$29.95~~ \$26.95

New Mormon Studies CD-ROM: A Comprehensive Resource Library published by Smith Research Associates, ~~\$200.00~~ \$180.00

Pat & Kirby Go to Hell by Pat Bagley and Robert Kirby, ~~\$9.95~~ \$8.95

Utah's Black Hawk War by John Alton Preston, ~~\$19.95~~ \$17.95

Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young by Ronald W. Walker, ~~\$25.00~~ \$22.50

Title	Qty	Price	Name _____
_____	_____	_____	Address _____
_____	_____	_____	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
_____	_____	_____	Phone _____
Subtotal _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MC <input type="checkbox"/> Amex <input type="checkbox"/> Disc
U.S. Shipping & Handling (\$2 first book; \$1 ea. additional) _____			Card # _____ Exp _____
TOTAL _____			Signature _____

Mail order to SUNSTONE, 343 N. Third West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103-1215
or call 801/355-5926 to place credit card order, or fax order to 801/355-4043

SUNSTONE

343 N. Third West
Salt Lake City, UT 84103-1215

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Salt Lake City, UT
Permit No. 2929



Appropriating the looks and styles of popular U.S. culture is a current trend in marketing to Mormons. These T-shirts imitate the styles and logos of the National Basketball Association, the movie Men in Black, and fashion designers Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfger.