

lofty ends, can it be said that all specific cases of suffering serve such ends? This seems to be what the author is saying, that all cases of suffering are potentially instrumental goods. Further, this position seems to be undergirded by a kind of "pre-determinism" which governs specific cases of suffering: "For you, your child, . . . there is no other way" (p. 61). "Perhaps you anticipated these exact circumstances" (p. 58).

Granted that up to a point suffering may serve some useful function. In life as we know it pain often exceeds this point, and it is an evasion of the facts to contend that it is always an opportunity for the exercise of virtue. Even if a case could be made for this position on the human level, it would leave untouched the whole problem of animal suffering. The mouse in agony under the torturing paw of the cat could hardly be convinced that his suffering is not too high a price to pay for the pleasure, or any other virtue, that might accrue to the cat, or to the universe. Surely it is impossible to observe the vast amount of suffering among animals and the suffering of humans that often makes men less than human and look upon it as even "strangely beautiful," or "count it all joy" (p. 60).

One may learn to accept his own suffering and even bear much of the suffering of others, all in the belief that ultimate goodness and wisdom would somehow account for it were he able to see the whole picture. But any suggestion that we see the whole at the present is to ensnare ourselves in a shallow piety, or exhibit an impertinence unbecoming to a species with our limitations.

The foregoing examples of inaccuracy and inadequate handling of the subjects treated may seem unimportant, but they add up to the very strong impression which I received from reading the book: important problems were raised, but the author, though I am sure he is equal to the task, does not treat them adequately. Perhaps this cannot be done within the framework of a book which tries to combine popular edification with philosophical scholarship.

In spite of my critical comments, I believe that this book helps to fill a gap in current Mormon literature and should have wide circulation in the Church. One now can wish only that the praise and approval of the original essays would have stimulated the author to a more thorough treatment before publishing them in book form.

## A CAUTIONARY VOICE

*Claudia Bushman*

*You and Your Child's World.* By Elliott D. Landau. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1967. 312 pp., \$2.95. Claudia Bushman is a graduate of Wellesley and Brigham Young University and a mother of five.

Dr. Landau, a specialist in child development at the University of Utah, has compiled a warm and sensitive book of advice for parents. The book consists of short discussions on special topics, many edited from his KSL radio program, and a few borrowed from special experts, former teachers, and studies which he has "admired and thought worthy of [his] readers." The selections are arranged in groups according to the chronological age of the child, and while

the material is not comprehensive, cross referencing and indexing lead the reader easily to whatever he seeks.

My own opinion is that in these days those parents who are really concerned about how to bring up their children tend to have good instincts about how to do it; and that what they need is reassurance rather than rules. Child experts who operate from a theoretical plane tend to be intimidating. Dr. Landau's great popularity as expert and lecturer is largely due to his approachability. Very small exposure to this book convinces the reader that its author is a thoroughly *nice* man. He *cares* about children and makes decisions in terms of their well-being. He makes no claims to omniscience and sometimes refers to his own problems as a parent. Reassured by this human interaction, we feel we could take our problems to this man. He understands and would give wise advice.

He includes no capsule philosophy, but a number of ideas are repeated or voiced with such anguish that they seem to be central to his thought. The basic one is that each child is an individual with his own developmental schedule, personality, and peculiar gifts. To help a child unfold and blossom, a parent should love and encourage him, praise his progress, and appreciate his uniqueness. If pushed past his abilities, he may be forced into failures that may make life-time patterns. Dr. Landau says, "Childhood is not made for pressure-cooker learning—and yet seemingly wise and gracious people are grinding and boiling their pre-schoolers in cauldrons of hyperactivity so that there will be some sizeable acquisition of intellectual power" (p. 108).

Dr. Landau does not think that children should be pushed into reading before school age; those that start later soon catch up. He contends that competition should not be fostered, and that children who are constantly pressured to excel at school, in games, music lessons, etc., will, instead of excelling, tend to be below average in whatever they do. Parents should develop their children's self-respect and encourage activities that help children learn to think well of themselves.

Parental warmth should begin at birth. Parents should speak and sing to their babies, and cuddle and pat and hug them. A child can best fulfill his potential in an atmosphere of love, where he is taught by good example. For this reason Dr. Landau thinks that society should be easier on juvenile delinquents who are suffering greatly already and are not likely to be improved by punitive action. He assumes that all behavior is caused, and that the only cure for unacceptable actions is to find and treat the problems.

One particularly practical suggestion he makes is to ask ourselves each day if we have communicated with each of our children and, if so, what the nature of that communication has been. This simple test provides a framework for examining the quality of our relations with each of our children. Awareness of the negative and unpleasant things we say may help us to say a few nice things and strengthen our relationships.

That many people would consider Dr. Landau's philosophy too soft is obvious from the common remarks we hear such as "Your brother could tie his shoes when he was much younger than you." "If he were my kid, I'd sure show him." "Children must be taught the value of good hard work." "Get in here

and practice until you can play this piece decently.” It is a common assumption that if you do not push your children, they will never learn anything. Yet how easily we get locked in awful struggles of will with our children, spending huge amounts of wasted energy, building hostility and rebellion. Authoritarian persons may not be able to swallow Dr. Landau’s policy of loving permissiveness, but this book should prove a cautionary voice for each thoughtful parent. In this affluent age, when people depend increasingly on the beauty and accomplishments of their children as final symbols of status, we need constant warning lest we exploit our greatest treasures.



## A MORMON RECORD

*Lowell M. Durham*

Lowell Durham received his Ph.D. in composition from the University of Iowa. He is currently Professor of Music at the University of Utah where he previously served as Dean of the College of Fine Arts. He is choir director in both his ward and stake.

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