

mit me to indicate how I live in two worlds. I hope to fill in details later in sufficient depth to clarify my position.

First of all, I look upon religion and secular thought as being complementary to each other as well as conflicting at times. I no longer seek to harmonize them with each other in the sense of expecting them to give me identical views of reality (as I once did). I let them find a harmony in my life as I draw upon each to meet my needs. I reject, for example, those well meant efforts of people whom I respect, who try to make a biology or geology text out of Genesis, Chapter One, or who read a theory of physics into Doctrine and Covenants, Section 93. For me, the scriptures declare the existence of God and his will and man's obligation to God and fellowman, and they leave me free to explore nature and human nature as I will.

Secondly, I think it is easier to appreciate both religion and secular thought if we exercise more humility in both fields. Religionists have a tendency — based on their faith in revelation — to reduce God and his ways to man's ways of doing and perceiving things. The longer I live, the more appreciation I have for the conception that man was created in the image of God and not vice versa. The Creator is the prototype, the original "picture" — the Transcendent. It is becoming to a man of faith to realize that his knowledge of God and his eternal truth is relative to the person's capacity and experience. Likewise, it is also appropriate for any scientist or philosopher or historian to remember that he is dealing with fragments of reality and that he cannot see nor know the whole. Modesty is becoming to him as well.

SOUNDING BRASS AND TINKLING SYMBOLS

Mormons and Infidelity

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In Masters' and Johnson's recent book *Human Sexual Inadequacy*, I ran across some startling information that made a whole group of other data collected accidentally and incidentally over a period of ten years suddenly coalesce and quite jar me. They indicated that a sizable number of patients whom they had treated for sexual problems had been previously seduced by former therapists they had consulted seeking a solution to their sexual problems. Thinking back to my own clinical training I remembered that no one had ever really warned me about the problems that transference and counter-transference could get a psychotherapist into (i.e., getting emotionally or otherwise involved with the patient). And yet over a period of years I had known many colleagues and therapists (L.D.S. and non-L.D.S.) who had

become emotionally and sometimes sexually involved with people they were treating. Sometimes this led to divorce for the therapist, sometimes not. In the case of the Mormons excommunication or disfellowshipment occasionally occurred, though not always.

In sifting through cases both of clients and colleagues where this occurred it seemed that certain occupations were particularly "high risk" or vulnerable, including lawyers, salesmen, physicians, psychotherapists and counselors of all kinds, and certain businesses; the people in all these professions had frequent, close, and personal association with many members of the opposite sex other than their spouses. This tended to facilitate the formation of dependency relations between men and women not married to each other. And it has

become increasingly obvious to me that despite the high resolve, good morals, and great personal integrity which characterize many persons of the L.D.S. faith, we all have personal vulnerabilities and private neuroses which occasionally and under certain circumstances render many of us susceptible.

Since this can and does happen even to sophisticated therapists, it is not surprising that ministers, bishops and even their counselors or others in the Church can also be vulnerable and occasionally fall prey. It would seem to me a wise practice to give all newly called Bishops some practical counsel on how to effectively deal with the transference problem.

In working with L.D.S. couples where one party has become caught up in an affair, I've been impressed by how many have been "good people" who slowly, almost imperceptibly and unknowingly, have drifted into such a relationship, then suddenly have found themselves trapped by an intense passion for another person. And whether sexual activity was involved or not, the emotional commitment to that party often created static in the person's own marital relationship, making it difficult for them to see their spouse in a generous light or even to want to work out their own marital problems. All minor irritations became magnified and provided rationalizations for them to continue with their flirtation or affair.

It's like having the flu; you painfully know you have it, but seem to have little power to do much about it. The individual knows he's being irrational, wrong — "I'd die if the kids found out," but, "I can't help myself, I can't give the other person up yet." There appears to be absolutely no relationship between such things as IQ or social class level and vulnerability to this distressing disease. It can strike anyone who is susceptible.

The best defense for people in the "dangerous" occupations or Church positions is to have full awareness of the dynamics of transference and counter-transference so that they recognize the problem before they are trapped or are apparently "powerless" to effectively deal with it. Anybody who counsels others (sharing their deepest feelings and helping with their most serious problems) will frequently find himself venerated, liked, adored, and even loved by some of his patients, clients, parishoners,

secretaries, dental assistants or ward members. This is, of course, what we mean by transference and it can be an extremely heady and ego-inflating experience. During the process of counseling or therapy the counselor must be secure and stable enough not to be seduced by this type of flattering experience. But for a therapist, or Bishop, to be truly effective I'm personally convinced that he has to have a loving wife and a good marriage, otherwise in time his "well will run dry"; he will lose his effectiveness and his own needs will eventually intrude into the interview and relations with those he counsels.

The notion that a light flirtation can be harmless in such a setting can turn into a cruel hoax. It attacks the very heart of the marital relationship, involving trust between the husband and wife. That may sound like a corny platitude, but I've spent many months and years shoring up collapsed egos of women (or men) who turn their aggression inward and hate themselves, not their mate because he (or she) strayed. They frequently blame themselves, somehow, for what happened. It was almost as if they were saying, "If I were more lovable or an adequate person he would never have gotten interested in someone else . . . I must be no good. I hate myself."

With the rejected partner feeling inadequate and unlovable, both people often foul up their relationships with the children. They often find it difficult to discipline or set limits, fearing that they might also lose their children's love. The children sensing this begin to manipulate the parent in unhealthy ways for all concerned.

With the erring partner too much psychic energy is consumed dealing with guilt, covering up lies, or setting up a foolproof rendezvous — to leave an adequate amount of libido for spouse, work, and kids. Frequently and ironically this individual finds that he can't extricate himself gracefully from the illicit relationship when he is ready to return home. The other party now won't let him go and uses guilt plus many other very effective mechanisms to hold on to him (or her).

To carry off an "affair" successfully one needs to have a full blown character disorder without conscience or guilt. But most Mormons have a sufficient sense of responsibility or superego not to get off the hook that easily. So they suffer or move in the direction of apostasy.