

ballooning beauties. (The young prophet's sisters are just such a bunch: they wobble flabbily as he chases them upstairs, intending to goose them.) In addition, the (intended) lively, earthy family talk that fills the books is not always, in my view, effective; the characters are sufficiently convinced of their own cuteness that I am reminded of the excesses of Heinlein's later novels. Presumably, though, what can't be cured must be endured.

Some years ago I expressed in print my disappointment that Card, an obviously talented writer in a largely transcendental

genre, did not invest his writing with more explicitly Mormon themes. Now he has done it, and in spades: he has chosen the biggest Mormon story of them all. The Joseph Smith story is something that unfailingly calls up shivers and awe in the most jaded Latter-day Saint, regardless of our disillusionment with modern mega-institutions and attitudes. The raw chutzpah of choosing that story takes one's breath away. So far Card has not disappointed us, for the most part. I would venture to say that the Prophet himself would at least smile at this enterprise.

Honoring Arrington

New Views of Mormon History: Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington, edited by Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 438 pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by F. Ross Peterson, professor of history, Utah State University, and editor, *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT*.

LEONARD ARRINGTON deserves to be honored. Nineteen of his professional associates, former employees, and friends have each contributed to this book a previously unpublished essay to thank a man who fostered their individual careers. Although Arrington's contributions are highlighted in the introduction and the volume ends with a detailed bibliography of his work, the essays do not focus on him or on his all-too-brief tenure as LDS Church historian from 1972–80. Each essay covers a topic of special interest to its author; only the authors' appreciation for Arrington links the pieces together.

In some respects the volume is a historiographical statement. During Arrington's years as Church historian, numerous scholars, young and old, inside and outside of the Church, were able to utilize Church archives and records in an unprecedented

way. The result was a "New" Mormon history or at least a new view of the Mormon saga. Indeed, historians produced numerous volumes and articles published by scholarly presses and professional journals. The "in-house" publications also benefited by the breadth of historical research and writing. Numerous religious historians like Jan Shipps, Lawrence Foster, and Mario dePilis considered Mormons writing objectively about their own historical experience new and exciting. Arrington and his colleagues shared a brief but fleeting moment of open scholarly glory.

But the reality of writing objective institutional history in a grand way became dangerous to the larger Church institution. Arrington's plan for an officially sanctioned, eighteen-volume sesquicentennial history was scuttled in midstream, he was demoted, and his division was exiled to Brigham Young University in Provo—minus the historical documents.

Most of the contributors to this festschrift participated with Arrington in that shining moment. They offer here articles that exemplify what Arrington sponsored and encouraged. Their work is in areas familiar to them; their narratives are neither threatening nor earthshaking. Like Arrington himself, the essays are appropriately calm, dispassionate, and straightforward.

ward. Each has considerable merit, but none will change many critical minds who champion a need for creative historical analysis rather than narrative description. However, their efforts deserve a close reading. I was most excited by two essays about women in the Church. Carol Cornwall Madsen's "Schism in the Sisterhood: Mormon Women and Partisan Politics, 1890-1900" and Jill Mulvay Derr's "Changing Relief Society Charity to Make Way for Welfare, 1930-1944" make significant contributions and fit well together in this collection since Arrington championed women's issues and history. The political and social welfare contributions of Mor-

mon women were and are tremendous. These essays certainly paint an alternative picture to the stereotype of homebound, downtrodden Mormon women.

In the final analysis, this collection of essays adds significantly to Mormon historiography. While the viewpoints are not necessarily new or intended to revise earlier preconceptions, the essays are good history, and they do service to the mentor and colleague honored. They illustrate a continuing need for a complete and open analysis of the Mormon historical experience. Until the Church overcomes its fear of history, we must view the Arrington period as a mirage, so near, yet so far.

A Celebration of Diversity

A Heritage of Faith: Talks Selected from BYU Women's Conferences, edited by Mary E. Stovall and Carol Cornwall Madsen (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 191 pp., index, \$10.95.

Reviewed by Helen Cannon, a teacher in the English department at Utah State University.

IN 1986 DESERET BOOK published an anthology of talks selected from BYU women's conferences. That collection, *Woman to Woman*, as the title suggests, included talks exclusively by Church women. Now, a 1988 anthology includes both male and female voices.

That is one difference in the two collections. Another is that, while *Woman to Woman* listed no editor, *A Heritage of Faith* credits two competent ones, Mary E. Stovall and Carol Cornwall Madsen, who have selected and arranged the talks (from 1985, 1986, and 1987 women's conferences) thematically under the headings, "Seeking Spirituality," "Coping with Hard Realities," "Inspiration from the Past," "Women in an International Church," and "Individuality and Community." Though the talks probably were not originally written to

those assigned themes, they fit nicely under the headings now.

Stovall and Madsen have gathered here a balance of the bold and the conventional, of the provocative and the familiar. Consider, for instance, ninety-year-old Camilla Eyring Kimball's candid view of old age as "a time of dependency on others after a lifetime of being self-sufficient," a comment she immediately tempers with the reassurance that old age can hold the "satisfaction of enduring to the end by being faithful to important values in life" (p. 4). In a similar balance, she notes dangers of learning, while fondly relating her lifelong love of study and teaching. Citing 2 Nephi 9:28-29, Sister Kimball concludes "that learning has its risks. But on the other hand, ignorance has its risks too—just a different set" (p. 8).

Patricia Terry Holland takes a hard look at the complexity of women's concerns and cautions against the Paula-Perfect Syndrome of being "caught in the crunch of trying to be superhuman instead of realistically striving" (p. 12). From experience she counsels for a "stilling of the center," for an "acceptance of diversity," and for faith in a Mother in Heaven. This section