

the ill-informed have attempted to quell what seemed to them inappropriate music for worship, disregarding both cultural differences and the passion in musical praise. We should spend less time and effort worrying about form and more lauding content. A jubilant African song of praise does not express love of God less than a somber Anglo-American hymn. Perhaps even the pop-Mormon songs we currently hear sung in breathy adolescent voices have a valid role in helping young people express their religious feelings. They are no different from past popular "gospel" songs such as "How Great Thou Art," which, Hicks tells us, Church musical leaders fought adamantly for decades.

*Mormonism and Music* is a solid foundation work on which to build. Hicks has laid out the basic story, uncovering many

subjects appropriate for further exploration. One potentially fertile area would be a study of the informal folk and popular Mormon music of the twentieth century to parallel the institutional side that Hicks documents here so well.

*Mormonism and Music* is an important, balanced, and long-needed contribution to LDS scholarship. It is incredible that no one has written such a history before. Music is basic to Mormon worship. It is also art, capable of moving its listeners at least as much as prayers and theology. As Hicks says in his introduction, "Religion and art as institutions have maintained a fundamental enmity . . . doubtless because they make similar claims and demands" (p. x). When religion and art are allied, the marriage may be rocky, but always interesting.

## Two Covenant Systems

*Promises Made to the Father: Mormon Covenant Organization* by Rex Eugene Cooper (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), viii + 235 pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by Marianne Perciaccante, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia.

HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN religion often see a connection between Mormons and Puritans, if only because most early Saints came from New England. However, many studies which have mentioned similarities between these religions have done so cursorily, and until now, none has studied the relationship between the chief Puritan and Mormon sources of social and religious organization: their covenants.

Rex Eugene Cooper, in a revision of his University of Chicago dissertation in anthropology, which won the 1986 Reese History Award from the Mormon History Association, finds a significant correspondence between the two religions' covenantal conceptions. His goal, though, is not to develop the "genealogical" or historical association between these conceptions;

rather, his training in British anthropology leads him to demonstrate the similarities between the two groups, while maintaining "a healthy wariness about assuming influence in the presence of similarity" (p. 4). Hence, he uses his exposition of the Puritan covenant system less to indicate Puritan historical influence upon early Mormon religious organization than to show what is latent in historians' and anthropologists' understandings of the historical evolution and current status of Mormon covenant organization.

Building upon the work of fellow anthropologist David Schneider, Cooper elucidates the correlation between the covenantal principles by presenting categories of American kinship organization upon which, he says, Mormon and Puritan structures are also premised: "the order of nature (things as they exist in nature) and the order of law (human regulations and conditions and representations resulting from their implementation)" (p. 26). He asserts that kinship relationships based upon both categories are the strongest. Thus, uncovering the analogous and dissimilar structures allows

him to go beyond surface resemblances and differences, so that at one point he can summarize the functioning of the covenants as follows: "While Puritan unity was ultimately based upon *political* domination [order of law], Mormon unity was predicated upon hierocratic domination; in Mormonism then, priesthood replaced the Puritan state as the fundamental basis of religious order [ultimately order of law and order of nature]" (p. 90).

Understandably, Cooper's presentation of the Puritan covenant structure is essentially static. However, while referring to the paradigm of Puritan structure, he does offer a precise discussion of the historical development and evolution of Mormon covenant organization. He indicates two major developments within Mormon covenant structure: (1) the covenant as defined through the law of consecration and stewardship in the pre-Nauvoo period; (2) the covenant based upon kinship or patriarchal order—developed during the Nauvoo period and subjected subsequently and again more recently to relatively minor changes.

As is necessary in all viable social movement organizations or religious systems, Mormon covenant organization adapted itself to its environment. Accordingly, in the pre-Nauvoo period of Church history, Joseph Smith sought to reinforce group solidarity by encouraging the Saints to gather in one location (the City of Zion) and by promoting economic cooperation through individual participation in the stewardship system—families gave their excess wealth to the community. Consequently, those who participated in this system unitedly offered their property to be held in common by the hierocracy and thus

became dependent upon the community.

When practical difficulties rendered this structure ineffective, sealing rituals based upon natural or adoptive kinship were instituted to create solidarity dependent upon lineage perception rather than upon gathering in one locale. This kinship system, based upon the Saints' under-

standing of their descent from Abraham, created an official connection between living families and their ancestors back to Abraham; and it reinforced the value of the family's natural worth as an organizational unit. Eventually, but temporarily, this system, already based upon the order of nature, took on an aspect of the order of law: to solidify the community and help those involved achieve salvation, adults were permitted and encouraged to be adopted by hierarchically advanced members of the community.

This last understanding of covenant organization also served the practical function of providing an analogous structure for the companies traveling to Utah. This patriarchal covenantal structure—without the prominence of adoptive sealings of adults—is the system which has endured, and which, Cooper indicates, has "facilitated worldwide development of the Mormon church," allowing for "an institutionalized pattern of comprehensive meanings, to provide for orderly transformations in understandings, and to enable the organization to meet and master changing circumstances" (p. 208).

Hence, through allusion to the Puritan covenantal paradigm, Cooper demonstrates that Mormon covenant structure initially depended upon the order of law in the pre-Nauvoo stewardship system. Thereafter this structure evolved synergistically with historical circumstances to create a more stable, yet more adaptable, system under the order of law and nature. This admirable system has continued to foster the growth of the Church throughout the world.

Cooper presents his theory reasonably, clearly, and thoroughly. He does, however, remark troublingly that "although various aspects of the patriarchal system have developed through time, my analysis will be essentially ahistorical for the sake of clarity" (p. 102); yet his discussion of the evolution of covenantal organization includes references to historical changes and circumstances. In addition, his admirable discussion of Puritan cove-

nant organization as a comparative analytical structure allows him to indicate that particular historical developments are facets of general patterns that religious organizations follow.

The one disturbing feature of Cooper's work is his insistence on placing the Mormons and Puritans in a purely heuristic relationship, and his refusal to indicate the historical relationship between the two religions. Although this disinclination to discuss the implications of a historical relationship does not lead to significant distortions, it does create a notable gap in his work. It seems as if he is dodging an obvious genealogical linkage. Such a failure is difficult to understand given that Cooper is, on the other hand, willing to indicate genealogical linkages between

some nineteenth-century Church beliefs and nineteenth-century American culture: societal and Church understandings of "genetics and culture" (p. 117), the place of women (p. 124), and "kinship amity and domestic order" (p. 168). Ignoring the influence of historical associations would not in any way take away from his analysis, while referring to the associations could have provided another helpful hermeneutical plane.

Nevertheless, this criticism does not take away from the insightful anthropological assertions that Cooper does derive from his analysis, nor does it in any way invalidate the interpretations which he gleans from the paralleling of the two covenant systems.

## Delusion as an Exceedingly Fine Art

*Bones* by Franklin Fisher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), 225 pp., \$17.95.

Reviewed by Lavina Fielding Anderson, editor of the *Journal of Mormon History*, past president of the Association for Mormon Letters, and former associate editor of *DIALOGUE*.

ABOUT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher invited Franklin Fisher, a young and aesthetically bearded professor of English at the University of Utah, to read from his novel in progress at a gathering of the Association of Mormon Letters. The manuscript was "Bones," and the scene he selected was comic: his protagonist, a missionary, was one of several priesthood holders called upon to cast the evil spirit out of a woman lying in bed. The problem was one of logistics. How could they all get their hands on her head at the same time? While the uncooperative woman lay hissing at them faintly, they gathered around, leaning precariously far and bracing themselves against, and even on, the sagging bed. Amazingly enough, in this scene waiting for a disaster, the young protagon-

ist had a spiritual experience and the exorcism worked.

I did not know Franklin Fisher and have not seen him or any of his works since then, but I remembered the title of the manuscript and that great comic scene. When I saw *Bones* listed in the University of Utah Press catalogue, I could hardly wait to read the book.

It was a good thing I remembered that scene. I didn't like the first section and dragged myself with increasing reluctance through the sexual obsessions and social ineptitudes of Lorin Hood. Lorin is an artist of sorts in Los Angeles, who is painting grotesque still lifes, waiting on tables in a coffeehouse, and passively observing his doomed and unraveling relationship with his girlfriend, Yvonne, and her brief successor, Gloriana. When Yvonne moves him out, he goes ungracefully, unrolling his sleeping bag on a succession of increasingly inhospitable floors and leaving socks, toothbrushes, and clothes trailing behind him.

When there is nowhere else to go, he ends up back in Utah where, within the space of a page and with absolutely no explanation of why he would do such a