

were not as radically different from other groups during the nineteenth century. Other historians present stronger cases for the opposite argument, pointing out that one of the reasons Mormons felt so much persuasion from their neighbors was because their only true church concept differed with American pluralism.

Most of Underwood's research is based on early Mormon publications. He uses very few other primary sources. Underwood published many of the ideas as articles; many of the chapters present the same material and have almost exactly the same titles as the articles.

The book does not provide all the answers that it could. All of the material covers from 1830 to 1846 when Joseph Smith headed the church and the short time following his death. But other than on the dust jacket, the author never describes his time frame. He also does not have a clear chronology of Mormon history. While other histories include the church's experiences in Kirtland, Missouri, and Nauvoo, a reader without that background would be lost.

Throughout the book, Underwood drops interesting ideas but does not develop them. For example, he suggests, "It cannot merely be assumed that what a modern reader un-

derstands by a given passage in the Book of Mormon is what a Latter-day Saint in the 1830s would have understood by the same passage. To recognize the reality of such interpretive differences one has only to look at the contrasting uses made of the same Book of Mormon by the RLDS and the LDS church" (76-77). Period. The reader unacquainted with the Mormon past is left wondering what the RLDS church is and how it differs from the LDS church. The LDS reader who knows about the Mormon church but nothing about the RLDS church questions how Reorganized members view the Book of Mormon—and as a student of the history of both churches, I am not sure what he is referring to.

On the same page, Underwood carefully shows how "a search of early Church literature" reveals the ways leaders used the Book of Mormon. On page 78 he has two tables of the most common citations and principal themes used. Neither the text nor the notes bother to name the sources. I could point to other examples where Underwood does not present his sources and develop his ideas. Readers will leave the book knowing something about *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* but with many unanswered questions.

## Listening to Each Other

*Religion, Feminism, and Freedom of Conscience: A Mormon/Humanist Dialogue.* Edited by George D. Smith (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, and Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994).

Reviewed by Florian J. Wineriter, a certified Humanist Pastoral Counselor and president of Humanists of Utah, a local chapter of the American Humanist Association.

*Mormonism:* We believe men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression.

*Humanism:* We believe people must take personal responsibility for their individual behavior.

The editor has carefully selected several outstanding papers presented at the three-day Mormon/Humanist Dialogue in Salt Lake City in September 1993. The presenters represent clear, thoughtful, and challenging thinkers from both organizations, including some former Mormons who are now leaders of the Humanist movement. One gets the impression that Mormons and Humanists have many areas of agreement concerning human responsibility for making this life not only tolerable but meaningful, for being concerned about the welfare of the under-privileged and the unfortunate members of society, and for developing a global concept of the human condition. Deliberating the messages of the various authors, one might see Humanism as Mormonism minus its theology!

Paul Kurtz, emeritus professor of philosophy at State University of New York at Buffalo and chair of the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism (CODESH), opens the seminar by writing, "This dialogue is historic, for as far as we are aware it is the first formal exchange of ideas by Mormons and Humanists. In a pluralistic society, such as America, it is important that people from diverse religious and nonreligious traditions engage in debate to define differences and more meaningfully to discover common ground" (xvii).

The book is divided into three sections for ease in comparing the two philosophies. Part I, "Freedom of

Conscience," can be summarized by L. Jackson Newell, a professor at the University of Utah, who writes, "I owe a personal and intellectual debt to both Mormonism and Humanism . . . because I have seen them through both of these lenses." Newell concludes his presentation, "There is no greater hope for humanity, nor any greater threat to tyranny and injustice, than a free and responsible conscience, coupled with the courage and the will to act" (39).

Part II, "Academic Freedom," discusses one of the secular areas where Mormonism and Humanism struggle for accommodation. Frederick S. Buchanan, also a professor at the University of Utah, writes, "I believe that Mormonism officially endorses untrammeled scholarship while unfortunately promoting an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust" (84). Vern L. Bullough, professor emeritus at State University of New York at Buffalo, writes, "Humanists base their belief system on a rational process of arriving at objective truth, namely the scientific method of testing and verifying the empirical world" (63). The long struggle at Brigham Young University to balance religion and scholarship has no chance of success, according to Gary James Bergera whose essay is heavily documented with footnotes. The authors of the Academic Freedom section deal extensively with the moral and ethical requirements imposed at BYU on students, faculty, and curricula, requirements that question whether BYU should be designated a seminary rather than a university.

Part III, "Feminism," is critical of both Mormonism and Humanism for failing to recognize the contributions women have made to religion, secu-

larism, politics, and world culture in general. Bonnie Bullough, professor emeritus of nursing, State University of New York at Buffalo, summarizes the problem: "Humanist men like to be taken care of by devoted wives, just like Mormon men; they continue to focus on great rational philosophers of the past, when paternalism reigned supreme" (121).

My favorite section of the book is

the epilogue, an essay written by Walter Lippman in 1939 suggesting that the Freedom to Speak mandates a Responsibility to Listen. "We must protect the right of our opponents to speak because we must hear what they have to say" (154). I'm pleased the editor added the epilogue because it summarizes the value of this publication—Mormons and Humanists "listening to each other."