

pivotal importance of the problem of evil and how Mormons may address it. There are also criticisms of Roberts by scientist Evenson, but his work contains important confusions and inadequacies, for example, when he talks of "beautiful and consistent mathematical theories" (cxix). Kurt Godel showed us in 1931 that all mathematical theories are complete only if they are inconsistent, and consistent only if they are incomplete. James B. Allen publishes an extremely important account as to why and how Roberts's work was not previously published. All in all, these essays are an important introduction to this vitally critical work.

Finally, little can be written in a review of this wonderful and important treatise. Let me draw attention to

one example to illustrate the importance of this publication. In chapter 2, for example, Roberts describes man "as existing" (22, Larson; 29, Welch). This is important, for we see that man is not "created" as other denominations claim, and this makes it possible to seriously claim that man is free or has "free agency" (24, Larson; 31, Welch). Roberts is addressing something most critically important here and he picks it up in chapter 8 when he talks of the "Eternity of Intelligences" and says that "intelligences are eternal—are among the uncreated things—and the indestructible things" (81-83, Larson; 81-83, Welch).

This one example alone shows the sophistication and depth of Roberts, and his insight should continually guide our understanding of Mormonism.

## Hypertextual Book of Mormon Study

*Book of Mormon Reference Library*, CD-ROM for Macintosh and Windows (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995).

*Book of Mormon Studybase*, for Windows (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995).

*LDS Classics CD-ROM*, CD-ROM for DOS (San Diego: Research Applications International, 1995).

*LDS Collectors Library 1995 Edition*, CD-ROM for Windows (Provo, UT: Infobases, 1995).

*Sunstone on Disk: 1974-1994*, 3.5 Disks for DOS (Salt Lake City: Sunstone Foundation, 1994).

*Ultimate LDS Library on CD-ROM*, for

Windows (American Fork, UT: Portals, 1995).

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BOOK OF MORMON CRITICISM IS entering an era envisioned by hypertext pioneer Vannevar Bush in 1945 in which

[w]holly new forms of encyclopedias will appear, ready-made with a mesh of associative trails running through them . . . The historian, with a vast chronological account of a people, par-

allels it with a skip trail which stops only at the salient items, and can follow at any time contemporary trails which lead him all over civilization at a particular epoch. There is a new profession of trail blazers, those who find delight in the task of establishing useful trails through the enormous mass of the common record. The inheritance from the master becomes, not only his additions to the world's record, but for his disciples the entire scaffolding by which they were erected.<sup>1</sup>

Bush's futuristic "trails" mimic what he dubbed the "intricate web of trails" that rapidly conveys associative thoughts in the human brain. Unlike the mind, however, Bush's mechanized trails could never forget. This is the essence of hypertext—an accessible web of indelible information.

Several computer-oriented LDS resources using principles of hypertextual design are now available. With powerful search engines at their disposal, Book of Mormon students can explore linear texts in nonlinear ways. All of these electronic resources are dissimilar enough in content to warrant separate use by serious students of Mormon scripture. Noteworthy product features include:

- \* *Book of Mormon Reference Library*—A collection of Deseret Book publications on the Book of Mormon. Folio for Windows user interface (UI) with search capabilities, including search tracking via a Query history. Users can electronically mark important text or insert "sticky notes" using the Highlighter and Notes features. From the Customize menu, users can create their own cross-references with jump or pop-up links. Runs under Windows 3.1x or Windows 95.
- \* *Book of Mormon Studybase*—Includes prominent Book of Mormon publications from Bookcraft. Folio for Windows UI with extended search capabilities. In addition to customizable cross-referencing tools, *Studybase* lets users search their personalized references. Runs under Windows 3.1x or Windows 95.
- \* *LDS Classics CD-ROM*—First electronic resource to include the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, 1833 Book of Commandments, and 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. TextWare for DOS UI that is full-text search enabled. Users can create and search bookmarks. Runs under DOS 2.0x or Windows 95 (DOS).
- \* *LDS Collectors Library 1995 Edition*—An extensive collection of Mormon works critical to Book of Mormon studies, including early Mormon periodicals and journals. Folio for Windows UI with full search capabilities. *Collectors Library* lets users customize and search cross-references, bookmarks, and research notes. Users can access context-sensitive Help by pressing F1. Runs under Windows 3.1x or Windows 95.

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1. Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think," originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1945 (when Bush directed the Office of Scientific Research and Development). The essay is available on the World Wide Web @ <http://www.isg.sfu.ca/~duchier/misc/vbush/>.

- \* *Sunstone on Disk: 1974-1994*—Ninety-four issues of *Sunstone* and twenty-seven issues of *Sunstone Review*, searchable in a Folio for DOS UI. Runs under DOS 2.0x or Windows 95 (DOS).
- \* *Ultimate LDS Library on CD-ROM*—A comprehensive library of Mormon sources that includes hypertext access to illustrations in works such as the Book of Abraham. WordCruncher for Windows UI with a powerful, efficient search engine. Customizable bookshelves let users arrange *LDS Library* contents to facilitate research needs. Runs under Windows 3.1x or Windows 95.

As useful as these resources are, users should always check electronic references against the original documents, especially if they intend to publish any quotations from these sources. I have discovered transcription errors ranging from transposed letters to omitted text.

Hypertext stands to blur nostalgic

distinctions between reader and author because its design involves a myriad of conduits through which users can rapidly access and disseminate information. Imagine digital nonlinear texts—collaborative products—cultivating reader participation and contribution. Such texts, accessible via the Internet, challenge basic assumptions about language, learning, authorial-intent, reader-response, creativity, proprietorship, and the stability and autonomy of the academy.<sup>2</sup> Although electronic LDS resources have only begun to harness the possibilities of hypertext, their potential to alter the path of Book of Mormon studies is immense. Let me briefly illustrate.

Originally students of Mormon scripture laboriously combed through vast depositories of documents, culling relevant data such as when a Book of Mormon theme was first understood a certain way or what the implications are of Book of Mormon literary devices. Now complex queries such as these are more easily explored with the aide of hypertext tools.

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2. There is a growing corpus of literature exploring hypertextuality. See Espen J. Aarseth, "Nonlinearity and Literary Theory," in George P. Landow, ed., *Hyper/Text/Theory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 51-86; Kathleen Burnett, "Toward a Theory of Hypertextual Design," *Postmodern Culture* 3 (Jan. 1993, <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc>); J. Yellowlees Douglas, "How Do I Stop This Thing': Closure and Indeterminacy in Interactive Narratives," in Landow, *Hyper/Text/Theory*, 159-88; Robert M. Fowler, "The Fate of the Canon in the Electronic Age," *Forum* 9 (Mar./June 1993): 151-72; Edward M. Jennings, "The Text Is Dead; Long Live the Techst," *Postmodern Culture* 2 (Jan. 1992, <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc>); Michael Joyce, *Of Two Minds: Hypertext Pedagogy and Poetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); George P. Landow, "What's a Critic to Do? Theory in the Age of Hypertext," in Landow, *Hyper/Text/Theory*, 1-48; George P. Landow, *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Gunnar Liestøl, "Wittgenstien Genette, and the Reader's Narrative in Hypertext," in Landow, *Hyper/Text/Theory*, 87-120; Adrian Miles, "Hyperweb," *Postmodern Culture*, May 1996, <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc>; Mireille Rosello, "The Screener's Maps: Michel de Certeau's 'Wandersmänner' and Paul Auster's Hypertextual Detective," in Landow, *Hyper/Text/Theory*, 121-58; Greg Ulmer, "Grammatology Hypermedia," *Postmodern Culture* 1 (Jan. 1991, <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc>).

For example, in my essay “Apologetic and Critical Assumptions about Book of Mormon Historicity,”<sup>3</sup> I noted that some Book of Mormon students had incorrectly identified the *earliest* Mormon references to “Mahonri Moriancumer” and “Cumorah.” BYU religion professor Kent P. Jackson had suggested that George Reynolds uttered the earliest reference to “Mahonri Moriancumer” in 1892. I cited sources from 1878 and 1874 that used “Mahonri Moriancumer” and one from 1835 that called Jared’s brother “Moriancumer.”<sup>4</sup> Yet using the search feature of an electronic LDS resource, I located within seconds an additional source that would have taken weeks—if not longer—to find. On 25 July 1868 Brigham Young told a Mill Creek congregation:

You recollect reading of the brother of Jared, *Mahonri Moriancumer*, who saw the Lord. If he had not kept the commandments of God he would not have had power to see the finger of the Lord. But he was faithful in all things, and this gave *Mahonri* such exceeding great faith that he had a right to the blessings he asked. If we were to keep the commandments of God, as he did, we would have the right to claim the blessings even as *Mahonri* had.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, Book of Mormon arche-

ologist David A. Palmer and FARMS board member William J. Hamblin have claimed that Oliver Cowdery first christened the upstate New York hill “Cumorah” in 1835.<sup>6</sup> I cited a source from January 1833 in which William W. Phelps explicitly identified the New York drumlin as “Cumorah.”<sup>7</sup> I located that reference after reading all Mormon periodicals published during Smith’s lifetime. Again, using a hypertext resource, I discovered a reference that had escaped my attention. In February 1833 Phelps printed a hymn mentioning Cumorah:

An angel came down from the mansions of glory,/ And told that a record was hid in *Cumorah*,/ .../ When you hear these glad tidings.// A heavenly treasure; a book full of merit;/ It speaks from the dust, by the power of the Spirit;/ .../ When you hear these glad tidings./ .../ .../ When you hear these glad tidings.<sup>8</sup>

Readers are reintroduced to Book of Mormon language through hypertext. Edgar C. Snow, for example, suggests that the phrase “or rather” (e.g., Alma 1:15; 53:10) was a corrective or reiterative literary device (“[statement] or rather [restatement]”) used by Nephite writers because they lacked methods for erasing words on metallic plates.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, “such

3. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Fall 1993): 153-84.

4. *Ibid.*, 159n20.

5. *Journal of Discourses*, 12:244, emphasis added.

6. Hamblin subsequently corrected this mistake.

7. *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Jan. 1833): 8, cited in Metcalfe, “Apologetic and Critical Assumptions,” 160.

8. *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Feb. 1833): 9, emphasis added. In an 1842 letter Smith gave a recital of early Mormon epiphanies, a portion of which echoes Phelps’s phraseology: “And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah! Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfilment [sic] of the prophets—the book to be revealed” (D&C 128:20).

9. “Book of Mormon Musings: Reformed Egyptian Druthers,” *Sunstone* 19 (Mar. 1996): 16-17. Snow omits an obvious way to “erase” words on metal: scratch them out.

grammatical backpedaling should not be viewed as a weakness; on the contrary, it should impress us with the skill of the authors in creating a complex document on metal—in apparently only one draft—with so few instances of grammatical back-pedaling [sic].<sup>10</sup>

Hypertext offers a panoramic (re-) presentation of such literary phenomena; a search of “or rather” reveals that it appears once in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible (Gal. 4:9), twelve times in the Book of Mormon—ten of those in Alma<sup>11</sup>—and periodically in Joseph Smith’s other writings.<sup>12</sup> A hypertext search also confirms that the phrase is one among several corrective or reiterative devices used in the Book of Mormon.

A closely related Book of Mormon literary device is “{or} in other words.”<sup>13</sup> While a hypertext search re-

veals that this phrase is absent in the KJV, it appears repeatedly in Joseph Smith’s texts. Smith uses the phrase in the Book of Mormon,<sup>14</sup> the Doctrine and Covenants (and parallels in the Book of Commandments),<sup>15</sup> the Joseph Smith (Bible) Revision,<sup>16</sup> the Lectures on Faith,<sup>17</sup> the Book of Abraham and its predecessor, the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,<sup>18</sup> as well as his diary and private correspondence.<sup>19</sup>

Hypertextual data on “or rather” and “{or} in other words” elicits reader response. If ancient Nephites authored the literary devices, why are they almost never used by ancient Hebrew biblical writers? Why would these phrases be favored by diverse Book of Mormon authors over such an extended time period? If Smith authored the literary devices, in what way would Book of Mormon historic-

10. Snow, “Reformed,” 17.

11. See Mosiah 7:8; 8:17; Alma 1:15; 2:34; 17:18; 30:9; 32:16; 36:14; 39:16; 50:32; 53:10; 54:5.

12. Joseph Smith to Silas Smith, 26 Sept. 1833, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984), 298; Joseph Smith to Edward Partridge et al., 30 Mar. 1834, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 315; Lectures on Faith 5:5 (modern versification).

13. “[O]r rather” and “{or} in other words” are conflated in Alma 32:16: “. . . or rather, in other words . . .” Both phrases were used by other early nineteenth-century writers.

14. 1 Ne. preamble; 8:2; 10:4; 19:7; Mosiah 7:27; Alma 13:7; 32:16; 40:2; 40:19; 46:21; 48:15; 3 Ne. 3:6-7; 6:20.

15. D&C 10:17 (// 1830 Book of Mormon Preface); 42:37; 42:69; 42:74; 58:20; 59:13; 59:14; 61:23; 63:42; 78:8-9; 82:8-9; 82:17; 83:5; 88:127; 93:36; 93:45; 95:17; 101:12; 104:5; 104:68-69; 107:65-66; 128:8.

16. JSR Gen. 14:36; JSR Mark 9:3; JSR Luke 6:29; 14:26; 17:37; 23:32.

17. In Lectures scholars believe Smith authored. Lectures on Faith 5:5 (4 occurrences); 7:7 (3 occurrences).

18. Abr. Fac. 2:5; EAG, 29.

19. Joseph Smith Diary, 9 Nov. 1835, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 75; Joseph Smith Diary, 17 Dec. 1835, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 108; Joseph Smith to William Smith, 18 Dec. 1835 (Joseph Smith Diary), in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 114; Joseph Smith to William Phelps et al., 18 Aug. 1833, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 285; Joseph Smith et al. to Hezekiah Peck, 31 Aug. 1835, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 345; Joseph Smith to Caldwell county Mormons, 16 Dec. 1838, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 375; Joseph Smith et al. to Quincy, Illinois, Mormons, 20 Mar. 1839, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 403; Joseph Smith to Isaac Galland, 22 Mar. 1839, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 420.

ity remain intact? Was Smith then also author of the corrective or reiterative statements? If not, why not? If so, was he also author of the initial statements preceding "or rather"/"or" in other words"? And isn't a corrective/reiterative literary device more conducive to an oral tradition—such as Smith audibly dictating the Book of Mormon—than a literary tradition—such as ancient Nephites arduously inscrib-

ing metallic plates? How readers will resolve this type of data depends on the methods and assumptions each is willing to embrace.

Precisely what effects hypertextual Book of Mormon study will engender remain to be seen—undoubtedly they will be profound. Book of Mormon students would be remiss if they failed to use LDS hypertextual tools.