

A History of Dialogue, Part One: The Early Years, 1965-1971

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FOR NEARLY THIRTY-FOUR YEARS, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* has occupied a place, defined by former co-editor Allen Roberts, as the “patriarch (or matriarch)” of independent Mormon scholarship.¹ And notwithstanding an increase of anti-intellectual rhetoric² from the church hierarchy in recent years, the journal has managed not only to survive, but continues to provide nourishment for countless Mormons. Despite the fears from above (and their trickle-down effect), publications such as *Exponent II* (1974) and *Sunstone* (1975) followed the founding of *Dialogue* and have gained similarly loyal followings.³ Even church-sanctioned *Brigham Young University Studies*, which initiated publication several years prior to *Dialogue*, came to feel the competition brought on by the new journal and raised its content to higher levels of scholarship.⁴

1. Allen Roberts [with Eugene England, Elbert Peck, and Sue Paxman], “How Do *Sunstone*, *Dialogue*, and *Exponent II* Contribute to the Kingdom of God?” Washington D.C. Sunstone Symposium, 13 March 1993, audiotape #26, in my possession.

2. For recent speeches critical of intellectuals, see Boyd K. Packer, “The Mantle is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect,” *BYU Studies* 21 (Summer 1981): 269-278; Glen L. Pace, “Follow the Prophet,” *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 25-27; Dallin H. Oaks, “Alternate Voices,” *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 27-30; Malcolm R. Jeppson, “We Shall Not Be Led Astray-III,” undated typescript, in my possession; Boyd K. Packer, untitled speech to the All-Church Coordinating Council Meeting, 18 May 1993, typescript in my possession.

3. A serialized history of the Sunstone Foundation is also in progress, beginning with Lee Warthen, “History of *Sunstone*, Chapter 1: The Scott Kenney Years, Summer 1974-June 1978,” *Sunstone* 22 (June 1999): 48-61.

4. Indeed, *BYU Studies* editor Charles Tate, upon taking over the journal in 1967, stated, “I will freely admit that if I am able to bring *Studies* ‘of age,’ it will be because of the impact of *Dialogue*, which has given the Church a challenge and in that way aided it.” Charles D. Tate to Eugene England, 22 August 1967, Dialogue Foundation Collection, ACCN 385, Manuscripts Division, Special Collections, University of Utah Marriott Library, Salt Lake City. See also comments of Eugene England in “An Interview with Eugene England,” *The Carpenter* 1 (Spring 1970): 15-18.

Although *Dialogue* and other independent publications remain unknown to most Mormons, they are nevertheless an important presence for thousands within the faith. Some attest to the balance the unofficial organs bring to the official ones. For some Latter-day Saints, outlets such as *Dialogue* remain the only contact they have with anything Mormon. Others maintain that these publications have kept them active in the church. Mormon historian Thomas G. Alexander once acknowledged a faith-promoting aspect of *Dialogue* after witnessing an intellectual friend fall away from Mormonism. Stressing that “the church was meant for all people,” Alexander believed that this man, “who had so much to give and needed so much from the church,” probably would have stayed in the church had he found like minded Mormons to share his experience.⁵ For over three decades, *Dialogue* has aided Mormons in that way.

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The idea for *Dialogue* predates the project that came to fruition by nearly a decade. As early as the late 1950s, Eugene England and Wesley Johnson, two of the original founders of the journal, were independently envisioning a publication that would unify and bring together an otherwise scattered group of Mormons. Unknown to each other, they started sharing their ideas with friends. Johnson recalls discussions with colleagues in 1959 as a graduate student at Columbia University. The following year, as a pre-doctoral fellow at UCLA, he made the idea for an independent publication his topic for an LDS sacrament meeting sermon. This talk excited the young Mormons in the audience who agreed that there was a need for more scholarly, thought-provoking essays than what they read in the monthly *Improvement Era*, then the official Mormon magazine for adults.⁶ Two years before, while an undergraduate at the University of Utah, Eugene England had discussed the idea with some of his friends in Salt Lake City.⁷ The idea had come to him after feeling

5. Thomas G. Alexander, “The Pursuit of Understanding,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 110.

6. G. Wesley Johnson interview, conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 3 August 1996, in Provo, Utah. In January 1971, the *Improvement Era* was revamped and became the *Ensign*, with basically the same content. Other church magazines were also changed and or discontinued at that time.

7. Mary Lythgoe Bradford, “Ten Years with *Dialogue*: A Personal Anniversary,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 11(Spring 1978): 10. Bradford had been one of those involved in these early discussions at the University of Utah. She identifies others present as England’s wife, Charlotte, and Karl Keller, who was later teaching English at the State University of New York, Cortland, at the time *Dialogue* was founded. Both Bradford and Keller served the journal from the beginning in editorial positions.

“some uneasiness” about Mormonism’s indifference toward people with intellectual gifts.⁸ “I was critical of Church publications, in a sense, because I didn’t find them very meaningful for me and some others I knew,” England recalls.⁹ The decade ended without any action, however, as England, graduating with a B.A. in 1958, joined the Air Force, and Johnson, in 1961, went to Africa to write a doctoral dissertation on the political history of Senegal.¹⁰ By the mid-1960’s, however, a publication for Mormon intellectuals became, as England later put it, “an idea whose time had come.”¹¹

I. 1965-66: FIVE MORMONS WITH A VISION

I can tell you of my own experience at Harvard and Columbia, seeing good members of the Church leave the fold because they could not reconcile what they were being taught in class with what they learned in [priesthood] meeting on Sunday . . . Our hope is that our magazine may be a reassuring voice to these people, that they should not alienate themselves from Mormonism.

Wesley Johnson to Harvey L. Taylor, 3 December 1965

I think you state the big problem [for *Dialogue*] perfectly when you say it is to maintain “a highly developed sense of responsibility to the Church.” Doubtless many faithful members will be suspicious no matter what you do . . .

Richard L. Bushman to Wesley Johnson, 8 August 1965

By early summer, 1965, interest in a new Mormon publication was brewing, and people were talking. However, few would ultimately act. The project that finally bore fruit began at Stanford University, where England was now a graduate student in English and Johnson was a young professor of history. England and his wife Charlotte (Hawkins), who together had served a mission in Samoa from 1954-56, now had six young children. Johnson and his wife Marion (Ashby) had two.¹²

Unknown to each other, both England and Johnson resumed their discussions with friends about starting a Mormon journal, and at least three of them listened. From these conversations, Frances Menlove,

8. Eugene England Oral History, Interviews by Davis Bitton, 1975, typescript, 1, Oral History Program, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

9. “An Interview With Eugene England,” 11.

10. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996; Marion Ashby Johnson, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson on 21 September 1999.

11. England Oral History, 1; “An Interview with Eugene England,” 13.

12. G. Wesley Johnson, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 9 August 1999; Eugene England to Devery S. Anderson, 13 September 1999. Johnson had a third child born in 1970, and England’s sixth child was born during the summer of 1965, when the *Dialogue* founders first got together.

Joseph Jeppson (friends of England), and Paul Salisbury (a friend of Johnson) became excited enough to pledge their talents to this project.

Getting Started at Stanford

England and Johnson had yet to meet, however,¹³ but as it happened, they had a mutual friend. Diane Monson, a political science professor at Brigham Young University, occasionally visited Palo Alto, California and attended church meetings in the Stanford ward. England became acquainted with her from these visits; Johnson's friendship had begun years earlier during his undergraduate days at Harvard. As each excitedly told her about his own ideas, Monson realized that "something was in the air" and encouraged the two, who had only heard of one another, to get together.¹⁴ Remembering these conversations, she refers to her influence as "peripheral yet pivotal."¹⁵ One day after attending a Sunday school class taught by England, she urged him to get with Johnson and the others she was now hearing about. "So at Diane's suggestion," recalls England, "I got the group together at my home and we just talked about these feelings that we had."¹⁶

Frances Lee Menlove, a recent Pd.D. graduate in psychology, was now a research associate in the Stanford Psychology Department. She "became caught up with the idea" of starting a Mormon publication after conversations with England and Joe Jeppson. She credits her scientist grandfather for her interests in the Mormon intellectual arena. To him, Mormonism was unique, "because its domain, its scope, encompassed all of truth, no matter from what source or on what subject." He passed on valuable advice to his granddaughter: "Never be afraid of inquiry. Never be afraid of ideas," he urged. "The gospel can handle any clash between cultures, or religious faiths or with science." This project appealed to Menlove because, "I thought the idea of helping to provide a forum for ideas was a service. I believed it was an important, potentially significant service to others."¹⁷

Paul G. Salisbury had known Johnson since their experience as missionary companions in Valence, France, a friendship that had continued into college and beyond. Salisbury had also known Menlove since their days as students at Stanford. Salisbury, then an architect living in Salt

13. England, serving in the bishopric of the Stanford student ward, attended church there, while Johnson and his family attended a local ward in Palo Alto. Ashby Johnson interview, 21 September 1999.

14. Diane Monson, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 16 June 1998; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

15. Monson interview, 16 June 1998.

16. England Oral History, 3.

17. Frances Lee Menlove to Devery S. Anderson, 1 October 1997.

Lake City, had long recognized the need for an independent Mormon publication, and, like Johnson and England, had been discussing the idea with friends for nearly a decade.¹⁸ While attending Stanford, he and other students had held in-depth discussions on Mormonism during long drives back to Utah during Christmas and spring breaks and had talked of starting a journal focusing on Mormon history. Salisbury remembers these moments as “conversations that . . . remain in my mind as some of the most stimulating of my college days.” Johnson later brought up his idea to Salisbury when they visited in 1965. “The idea caught my imagination immediately as something I had thought about and had wanted to do.”¹⁹

Joseph H. Jeppson, who held degrees in history and law from the University of Utah and Stanford, taught history at the College of San Mateo when the group got together. His friendship with Menlove had begun in childhood when both attended church in the same Salt Lake City LDS ward. His interests in Mormon studies included church history and doctrine, and at Stanford, he had made a thorough study of the Mormon collection in the University library. His research forced him to conclude that official Mormon history often lacked in honesty and accuracy. Jeppson’s idea was to begin a newsletter that would remedy this. Mormon critics Jerald and Sandra Tanner had recently started their publication, the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, but Jeppson did not share their evangelical anti-Mormon bias and wanted to produce something “a little more literate and more neutrally oriented.” As Jeppson shared this with Menlove, she informed him of Salisbury’s similar conversations with her. Jeppson then passed all of this on to England.²⁰

Meetings took place throughout the summer at the England and Menlove homes, as well as in Johnson’s office at Stanford’s history department, and things began to take shape. Remembering the early planning meetings as “upbeat and exciting,” Menlove recalls that after they each suggested various formats, the group “began listening to each other’s ideas and the outcome was *Dialogue*.”²¹ England was primarily interested in Mormon theology and literature. Although Jeppson enjoyed theology, he wanted the publication to include Mormon history, as did Johnson and Salisbury.²² Menlove remembers, “I didn’t have a special agenda or area I wanted emphasized. I was hoping for a forum

18. Paul G. Salisbury to Devery S. Anderson, 17 May 1998; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996. Salisbury identifies one of these friends as Richard O. Cowan, who later joined the Religion Department at Brigham Young University.

19. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

20. Joseph Jeppson to Devery S. Anderson, 19 May 1998.

21. Menlove to Anderson, 1 October 1997.

22. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

where many subjects and issues could be discussed rigorously, respectfully and vigorously.”²³ Although the others did have specific interests, they also wanted the journal to promote a variety of fields.²⁴ More importantly, according to Salisbury, the group was “particularly united in our vision that the resources for such a journal lay in the Mormon intellectual community as found on various campuses across the U.S.” The journal would fill a void, as Salisbury explains further:

Early in our discussions we sensed the role of such a journal as helping define or create or bring together such a Mormon intellectual community. We all knew former colleagues, missionary companions, ward members who shared a life of the mind based in Mormonism—for which no forum or outlet or nourishment existed within the church [sic]. *BYU Studies* was the only such forum—and we all knew it—but it had been so fettered by its relationship with BYU, so subject to control and manipulation that it had been a great disappointment.²⁵

By August, it became apparent that the group had plenty of commitment—but not enough money to proceed. They temporarily remedied this situation by each pledging \$25.00, money to be used to print and mail a prospectus to a few hundred friends.²⁶ Written by England and signed by all five of the founders, this simple, mimeographed sheet appealed to Mormon intellectuals:

Many men need some medium in which to consider their historical and religious heritage in relation to contemporary experience and secular learning. Some are excited about the dialogue this encounter provides and the good fruit it bears in their lives. Others find themselves alone in their experience and cut off from such a dialogue—and too often feel forced to choose between their heritage and the larger world.

We are now preparing to publish a journal designed to meet the needs of both these groups. It will be edited by Mormons who value the life of the mind in all its variety and who wish to respond to their Mormon heritage in

23. Menlove to Anderson, 1 October 1997.

24. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

25. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998. Before *Dialogue's* founding, Johnson acknowledged that the new journal “will be in competition with *BYU Studies*,” but that there was room for both publications. “Most of the articles published in the *Studies* are written by BYU faculty members, but we think there are hundreds of faculty members who are LDS across the land, plus countless more professional and business people, who would like to contribute to the same kind of journal.” Wesley Johnson to John Gardner, 29 August 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

26. Eugene England, interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 8 November 1994, in Salt Lake City, Utah; Eugene England, “On Building the Kingdom with *Dialogue*,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Summer 1988):129; “An Interview with Eugene England,” 12.

the context of human experience as a whole. We believe there are many in the Mormon community and in other communities of belief or experience who will find the resulting dialogue interesting and valuable . . .²⁷

Response to this announcement was immediate and encouraging. People “started sending checks—even though we hadn’t announced a price,” remembers England.²⁸ One anonymous donor even sent a hundred dollars in cash. People mailed in enough money, recalls England ten years later, that from that point, “we didn’t have to put in any money ourselves. We were able to finance everything from the money that came, which as I look back, is amazing.”²⁹ In addition, Johnson wrote his friends from UCLA who, years earlier, were excited about his ideas and asked them to help finance the project.³⁰

Choosing a Name

With plans going forward, a crucial step of course, was naming the new journal. Salisbury recalls “that the selection of a name involved a lot of early discussion and negotiation.”³¹ After considering various titles, such as “Kairos” (a Greek word meaning “the redeemed time”), England suggested the name *Dialogue* (“a rather trendy term of the 60s,” remembers Salisbury), which the team accepted.³² To avoid confusion, they added the subtitle, *A Journal of Mormon Thought*, to distinguish it from the Lutheran publication, *Dialog*.³³ In a letter to a BYU professor, Johnson said that the title was “. . . of necessity a compromise but nevertheless [it] conveys much of what we are interested in.”³⁴

Establishing the Editorial Board

Although some supporters worried that *Dialogue* could become a voice for the disaffected, the founders sought to avoid this possibility from the beginning. To insure that *Dialogue* would remain a responsible, scholarly voice, Johnson insisted that the staff establish an editorial board for critiquing and refereeing manuscripts.³⁵ They began soliciting Mormon academics throughout the country for board positions, and of

27. “Prospectus,” *Dialogue* Collection.

28. England, “On Building the Kingdom with *Dialogue*,” 129; England Oral History, 3.

29. England Oral History, 3.

30. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

31. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

32. England interview, 8 November 1994; England Oral History, 4; Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

33. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

34. Wesley Johnson to Richard L. Anderson, 16 August 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

35. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

those they contacted, most accepted the offer. The first board was impressive by any standard. Among the recruits was Dallin H. Oaks, then a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, and a former BYU classmate of Johnson.³⁶ Oaks would later become more visible in Mormonism as president of Brigham Young University (1971-1980) and in 1984 as a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Oaks, who first feared *Dialogue* might be "a rather leftish outfit," became interested when Richard L. Bushman, a history professor at BYU (who would become the book review editor for *Dialogue*), assured him that "our board was composed solely of active members of the church and that we had no intention of taking potshots."³⁷ After further discussions with Johnson, who had approached him originally, Oaks accepted. Reflecting back on his decision to join the board, Oaks recalls:

I had some significant concerns about the direction the journal would take over time. I knew the manuscripts it would attract would include some from persons who were struggling with their testimonies, from some who were disaffected or bitter, and even some from enemies of the church, since there were relatively few publication outlets for such persons and some people have a consuming desire to publish things about the church, for one reason or another. The managing editors and the members of the editorial board would perform a very important function in evaluating manuscripts. I could anticipate that with changes in editors or by gradual drift in criteria the journal could become something with which I would not want to be associated. I remember discussing these concerns with Wes Johnson, and receiving enough assurances that I decided to serve.³⁸

Chase Peterson, later the president of the University of Utah, also joined the board, as did Diane Monson. Mormon scholars from Harvard,

36. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996; Dallin H. Oaks to Devery S. Anderson, 10 August 1999.

37. Richard L. Bushman to Wesley Johnson, 7 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

38. Oaks to Anderson, 10 August 1999. In his letter to me, Oaks recalls that "I was generally pleased with the content and quality of scholarship that appeared in the journal during my term on the board." Although Oaks did not communicate his current feelings for *Dialogue*, it is clear that he has not always been pleased with essays published since his days on the *Dialogue* board. His April 1989 General Conference sermon, "Alternate Voices," alluded to David John Buerger's article (Winter 1987), "The Development of the Mormon Temple Endowment Ceremony," which Oaks deemed inappropriate to publish. For the text of Oaks's speech, see *Ensign*, May 1989, 27-30.

Johnson remembers Oaks's contribution to *Dialogue* during these early years. "His reviews were beneficial, wise, well-balanced," and full of "good insights." Johnson continues, saying Oaks "was one of the most prompt reviewers and took the job very seriously. He was an excellent board member who shared the vision" (Johnson interview, 3 August 1996). Oaks served three terms on the editorial board. His third term expired in 1969.

Pennsylvania State, the University of Washington, and Stanford joined several others from Utah universities to pioneer this independent effort.³⁹

There were those who elected not to affiliate with the new venture. Church Education employee Kenneth Godfrey, after accepting a position on the editorial board, resigned at the encouragement of his stake president Alma Burton. Burton, referring to the editors as “the modern Godbeites,” told Godfrey to “stay away from them.”⁴⁰ “I have mixed emotions regarding this decision,” wrote Godfrey of his resignation. “Because I feel that things one feels deeply about should be supported regardless of the consequences. Perhaps this is the real reason for the resignation because of my feeling that one ought to obey counsel.”⁴¹

Henry B. Eyring, Jr., then a professor in the Stanford Business School (who would later become an apostle also) was approached, but refused. “I think what you’re doing is marvelous,” he said to England, as the two ate lunch together on a bench near the Stanford LDS chapel. “I think it’s needed by the church and that the Lord probably wants it, but I’ll have nothing to do with it because it would disturb some of the General Authorities,” especially his uncle, Apostle Spencer W. Kimball.⁴²

The journal will forever remain indebted to the men and women who served on the first editorial board. Johnson looks with gratitude, to “those who supplied their names, put their reputation on the line.”⁴³ That *Dialogue* came to meet their expectations is evident by a 1967 letter from Dallin Oaks to Johnson: “Thank you for the honor of inviting me to serve another year on the Board of Editors of *Dialogue*. I continue to treasure my association in this worthy project.”⁴⁴

Motivated by the response to the first flyer, the group used the funds that came in to create a professionally printed brochure, which included a subscription form (\$6.00 per year; \$4.00 for students and missionaries), aimed at thousands of prospective supporters.⁴⁵ Most of these names became available to the team through the annual *Directory of Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Higher Education and School Administration*. Published at the behest of BYU president Earnest L.

39. See the masthead, inside front cover, of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Spring 1966).

40. England interview, 8 November 1994; England Oral History, 18.

41. Kenneth Godfrey to Eugene England, 30 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

42. England Oral History, 20, England to Anderson, 13 September 1999. Eyring spoke similar comments to Jiro Numano, the founder of *Mormon Forum*, an independent Japanese publication. When Numano asked Eyring for advice in the late 1980s, Eyring referred to his experience when *Dialogue* was founded, and then concluded that “I cannot encourage or discourage this,” but admonished Numano to “try to be in line with Gene England” (“A Mormon Japanese Reader’s Digest,” *Sunstone* 19 (December 1996): 58).

43. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996

44. Dallin Oaks to Wesley Johnson, 27 February 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

45. England Oral History, 5.

Wilkinson since the mid-1950s, it included names of Mormons associated with Universities all over the United States. This list alone gave the team the exposure *Dialogue* needed.⁴⁶

Informing the Brethren

Before embarking on a major advertising blitz, however, some of the founders felt they should inform the general authorities of the church about *Dialogue*. By late summer, England, Johnson, and others had informed a few in the hierarchy of their plans,⁴⁷ so the leadership was not unaware of the emergence of the journal, but a more formal announcement seemed in order. The question was how to go about making such an announcement, and the approach that was eventually taken was a compromise resulting from weeks of debate.

Richard Bushman, who took responsibility for informing the brethren, wrote to an early supporter that the team would likely give "an outline to President [Hugh B.] Brown, not asking for approval, but merely to keep him informed."⁴⁸ This plan was vetoed by the others who were in favor of approaching the general authorities individually. Bushman, however, concluded that this approach would be a mistake, as most of the leaders already knew about the journal. "*Dialogue* was brought up in the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the BYU, where quite a number of the Brethren were present," he wrote to Johnson. "[T]he attitude was simply, let's wait and see." Stephen R. Covey, then an assistant to BYU's President Wilkinson, was present at that meeting and "put in a good word for us . . . Chase [Petersen] has had some indication that the journal has been discussed at a Thursday [temple] meeting."⁴⁹ Bushman, however, had other concerns about individual interviews:

46. The directory was not published again after 1965, but in a letter to the editor of *BYU Studies* the previous year, Stanley B. Kimball, a history professor at Southern Illinois University, criticized that publication for its limited scope. Suggesting a format similar to other scholarly magazines, Kimball advocated that *BYU Studies* make use of the thousands of scholars listed in the directory, that "some group consciousness [be] effected and an 'order' for the learned defense of the Mormon faith formed." As it stood, *BYU Studies* remained "rather parochial in concept inasmuch as the Editorial board is all at the 'Y' and since 84% of the articles in the first eight issues came from Utah, 74% from the 'Y' alone, and 37% from individuals at the 'Y' under the rank of associate professor." Kimball's criticisms, coming over a year before the appearance of *Dialogue*, seem prophetic in spelling out the aim of the new journal, a further indication that scholars were sensing the need for such a publication. See Stanley B. Kimball, "Mormon Culture: A Letter to the Editor," *BYU Studies* 5 (Winter 1964): 125-128.

47. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996; Wesley Johnson to Truman Madsen, 12 August 1965, *Dialogue* Collection. Unfortunately, Johnson did not identify who these general authorities were.

48. Richard L. Bushman to Howard Marsh, 27 September 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

49. Richard Bushman to Wesley Johnson, 7 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

If I approached Brother [Mark E.] Petersen personally and told him of our plans I would almost force him to deliver an opinion. If he had once spoken, though he was but one man, and speaking personally, if I disregarded his advice, we would indeed be in trouble. Bob Thomas has suggested that we should not approach any authority whose advice we were not willing to take. At present, precedents being what they are, most of the Brethren will be suspicious, and if by a direct confrontation we put them in a position where they have to say something, if only to be civil, we may force their hand at an inopportune moment.⁵⁰

Bushman concluded that writing a letter to the First Presidency was the best way to avoid this problem. He had earlier drafted a two page letter on 25 October 1965 and sent a copy to the team at Stanford. England, initially against writing the presidency, conceded in a letter to Bushman on 12 November: "I surrender. With some misgivings but a good spirit. You state your case well . . ." However, feeling the letter was too long, England convinced Bushman to shorten it to one page. "Our feeling here is that a letter should be sent to arrive just before Thanksgiving," he added. "It should be a warm but fairly formal letter signed perhaps by myself and you."⁵¹ After England suggested a paragraph of loyalty to the church leaders, Bushman responded:

Doug Alder is the son-in-law of [assistant First Presidency secretary] A. Hamer Reiser. Doug says that people are always lobbying the Brethren for one cause or another and invariably they pour on their testimony. The Presidency much prefers that people level with them, say clearly what they want, and end.

Alder also advised Bushman against sending the letter to anyone but the First Presidency. "If we do each one [recipient] will form an opinion, and many of these will be unfavorable."⁵² England, however, countered:

We would much prefer that they formed an opinion on the basis of our prospectus and a copy of the letter to the First Presidency than that they form it on the basis of someone's writing them (probably a crank letter) after seeing one of our ads or a prospectus.⁵³

England's reasoning, in the end, prevailed. Bushman mailed his edited letter to the First Presidency, dated 20 November 1965 (signed also by England), along with the brochure, to all thirty-seven general authorities. He also sent copies to directors of the various LDS institutes, to

50. Bushman to Johnson, 7 November 1965.

51. Eugene England to Richard Bushman, 12 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

52. Richard Bushman to Eugene England, 18 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

53. Eugene England to Richard Bushman, 22 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

Ernest Wilkinson, Stephen R. Covey, and to Earl C. Crockett, Academic Vice President at BYU.⁵⁴

England took for granted a positive reaction from church leaders. "I just assumed they would approve. I saw our project as wholly in accord with the church's mission, and a contribution to it." He continues:

One of my growing interests as an Institute teacher at Stanford was young people in the church, and their problems and needs as they were faced with intellectual challenges at college. I realized that the official church wasn't doing much for them—perhaps it shouldn't—there wasn't any particular reason—this was a new problem that was developing. In the spirit of the lay church, I felt that people who saw the problem should try to do something about it.⁵⁵

This concern for young people was the focus of the letter to the First Presidency:

Our combined experience in many universities has made us keenly aware of the intellectual pressures on our youth. We believe that to hold them we must speak with many voices. A straightforward testimony by a man of spiritual power is most effective; Institute classes and the church schools help a large number. Unfortunately, these methods do not reach certain ones, including some of the finest students. Often these are overawed by the brilliance of secular culture. By comparison their own beliefs, as they perceive them, seem embarrassingly unsophisticated. They ascribe intellectual superficiality to Latter-day Saints and the Gospel itself and feel compelled to choose reason over faith.

We believe that *Dialogue* can help reach these young people. Its contributors have the training and the qualities of mind respected in the universities, and its manner will be suitably candid and objective. At the same time it will display the rich intellectual and spiritual resources of the Gospel as mature men have discovered them and how relevant our faith is to contemporary life. The content of the magazine will be proof that a Latter-day Saint need not abandon thought to be a faithful Church member nor his faith to be thoughtful. All of our young people however firm, should benefit from that kind of testimony.⁵⁶

Although church leaders never answered the letter directly, they later published a statement in the church's quarterly *Priesthood Bulletin*, in response "to questions from stake and ward leaders and from individual members" about the journal. ". . . *Dialogue* is an independent maga-

54. Eugene England to David Crockett, 11 December 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

55. England interview, 8 November 1994.

56. Richard L. Bushman and Eugene England to the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 20 November 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

zine, privately owned, operated and edited. It has no connection with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints either officially or unofficially." Hence the contents "are never submitted to Church Authorities for approval and therefore are the sole responsibility of the editors."⁵⁷ Avoiding an endorsement or censure, the church elected to remain aloof. "This is exactly what we hoped for and expected," says England.⁵⁸

At least one general authority received an additional letter. Jeppson wrote Apostle Spencer W. Kimball about the journal just two weeks after Kimball would have received his copy of the letter to the First Presidency. Jeppson knew Kimball from their experience together walking across the plains as part of the 1947 centennial celebration of the Mormon trek west. "For such a journal to be profitable and faith building," responded Kimball, "certainly it will need to be watched with great care for there are people who would be glad to 'use' its pages to air their ideas and concepts, some of which would not be in harmony with revealed truth."⁵⁹ The founders of *Dialogue* certainly welcomed such advice. But with the "wait and see" attitude the leaders had informally adopted, for now, giving advice was as far as they were willing to go.

Spreading the Word

Once they had informed church leaders about *Dialogue*, the Stanford team began advertising the journal all across Mormondom. "Things are going full steam," wrote England. "The last two weeks have been D-Day in Utah, where we've conducted a big advertising campaign in all the papers and spread our prospectuses all over the campuses."⁶⁰ In all, the team sent out 10,000 brochures.⁶¹ The response was phenomenal, with some supporters hardly able to contain their excitement. "It is the most exciting news to come out of the West in many years," wrote one Ph.D. candidate to England.⁶² For the group at Stanford, this interest seemed incredible. "I think that none of us could have predicted the very great response that we had once we sent out our flyer," says Johnson.⁶³ Eng-

57. *Priesthood Bulletin*, 3 (March-June, 1967): 1.

58. England interview, 8 November 1994.

59. Spencer W. Kimball to Joseph Jeppson, 10 December 1965, copy in my possession. When the first issue of *Dialogue* appeared in March 1966, Kimball wrote Eugene England a letter of thanks for his complimentary copy. "I have not had opportunity yet to read it, but I will carry it with me to my next long distance assignment and read it" (Spencer W. Kimball to Eugene England, 12 April 1966, *Dialogue* Collection).

60. England to Crockett, 11 December 1965.

61. England, "On Building the Kingdom with *Dialogue*," 129.

62. Frederick S. Buchanan to Eugene England, 15 December 1965, *Dialogue* collection.

63. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

land agrees: "Subscriptions poured in at such a rate that by the time we went to press with our first issue, we had enough saved to more than pay for the first year's four issues."⁶⁴

Some unexpected publicity came from the national media. On 12 December 1965, the *New York Times* featured an article on the founding of *Dialogue*.⁶⁵ Although several subscriptions came through this exposure, general authorities, as well as members of the *Dialogue* staff, complained of inaccuracies in the article. England took issue with certain statements, noting that the *Times* correspondent "was after sensationalism," that after interviewing Salisbury, the reporter added "a few mis-attributions, and a misleading tone and completely misrepresented us."⁶⁶ England further spoke of his displeasure in a letter to family friend and apostle Mark E. Petersen. England assured Petersen, who also found the article disturbing, that *Dialogue* had a loyal purpose, "contrary to publicity in the *NY Times* which misrepresented the church in general as well as our journal." Petersen responded, "I should be glad to read it [*Dialogue*] when it comes."⁶⁷

Two weeks later, the *Times* publicized *Dialogue* again, in a lengthy article by correspondent Wallace Turner. Turner, focusing attention on the erstwhile Mormon doctrine of polygamy and the current practice of banning black males from the priesthood, describes liberal Mormons as "hungry as never before for avenues of discussion." Calling *Dialogue* their answer, Turner noted the nature of the journal: "It will not be antichurch, nor rebellious. But it will be independent of church control."⁶⁸

While on a church assignment in San Mateo, California, Apostle Gordon B. Hinckley, sensitive to church coverage in the press, spent a Satur-

64. England, "On Building the Kingdom with *Dialogue*," 129. Joseph Jeppson, who was in charge of *Dialogue's* finances, insisted that the group keep enough money in the bank to pay back subscribers in case the journal, for whatever reason, folded (England interview, 8 November 1994).

65. See "Mormon Scholars Plan a Journal," *New York Times*, 12 December 1965, 80.

66. Eugene England to Richard Marshall, 14 December 1965, *Dialogue* Collection. Reading the *Times* article, several statements would have been disturbing to Mormon leaders and the *Dialogue* staff, the latter insisting that the journal was born out of loyalty to the church. One quotes Salisbury that, "[w]e will of course be concerned with the church stand against the repeal of 14-(b)—[a section of the Taft-Hartley Law permitting state 'right-to-work' laws], the stand of the church against pacifism in the Vietnam War and the position taken by Mormon leaders in relationship to Negroes." Salisbury was also attributed with a claim that the church stifles free thought. According to the article, eighteen members of the editorial board lived outside of Utah "because it is difficult to hold nonconformist views within the church and prosper in Utah."

67. Eugene England to Mark E. Petersen, 25 March 1966; Petersen to England, 29 March 1966, both in *Dialogue* Collection.

68. Wallace Turner, "Mormons Gain Despite Tensions," *New York Times*, 27 December 1965, 1, 18.

day evening with England. After reading the *Times* articles, Hinckley had concluded that *Dialogue's* aim was to attempt to speak with finality on Mormon issues. England responded to their conversation in a follow-up letter: "I can't emphasize too strongly that *Dialogue* is not a theological journal or anything remotely like one; when we talk about a journal of Mormon thought, we are not talking about the Mormon position on any doctrine. . . ." England also assured Hinckley that Salisbury, interviewed for the *Times*, ". . . was entirely misrepresented and misquoted from the very first paragraph, which erroneously called him the editor. He is a devoted and orthodox member of the church whose association with *Dialogue* can only be to our benefit."⁶⁹ Hinckley seemed relieved in his response to England two days later. "The explanation helps," he wrote. However, still concerned about bad publicity for the church, he enclosed "a clipping of the kind which creates the image of *Dialogue* as a journal of dissent."⁷⁰

To counter the negative image that the *Times* article may have caused, Salisbury sought publicity in Utah newspapers, but this proved frustrating. According to England, Salisbury became "miffed over the run-around the Salt Lake papers had been giving him for over a week." The *Deseret News*, the *Church News*, and *The Salt Lake Tribune*, "[are] unwilling to do a straight new[s] story on us for reasons that sound suspiciously like plain fear of anything that even remotely might be controversial."⁷¹ Paid advertising was not always successful either. Ads that appeared in the *Tribune*, "easily got lost," remembers Salisbury. Advertisements appeared in the *Utah Daily Chronicle* at the University of Utah and, thanks to Bushman, in the *Daily Universe* at BYU. Later, Salisbury took out full cover ads in the program of the Utah Symphony.⁷² The *Improvement Era* had long advertised items ranging from books to household products. Salisbury submitted ads to that magazine as well, but they were never run (although they were never formally rejected either), even after First Presidency counselor Hugh B. Brown later offered to

69. Eugene England to Gordon B. Hinckley, 7 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection. Hinckley may have reached the conclusion England refers to from a statement, attributed to Salisbury, that "we seek to give voice to a growing intellectual community, to open the door to a variety of viewpoints impossible to express in existing Mormon church journals" (*New York Times*, 12 December 1965).

70. Gordon B. Hinckley to Eugene England, 9 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection. Hinckley did not identify this clipping in his letter, nor was I able to find it among the *Dialogue* correspondence.

71. England to Marshall, 14 December 1965. According to the *New York Times*, both Salt Lake City newspapers claimed that "space problems, not the nature of the quarterly," was the reason for the rejection.

72. Salisbury interview, 19 May 1998.

lobby the magazine's editor.⁷³ The quarterly alumni magazine *BYU Today* did turn them down outright.⁷⁴ Salisbury succeeded in advertising on the church owned KSL in Salt Lake City, however, between sessions of the church's general conference.⁷⁵ A short, but enthusiastic article announcing *Dialogue* finally appeared in the *Church News* before the end of the year.⁷⁶ Salisbury also promoted the journal on several radio call-in programs.⁷⁷

Response to publicity efforts and the obvious high interest in the forthcoming journal from the scholarly Mormon community clearly indicated the need for such an outlet among Mormon intellectuals. Consequently, quality, in terms of content and aesthetics became a priority from the very beginning. "We wanted something that would be of lasting value and something that would make a statement," Johnson recalls. Familiar with the professionalism of the *Stanford Law Review*, he suggested that following a similar format would communicate both.⁷⁸ With the tremendous response from pre-publication advertising, subscribers were sending the message that they expected as much.

Salisbury's influence with the design of *Dialogue* cannot be overstated. He describes himself at that time as "fascinated in how journals were put together," and credits the quarterly *Perspectives USA*, devoted to art and architecture, as having a tremendous influence on him. In their discussions, England remembers Salisbury's fear that the publication would be misunderstood without the right look: anything in a cheap or newspaper format would resemble the Tanners' anti-Mormon effort. This reasoning prevailed. "To be acceptable enough not to be dismissed immediately," says England, "was reason enough, in addition to all the other good reasons, for having a really fine layout."⁷⁹

73. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998; Paul G. Salisbury, "Notes from a Meeting with President Brown," recorded immediately after an 8:00 a.m. meeting on 29 September 1969 with President Hugh B. Brown in his office, copy in my possession. With regard to placing ads for *Dialogue* in the *Improvement Era*, Brown told Salisbury that "perhaps he could help us. He said he was on good terms with both Elder [Richard L.] Evans and Brother [Doyle] Green and would speak to both of them for us. I told him this would be very important to us, that an ad in the *Era* would help us reach the market we need. He said he would see to it right away." Whatever attempts Brown made to help *Dialogue* advertise in the *Era*, no ads ever ran. Fifteen months after this conversation, the *Era* was discontinued, and the church no longer permitted advertising in its replacement, the *Ensign*.

74. Eugene England interview, conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 17 July 1996, in Provo, Utah.; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

75. England interview, 17 July 1996.

76. See "Group Plans Paper on 'Mormon Thought' ", *Church News*, 25 December 1965.

77. Salisbury interview, 19 May 1998.

78. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

79. England Oral History, 7.

The Mormon History Association

As news of the project spread, groups from at least six other universities and organizations contacted *Dialogue*, saying that they, too, had planned to start a similar publication.⁸⁰ Most, however, were happy now to support the project at Stanford instead.⁸¹ Perhaps the most important of these groups was the newly formed Mormon History Association. Leonard J. Arrington, founder and president, invited Johnson to speak at the first meeting of the organization, held on 28 December 1965 at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco. Assuring the group of *Dialogue's* commitment to Mormon history, Johnson spoke of plans to publish a theme issue each year, and, according to the official minutes of the meeting, proposed "that the Mormon History Association take over the third issue as the first of these special theme issues. Leonard Arrington was appointed guest editor for such an issue."⁸² "Our historical community needed an outlet for our serious historical articles," wrote Arrington in his memoirs, "because most historical journals would run articles on Mormon historical topics only rarely."⁸³ Consequently, the MHA waited nearly a decade to begin publishing its own *Journal of Mormon History*.⁸⁴

A Volunteer Effort

As a member of the bishopric of the Stanford ward, England knew most of the Latter-day Saint students on campus and recruited a dozen or so of them to help with the necessities: typing the mailing list and subscription forms, answering mail, and readying the manuscripts for publication. This volunteer effort, carried out in various rooms on the Stanford campus, lasted for over a year and a half. "It was really a spiritual experience," remembers England.⁸⁵ These evenings opened with prayer, and the students found the effort gratifying," for as he explains, "they

80. In their 20 November 1965 letter to the First Presidency, Bushman and England identify groups from "Yale, Michigan, Logan, Princeton, Santa Barbara, and Salt Lake City" (*Dialogue* Collection). See also "An Interview with Eugene England," 13.

81. England Oral History, 3; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

82. "Minutes of the Formative Meeting of the Mormon History Association," published in Leonard Arrington, "Reflections on the Founding and Purpose of the Mormon History Association, 1965-1983," *Journal of Mormon History*, 10 (1983):97; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

83. Leonard J. Arrington, *Adventures of a Church Historian* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 62.

84. The *Journal of Mormon History*, originally published annually beginning in 1974, became a semi-annual journal in 1992.

85. Eugene England, "A Matter of Love': My Life with *Dialogue*," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Spring 1987): 18; England interview, 8 November, 1994; England Oral History, 4-5.

felt that they were aiding the Kingdom."⁸⁶ Johnson remembers not only students, but several Stanford faculty members, library personnel, and local business people giving their time. Local Mormons such as Ralph Hanson of the Stanford Library, and Clayne Robinson, an attorney (who went on to teach opera at BYU), were among the volunteers. "People felt they were doing something special," he recalls.⁸⁷

Unsolicited feedback from unexpected quarters only served to affirm such a conviction. In a letter to England and Johnson, Diane Monson tells of her visit with a stake high councilman in Boulder, Colorado. "[He] is enthusiastic in promoting *Dialogue*. He guarantees 25 subscriptions at least, and will circulate brochures, which I will send to him."⁸⁸ Another supporter reported talk of the journal in the east: "*Dialogue* is picking up speed and seems to be on everyone's lips in these parts," wrote Mary Bradford from her home in Washington, D.C. "It was even discussed in Priesthood meeting last week."⁸⁹

Such enthusiasm could potentially backfire, and England knew where to draw the line, as evidenced in an exchange of letters months later between him and Monson. Monson enthusiastically informed the staff at Stanford that a Mormon salesman "would very much like to promote the sale of *Dialogue* 'in every home' as a special project for the New York Seventies priesthood group."⁹⁰ England, however, saw trouble with this approach:

... it is very tempting, but we feel quite unanimously that we neither want to misuse our connection with the church—such as the Birch Mormons have surely done—nor even appear to be doing so. We'll bend over backwards to avoid that impression.⁹¹

In fact, due to such widespread publicity, negative rumors about *Dialogue* had made their way into the office before the first issue was even off the press. For example, Johnson received a letter from someone who had heard that LDS Institute of Religion directors were being told not to subscribe to the journal. "Yet in the same morning's mail came a request for several subscriptions to be sent to Institute Headquarters," he wrote to Dallin Oaks. Having also received other "letters of interest"

86. England interview, 17 July 1996.

87. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

88. Diane Monson to Eugene England and Wesley Johnson, 2 December 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

89. Mary Bradford to Eugene England, 4 Jan 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

90. Diane Monson to Eugene England, Wesley Johnson, and editors, 3 July 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

91. Eugene England to Diane Monson, 25 July 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

from LDS Institutes, Johnson could only conclude that “the first letter was no more than a reflection of a local rumor.”⁹²

Staff and Organization

The five founders all served as part of the first editorial staff: England and Johnson filled the roles as managing editors; Frances Menlove took on the duty as manuscripts editor; the job of publication editor went to Paul Salisbury, and Joseph Jeppson served as “Notes and Comments” editor. In addition, Leonard Arrington, along with Lowell L. Bennion, former director of the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah, accepted positions as advisory editors. Pioneering this kind of publication, England felt that the team “could use some counsel from wiser and older heads both in terms of the scholarly world and the church.”⁹³

The history department at Stanford permitted the staff to house *Dialogue* in a portion of Johnson’s office—an arrangement that required no rent or utilities expenses.⁹⁴ Stanford also hosted the journal’s first post office box.⁹⁵

On 11 July 1965, the group held a meeting at Johnson’s apartment in Stanford’s Escondido Village, and the five founders—now trustees of the proposed *Dialogue* Foundation, “met and unanimously approved” the contents of a list of articles of incorporation and “voted to incorporate a non-profit corporation under the laws of Utah,” with Salisbury’s home in Salt Lake City designated as the “Principal Office.” Jeppson, a licensed attorney, wrote the articles, and he and Salisbury were appointed chairman and secretary respectively.⁹⁶ Clyde L. Miller, Secretary of State of Utah, signed a certificate of incorporation on 23 September.⁹⁷ Everything was set. From that first official meeting in June 1965, it was to take just about nine months—a normal gestation period—to publish the first issue.

92. Wesley Johnson to Dallin H. Oaks, 3 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

93. England Oral history, 22. England here acknowledges that the editors used Bennion and Arrington only sporadically. Recalling his experience with *Dialogue*, Bennion said, “I knew it would be a mixed blessing, that it would bring problems and misunderstandings from headquarters . . . but . . . it’s creative, intellectual, and I’ve never been afraid of exposing the gospel to thinking” (Lowell L. Bennion, *Ora! History*, 141, as cited in Mary L. Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian* (Salt Lake City: *Dialogue* Foundation, 1995), 253). For Arrington’s comments about his role with *Dialogue*, see Arrington, *Adventures of a Church Historian*, 59-62.

94. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996. Johnson recalls with gratitude the support given him by Lewis William Spitz, renowned scholar and professor of reformation history at Stanford. Spitz persuaded the administration to give *Dialogue* free office space. “He told the administration that it [*Dialogue*] was an intellectual exercise stimulated by our Stanford experience” (Johnson interview, 9 August 1999).

95. England Oral History, 4; England interview, 8 November 1994.

96. “Articles of Incorporation,” *Dialogue* Collection; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

97. Certificate of Incorporation, *Dialogue* Collection.

II. 1966-1971: EUPHORIC BEGINNINGS

Things are going well. We have more than 1,300 subscriptions; a number of good articles are coming in. Interest is being expressed by people from all over the country. We are on our way.

Phillip C. Smith to Diane Monson, 26 February 1966

. . . I'm almost up to the last issue, and I am thrilled and proud of your cohorts. You are having an important impact in our area. People are pleased and motivated and reinforced. Good work!

Dallin H. Oaks to Wesley Johnson, 6 January 1967

Shortly before *Dialogue* appeared in March 1966, the journal already had 1,500 subscribers; by late October it would boast 3,400; by mid-1967, active subscriptions surpassed 7,500 and would eventually peak at around 8,000 during the England-Johnson tenure.⁹⁸

Dialogue's Debut

The eagerly awaited premier issue of *Dialogue* (Spring 1966) more than fulfilled the many widespread and growing expectations. Salisbury designed the cover and layout. Johnson and England both wrote introductory editorials explaining their vision for the new journal.⁹⁹ Leonard J. Arrington provided the lead article with his, "Scholarly Studies of Mormonism in the Twentieth Century." This essay, originally delivered at a meeting of the Western History Association in October 1965, included an appendix listing Ph.D. dissertations on Mormonism since the turn of the century. Menlove contributed a thoughtful essay, "The Challenge of Honesty," calling upon Latter-day Saints to be true to themselves and reminding them that an integral part of honesty is to confront doubts and fears, not to suppress them. A further aid to the thinking Mormon was Victor Cline's personal essay, "The Faith of a Psychologist." Cline, a devout Mormon, expounded on why he maintained religious beliefs within a profession where only ten percent claimed any religiosity. Claude Burtenshaw, in "The Student: His University and His Church," examined the college experience of various young Latter-day Saints and their attempts to reconcile their secular experience with religion. R. A. Christmas critiqued the literary contributions of a popular Mormon book with "The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt: Some Liter-

98. Eugene England to Douglas R. Bunker, 14 March 1966; England to Dr. Sheldon Murphy, 29 October 1966; Wesley Johnson to Mrs. Robert Redford, 3 June 1967, all in *Dialogue* Collection; England interview, 8 November 1994.

99. See G. Wesley Johnson, "Editorial Preface", and Eugene England, "The Possibility of *Dialogue*: A Personal View," both in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Spring 1966): 5-11.

ary, Historical, and Critical Reflections." Christmas, acknowledging grammatical and editorial weaknesses, nevertheless maintained that Pratt makes a contribution to Mormonism by giving insight into frontier life and thought. This issue also saw the only contribution ever to appear by Truman Madsen, then director of the Institute of Mormon Studies at BYU. "Joseph Smith and the Sources of Love" was originally delivered as the Joseph Smith Memorial Sermon at the LDS Institute of Religion at Utah State University in December 1965.

Non-Mormons also entered the dialogue. Catholic scholar Mario S. De Pillis, of the University of Massachusetts, contributed "The Quest for Authority and the Rise of Mormonism," detailing the religious milieu of the 1820s and the rival sects contemporary with Mormonism. Joseph Smith, according to De Pillis, wanted "a sect to end all sects," and hoped to squelch the diverse views and contradictions he [Smith] found so offensive.¹⁰⁰ A Roundtable featured protestant theologian (and Stanford professor) Robert McAfee Brown, along with Mormons Richard L. Anderson and David W. Bennett, debating Mormon philosopher Sterling M. McMurrin's recent book, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1965).

Overall, the first issue of *Dialogue* boldly declared that Mormonism was both to be taken seriously and to remain subject to scrutiny. And for the most part, responses to the debut were enthusiastic. Declaring the journal "long overdue" and "badly needed," one subscriber wrote that he knew of "scores of young college graduates who have been driven from the church by the narrow minded type of Mormon who seems to be in charge at this time. Perhaps your influence will change all that."¹⁰¹ Another wrote that "The first *Dialogue* is tremendously impressive. I had expected fine fare, but the feast that materialized was astonishing."¹⁰² Perhaps a letter to the editor, published in the second issue, best describes the fulfillment of the editors' aim in founding *Dialogue*:

People often say, "He has lost the glow and enthusiasm he once had as a new convert." I feel that for some of us the excitement of enquiry and discovery gave us part of that "alive" quality . . .

Dialogue is like a refreshing drink of water "in our lovely Deseret." I have properly devoured the first issue and it has revived a near-dead spiritual awareness. The doubts that had gone "underground" and the seeking that

100. De Pillis's essay prompted a roundtable discussion in the following issue of the journal. See Richard L. Bushman, "Taking Mormonism Seriously," William A. Clebsch, "Each Sect the Sect to End All Sects," and Mario S. De Pillis, "Mormonism and the American Way: A Response," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Summer 1966): 81-97.

101. S. L. Zundell to *Dialogue* staff, undated, *Dialogue* Collection.

102. Robert Flanders to Joseph Jeppson, 15 April 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

had become self-conscious and stilted are uniting in a responsible spirit of re-investigation. I think that the active membership I have maintained with effort will be much more honest now.¹⁰³

Not everyone issued a positive critique, however. Ray Chandler Smith, Sr., "Prophet and Seer" of The Center Place in Independence, Missouri, previously having expressed hope that "your new venture will be a veritable success," wrote after examining the first issue, "and throwing it into the waste-paper basket," that he was "thoroughly disgusted!!!"¹⁰⁴ Explaining himself ten days later, Smith elaborated:

I had expected *Dialogue* would be a lifeline between Jesus Christ and man. But the [i]llusion has been proven inadequate, and undoubtedly the saying is true as far as theology is concerned—"God is dead."¹⁰⁵

One reader, perhaps expecting content that would mirror the official church organs, was clearly disappointed and described the first issue as "a real blow." "I think most of the contributors find the gospel interesting," the anonymous writer declared, "but there is no evidence that they believe in it." Especially upset by a short satirical piece written by Jeppson,¹⁰⁶ the letter predicted doom: "If you don't choose to control the tone of your articles, *Dialogue's* demise may be slow, and even graceful, but it will go under."¹⁰⁷

All of the General Authorities received a complimentary copy of the first issue, sent with a cover letter, of which First Presidency Secretary Joseph Anderson formally acknowledged receipt.¹⁰⁸ The only member of the hierarchy to voice a response was S. Dilworth Young, a member of the Council of Seventy. Young expressed a fear that "sooner or later you are going to run out of material which will be the solid opinion of the leaders of the church, past or present." Consequently, "the material is bound to become speculative, and that could cause trouble." This "trouble," according to Young, would be from liberals pushing their own particular agendas. "If you do resist [them], they likely will brand you as prejudiced, and with that brand on you, you will likely try to remove the brand by proving you are not." Young concluded with some friendly counsel:

103. Letter from [Mrs.] Lucretia A. Petersen, published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Summer 1966): 5-6.

104. Ray Chandler Smith, Sr., to *Dialogue* staff, 22 February and 8 June 1966, both in *Dialogue* Collection.

105. Ray Chandler Smith, Sr., to *Dialogue* staff, 18 June 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

106. See Joseph H. Jeppson, "Non-Editorial Postlude," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Spring 1966): 164-165, discussed later.

107. Undated letter from "a Ph.D. candidate," *Dialogue* Collection.

108. Eugene England and Wesley Johnson to the First Presidency, 29 March 1966; Joseph Anderson to Eugene England, 4 April 1966, both in *Dialogue* Collection.

I know you are sincere, but in your sincerity, remember that undeviating loyalty to the church leaders (1st Pres[idenc]y and the Twelve) is the only standard you can maintain if you want the approbation of the church."¹⁰⁹

Eugene England already shared Young's concerns. "How much of a risk do we want to take in order to make *Dialogue* useful when issues are crucial?" he wrote to Bushman two days later. "Perhaps the answer is that we're still too young to know and had better err on the conservative side."¹¹⁰

Young also took issue with England's editorial, where he had asked Latter-day Saints to consider the possibility that they may be mistaken about many of their long held ideas.¹¹¹ In a letter to Young, who felt that a true Latter-day Saint should never question fundamentals, England responded that LDS missionaries expect investigators "to question their most cherished beliefs—to consider the possibility that they might be dead wrong about things they have built their lives upon." With such an approach, England asks, "How can we ask less of ourselves when we (in an indirect proselyting effort like *Dialogue*) offer to talk with people about our religious heritage?"¹¹²

Also discouraging was a letter from BYU English professor Robert Thomas. Thomas, who was expected to provide a sermon for the second issue, became disillusioned after reading the first. "You mentioned that several general authorities seem to be either favorable or at least non-committed," Thomas states. "I'm afraid my experience with them in regard to *Dialogue* is not so encouraging."¹¹³ Thomas, apparently aware of some objections to the journal within the hierarchy, withdrew his support and promised manuscript.¹¹⁴

The over-all praise the first issue received, however, was rewarding—exhilarating even—to the five founders of the journal, who saw their labors well-rewarded. In fact, the issue sold out within weeks, even though the initial run was for twice the subscription amount.¹¹⁵ More national publicity soon followed, as *Time* magazine featured a short piece

109. S. Dilworth Young to Eugene England, 28 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

110. Eugene England to Richard L. Bushman, 30 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

111. England, "The Possibility of *Dialogue*," 10.

112. Young to England, 28 March 1966; England to Young, 5 April 1966, both in *Dialogue* Collection; England interview, 8 November 1994.

113. Robert K. Thomas to Eugene England, 14 June 1966, *Dialogue* Collection. Richard Bushman remembers that Thomas's reaction to *Dialogue* was based on Jeppson's satirical "Non-Editorial Postlude." Worried that the editors had crossed the line with this piece, "Bob came into my office and said, 'Well, it's all over'" (Richard L. Bushman, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 25 May 1998).

114. England Oral History, 9.

115. Comments made in editorial titled "In This Issue," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Summer 1966).

about *Dialogue*. The article included a photograph of England, Johnson, and Salisbury.¹¹⁶ A brief note in *The Christian Century* also called attention to the journal.¹¹⁷

Labors Behind the Scenes

It was no easy task, through this totally voluntary effort, to see this and subsequent issues through the final stage of production. Johnson wrote a board member that “. . . getting out this first issue has been nearly a full-time job . . .”¹¹⁸ Johnson and England, as managing editors, oversaw the entire project. Both had prior experience editing university publications. As an undergraduate, Johnson had edited the satirical *Harvard Lampoon*, and England had edited the literary magazine *Pen* at the University of Utah.¹¹⁹ “It would be wrong to say that we didn’t have differences,” says Johnson of his experience working with England. However, the co-editors remember the overriding concern: “We had a vision of what we wanted to achieve, and we were both ready to sacrifice a great deal of our time and energy to achieve that.”¹²⁰

As manuscripts editor, Menlove remembers that she “would receive new manuscripts, look them over, figure out [three] people who might be appropriate to review them and send them out.” After the board members assigned to the manuscript would return their critique, “we would decide as a staff, whether to accept, accept with modifications or reject. I would then notify the author.”¹²¹

Salisbury, geographically distant from the team at Stanford, conducted his duties from Salt Lake City. As publications editor, he was in charge of “everything that related to getting the journal in print and to the public.” Although the other staff members had a say in certain aspects of the design, “the selection of art work, photos and cover design, [and] the composition of pages were all mine for the first few years.”¹²² Salisbury contracted first with Alphabet Press in Salt Lake City, but they soon went out of business.¹²³ Salisbury next accepted a bid from Quality Press, also of Salt Lake City (interrupted later by a brief interlude with

116. “For Ruffled Believers,” *Time* 88 (26 August 1966): 59.

117. See “The World Around Us,” *The Christian Century*, 83 (13 April 1966): 473.

118. Wesley Johnson to Cherry Silver, 26 February 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

119. Wesley Johnson to John Gardner, 29 August 1965, *Dialogue* Collection.

120. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

121. Menlove to Anderson, 1 October 1997.

122. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998. Johnson praises Salisbury’s talent, creativity, and contribution to the journal. Salisbury’s associations with the Salt Lake City artistic community also enabled him to bring their work to the pages of *Dialogue* (Johnson interview, 9 August 1999).

123. Paul Salisbury to Eugene England, 15 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

Bookcraft).¹²⁴ His duties required him “to be at the printer’s office at just the right moment” to check last minute details.¹²⁵

For Jeppson, working on *Dialogue* became a task that included daily visits to the office, editing manuscripts, and fulfilling his duties editing the “Notes and Comments” column, which featured announcements, news, and short essays on Mormonism. Jeppson, describing himself as representing “the far left of the group,” was also “the extant comedian,” according to the other founders. He saw to it that humor and satire made their way into *Dialogue*, which he introduced in the first issue with his brief “Non-editorial Postlude.” In three paragraphs, Jeppson criticized “the weighty precepts and lofty thoughts which our editors and writers have thrust upon the Mormon people in this issue,” and argued that a man seeking true guidance, “needs the help of his Home Teacher.”¹²⁶ Some readers, not recognizing the intended humor, took Jeppson seriously; others were offended.¹²⁷

Early challenges came to the editors in the form of manuscripts—or lack of good ones. Several of the early submissions had been written years earlier—waiting for the opportunity to be published. Rejecting up to 90% of submitted material, England remembers the early years as a time of “weeding out.”¹²⁸ “I think by the third year,” recalls Johnson, “we finally . . . had gone through all of the Sacrament Meeting talks that people had sent in.”¹²⁹

The editors learned early, however, that the best contributions had to be solicited. “You say you are short of manuscripts. I think we will always be short of good ones,” Bushman wrote to England. “I doubt if we can ever sit back and let people come to us.”¹³⁰ The staff sought these writers through various means. One method was to search through back issues of the *Improvement Era* and to contact authors who had published

124. The Stanford Press actually wanted to print *Dialogue*, and the staff had taken bids from them. However, all things considered, it proved more cost effective to print the journal in Salt Lake City.

125. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998.

126. See “Non-Editorial Postlude,” previously cited. Jeppson continued his satirical editorials for several years under the name Rustin Kaufmann. This pseudonym was inspired by the movie *The Graduate*, starring Dustin Hoffman as a young Jewish man seduced by an older woman. “Kaufmann” reviewed the film in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* (Spring 1969): 111-113. Although this was a tongue in cheek review, at least one Jewish faculty member at Stanford came to Johnson’s office to complain that *Dialogue* “was anti-Semitic.” “We told him it was a joke,” remembers Jeppson, “but he didn’t smile” (Johnson interview, 3 August 1996; Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998).

127. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998. See earlier comments by Robert Thomas to Richard L. Bushman, note 108.

128. England interview, 8 November 1994; England Oral History, 25.

129. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

130. Richard L. Bushman to Eugene England, 20 May 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

there. Nancy Lund, a volunteer in the office, sent a form letter to well-known Mormon scholars, asking them to contribute.¹³¹ As *Dialogue's* reputation grew, the editors did not have to rely on solicitations exclusively. However, looking back on his own experience, Johnson remembers that "the best manuscripts [were always] commissioned by the editors."¹³²

Unfortunately, as England explains apologetically, "we perhaps developed a too complex editorial process." Consequently, "we offended a lot [of writers] by taking so long with the manuscripts."¹³³ Johnson concedes to a point, but maintains that "[w]hile it is true that we [fell] behind in corresponding with some authors, these in almost all cases have been rejects. Authors who were publishable have been given VIP treatment."¹³⁴ England, however, defends the care given to rejected authors. To him, "one of our great services to aspiring Mormon writers was some good feedback their first time. So we took seriously the process of critiquing even articles we turned down, and I think we helped a lot of writers develop in the church."¹³⁵

Each issue typically spent six weeks at press. The staff at Stanford would send Salisbury the manuscripts, who took them to the printer, where galley proofs were printed, sent back to Stanford, corrected, then returned to Salt Lake City for the printing of page proofs. At this stage, the authors were given a final chance to make corrections and modifications.¹³⁶ From there the journal would be printed, bound, and mailed to subscribers. The earliest issues were produced through hand set type in hot metal.¹³⁷ Salisbury remembers that, "shrink wrapping didn't exist when we started and so each issue was [put] in a paper envelope and sealed."¹³⁸ Salisbury would organize 8-10 people into "stuffing parties," at his father's Salt Lake City insurance office.¹³⁹ England remembers that

131. See form letter of Nancy Lund, sent to at least fourteen scholars, *Dialogue* Collection.

132. Menlove to Anderson, 1 October 1997; Wesley Johnson to Robert Rees, 14 July 1971, *Dialogue* Collection.

133. England Oral History, 9. England even recalls that the staff lost a manuscript submitted by Mormon historian Juanita Brooks. When England asked her for a replacement copy, she informed him she had not made a duplicate. "I just felt terrible about that for years, and I'm sure she hasn't forgiven us," remembered England a decade later (England Oral History, 28).

134. Johnson to Rees, 14 July 1971.

135. England interview, 8 November 1994.

136. Johnson interview, 9 August 1999.

137. Paul G. Salisbury, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 9 August 1999.

138. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1988.

139. Salisbury interview, 9 August 1999. Salisbury remembers U of U and BYU faculty, as well as Chase and Greta Peterson among the volunteers.

his own staff and volunteers in Palo Alto met every Tuesday night. Keeping track of subscriptions was challenging. Since “we didn’t then have any computer lists or anything, [we] did everything by hand.”¹⁴⁰ With 8000 subscribers eventually, one can appreciate how crucial the volunteers were to *Dialogue*.

Some Mormon general authorities subscribed to *Dialogue* from the beginning, and, prompted by a suggestion from an early supporter, all of them began receiving gift subscriptions with the Winter 1967 issue. “We will try it for a year,” wrote England.¹⁴¹ The policy actually lasted into the next editorship.¹⁴² A few in the hierarchy, such as Marion D. Hanks, Paul H. Dunn, and First Presidency Counselor Brown, supported the enterprise.¹⁴³ Brown even prevented BYU president Ernest Wilkinson from banning *Dialogue* from the university bookstore. Bushman had lobbied hard for placement of the journal at BYU, and wrote England that

. . . they cannot put *Dialogue* on the stand without Wilkinson’s approval (standard procedure for all magazines) and he will not give approval until he speaks with the executive committee which is composed of a half dozen apostles. Lou [Prof. Louis Midgely] is afraid that Wilkinson will present the issue in such a way as to prejudice them against approval and then this decision will be interpreted as general disapproval by the Brethren.¹⁴⁴

During a meeting of the board of trustees—where Wilkinson argued his case against the journal, Brown countered that if *Dialogue* was too controversial for BYU, then perhaps books by some of those present should be banned also. “That brought the discussion to an end,” says England.¹⁴⁵

Brown went so far in his support for the journal as to later suggest to England that *Dialogue* combine with *BYU Studies* as a church sanctioned

140. England Oral History, 4.

141. Victor Cline to Eugene England, 23 February 1968; England to Cline, 22 March 1968, both in *Dialogue* Collection.

142. England interview, 8 November 1994. According to England, some general authorities “felt we were trying to counsel them by sending them *Dialogue* to straighten them out and they resented it” (England Oral History, 16).

143. England Oral History, 17.

144. Richard L. Bushman to Eugene England, 29 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

145. England Oral History, 18. Paul H. Dunn told the author a similar anecdote, in a conversation following his address at a single adult fireside in Sandy, Utah, six weeks before his death in January 1998. In 1966 Dunn was present in what may have been the same meeting of the Board of Trustees that England refers to above, yet the details vary slightly. As the board discussed *Dialogue*, one of the general authorities, whom Dunn did not identify, spoke up: “As far as I’m concerned, that book should be burned.” Hearing this comment, church president David O. McKay “sat up in his chair and said, ‘Now look—in this Church we do not burn books. If we did, I can think of some books by a few of you that I would rather see burned than *Dialogue*.’”

publication for Mormon intellectuals.¹⁴⁶ Whether Brown felt that church approval would insure a long life for the journal, or that it would reach a larger audience is unknown, but nothing ever came of this suggestion. N. Eldon Tanner, Second Counselor in the First Presidency (and a nephew to Brown), took a different approach. "We have heard since December that President Tanner is also quite encouraging about our journal," wrote England shortly before the first issue appeared. But the Mormon leader

. . . made the interesting suggestion that the journal should be sure to include articles which attack the Church because that would make it very clear that *Dialogue* is in no way an official Church journal. He would only hope that there be opportunity for rebuttal and of course this is exactly what we want the journal to provide.¹⁴⁷

Such feedback from church leaders, positive or negative, was for the most part confined to the England-Johnson years.

Seeking Balance

From the beginning, critics accused the editors of having a liberal bias.¹⁴⁸ Although England concedes that, "the very idea [of a publication like *Dialogue*] is a liberal idea and attracts liberals in a relative sense," the editors were "genuinely determined to provide material at cross spectrums and actually commissioned articles from a variety of viewpoints . . ."¹⁴⁹ Evidence in the *Dialogue* correspondence indicates that the editors did

146. England Oral History, 18; England interview, 17 July 1996. In his "Notes from a Meeting with President Brown," Salisbury writes of Brown's favorable comments toward the journal:

President Brown said he liked *Dialogue* and felt it was important to the church, but that most of the brethren are afraid of it. He said they are afraid of anything that questions or that they feel challenges their authority and that this is too bad. "It shouldn't be that way. We teach that truth should be able to stand on its own in the market place." He elaborated briefly on the gospel belief that truth can withstand any scrutiny and that I said I felt most of the brethren objected to *Dialogue* without reading it and that I didn't feel this was fair to us. President Brown said, "It's worse than that, it's immature, it's infantile."

147. Eugene England to Douglas R. Bunker, 3 March 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

148. Indeed, the second issue of *Dialogue* (Summer 1966) contained J. D. Williams, "The Separation of Church and State in Mormon Theory and Practice," which criticized the conservative views of Apostle Ezra Taft Benson. Williams's essay so offended some of the brethren that they withdrew a call about to be issued to Leonard Arrington to serve as a mission president in Italy. Apparently it was guilt by association as Arrington had published in the journal and served as an advisory editor. See Arrington, *Adventures of a Church Historian*, 89.

149. England interview, 8 November 1994.

seek people who would provide balance. Future apostle Neal A. Maxwell, then Executive Vice President of the University of Utah, responded to an invitation to contribute to *Dialogue*. "I fully intend to write something" he responded, "although his submission never came."¹⁵⁰ The editors also encouraged Truman Madsen to continue publishing in the journal, but after his piece in the premier issue, he declined any further involvement. According to England, Madsen said he was given "a look" by a general authority which indicated that he "probably shouldn't write for *Dialogue*."¹⁵¹

The editors also encouraged general authorities to submit articles. However, Elder Marion D. Hanks, willing to contribute, was denied permission by church president David O. McKay.¹⁵² The only general authority to publish in *Dialogue* was President Hugh B. Brown. His funeral sermon for retired BYU English professor P. A. Christensen appeared in the spring 1969 issue.¹⁵³

This desired balance also extended to political issues, and the staff sought contributors among Mormon scholars for that purpose. L. Ralph Mecham, assistant to the president for special projects at the University of Utah, responding to such a request from Salisbury, suggested three "moderate-to-conservative Republicans who have good standing in the church and who might be willing to write articles."¹⁵⁴

Maintaining balance remained a constant challenge, however. Acknowledging that the majority of articles to appear in *Dialogue* "could probably be characterized as leaning towards a liberal point of view," Johnson wrote to board member Victor Cline that he would welcome conservative perspectives on issues, "but this can be made possible only if we can locate people who feel this point of view and will also take the

150. Neal A. Maxwell to Richard L. Bushman, 18 October 1966, *Dialogue* Collection.

151. England Oral History, 10.

152. England Oral History, 17.

153. Hugh B. Brown, "In Memory of P. A. Christensen (1888-1968)," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Spring 1969): 51-58. Two other general authority sermons (one by Brown) were later published in the journal, though posthumously. See J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "When Are the Writings or Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Summer 1979): 68-81, and Hugh B. Brown, "An Eternal Quest: Freedom of the Mind," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Spring 1984): 77-83.

154. L. Ralph Mecham to Paul G. Salisbury, 7 April 1966, *Dialogue* Collection. Mecham gave Salisbury the names of Dr. Charles H. Bradford, Deputy Director for Research, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, John R. Evans, Minority Counsel, Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, and Robert F. Bennett, Washington liaison with J. C. Penney Company. Only Bennett ever published in *Dialogue*, and that was not until 1977. See Robert F. Bennett, "Some Thoughts on Public Relations," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Spring 1977): 120-122. Although Bradford never submitted an article, he obviously supported the journal in other ways: his wife, Mary, became editor in 1976.

trouble to sit down and articulate it in an article."¹⁵⁵ England also assured Cline six months later that "the majority of our effort since before publishing our first issue has gone into trying to involve the more conservative and orthodox members of the church in the journal." However, "we keep running into the same old problem of being misunderstood and badly judged—largely by people who haven't taken the time to read the journal with any serious attention."¹⁵⁶ Sometimes, however, the editors inadvertently contributed to the problem.

In retrospect, England insists that he used poor judgment in publishing a letter (Summer 1967) written by church member Stuart Udall, then Secretary of the Interior in the Lyndon Johnson administration.¹⁵⁷ Udall, from a prominent Mormon family in Arizona, had long been an outspoken supporter of civil rights, and now sought to counter accusations that, as a Mormon, he must be racist since his religion denied priesthood office to blacks. Thus, Udall decided to openly attack that policy.¹⁵⁸ Because England hoped for "constructive dialogue" on this issue, he first welcomed the Udall piece. Initially he intended to use it as part of a roundtable, but then persuaded Udall to submit his essay as a letter to the editor instead.¹⁵⁹ Udall requested advance copies of the letter, as it would appear in the journal, in order to forewarn Mormon president David O. McKay and other leaders.¹⁶⁰ Criticizing the racial policy, Udall went right to the point: "My fear is that the very character of Mormonism is being distorted and crippled by adherence to a belief and practice that denies the oneness of mankind." Urging a change in policy, he maintained:

155. Wesley Johnson to Victor Cline, 3 June 1967, *Dialogue* Collection. Johnson even met with conservative Mormon writer Cleon Skousen for nearly three hours in Skousen's home in Provo, Utah, in an attempt to persuade him to publish in *Dialogue*. Skousen refused (Johnson interview, 9 August 1999).

156. Eugene England to Victor Cline, 23 December 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

157. Udall began serving in this post in 1961 under President John F. Kennedy.

158. F. Ross Peterson, "'Do Not Lecture the Brethren': Stuart L. Udall's Pro-Civil Rights Stance, 1967," *Journal of Mormon History* 25 (Spring 1999): 275. Peterson's essay presents the background and aftermath of Udall's published letter.

159. Eugene England to Stewart L. Udall, 25 April 1967, *Dialogue* Collection; Johnson interview, 9 August 1999. Ross Peterson, however, cites a 20 December 1966 letter from Hank Berenstein, an aide to Udall, where Berenstein convinced Udall to submit the essay as a letter to the editor. See Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 279. However, Udall must have ignored this advice, as four months later, England, in the letter cited above, indicates that the eventual format that the essay took is only now being suggested: "[W]e considered using your essay as part of a roundtable, but that would have to wait for our winter issue because of our prior commitments. We therefore would like to print your essay as our lead Letter to the Editors, with a[n] editor's note specifically inviting response to it."

160. Udall to England, 28 April 1967, *Dialogue* Collection; Ross Peterson notes that in addition to McKay, Udall sent the letter to First Presidency counselors Hugh B. Brown, N.

The restriction now imposed on Negro fellowship is a social and institutional practice having no real sanction in essential Mormon thought. It is clearly contradictory to our most cherished spiritual and moral ideals.¹⁶¹

Udall submitted the letter on 24 February 1967. Coincidentally, *Time* and *Newsweek* began criticizing the Mormon position on blacks in March installments of the magazines, predicting that the priesthood policy would hurt Mormon governor George Romney's presidential campaign.¹⁶² England informed Udall that the *Dialogue* issue containing his letter would be sent to subscribers on May 17. Udall chose that day to release the letter to the Associated Press.¹⁶³

The national media responded by focusing on Udall's plea to church leaders to remove the priesthood restriction.¹⁶⁴ Letters to the editor poured into the *Dialogue* office responding to Udall, twelve of which were published in the following two issues.¹⁶⁵ Among the immediate barrage of letters Udall himself received were hundreds from Arizona Mormons, including apostles Delbert L. Stapley and Spencer W. Kimball, who thought Udall's plea was out of line.¹⁶⁶ Liberal Mormons applauded Udall's "courage" for speaking out.¹⁶⁷ Because church leaders had already received death threats over the black issue, England feared that with national publicity, Mormons would assume *Dialogue* supported those threats. Although Johnson maintains that publishing the Udall letter "was a statement we had to make to establish our credibility in a number of quarters," England believes that this move "did us, and prob-

Eldon Tanner, Arizona apostles Delbert L. Stapley and Spencer W. Kimball, and Governor George Romney. See "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 279.

161. Stuart L. Udall, Letter to the Editor, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Summer 1967): 6.

162. Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 279. For the articles Peterson refers to, see "Republicans: Romantic Interlude," *Newsweek*, 69 (6 March 1967): 34-35; "The Two Romneys," *Time* 89 (3 March 1967): 24-25.

163. Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 281.

164. Ibid. For newspaper accounts of Udall's letter, see Wallace Turner, "Udall Entreats Mormons on Race," *New York Times*, pp. 1, 23, and "Udall Asks LDS to Reexamine Negro Doctrine," *Salt Lake Tribune*, pp. B1, B2, both 19 May 1967.

165. See the letters to the editor in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Autumn 1967): 5-9, and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Winter 1967): 5-7.

166. Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 283-84. Peterson notes the contrast between the Stapley and Kimball letters. Stapley, whose 26 May letter Peterson described as "a theological defense of racism," declared that, "God himself placed the curse...and it is up to him and not to man to lift that curse." Kimball's 25 May letter avoided discussion of any justification of the priesthood ban, but expressed disappointment in Udall's attempt to "command your God" or "to make a demand of the Prophet of God!"

167. According to Peterson, Mormons praising Udall included activist Esther Peterson, also serving in the Johnson administration as chair of the President's Committee on Consumer Interests, sociologist Lowery Nelson, Mormon bishop Wayne M. Carl, and former BYU professor W. Grant Ivins. See Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 282-283.

ably the church, significant harm."¹⁶⁸ Immediate feedback to England seemed to confirm this. "How do you suppose the brethren react[ed] when they read your name and your publication as the vehicle for such a letter with some ominous ramifications?" asked Richard Marshall, England's former bishop.¹⁶⁹ Ten days later, Marshall wrote again:

While it is true you've made yourself some good friends among the brethren, it's also true that some are saying now to others: "I told you so."

... Imagine how shocked I was to have one of [the general authorities] say in a meeting in my presence that "Gene England is destroying himself."¹⁷⁰

D. Arthur Haycock, England's former mission president, also sent England a letter, "replete with innuendos that the [sic] good proportion of the general authorities were about to cut me off, if not in fact, at least in their hearts."¹⁷¹ England tried to offset any damage by writing N. Eldon Tanner, explaining how and why *Dialogue* came to publish the Udall letter. Despite national press which reflected negatively on the church, England assured Tanner that "*Dialogue* made no effort before or after publication to give the letter publicity."¹⁷²

Although the Udall letter helped sour some general authorities on *Dialogue*, it prompted many lay Mormons to speak out on the issue of blacks and the priesthood for the first time. Interestingly, most critical responses avoided justification of the policy, instead, scolding Udall for making a demand of church leaders.¹⁷³ Ironically, two supportive letters to Eugene England came from future general authorities. "The Udall controversy was interesting," wrote Hugh Pinnock. "I was surprised to find people becoming as explicit as they did with the article." Pinnock concluded with an admonition:

You must (hopefully) print such opinions—especially when a government official of his stature speaks, whether he be right, wrong or indifferent. Generally speaking people are pleased with your work—pray that too many don't become satisfied, however, or you will fail in what you can accomplish.¹⁷⁴

168. England, "A Matter of Love," 20; G. Wesley Johnson, "*Dialogue: The Early Years*"; responding to a paper delivered by Devery S. Anderson on 16 August 1996, at the Salt Lake City Sunstone Symposium, audiotape #252, copy in my possession.

169. Richard J. Marshall to Eugene England, 19 May 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

170. Richard J. Marshall to Eugene England, 29 May 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

171. Eugene England to Steven L. Tanner, 13 July 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

172. Eugene England to N. Eldon Tanner, 28 June 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

173. Peterson, "Do Not Lecture the Brethren," 281-285.

174. Hugh W. Pinnock to Eugene and Charlotte England, 29 July 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

Jeffrey R. Holland, then director of the LDS institute in Seattle, asked for two new subscriptions for the institute. "One copy isn't going to be enough to handle the traffic if the 'Letters to the Editor' keep getting national attention."¹⁷⁵

Scholars and the Black Issue

As a scholarly voice in the Mormon intellectual community, *Dialogue* could hardly avoid discussion of the sensitive "Negro Doctrine," however. In the years following the advent of the civil rights movement, the church received intense criticism over the priesthood ban.¹⁷⁶ The winter 1967 issue of *Dialogue* gave the topic scholarly attention by featuring "Mormonism and the Negro: Faith, Folklore, and Civil Rights" by Mormon sociologist Armand Mauss. Unlike Udall, Mauss did not attack the church's position, but sought to refute some of the popular explanations as to why the church denied priesthood to members of African descent. Describing as "folklore," the widely believed views of nineteenth-century Mormon leaders (beliefs echoed by many contemporary writers), Mauss demonstrated as unscriptural the notion that blacks were less valiant or neutral in the "war in heaven," or were forever cursed or marked because of the actions of biblical figures Cain and Ham. Keeping balance, however, he also rejected as unsubstantiated the more liberal view that the policy was an infringement on Negro civil rights, as proclaimed by Udall, and, earlier, by the NAACP.¹⁷⁷

Two years later, the issue found its way into *Dialogue* once again. Stephen G. Taggart, a recent graduate of Cornell University, submitted an essay called "Social and Historical Origins of Mormonism's Negro

175. Jeffrey R. Holland to Eugene England, 15 June 1967, *Dialogue* Collection.

176. Stanford, which housed the *Dialogue* offices, refused athletic participation with BYU in 1969 over the black policy, as did other universities. Johnson specifically remembers the Stanford incident originating after the assassination of Martin Luther King when the university set out to increase the black presence on campus. The BYU boycott created tension between Mormon and non-Mormon students and faculty, and England feared "the possibility that [Stanford] would broaden their concern about the church to cut off relationships in all kinds of places." Johnson recalls the feeling that "*Dialogue* didn't have much of a future [at Stanford]." However, the journal remained safe until moving to Los Angeles in 1971 ("An Interview with Eugene England," 19; Johnson interview, 9 August 1999). See also William F. Reed, "The Other Side of 'The Y'," *Sports Illustrated* (26 January) 1970: 38-39, and Brian Walton, "A University's Dilemma: BYU and Blacks," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 6 (Spring 1971): 31-36, for an account of this episode.

177. See Armand L. Mauss, "Mormonism and the Negro: Faith, Folklore, and Civil Rights," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Winter 1967): 19-39, reprinted in Lester E. Bush, Jr., and Armand L. Mauss, ed., *Neither White nor Black: Mormon Scholars Confront the Race Issue in a Universal Church* (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1984), 9-30.

Policy," which *Dialogue* agreed to publish.¹⁷⁸ Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, in September 1969, Taggart sent copies of his manuscript to President Hugh B. Brown.¹⁷⁹ Alvin R. Dyer, a special counselor in the presidency, also read the manuscript (Dyer was appointed as an extra counselor in 1967 due to President McKay's declining health). In a meeting with Salisbury, Brown "stated at the outset that it was a very good manuscript," but advised against publishing it "for *Dialogue's* sake." According to Salisbury, Brown said that "many of the 'brethren' were upset by the article but [Brown] questioned whether they had really read it." Most upset was Dyer, who, according to Brown, called the piece, "an 'abominable' document, 'full of error from start to finish'." Dyer promised to supply Brown with a written response to the manuscript, but failed to do so, even after Brown "asked him about it a dozen times . . ." ¹⁸⁰ Dyer finally submitted his ten page review, titled, "An Article," calling Taggart's manuscript "one of the most vicious, untrue articles that has ever been written about the church."¹⁸¹ Dyer later called Eugene England and recommended against publishing the Taggart manuscript, although he failed to explain why.¹⁸²

Brown, "unequivocally" declaring to Salisbury "that the Church's stand on the Negro question was 'not a doctrine but a policy,'" certainly would have approved of the Taggart manuscript for its conclusion that "[t]he weight of the evidence suggests that God did not place a curse upon the Negro—that his white children did," and Taggart's plea "that the time for correcting the situation is long past due."¹⁸³ Brown would

178. Taggart's paper had previously received "Honorable Mention" in the 1st Annual *Dialogue* Prizes for articles submitted in 1968. See *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon thought* 4 (Spring 1969), inside back cover.

179. Lester E. Bush, Jr., "Writing 'Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview' (1973): Context and Reflections, 1998," *Journal of Mormon History* 26 (Spring 1999): 238. Bush's essay, an expanded version of a paper presented at the Mormon History Association meeting in Washington, D.C., on 23 May 1998, chronicles his interest in the topic of blacks and the priesthood, including the background of his "The Mormon Negro Doctrine," published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* (Spring 1973); Salisbury, "Notes from a Meeting with President Brown."

180. Salisbury, "Notes from a Meeting with President Brown."

181. Bush, "Writing 'Mormonism's Negro Doctrine'", 239.

182. England Oral History, 17.

183. Stephen G. Taggart, *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1970), 76. Brown was deeply concerned with the church's position regarding black priesthood denial, and was nearly successful in revoking the policy in 1969. See D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 13-15, and Edwin B. Firmage, ed., *An Abundant Life: The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999, 2nd ed.), 142. According to Salisbury, "Notes from a Meeting with President Brown":

[Brown] said that there were brethren who believed [the priesthood ban] to be a doctrine (he specifically named Elder Lee and President Joseph Fielding Smith) but that President McKay felt, as did President Brown, that it was only a policy and could be

have felt his views vindicated by Taggart's inclusion of a letter written by Sterling McMurrin to McKay's sons, reporting on a 1954 conversation McMurrin had with McKay about the priesthood issue. McMurrin quotes McKay as rejecting any notion of a curse upon blacks, insisting that "there is not now, and there never has been, a doctrine in this church that the Negroes are under a divine curse."¹⁸⁴

Dyer, on the other hand, would have opposed the article for the precisely the same assertions. His views on the subject were already a matter of record. In 1961 he addressed missionaries about the priesthood ban, telling them, "what I say is not to be given to your investigators by any manner of means," and went on to reiterate the correctness of the popular explanation of the day: The "Negro [is] cursed under the cursing of Cain," said Dyer, because "those spirits rejected the Priesthood of God in the pre-existence."¹⁸⁵

Despite the controversy within the hierarchy, however, *Dialogue* remained determined to publish the Taggart piece, accompanied by a reply from Lester Bush, a young physician whose own thorough research on the history of the black policy had led to some fundamentally different conclusions as to its origin. His comments were to be followed by a rejoinder from Taggart. Taggart's untimely death prevented this debate from ever taking place, however, and his family withdrew the article and submitted it to the University of Utah Press where it appeared in book form.¹⁸⁶

All that ultimately appeared in *Dialogue* was a review by Bush of Taggart's by-then published book (Winter 1969). Although Taggart, like Mauss, refuted racist doctrines, Bush did take issue with Taggart's echoing of the "Missouri Thesis" as the origin of the black policy. This idea, formulated by earlier historians, maintains that the ban was initiated by Joseph Smith in 1834 as a way to appease angry pro-slavery Missourians.¹⁸⁷ In his seventeen page reply, Bush countered that Taggart's sources for

changed. He then said that Lawrence and Luellen McKay had gone to their father about ordaining a Negro to the priesthood who worked at the Hotel Utah. President Brown said that President McKay agreed to do it but "some of the other brethren got wind of it and put a stop to it." President Brown said he felt this was unfortunate because he said, "It's important that the policy be changed while President McKay is alive—if it isn't we'll be set back several years—as long as Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee are in control."

184. Taggart, *Mormonism's Negro Policy*, 74.

185. See Alvin R. Dyer, "For What Purpose?," address delivered to a missionary conference in Oslo, Norway, 18 March 1961, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

186. See the introduction to the reprint of "A Commentary on Stephen G. Taggart's *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins*, in Lester E. Bush, Jr. and Armand L. Mauss, eds., *Neither White nor Black: Mormon Scholars Confront the Race Issue in a Universal Church* (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1984) p. 31. See note 177 for publication information on Taggart's book.

187. As Bush points out, Taggart was echoing the views of earlier historians. See

this view were few and too many years after the fact. Bush's work, a prelude to his lengthy 1973 study also published in *Dialogue*, argues that the most reliable evidence documents the priesthood restriction as originating with Brigham Young in 1849.¹⁸⁸ Although differing in important aspects, both Taggart and Bush agreed that there was nothing in Mormon scripture that advocated such a policy, and that popular, modern explanations for the ban were based on racist interpretations of what little information was available. Although these conclusions were disturbing to some, for others who had entertained doubts about the necessity of the practice, these scholarly voices were a welcome alternative to the theological explanations then being made abundantly available to members of the church.

Dialogue and the Joseph Smith Papyri

Although the issue of blacks and the priesthood was controversial for public relations reasons, other articles would be controversial for more fundamental ones. On 27 November 1967, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City presented the LDS Church with eleven fragments of Egyptian papyri, once belonging to Joseph Smith. Long assumed destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871, the papyri, which the Metropolitan had possessed since 1947, were "discovered" in the basement of the museum in 1966 by a Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, former director of the Middle East Center at the University of Utah. According to published accounts of the discovery, Atiya happened upon the papyri while doing research for a book. Eighteen months later, after private meetings and negotiations with museum officials, they were donated to the church.¹⁸⁹

Smith had originally purchased the papyri, along with four Egyptian mummies, from a Michael Chandler who visited Mormon headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835. Chandler was following rumors that Smith

Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, 2nd ed. revised (New York: Knopf, 1971) and Warren A. Jennings, "Factors in the Destruction of the Mormon Press in Missouri, 1833," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 (Winter 1967): 56-76, both cited by Bush.

188. For the full discussion, see Lester Bush, "A Commentary on Stephen G. Taggart's *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins*," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Winter 1969): 86-103. Reprinted in *Neither Black nor White*, 31-52; Bush "Writing 'Mormonism's Negro Doctrine,'" 231.

189. For news accounts of the discovery of the papyri and their acquisition by the LDS church, see Jack E. Jarrard, "Rare Papyri Presented to Church," *Deseret News*, 27 November 1967, A-1 & A-3; "LDS Given Manuscript Used by Joseph Smith," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 November 1967, 16. For reports in Mormon publications, see Jack E. Jarrard, "Church Receives Joseph Smith Papyri," *Church News*, 2 December 1967, and Jay M. Todd, "Egyptian Papyri Rediscovered," *Improvement Era* 71 (January 1968): 12-17.

could translate unknown languages.¹⁹⁰ Smith took an immediate interest in the scrolls and soon announced that two of them contained writings of Old Testament patriarchs Abraham and Joseph.¹⁹¹ Smith produced what he said was a translation of a portion of the papyri, calling it the Book of Abraham, which the Mormon church in Utah later canonized.¹⁹² Included with the published text of the Book of Abraham were three illustrations from the papyrus, which Smith reproduced as Facsimiles 1, 2, and 3, assigning them Abrahamic themes.¹⁹³

Rumors of the existence of the papyri began leaking out immediately after Atiya claimed to have located them. These rumors did not escape the *Dialogue* office, and a curious Joseph Jeppson wrote Hugh B. Brown for confirmation six weeks before the church acquired the fragments. "I have no personal information on this subject," Brown responded. "[I] have heard it rumored that the scrolls are in existence, but as yet we have not been able to make contact. When we do, undoubtedly, Dr. Nibley will have the information."¹⁹⁴ Nibley had previously established himself as the church's most eminent scholar and defender of the antiquity of Mormon scripture.¹⁹⁵ Jeppson learned more about the existence of the papyri

190. For more on the history of the papyri and the purchase by Smith, see James R. Clark, *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), Clark, "Joseph Smith and the Lebolo Egyptian Papyri," *BYU Studies* 8 (Winter 1968): 195-203; Keith Terry and Walter Whipple, *From the Dust of Decades: A Saga of the Papyri and Mummies* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968); Jay M. Todd, *The Saga of the Book of Abraham* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969); H. Don Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham: Mummies, Manuscripts, and Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995).

191. B. H. Roberts, ed., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978), 1:236.

192. The Book of Abraham was first published serially in the 1 and 15 March and 16 May 1842 issues of the Mormon newspaper, *Times and Seasons* in Nauvoo, Illinois. It was later included in the first edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1851), and canonized in 1880 when that compilation became the fourth book of LDS scripture. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has remained skeptical of the Book of Abraham. For an RLDS assessment of the Book of Abraham controversy, see Richard P. Howard, "A Tentative Approach to the Book of Abraham," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 88-92.

193. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century criticisms of Smith's ability to translate Egyptian were based on these published facsimiles, since the papyri were presumed lost. See studies by French Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria in Jules Remy and Julius Brencley, *A Journey to Salt Lake City* (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), 2:539-46, and from early twentieth-century scholars in F. S. Spaulding, *Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator* (Salt Lake City: Arrow Press, 1912), and Samuel A. B. Mercer, "Joseph Smith as an Interpreter and Translator of Egyptian," *The Utah Survey* 1 (September 1913): 4-36.

194. Hugh B. Brown to Joseph H. Jeppson, 17 October 1967, copy in my possession.

195. In fact, in the same issue of *Improvement Era* that announced the discovery of the papyri, Nibley began what would be a two-and-a-half-year series on the Book of Abraham. See Hugh Nibley, "A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price," *Improvement Era* 71 (January 1968) to 73 (May 1970).

during a telephone conversation with Dr. Klaus Baer, Professor of Egyptology at the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, who had some knowledge of the matter (Baer had been Nibley's tutor when the latter studied Egyptian). Baer, according to Jeppson, "let it slip that [the papyri] had not burned up in the Chicago fire. But since he had promised Nibley he wouldn't tell Mormons about it, he clammed up."¹⁹⁶ Evidence from Baer and others indicates that Atiya's "discovery" came with help from some of the staff at the Metropolitan, who wanted the church to become aware of the papyri before the public did.¹⁹⁷ Jeppson also claims that it was his persistence that led the Metropolitan to respond to the rumors. Determined to learn the facts, Jeppson called Wallace Turner, the western correspondent for the *New York Times*, and relayed his conversation with Baer. According to Jeppson,

[Turner] promised to get "the whole force out looking for [the papyri]." Three days later he told me they had located them in the basement of the Metropolitan in NY. I called [Dr. Henry] Fischer [curator of the Egyptian collection at the Met], and told him we knew they were there. Fischer told me he worried about their safety, and asked me to give him three days to figure out what to do. I did. He arranged to [donate] them to the church. Fischer sent me photocopies of them, in case the church decided to destroy them.¹⁹⁸

196. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998.

197. Letters by Baer also confirm that he was among a privileged few who knew the papyri were at the Metropolitan—even before Atiya supposedly located them. In a 13 August 1968 letter (copy in my possession), Baer wrote to Jerald Tanner that:

I saw photographs of them for the first time in 1963, I believe, and was asked at the time, on my honor, not to tell anyone where they were and to keep the whole thing confidential. I am sure that other Egyptologists also knew about them, and [Egyptologist John A.] Wilson's letter [*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Winter 1968): 54] pretty well represents what we felt we could say in view of our promise to the Metropolitan. About that time I wrote Nibley that some of the Joseph Smith papyri still existed but that I was not at liberty to say where, and he wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri...This is about where things were until the [Metropolitan] Mus. photos were shown to Nibley in 1965 (at which time he did not know where the originals were). Atiya's story about "discovering" the papyri is obviously mistaken. He "discovered" them because the [Metropolitan] Mus. wanted them "discovered." It is also pretty clear to me that the [Metropolitan] Mus. didn't want anyone to find out about the papyri before the Mormon church did, at least not publicly, and that they took their own sweet time about it.

A recent statement from Mormon apologist John Gee confirms that the Atiya story is not accurate. In a footnote to his review of Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham*, Gee says that, after examining correspondence between Fischer and Atiya, "I find it impossible to believe that Fischer did not know that the Metropolitan owned the papyri, and knew exactly what they had. I find Atiya's story repeated in Peterson . . . incredible. I understand Fischer was justifiably furious at Atiya's story." See Gee, "Telling the Story of the Joseph Smith Papyri," *Review of Books About the Book of Mormon* 8:2 (1996): 59.

198. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998. According to Fischer, the papyri were "a gift,

Dialogue's interest in the papyri escalated when Norman Tolk, a member of the editorial board in New York, "through means he chose not to disclose," also secured photographs of all eleven pieces during the church's acquisition process. Tolk sent the photos to the *Dialogue* office and also arranged interviews with Fischer and Atiya for publication in the journal.¹⁹⁹ However, since the church had only published photos of four of the fragments in the *Church News*, Tolk insisted that England receive permission through First Presidency first counselor Tanner to publish the complete set.²⁰⁰ England complied, but Tanner responded by denying permission until the church could make a general release to the press.²⁰¹ Consequently, Salisbury, in Salt Lake City, held up the winter 1967 issue with the understanding that permission was pending. *BYU Studies*, which planned an article on the papyri by Nibley, published a flyer announcing that they too, would soon publish the photographs.²⁰² Tanner, however, later called Salisbury and told him that the church had reconsidered its earlier decision and had since decided against releasing any additional photographs. Hence, Tanner denied *BYU Studies* permission and asked that *Dialogue* refrain from publishing the Tolk photos as well. Disappointed, England nevertheless had Salisbury pull the photographs and reproduced only those that had appeared earlier in the *Church News*. The issue (Winter 1967) also included interviews with Atiya and Fisher.²⁰³

In February, when the winter 1968 issue of *BYU Studies* appeared, the *Dialogue* staff was stunned to see photographs of all eleven papyri fragments. Hurt and betrayed, and eager for an explanation, a perplexed England wrote to Tanner for some answers. "Perhaps you can imagine then, the feelings of many of our staff members when they received the copies of the *BYU Studies* yesterday and saw all of the papyri . . . published there." Most disillusioned was Salisbury, who had worked hard to delay the press run. "We proceeded on the assurance that no such release was about to be made," continued England. "If I could just tell [the staff]

of course, but it was made possible through an anonymous donation which covered the cost to the museum" ("An Interview With Dr. Fischer," under the heading, "The Facsimile Found: The Discovery of Joseph Smith's Papyrus Manuscripts," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Winter 1967): 64).

199. Eugene England to Wesley Johnson, 23 December 1967, *Dialogue* Collection. Johnson was mid-way through a six-month teaching assignment in Florence, Italy. Aside from some correspondence with the *Dialogue* staff, Johnson, of necessity, left the majority of the editorial duties to England.

200. England to Johnson, 23 December 1967. For the first published photos, see Jarard, "Church Receives Joseph Smith Papyri."

201. England to Johnson, 23 December 1967.

202. Ibid. The article became Hugh Nibley, "A Prolegomena to Any Study of the Book of Abraham," *BYU Studies* 8 (Winter 1968): 171-178.

203. See "The Facsimile Found," 51-64.

what happened, it would help a lot, and so I hope you can take a few moments to tell me briefly how *BYU Studies* came to get permission to go ahead and why permission was not extended to us at the same time."²⁰⁴

Tanner's response is not in the *Dialogue* correspondence, but Charles Tate, editor of *BYU Studies*, sheepishly wrote England a letter of explanation. According to Tate, *BYU Studies* received last-minute permission because he had put himself "in a bind," by promising his readers that publication of the photographs was forthcoming. To avert embarrassment, he and Hugh Nibley had made one more attempt, through Tanner, for permission. Tanner was supportive, but advised Nibley to make a formal request to the First Presidency. Following through, Nibley recommended that all the photos be released on February 1, and the presidency complied.²⁰⁵ However, the *Dialogue* staff was not informed of this latest reversal. Hence, *BYU Studies*, unbeknownst to *Dialogue*, published the photographs within a week, and the church published a full color spread in the February 1968 *Improvement Era*.²⁰⁶ *Dialogue*, the first to possess photographs, lost out on what England called, "the scoop of the century." However, as England recalls, this case certainly showed that "we followed counsel."²⁰⁷

Although losing out to *BYU Studies* in producing the first papyri photographs, it was *Dialogue* that published the first translations of the papyri by renowned Egyptologists. Jeppson arranged this project by sending the color *Improvement Era* photographs to Baer, John A. Wilson, also of the University of Chicago, and Richard A. Parker of Brown University. These scholars agreed to produce translations for *Dialogue* without pay.²⁰⁸ Both Wilson and Parker (Summer 1968) identified the majority of the papyri as chapters of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead," dating these particular fragments between 500 and 300 B.C. or later. Wilson offered a translation of six of the papyri pieces, originally forming one scroll, and all part of the Book of the Dead. Parker translated the fragment labeled the "Sensun" papyrus (meaning "to breathe") from the

204. Eugene England to N. Eldon Tanner, 7 February 1968, *Dialogue* Collection.

205. Charles C. Tate to Eugene England, 15 February 1968, *Dialogue* Collection.

206. See photographs of the papyri in *BYU Studies* 8 (Winter 1968): 179-190, and *Improvement Era* 71 (February 1968): 40-41.

207. England Oral History, 16-17. England, recently commenting on this episode, still remembers the effect it had on him and his staff: "I was mainly upset (still am) that we had a chance to make a scoop and show genuine, responsible dialogue concerning important discoveries and issues but were prevented from doing so—and thus from enhancing our image—by behavior that was at best very unprofessional, even unethical, and at worst duplicitous" (England to Anderson, 13 September 1999).

208. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998.

Book of Breathings, a condensed form of the Book of the Dead, dating from Roman times.²⁰⁹

It is the Sensun papyrus, more particularly, the “Small Sensun” (Papyri Joseph Smith XI), that has proved the most troublesome for the Book of Abraham.²¹⁰ This is made evident in an essay by Grant Heward, a postal worker and amateur Egyptologist, and Jerald Tanner, a well-known critic of Mormonism, included in this same issue of *Dialogue*. This article demonstrated that in an 1830s Mormon manuscript titled *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, individual characters from the Sensun text had been matched in parallel columns to English passages of the Book of Abraham. This, according to Heward and Tanner, seems clear that Smith believed that the Sensun fragment was the Egyptian text of the Book of Abraham. To complicate things further, according to the authors, each individual character from the Sensun was translated by Smith into dozens of English words—an impossibility in any literal translation.²¹¹ Heward and Tanner also discovered problems with Facsimile Two. Having been damaged prior to Smith’s purchase of it, characters from the Sensun text were then used to fill in the missing portions in order to make it more presentable when publishing the Book of Abraham.²¹² These additions, however, resulted in the combination of both hieroglyphic and hieratic writings, which, in the Egyptian, created a jumbled, nonsensical text.²¹³ Because of Tanner’s reputation as an anti-Mormon writer and publisher and Heward’s recent excommunication from the LDS church for opposing the authenticity of the Book of Abraham, Jeppson “had to push hard” for the staff to agree to publish the article.²¹⁴ However, the essay was an important contribution to link-

209. For these articles, under the heading, “The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri: Translations and Interpretations,” see John A. Wilson, “A Summary Report,” Richard A. Parker, “The Joseph Smith Papyri: A Preliminary Report,” and “The Book of Breathings (Fragment 1, The ‘Sensun’ Text, with Restorations From Louvre Papyrus 3284),” all in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 67-88, 98-99.

210. The title and numbering of this fragment (and all of the papyri) come from the published photographs in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968.

211. A photographic reprint of this manuscript appears under the title *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry).

212. The original of Facsimile Two was not part of the recovered papyri and is still lost. However, that the original was damaged when Smith came into possession of it is indicated by the fact that a replica drawing, included in the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, indicates that portions were missing.

213. See Grant S. Heward and Jerald Tanner, “The Source of the Book of Abraham Identified,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 92-98. Smith published an interpretation of the hypocephalus, including the restorations inserted from the text of the Sensun fragment. See the Book of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price*, 1981 edition, 37.

214. Joseph H. Jeppson, telephone interview conducted by Devery S. Anderson, 23 July 1999. Johnson recalls that he was very much opposed to publishing the Heward-Tanner essay (Johnson interview, 9 August 1999).

ing the papyri—more particularly, the Sensun scroll—with the Book of Abraham.

Baer's own translation of the Sensun text, including the writing that flanked Facsimile One, appeared alone in the fall issue. Baer also translated the individual characters found in parallel columns to the left of the English Book of Abraham text as produced in the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. This allowed for a comparison between Baer's translation and what came from Joseph Smith.²¹⁵ Needless to say, none of the Egyptologists found any similarities between their translations of these late funerary texts to what Joseph Smith published as the Book of Abraham.

Knowing the controversy the translation of the papyri would create, Jeppson recalls that he "expected the roof to fall in" after the articles appeared.²¹⁶ However, a response published by Nibley seemed enough to offset any damage caused by pitting Joseph Smith against the learned. Nibley, replying mainly to Heward and Tanner, was confident that, despite experimentation with the papyri by the prophet and his associates in Kirtland, Ohio, no one, including Smith, could have possibly believed nor intended the text of the Book of Abraham to have come from the few characters found in the small Sensun papyrus. Whatever the connection, it remained a mystery for now. Nibley also insisted that Smith could not have invented the Book of Abraham since it resembled too closely other ancient texts to which he could not possibly have had access.²¹⁷

Naturally, many observing Mormons hoped or even assumed, that studies of the papyri would vindicate Smith's ability to decipher Egyptian as it pertained to the translation of the Book of Abraham. When the scholarly community verified that the papyri were simply funerary texts dating from periods up to the time of Christ, several of the *Dialogue* staff worried about accusations of disloyalty from church leaders for giving the unbelieving a forum.²¹⁸ However, there was no response from anyone in the hierarchy.²¹⁹ Yet Jeppson sees the papyri episode as a defining moment in Mormonism:

215. See Klaus Baer, "The Breathing Permit of Hor: A Translation of the Apparent Source of the Book of Abraham," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Autumn 1968): 109-134.

216. Jeppson interview, 23 July 1999.

217. Hugh Nibley, "Phase One," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 99-105.

218. Jeppson interview, 23 July 1999.

219. England to Anderson, 13 September 1999. England also recalls that he was not particularly worried about the translations of the Egyptologists. Like many informed Latter-day Saints, England took the stand "that the divine 'translation' process, for both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham, involved much more direct revelation than anything like literal translation from an ancient text." The papyri had served more as "a stimulus to a revelation like that we call [the Book of] Moses [also published in the Pearl of

When we published the scrolls['] articles, I think we all just sat back and held our breath(s), not knowing what would happen next. Not much did, ostensibly. But I think it changed the scholars of the Church forever, and perhaps the leadership as well. From then on, the Brethren were not nearly so interested in Mormon [d]octrine as in bringing Mormonism on as a "mainstream" religion. . . .²²⁰

Great Price], so what the Egyptologists made of the actual texts that stimulated Joseph to ask [the] Lord concerning Abraham did not concern me."

220. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998. Debate over the papyri, and their connection to the Book of Abraham continues. In addition to several articles over the years, Nibley has published two books, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co, 1975) and *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981). Opposing Nibley is H. Michael Marquardt, who has written the response, *The Book of Abraham Papyrus Found: An Answer to Dr. Hugh Nibley's Book, "The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment"* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1975, revised and enlarged edition). See also Marquardt, "The Book of Abraham Revisited," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* 5:4 (1982): 101-120, reprinted by Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1983. Another brief criticism is Wesley P. Walters's "Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 16 (Winter 1973): 23-45, reprinted by Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1973. Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhoades produced a translation of Facsimile Two in "A Translation and Commentary of the Joseph Smith Hypocephalus," *BYU Studies* 17 (Spring 1977): 259-274. A good discussion of the Facsimiles is found in Edward H. Ashment, "The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham: A Reappraisal," and Hugh Nibley, "The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham: A Response," both in *Sunstone* 4 (December 1979): 33-51. Lengthy studies by critics are Jerald and Sandra Tanner, "The Fall of the Book of Abraham," in *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?*, (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, fifth edition, 1987), 294-369D, and Charles M. Larson, *By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri* (Grand Rapids: Institute for Religious Research, Revised Edition, 1992). Recent studies that allow Smith to have been somehow inspired by the papyri in producing the Book of Abraham are Karl C. Sandberg, "Knowing Brother Joseph Again: The Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith as a Translator," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22 (Winter 1989): 17-37, reprinted in Bryan Waterman, ed., *The Prophet Puzzle: Interpretive Essays on Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), and James R. Harris, *The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham, A Study of the Joseph Smith Papyri* (Payson, UT: Harris House, 1990). Most recently, a discussion of Smith's interpretations of the Facsimiles is Stephen E. Thompson, "Egyptology and the Book of Abraham," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28 (Spring 1995): 143-160. For a discussion connecting other Egyptian papyri to Abraham, see research of John Gee highlighted in "References to Abraham Found in Two Ancient Texts," *Insights: An Ancient Window: Newsletter of the Foundation For Ancient Research and Mormon Studies* (September 1991), and rebuttal by Edward H. Ashment, "The Use of Magical Papyri to Authenticate the Book of Abraham: A Critical Review," (Salt Lake City: Resource Communications, 1993). See also Gee's response to Ashment, "Abracadabra, Isaac and Jacob," *Review of Books About the Book of Mormon* 7:1 (1996): 19-84. A recent non-Mormon examination is John A. Larson, "Joseph Smith and Egyptology: An Early Episode in the History of American Speculation About Ancient Egypt, 1835-1844," in David P. Silverman, ed., *For His Ka: Essays Offered in Memory of Klaus Baer* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1994), 159-178.

Dialogue and the First Vision

Competition between *BYU Studies* and *Dialogue* did not end with the Joseph Smith papyri. Another controversial episode involved *Dialogue's* attempt to defend the church against one of its critics—an attempt which backfired. Wesley P. Walters, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church in Marissa, Illinois, submitted an article to *Dialogue* entitled, “New Light on Mormon Origins from the Palmyra Revival.” This essay disputed Joseph Smith’s claim that a local religious revival near his home in upstate New York prompted his “First Vision” by showing that no such revival appeared in the historical record (thus, according to Walters, Joseph Smith fabricated his vision). The editors sent a copy of Walters’s manuscript to Richard Bushman, who showed it to other scholars at BYU. Bushman recalls that the Walters essay “hit like a bombshell, because it took a story we thought was pretty well settled and turned it upside down.”²²¹ Mormon historians immediately made preparations to respond to Walters’s research. Several of them (including Bushman and Leonard Arrington) formed a committee headed by Truman Madsen, which made plans to spend the summer of 1968 doing research in Palmyra and vicinity. After talking with Madsen, England agreed to postpone the Walters essay until the historians were ready to publish a response—which would appear in the same issue of *Dialogue*. The New York research resulted in six articles, but at the last minute Madsen decided to publish them in *BYU Studies* instead.²²² “So *Dialogue* ended up having to publish Walters,” a frustrated England remembers. Although *Dialogue* did include a response by Bushman (based on the research of the Mormon historians), it appeared that *BYU Studies* (which did not publish Walters—only the responses) was defending the faith, while *Dialogue* (which did publish Walters) “seemed to be supporting the enemies.” England laments this because, “at a few crucial moments like that we could have established a positive image for *Dialogue*.”²²³ For England, feelings of betrayal, thirty years later, remain. “I think that was a very deliberate and unethical choice by Mormon in-

221. Bushman interview, 25 May 1998.

222. See *BYU Studies* 9 (Spring 1969).

223. England Oral History, 11-12. For the Walters and Bushman articles, see “The Question of a Palmyra Revival,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Spring 1969): 82-100. For continued debate about the setting of the first vision and the Palmyra revival, see Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Joseph Smith’s First Vision: The First Vision in Its Historical Context*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), Marvin S. Hill, “The First Vision Controversy: A Critique and Reconciliation,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Summer 1982): 31-46, and H. Michael Marquardt and Wesley P. Walters, *Inventing Mormonism: Tradition and the Historical Record* (Salt Lake City: Smith Research Associates, 1994), 15-41.

tellectuals at BYU that betrayed their scholarly as well as Christian responsibilities."²²⁴

Paying a Price

With *Dialogue's* growing reputation as a liberal, controversial publication, England found that there was a personal cost in editing the journal. Rumors began to circulate that he was both practicing polygamy and guilty of apostasy. While patently untrue, these stories still caused him "pain and disillusionment."²²⁵ Toward the end of his tenure as editor, he received word that Apostle Boyd K. Packer predicted publicly that England's children would fall away from Mormonism because of his activities with *Dialogue*. "We've been indoctrinated," laments England, into thinking "that [Mormon publications are] either official or else they're anti-Mormon. There's no middle ground."²²⁶ The commitment in time required as managing editor had forced him to delay the completion of his graduate studies for two years.²²⁷ Compounding his personal problem was the fact that his association with the journal would temporarily cost him a teaching opportunity at BYU. Apostle Boyd K. Packer denied England the position in 1975, telling him, "We can't have a former editor of *Dialogue* teaching at BYU."²²⁸

Johnson also paid a price. He devoted thousands of hours to *Dialogue* over his five-year tenure—time in which he estimates he could have produced more publications related to his field thus enabling him to secure a promotion sooner. "But we had a mission to perform," he insists, "to announce to the world that Mormons had a viable intellectual community."²²⁹

Making a Difference

Dialogue addressed many timely issues during these early years. The journal kept its commitment to the Mormon History Association, and Leonard Arrington guest edited the third issue (Fall 1966) which included several significant articles. Perhaps the most important was "The Significance of Joseph Smith's First Vision in Mormon Thought," a ground breaking essay by BYU history professor James B. Allen on the evolving use of the story among Mormons. This issue has been highly

224. England to Anderson, 13 September 1999, *Dialogue* Collection.

225. England, "A Matter of Love," 40.

226. England interview, 8 November 1994.

227. *Ibid.*

228. England was hired the following year, however, due to the influence of recently appointed Church Commissioner of Education Jeffrey R. Holland. England interview, 16 July 1996.

229. Johnson interview, 9 August 1999.

praised, and was even endorsed by the LDS Institutes of Religion.²³⁰ In another issue, *Dialogue* introduced many readers to liberal Mormon Bible scholar Heber C. Snell, in a roundtable with the conservative and prolific Sidney B. Sperry, along with Kent Robson, a Ph.D. candidate from Stanford (Spring 1967). Snell, "counting . . . on having a 'go' at Sperry," chronicled the decline in use of the Bible in modern Mormonism.²³¹ A timely discussion on Vietnam published later that year featuring England, Ray Hillam, and John Sorenson, offered insights from varying Mormon perspectives on a particularly divisive topic both nationally and within the Mormon community (Winter 1967).²³²

Perhaps the most memorable piece to appear in the early years of *Dialogue* was Richard D. Poll's sacrament meeting sermon, "What the Church Means to People Like Me" (Winter 1967). In his speech Poll brought lasting comfort to liberal Mormons through his "Iron Rod"/"Liahona" dichotomy. The only *Dialogue* article ever quoted (not positively) in an LDS general conference, Poll's sermon, delivered in Palo Alto, has been reprinted numerous times.²³³

Of the twenty issues published under the first editorship, five were centered around themes. In addition to Leonard Arrington's issue, Lowell Bennion edited "The Mormon Family in a Modern World," (Autumn 1967), Mary L. Bradford and Garth Magnum produced an issue on "Mormons in the Secular City," (Autumn 1968), Robert A. Rees and Karl Keller guest edited "Mormonism and Literature," (Autumn 1969), and Stanley B. Kimball took over another issue devoted to Mormon history, with "Mormons in Early Illinois," (Spring 1970). Over the five year period, the editors also published twelve roundtable discussions, and eight sermons. Of the artwork that Salisbury included, five issues featured the talents of guest artists. The winter 1969 issue, behind schedule, con-

230. See *Growing Edge*, 5 (April 1973), published monthly by the Department of Seminaries and Institutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, copy in *Dialogue* Collection.

231. Heber C. Snell to Eugene England, 22 January 1967, *Dialogue* Collection. See Heber C. Snell, Sidney B. Sperry, and Kent Robson, "The Bible in the Church," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Spring 1967) 55-90. For more on Snell and his career in the church educational system, see Richard Sherlock, "Faith and History: The Snell Controversy," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Spring 1979): 27-41.

232. See Ray Cole Hillam, "Vietnam: A New Perspective" Eugene England, "The Tragedy of Vietnam and the Responsibility of Mormons," and John L. Sorenson, "Vietnam: Just a War, or a Just War?" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Winter 1967): 65-100.

233. Harold B. Lee, "The Iron Rod," *Ensign* 1 (June 1971): 7. For reprints of Poll's sermon, see *Sunstone* 5 (July-August 1980): 15-20; Philip L. Barlow, ed., *A Thoughtful Faith: Essays on Belief by Mormon Scholars* (Centerville, UT: Cannon Press, 1986), 1-15; Mary L. Bradford, ed., *Personal Voices: A Celebration of Dialogue* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 49-61; Richard D. Poll, *History & Faith: Reflections of a Mormon Historian* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 1-13.

tained moving tributes to President David O. McKay, who died in January 1970. Poetry was included in all but four issues between 1966 and 1971. Fiction, first published in volume two, only appeared in four issues. This genre would become more prominent in later volumes.

This variety attracted a diverse readership. In addition to subscribers, England remembers reports of "shadow readers," who either could not afford the journal or who were reluctant to have their names on the subscription list. In several cases, the editors received word that eight to ten people were reading a single copy. *Dialogue* study groups were also formed in several locales, and Johnson, England, and Salisbury were often invited to speak at these and at firesides throughout the church.²³⁴ On 30 September 1966, England spoke at the LDS Institute at the University of Utah about the founding of the journal, and took questions from the audience.²³⁵ This interest in so many quarters assured the editors once again that *Dialogue* was meeting a need.

From the beginning *Dialogue* also had its critics. Yet England and Johnson both maintain that most criticisms came from people who had never even read the journal.²³⁶ A second-hand report by Apostle Boyd K. Packer to England in 1975 claimed that *Dialogue* had caused two young men within the same stake to leave the church. Reports such as these, however, never reached the editors directly. In fact, England and Johnson both witnessed the journal having an opposite effect: not only did readers report that *Dialogue* gave them reason to stay in the church, some credited it for their conversion, or re-conversion to Mormonism.²³⁷ Students at Stanford and elsewhere reported to England then and in later years that *Dialogue* helped them reconcile their faith with their intellectual lives.²³⁸ All of this confirmed again and again that there was a place in the Mormon community for the forum that *Dialogue* provided.

Growing Pains

By 1970, *Dialogue's* growth forced the editors to consider full-time paid help. A Mrs. Pat Bacon had been hired to work part-time in the Stanford office, and a few others held part-time positions handling sub-

234. England interview, 17 July 1996; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996; Salisbury interview, 19 May 1998.

235. See G. Eugene England, "Dialogue—The Idea and the Journal," fireside delivered at the LDS Institute, University of Utah, 30 September 1966, published by the LDS Student Association, copy in my possession.

236. "An Interview with Eugene England," 22; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

237. England Oral History, 18; England interview, 8 November 1994; Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

238. England to Anderson, 13 September 1999, *Dialogue* Collection.

scriptions and taking care of other necessities, but this was not enough. "Dialogue needs to have a full-time business or office manager in Palo Alto in addition to Mrs. Bacon," declared an assessment in 1970. "This would greatly relieve pressure on voluntary members of the staff, executive committee, and board and allow them to concentrate on planning and editing."²³⁹ Despite this pressing need, however, it would be several years before funds would allow *Dialogue* the benefit of full-time paid personnel.²⁴⁰

That same year, the staff established a board of trustees who would oversee the economic health of the journal. Changes in the editorial board and the formation of a student board of associate editors brought "new blood" to the publication in an effort both to keep the enterprise from faltering, and to attract more student subscribers.²⁴¹

This growth, however, occurred with bad timing, and the journal subsequently suffered. In 1970 England accepted a teaching position at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, leaving Johnson as the sole managing editor of the journal. Although England retained some affiliation with *Dialogue* as planning editor, this did little to relieve Johnson of the "incredible work loads" that came his way.²⁴² This, and some new problems with printing and production resulted in more late issues (for example, the fall and winter 1970 issues did not appear until April and July 1971 respectively).²⁴³ "We are at a point of no return on these late issues," Johnson wrote a board member in early 1971.²⁴⁴ Robert A. Rees, having served on the editorial board since 1969, came to the rescue as issue editor in 1970.²⁴⁵ But even the addition of Rees, other new members

239. "Statement on *Dialogue*," 1970, *Dialogue* Collection.

240. Johnson interview, 9 August 1999.

241. Unsent letter of Wesley Johnson to Stanley B. Kimball, 27 July 1971, *Dialogue* Collection; "An Interview with Eugene England," 19. The names of the Board of Associate Editors were added to the masthead of *Dialogue* beginning with the autumn 1969 issue, and discontinued in 1971. Although, as England indicated above, there was early interest in the journal by students, especially at Stanford, *Dialogue* was read mainly by academics and other professionals. According to Johnson, the student board was able to do little in attracting their peers to *Dialogue* (Johnson interview, 9 August 1999). Thirty years later, England now sits on the Board of Trustees of *Dialogue* "precisely to answer that question [regarding current lack of interest in the journal by young people] and do something appropriate in response" (England to Anderson, 13 September 1999, *Dialogue* Collection).

242. Johnson to Kimball, 27 July 1971, *Dialogue* Collection. Salisbury adds that England possessed a charisma that aided him in recruiting students and other volunteers, a quality that others on the staff (despite their numerous other talents and abilities) lacked (Salisbury interview, 9 August 1999).

243. Salisbury interview, 9 August 1999. Salisbury remembers that Quality Press was often understaffed or overbooked.

244. Wesley Johnson to Garth Magnum, 17 March 1971, *Dialogue* Collection.

245. Robert Rees to Robert R. Kirsch, 26 January 1970, *Dialogue* Collection.

of the editorial board, and a new board of trustees failed to offset many of the problems that had materialized.

Late issues began to effect subscriptions dramatically. Peaking at 8000 early, and holding at around 7000 by early 1970, subscriptions fell to 5000 eighteen months later. There may have been other factors. Letters from supporters criticized what they saw as Johnson's attempt to publish material more pleasing to the Mormon hierarchy. This criticism, coming from Joseph Jeppson, maintained that Johnson "was more interested in the survival of the magazine than in the novelty of its content."²⁴⁶ Karl Keller, a supporter from the beginning, made similar comments. "Several of my friends have voiced serious reservations about the last few issues of *Dialogue*, and since I join in their view, I want to write to mention the problem." For Keller, "*Dialogue* was becoming exceedingly thin. By thin, I mean insubstantial and inconsequential." Worried about the direction of the journal, Keller elaborates:

. . . *Dialogue* has always been and continues to be head-and-shoulders above the [*Improvement*] *Era*. Yet the last few issues suggest that it is moving in the direction of that unfortunate publication in that it seems now much more interested in being doggedly pro-church rather than simply honest, that it now covers topics covered adequately by church publications already rather than exploring areas tabooed and forgotten by them, that its writing is blander rather than bolder, that it is doing exactly what church publications do, avoiding the issues. . . . *Dialogue's* success will be, it seems to me, in simply being open and honest and bold and carefree. That means that it will be intellectual, liberal, personal, offensive, eccentric, etc. It will please only the liberal fringe of the church—but it will be founded on positions well argued.²⁴⁷

Johnson views these criticisms as being without merit. "Had we taken the journal in the direction [some people] wanted it, *Dialogue* would have been put out of business." First and foremost, Johnson felt committed to publishing the best scholarship available. He denies a conscious effort to please the authorities, and insists that the vast majority of readers remained happy with the content through the end of his term.²⁴⁸

Leaving Stanford

Other impending changes were about to effect the journal also. Johnson, due to leave for a year's sabbatical in Africa, would of necessity step

246. Joseph Jeppson to Robert A. Rees, 10 December 1971, *Dialogue* Collection.

247. Karl Keller to Wesley Johnson, 15 September 1970, *Dialogue* Collection. Keller does not say specifically which issues he refers to as "doggedly pro-church," but at the time of his writing, the most recent issues included one focusing on the death of President David O. McKay (Winter 1969), a theme issue on "The Mormons in Early Illinois" (Spring 1970), and a general issue (Summer 1970) with articles such as "Cache Valley Landscape: A Photographic Essay," "When Does an Intellectually Impaired Child Become Accountable?" and "Art, Beauty & Country Life in Utah."

248. Johnson interview, 9 August 1999.

down as managing editor on 1 September 1971. With his departure, *Dialogue* would no longer have access to donated office space at Stanford. Thus, finding a new editor and establishing a new era for *Dialogue* were issues now at the forefront.

The staff knew from the beginning that an eventual change in editorial teams was inevitable. Johnson remembers that he “envisioned a rhythm of changing editors and boards about every five or six years.” He emphasizes “that we [the original founders] were building for the future, and we were not going to make the mistake of hanging on to [the editorship].”²⁴⁹ England remembers a consensus that “for *Dialogue* to achieve its ideals, the editors should always be in their thirties.”²⁵⁰ Of the original founders, Frances Menlove left her position first. After less than a year as manuscripts editor, she moved with her husband to Germany, and Edward Geary, a graduate student at Stanford, took over her duties.²⁵¹ In 1970, England moved to Minnesota, and Jeppson, returning to Berkeley to work on his Ph.D., left his position as “Notes and Comments” editor to BYU Political Science Professor Louis Midgley.²⁵² Salisbury was also ready to leave, although he stayed on through 1972 as an advisory editor.²⁵³ Menlove joined the editorial board and remained there until 1970.²⁵⁴

Before departing Palo Alto, Johnson had to appoint a new editor to take his place. Robert Rees, working hard as issue editor since England’s departure, and “because of his significant editorial talents and enthusiasm for *Dialogue*,” seemed the best candidate.²⁵⁵ Rees, an English professor at UCLA accepted the offer and began making arrangements to move the editorial offices to Los Angeles. Rees officially took charge of the journal in September 1971.

*

After five years, *Dialogue* had become an important voice in Mormonism by successfully addressing issues that were clamoring for a forum. In the process, the editors helped develop the talent of writers,

249. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

250. This policy was short lived and ended with the editorship of Mary Bradford in 1976. All subsequent editors have been in their forties and fifties.

251. Edward Geary to Douglas Bunker, 17 September 1966, *Dialogue* Collection. Johnson’s wife, Marion, eventually took over as manuscripts manager (as the position was later called) in 1969.

252. Jeppson to Anderson, 19 May 1998, *Dialogue* Collection.

253. Salisbury to Anderson, 17 May 1998, *Dialogue* Collection.

254. This information is derived from the mast-head of issues of *Dialogue* through the Johnson-England tenure.

255. C. Burton Stohl to William Call, 25 January 1972, *Dialogue* Collection.

artists, and poets. "You have to approach people, you nurture people, you nurture writers, you convince people that they can do something," insists Johnson. "And I think that is what we did. I think that was one of the functions that *Dialogue* served very well."²⁵⁶ In the years to come, both *Dialogue* and the writers it encouraged would continue to benefit from their association with one another. Johnson's most gratifying moments were seeing *Dialogue* recognized by the larger scholarly community. "Cited in books by the Oxford Press, or the Harvard Press . . . to me as a scholar, [meant that] we'd arrived. And that meant that we were being taken seriously."²⁵⁷

The creation in the mid-1960s of *Dialogue* or something very much like it may have been inevitable, given the climate created by voices in the larger society. The America of the 1950s, with its self-image of post-war affluence, reflected best in the baby boom and the emergence of modern suburbia, often overlooked growing racial tensions and poverty that were the plight of many Americans. The sixties generation, embracing diversity and coupled with energy, began to "expose issues and created demonstrations that provoked deep emotions."²⁵⁸

Yet the founders of *Dialogue* did not see themselves as rebels. Mary Bradford recalls that, although "Mormon thinkers were responding to the excitement of the sixties," they nevertheless "created a constructive new outlet for individual expression."²⁵⁹ For the founders of *Dialogue*, true dialogue meant placing Mormonism before the scrutiny of Mormons, non-Mormons, believers, and skeptics alike. Having faith that their religion would hold up, the founders believed that they were aiding the cause. Those who failed to understand the legitimacy of this approach saw the editors as troublemakers, as rebellious, and even apostate. After all, *Dialogue's* enemies were watching the protests of the sixties, too. For others, just the fact of its existence was enough to provoke deep suspicions.

In a church increasing in respectability, maintaining that respect meant that many issues were not only ignored, but had to remain taboo.²⁶⁰ *Dialogue* tried to break down many of those taboos, sometimes

256. Johnson interview, 3 August 1996.

257. Ibid.

258. From the preface of Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Post-World War II studies contrast well the America of the two decades. See James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

259. Bradford, "Ten Years with *Dialogue*," 10-11.

260. See discussions in Gordon and Gary Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed: Themes in the Development of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), and Armand

countering the Mormon slogan that "all is well" in the process. Yet despite this boldness and independence, an undergirding loyalty to the institutional church and the gospel meant that *Dialogue* itself was intent on securing the respect and approval of the church hierarchy. Ten years after the founding of the journal, England acknowledged that ". . . if the First Presidency had said to me, 'Kill the magazine,' I'd have done it."²⁶¹ In *Dialogue's* infancy, this seems understandable. But to remain truly independent, that approval would inevitably become less important, and even less desirable. With the end of the England-Johnson tenure, communication between the editors and general authorities would, for the most part, cease. And as in many relationships, when communication ends, suspicion and fear take its place. In the years to come, future editors would experience both the joy and pain of these severed ties.²⁶²

To Be Continued

L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Response to Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

261. England Oral History, 17.

262. Thirty-four years after their first meetings at Stanford, where are the founders now? Eugene England and Wesley Johnson have both retired after long careers at BYU, and both remain in Provo, Utah. England teaches part-time at Utah Valley State College, currently sits on the board of trustees for *Dialogue* and *Sunstone*, and still writes for both; Salisbury lives in San Francisco where he works as an architect; Menlove, who lives on the Oregon coast, is currently a full-time student, studying theology and early Christianity at the Pacific School of Religion at the Graduate Theological School in Berkeley, California; Jeppson lives in Woodside, California and teaches history at Canada College. He still writes an occasional letter to the editor, but no longer under the pseudonym "Rustin Kaufmann." All but Salisbury still subscribe to *Dialogue*.

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