

Saints for All Seasons: Lavina Fielding Anderson and Bernard Shaw's *Joan of Arc*¹

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IN SEPTEMBER OF 1993 Lavina Fielding Anderson was excommunicated from the LDS church for documenting and publishing instances of the church's punishing treatment of Mormon intellectuals and feminists, as well as other instances of ecclesiastical abuse.² Shortly after her excommunication, Lavina was interviewed live by Rod Decker in Salt Lake City for the television program "Take Two." Her equanimity and witty rejoinders reminded me of the deft response to prosecutors made by the title character in Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* (1924), his dramatization of the conflicting claims of institutional loyalty and individual conscience. The real-life Joan of Arc—convicted of heresy and burned at the stake in

1. I would like to thank Lavina Fielding Anderson for access to unpublished materials, despite her inability to "put [herself] and Joan of Arc in the same sentence with a straight face." In this sentiment she actually echoes Shaw's Joan: "[F]ancy me a saint! What would St Catherine and St Margaret say if the farm girl was cocked up beside them!" (Bernard Shaw, *Saint Joan: A Chronicle Play in Six Scenes and an Epilogue* [London: Penguin, 1957], epilogue, 155; hereafter *SJ*.) Lavina declined my invitation to respond to this essay, stating, "I think that your piece will stand very well on its own. . . ." (Lavina Fielding Anderson to Karen Marguerite Moloney, 22 July 2003).

2. Lavina is part of a group of scholars who have been disciplined by the church for challenging its official history, authoritarian practices, and view of women's roles. As one of the "September Six" who were brought to trial during the same month in 1993 (the others were D. Michael Quinn, Paul Toscano, Avraham Gileadi, Maxine Hanks, and Lynne Kanavel Whitesides), Lavina's story has received widespread news coverage. Since that time, there has been an on-going purge: Janice Allred, David Wright, Brent Metcalfe, and Margaret Toscano have all been excommunicated for their writings. And others continue to be called before church leaders for disagreeing with mainstream church teachings through their scholarship.

1431, canonized in 1920—had long stimulated the fancy of historians and playwrights. Shaw, however, de-romanticized the figure by basing his play on T. D. Murray's *Jeanne D'Arc*,³ the first English translation of the official Latin text of Joan's trial: his keen-witted, practical, vigorous character embodies Joan's genuine qualities of spirit. His character also mirrors the flesh-and-blood Lavina, deprived for the last decade of church membership for her willingness, like Joan, to set "up the private judgment of the single erring mortal against the considered wisdom and experience of the Church" (*SJ*, scene 6). However, a decade has passed since Lavina's excommunication, ten years in which she has unwaveringly opposed the abuse of ecclesiastic power and remained as active as permitted in the functions of her ward and stake. Lavina shares more instructive qualities with Shaw's Joan than a mere aptitude for fielding questions.

Jeanne d'Arc, Joan of Arc, was born about 1412 and reared together with three brothers in the village of Domrémy in France. She was a pious child, active and hardy, remembered favorably and with affection by those who knew her. From her thirteenth year, she later told her judges, she received messages from God; in particular, she was instructed by St. Michael the Archangel, St. Catherine of Alexandria, and St. Margaret of Antioch.⁴ The voices of these saints guided her throughout the rest of her short life. Acting under their direction, she led decisive military victories over the English armies occupying France during the Hundred Years War and settled questions of the French dauphin's right to rule by crowning him King Charles VII in Rheims Cathedral. As Régine Pernoud attests, Joan "secured the survival of a France that was cut in two by both internal discords. . . and by methodical English invasion"—a France, before her intervention, that was "doomed to disintegrate."⁵ For some Joan's campaign against the English provides "a model for modern movements of popular resistance to colonial imperialism."⁶

3. T. D. Murray, ed., *Jeanne D'Arc: Maid of Orléans: Deliverer of France* (London: William Heinemann, 1902).

4. For how the voices came to be identified with these saints, see Karen Sullivan, "'I do not name to you the voice of st. michael': The Identification of Joan of Arc's Voices," in Bonnie Wheeler and Charles T. Wood, eds., *Fresh Verdicts on Joan of Arc* (New York: Garland, 1996), 85-111. See particularly Sullivan's endnotes 39 and 42 on the significance for Joan of the three saints, described by Mary Gordon as "icons of resistance and might" in *Joan of Arc* (New York: Viking, 2000), 26.

5. Régine Pernoud, "Epilogue: Joan of Arc or the Survival of a People," in Wheeler and Wood, *Fresh Verdicts*, 289.

6. Jeremy duQuesnay Adams, "Prelude," in Régine Pernoud and Marie Véronique Clin, *Joan of Arc: Her Story*, trans. and revised by Jeremy duQuesnay Adams, ed. Bonnie Wheeler (New York: St. Martin's, 1998), 4.

Eventually captured in battle, Joan was tried by the English in 1431 and convicted of heresy. On the day of her sentencing, just before the statement was read aloud cutting her off from the church and abandoning her to secular justice, she implored her judges, "Let all my words and deeds be sent to Rome, to our Holy Father the Pope, to whom, after God, I will refer myself."⁷ Despite strong precedent for the interruption of a trial by such a request,⁸ Joan's own plea was brushed aside, and six days later, at the age of nineteen, she was burned at the stake. Nineteen years later, rehabilitation proceedings began with an examination of witnesses. Another six years elapsed before a new trial nullified the previous legal actions "on the basis of procedural flaws" and Pope Calixtus III revoked Joan's sentence.⁹ Four hundred forty-eight years later, in 1904, Joan was declared Venerable by the Roman Catholic Church; in 1909 she was advanced to the rank of Blessed; and in 1920, nearly five hundred years after her trial, excommunication, and execution, Pope Benedict XV canonized her a saint. Today Joan, energetically venerated by many, remains a provocative figure among the French and a continuing magnet of controversy for scholars.¹⁰

Joan was also one of the heroes of my own Catholic childhood. I read all her juvenile biographies and named my guardian angel after her.¹¹ In 1978 when I saw Eileen Atkins bring her to life in Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* at London's Old Vic Theater (from the last row, and for the equivalent of one dollar), I was very moved. On a subsequent visit to the Old Vic in the summer of 1995, I was gratified to see that a poster of the play had been selected, with a small number of others, to hang in the theater's lobby.

Not surprisingly then, I regularly choose *Saint Joan* to teach Shaw when crafting syllabi for courses in modern British and Irish literature.¹² After all, the selection committee who awarded Shaw the 1925 Nobel Prize for literature regarded *Saint Joan* as the "crowning achievement" of

7. Vita Sackville-West, *Saint Joan of Arc* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 310. Sackville-West translates from the French of Jules Quicherat, *Procès de condamnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc*, 5 vols. (Jules Renouard et Cie, 1861).

8. Pernoud and Clin, *Joan of Arc*, 130.

9. *Ibid.*, 274; see also Sackville-West, *Saint Joan*, 367.

10. For some piquant examples, see the essays collected in Wheeler and Wood, *Fresh Verdicts*.

11. Because I first encountered biographies of St. Agnes and St. Rose of Lima, Joan's was the third name—lengthened to Jeannette, by which she was known in her village—of four I eventually gave my angel.

12. Despite his place in the English canon, Shaw is an Irishman who "read [Joan's] life in France as an allegory of his own youth in Ireland" (Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995], 428). Shaw

a career that included fifty-eight plays, five novels, short stories, and other writings,¹³ while "few disagree that his Joan is one of the great classical roles for an actress."¹⁴ (Eileen Atkins considered playing Joan an actress's "greatest challenge."¹⁵) Neither is it surprising, given the highly publicized church disciplinary procedures against the September Six ten years ago, that I should observe intriguing correspondences between those events and the themes of the play, most strikingly as manifested in the characters of Lavina Fielding Anderson and Shaw's Joan.

When Joan was canonized in 1920, as Niloufer Harben remarks in his book *Twentieth-Century English History Plays*, "Shaw must have been struck by this ironic reversal of judgement in history."¹⁶ Three years later, "Sydney Cockerel, the curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, . . . handed Shaw a copy of [T. D.] Murray's book," *Jeanne D'Arc*, the first translation into English of Joan's trial and rehabilitation proceedings.¹⁷ In Harben's words, "Shaw had always felt drawn by the figure of Joan and now his imagination was fired by contemporary reports of one of the most enthralling trials in history. He wrote the play within six months."¹⁸

Marking "a turning point in modern historical drama because of its universal impact,"¹⁹ Shaw's play draws copiously from the available historical records. "[F]ull of her personality. . . [and] many of [Joan's] actual statements [are in fact reproduced in the play] with hardly any alteration."²⁰ Moreover, Shaw "has strong historical backing for presenting Joan's refusal to defer to the judgement of the Church as the key issue upon which the case against her is built. The judges in their examination of Joan can be found returning to this question again and again."²¹ Thus they persist in interrogation: Will Joan submit herself to the judgment of

also wrote most of the play while summering in County Kerry, tested his trial scene on two priests, and surely noted connections between "[t]he strange alliance of noblemen and clergy against the Maid. . . [and] those Catholic bishops who defended Anglo-Irish privilege and who excommunicated members of the Irish Republican Army." (438). See Kiberd's chapter, "Saint Joan—Fabian Feminist, Protestant Mystic," 428–37, and "The Winding Stair," 438–39.

13. Brian Tyson, *The Story of Shaw's Saint Joan* (Kingston: McGill-Queens Univ. Press, 1982), 116.

14. Holly Hill, ed., *Playing Joan: Actresses on the Challenge of Shaw's Saint Joan* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1987), xiii.

15. Eileen Atkins, in Hill, *Playing Joan*, 200.

16. Niloufer Harbin, *Twentieth-century English History Plays: From Shaw to Bond* (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1988), 31.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, 48.

21. *Ibid.*, 51.

the church on earth; will she obey the dictates of its representatives? Her answers vary little, as Sackville-West's abridgment of her replies at trial indicates:

She will obey the Church, provided it does not command the impossible. She will never, for anything on earth, revoke the declarations she has made during the course of her trial about her visions and revelations. She will never, for anything on earth, obey the Church in the event of its commanding her to do anything contrary to the commandments which she says God has given her. She will refer always to God, were the Church to describe her revelations as illusory, diabolic, superstitious, or evil. She will submit herself to the Church Militant—that is to say to the Pope, the cardinals, archbishops, bishops and other clergy, but God must come first.²²

Shaw had in mind this kind of determination to stand by private judgment, or inspiration, no matter how weighty the exterior pressures to abandon it, when he formulated the compelling themes of his play. Harben here speculates on the conflict at the play's heart:

Shaw in *Saint Joan* demonstrates that the individual in his [or her] pursuit of truth will always be alone in society, the extraordinary individual, most often destroyed because of the threat he [or she] poses to the establishment. The individual committed to truth by nature is open to revelation, alive to the infinite possibilities of life. He [or she] therefore figures in stark contrast to society with its inherent tendency to overstructure and codify, so that bent on preservation rather than growth it tends to turn in on itself, leading to stagnation and decay, rather than movement and life. In *Saint Joan* we experience the private will against the public as Joan strives to live true to the voices within while the political forces at work in society marshal against her.²³

In Shaw's view, Joan is a genius gifted with a high level of imagination. She is also, summarizes Harben, "a visionary, a light-bringer, an agent of the life force."²⁴ In fact, "[i]f one translates the voices of the saints. . . into the secular language of Shaw, they become. . . , in terms of creative evolution, the voice of. . . the Life Force,"²⁵ an unrelenting energy that advances humanity's spiritual evolution by "continually driving onward and upward, growing from within itself into ever higher forms of organization, a power which is driving at a larger, higher, more intelli-

22. Sackville-West, *Saint Joan*, 292-93, abridging Quicherat, *Procès*, 1:324-26.

23. Harben, *English History Plays*, 52.

24. *Ibid.*, 61. Such characteristics are typical of Shaw's vibrant, clever female characters, who often show up the men trying to keep them in their place.

25. Judith Evans, *The Politics and Plays of Bernard Shaw* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2003), 151.

gent, more comprehensive consciousness."²⁶ As the agent of this insistent evolutionary activity, Joan will clash inevitably with those, "not malevolent by nature [who nonetheless] contribute to the world's disasters through want of imagination and [the inability to calculate the true] social and political consequences of the way they think."²⁷

Still—and this is a crucial point—for Shaw there are no villains in this play. The churchmen who convict Joan are good and fair-minded, men who, with substantial support from the historical record, take extra care to come across as impartial, if not well-disposed, toward Joan.²⁸ Far from corrupt, as Joan herself states in the epilogue of the play, "They were as honest a lot of poor fools as ever burned their betters" (*SJ*, epilogue). But, as "servants of the system [, these leaders are also] artificial, dehumanized, imprisoned in conformity," their conservatism utterly at odds with "Joan's natural vigour and spontaneity."²⁹ If these leaders typify the staid mentality of the institution while Joan represents the dynamic pull of individual inspiration, then for Shaw, the forces are "fundamentally opposed in character." The "divinely inspired" and "extraordinary" individual, "expected [by society] to fit into a conventional pattern," flies "in the face of social norms. . ." and "experiences the essential isolation of the individual in [a] pursuit of truth. . . ."³⁰ Even so, Shaw is adamant that the inspired individual conscience is the vehicle for positive evolutionary change within society. In the words of Brian Tyson, "People of Joan's genius could make contact with the Life Force for the sake of others: it was necessary for society to be renewed, even if the saint had to be sacrificed."³¹

Some view Lavina Fielding Anderson as a minor player on the world's stage, particularly when her achievements at age fifty-nine are set against those of a nineteen-year-old military commander who crowned a king. Those who do so have little comprehension of the magnitude of Lavina's role as witness—or archivist, to use her own term.³² Even if the two women's accomplishments differ significantly in content, Joan, as revealed for my purpose in Shaw's character, exhibits pronounced similarities in motivation and temperament with Lavina.

26. Gareth Griffith, *Socialism and Superior Brains: The Political Thought of Bernard Shaw* (London: Routledge, 1993), 126. For additional discussion of Shaw's "life force," see Leon Hugo, *Playwright and Preacher* (London: Methuen, 1971), 50-64.

27. Harben, *English History Plays*, 61.

28. See *ibid.*, 38-46, for a discussion of Shaw's versions of the historical judges.

29. *Ibid.*, 53.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Brian Tyson, *The Story*, 2.

32. Lavina Fielding Anderson, telephone conversation with author, 27 September 2003.

In her encyclopedia entry on Joan of Arc, the French national archivist Yvonne Marie Lanhers describes Joan as marked by the "stamp of the genuine prophets and saints, utterly subordinated to a particular task which they believe has been inexorably laid upon them by divine command."³³ Indeed, Joan led her armies and crowned her king—and even chose to wear men's clothing as her most practical career expedient—because the voices of her saints told her to.³⁴ While in Shaw's play these voices become audible manifestations of Joan's own inner guidance, and, in turn, instrument of the Life Force, they are just as surely voices to which she must remain true, even when they conflict with the will of those in authority, and at whatever cost, if she wishes to remain true to herself.

Similarly, Lavina was inspired to begin collecting and recording the stories of individuals who had suffered spiritual and ecclesiastical abuse in the LDS community, incidents which exhibited a "clash between obedience to ecclesiastical authority and the integrity of individual conscience. . . ."³⁵ She was also inspired to publish this information in an article entitled "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology" in the spring 1993 issue of *Dialogue*.³⁶ Though no spiritual beings appeared or offered instruction in answer to her scripture reading, her temple worship, or her fasting and prayers "to know whether it was the right thing to do to go ahead," the Spirit spoke to her clearly, quietly, unmistakably, "[a]nd the answer was always 'Yes.'"³⁷ Lavina declared in her *Dialogue* article that she "received the calling of a witness in the household of faith,"³⁸ but she has also asserted that God did not assign her the task by pre-emptive, inflexible decree: "It was always very clear that I had a choice."³⁹ Yet to deny the sanctity of this calling to be a witness, to act in opposition to it—even to save her membership in the church which made Lavina who she is—would be to disregard her inner certainty that God approved her choice; it would violate her conscience; it would destroy her peace.

33. Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th ed., s.v. "Joan, Saint."

34. For another perspective on Joan's choice of dress, see Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Warrior: Making History from Joan of Arc to Rupaul* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 31-37.

35. Lavina Fielding Anderson, "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Spring 1993): 7.

36. *Ibid.*, 7-64.

37. See the question-answer segment of "Lavina Fielding Anderson" (talks by Levi S. Peterson and Karen Marguerite Moloney), 1995 Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium audiocassette.

38. Anderson, "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership," 8-9.

39. Anderson, "Lavina Fielding Anderson," audiocassette.

Additionally, both Shaw's Joan and Lavina share a healthy dose of naiveté, Joan's portion even larger than Lavina's. Until shortly before her execution, and against all odds, Joan believed that she would be rescued, that all would somehow "come right." When told about a woman who had been burned to death for simply saying that Joan's work was according to God, Shaw's Joan replies with disbelief: "They could not burn a woman for speaking the truth" (*SJ*, scene 5). Lavina had no such illusions. Burning may not be the twentieth-century censure of choice, but she knew, months before her trial, what the outcome would be; she also expected that the loving labor which produced her seventy-two-page appeal of her excommunication to the First Presidency would be discounted.⁴⁰ That may make Lavina less naive, but hardly a cynic.

Like Joan, Lavina sincerely believed the truth was her best defense, that—in her own words—"[d]efenders of the faith cannot righteously strike out against those who tell the truth."⁴¹ In her appeal, she cites the essential injustice of being punished with the church's heaviest penalty, again to quote her, "for telling the truth about problems."⁴² She points out with appropriate aplomb that no one has "attacked the truthfulness or historical accuracy of the article,"⁴³ though with characteristic exactness, she concedes in a footnote "four details" of contention. I mention them to give a taste for Lavina's conscientious research to those who don't know her: One name in her article included an incorrect initial; one individual had not given permission to use his stake president's name; Louis Midgley felt his position had been misrepresented; and one anonymous source "had wished to be named."⁴⁴ Would that the sins of all archivists might be so slight.

But just as Joan over-esteemed truth as a defense, so did Lavina. Typically, people have a hard time being told the truth about problems, particularly if they are part of the problem. Human beings have a tremen-

40. The appeal included a 37-page letter and supporting documents. My sources here and for the comments that follow are photocopies of Lavina's appeal to the First Presidency, appendices to the appeal, related correspondence, and other unpublished material that she gave Peterson and me for talks delivered at the 1995 Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium and the 1996 Sunstone West Symposium in Irvine, California, in joint sessions entitled "Saints for All Seasons: Lavina Fielding Anderson and Bernard Shaw's Joan of Arc." See Levi Peterson, "Lavina Fielding Anderson and the Power of a Church in Exile," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29 (Winter 1996): 169-78.

41. Lavina Fielding Anderson to Presidents Ezra Taft Benson, Gordon B. Hinckley, and Thomas S. Monson, 23 October 1993, 20-21.

42. *Ibid.*, 1.

43. *Ibid.*, 20.

44. *Ibid.*

dous instinct for self-preservation, an instinct which can metamorphose with staggering speed into an urgent need to maintain the status quo at all costs. Raised to an institutional level, this defensiveness can become a highly skilled, carefully practiced, often destructive art. Both Shaw's Joan and Lavina underestimated the terribly threatening, extremely divisive nature of the truth about problems.

Closely related to the scrupulosity in documenting cases of spiritual abuse that makes Lavina an overbearing priesthood-holder's nightmare is another trait Lavina shares with Shaw's Joan. Both real-life archivist and dramatized military leader are very, very smart, their brilliance a quality neither Lavina nor Shaw's Joan chooses to hide, tone down, or disown. The historical Joan was illiterate, but, as Shaw points out in his lengthy preface to the play, she kept abreast of current events, understood extremely well "the political and military situation in France. . .," dictated letters with confidence, and shrewdly "adapted her methods of [military] attack to the peculiarities of the defense. . . ." (*SJ*, preface). She was, therefore, in Shaw's estimate, "much more of. . . an intellectual, than most of the daughters of [modern England's] petty bourgeoisie" (*SJ*, preface).

Scene V of the play opens in Rheims Cathedral shortly after Charles's coronation. Joan is kneeling in prayer near the door of the vestry and is approached by Dunois, with whom previously she had raised the siege of Orléans, effectively securing French independence. The streets are full of people calling for "The Maid," but Joan is acutely aware that her popularity at court is slightly more limited. Dunois's reply, in turn, points directly to Shaw's own thoughts on the highly gifted individual surrounded by inferiors:

JOAN: Why do all these courtiers and knights and churchmen hate me? What have I done to them? . . . I have brought them luck and victory: I have set them right when they were doing all sorts of stupid things: I have crowned Charles and made him a real king; and all the honors he is handing out have gone to them. Then why do they not love me?

DUNOIS [rallying her]: Sim-ple-ton! Do you expect stupid people to love you for shewing them up? Do blundering old military dug-outs love the successful young captains who supersede them? Do ambitious politicians love the climbers who take the front seats from them? Do archbishops enjoy being played off their own altars, even by saints? Why, I should be jealous of you myself if I were ambitious enough (*SJ*, scene 5).

Dunois's astuteness, however, is lost on Joan, as her reaction to the Dauphin's comment, only shortly later in the scene, confirms:

CHARLES: Yes: she think she knows better than everyone else.

JOAN [*distressed, but naively incapable of seeing the effect she is producing*]: But I

do know better than any of you seem to. And I am not proud: I never speak unless I know I am right. (SJ, scene 5)

Not only does Joan show up her social betters, but she does so with the "unwomanly and insufferable presumption" Shaw cites in his preface as the primary reason for her burning (SJ, preface).

Lavina is a doctoral degree away from illiterate, her academic training only enhancing abundant natural intelligence.⁴⁵ She is, however, like Joan, perhaps "too smart" at times. At one point in her appeal when she labors the issue of confidentiality, a reader less lawyerly than she might feel "shown up," even deliberately intimidated. Later, in a long letter to her stake president Marlin S. Miller, she asks, "Surely it is to the benefit of all concerned—you, me, Elder Dunn, the abused members, and the leaders of the abused members—to find a way to reconcile these problems without resorting to more abuse, more intimidation, more threats?"⁴⁶ President Miller is adamant in reply: "Sister Anderson, it is *not* my intention to intimidate you." What I find revealing is his need to continue the sentence by adding "or, to be intimidated by you."⁴⁷

Likely President Miller felt Lavina was trying to wear him down; he may also have felt ill-prepared to deal with her. In the same paragraph, he continues, "*I am not gifted in writing abilities as you are*, but I hope that you will know of my love and concern for you" [italics mine].⁴⁸ President Miller probably found it as wearying to correspond with the true-speaking bulldog Lavina as Shaw's courtiers, knights, and churchmen found it to endure the importunate Joan. There's nothing like a woman with unwomanly presumption for catalyzing defensive statements like this proclamation by Shaw's Bishop of Beauvais, Monseigneur Cauchon: "I am no mere political bishop: my faith is to me what your honor is to you. . . ." (SJ, scene 4); or President Miller's declaration to Lavina: "I fear God more than man, and have carefully sought to know His will in this matter."⁴⁹ Though both are good and decent men, as Shaw and Lavina point out over and over, these leaders are clearly not used to the challenge of women who are very, very smart.

So both Shaw's Joan and Lavina are intimidating presences, but both are also visionaries, light-bringers, agents of the life force that advances civilization. I've outlined Joan's history-making accomplishments, but what about Lavina's? Hers is an enterprise, frankly, not very well

45. Lavina earned a B.A. (1968) and an M.A. (1970) in English from Brigham Young University and a Ph.D. in American Studies (1974) from the University of Washington.

46. Lavina Fielding Anderson to Marlin S. Miller, 18 June 1993.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

known. *Dialogue* circulates to a relatively small number of Mormon readers. Rod Decker's audience may be wider, as might the readership of the Utah newspaper that ran a full-page, color, cover photo of Lavina and Michael Quinn to promote a 2001 interview,⁵⁰ but the audiences for both are still local. Widespread awareness of an achievement, however, does not equate with its value. Lavina has collected case studies of people who have been hurt by spiritual and ecclesiastical abuse. While by her own admission these abuses constitute only a small one percent of otherwise "clear, rational, and efficient" incidents of priesthood functioning in the church,⁵¹ for those whose pain she has acknowledged—and recorded—her service is invaluable. Lavina is a witness. In answer to her prayers, she has been directed "to defend the defenseless."⁵² Thus, she explains to President Miller, her "motives were and still are 'to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those who [sic] stand in need of comfort. . . .'"⁵³—and, moreover, to make a record of their suffering.

Pentecost (1995), an ambitious, powerful drama by David Edgar, takes place in a very old church somewhere in Eastern Europe. A compelling moment occurs during the first act in an exchange between Anna Jedlikova, a dissident under Russian rule and now the presiding magistrate for the region, and Father Petr Karolyi, a Catholic priest whose family escaped to London when Karolyi was about twelve years old. Jedlikova resents Karolyi; in fact, she resents all "[t]he people who got out." Karolyi replies to her briefly; Jedlikova counters with a lesson for us all:

KAROLYI. It is a little harsh, perhaps. In a society which, as everyone accepts, offered the choice of being hangman, victim or accomplice. To say: you cannot choose to get out if you get the chance.

JEDLIKOVA. Except of course there are some people who do not accept such choice. And pay the price. . . .

KAROLYI *shrugs and turns to go. . . . But then* [JEDLIKOVA] *collars* KAROLYI.

JEDLIKOVA. OK. I tell you what I think. You leave, you stop to be a witness. Worst story that I ever hear, in second world war, Serb children are transport to camp at Jasenovac, and they are so hungry that they eat cardboard tags around their neck. Which is their family, their age, their name. They eat their history. They die, and nobody remember them.

Slight pause.

50. Troy Williams, "Faith in Exile: Mormon Identity and the Excommunicated," *Event Newsweekly*, 16 August 2001, 10-11. See also the issue's cover.

51. Anderson to Benson, Hinckley, and Monson, 28.

52. Anderson to Marlin S. Miller, 18 June 1993.

53. *Ibid.*; Mosiah 18:9.

And now, already here, our past is being erased. And exiles with new names come back, and restore old names of streets and squares and towns. But in fact you cannot wipe it all away, like a cosmetic. Because for 40 years it is not normal here. And so we must remember. We must not eat our names. Otherwise, like Trotsky, we might end up with our jailor's.⁵⁴

Because of Lavina's case histories, we will remember. We will not eat our names. And because she remains an example of what her husband Paul calls "a voice of moderation amid sometimes strident expressions, . . . a voice of faith in gospel ideals amid negativeness and anger, and. . . an example of faithful activity while many others have become inactive and bitter",⁵⁵ because, primarily, she remains true to herself, Lavina "puts courage into us" (*SJ*, scene 1) every bit as powerfully as Shaw's Joan invigorated her comrades and troops.

With one difference. Shaw's Joan predicted that, should she "go through the fire [she would] go through it to [the hearts of the common people] for ever and ever" (*SJ*, scene 5). It was Shaw's way of commenting on five hundred years of continuing interest in the Maid of Orléans since her cruel execution, of explaining why a Catholic schoolgirl growing up in the later half of the twentieth century, in a country that didn't even exist when Joan was burned, might name her guardian angel after her. The common people have always loved Joan. Her excommunication and burning never altered that fact.

At least as it is used in the LDS church today, however, excommunication is a more efficacious popularity-damper than it was in Joan's day. The majority of rank-and-file church members accept church disciplinary decisions without question. Excommunication thus discredits Lavina, cuts off her influence, and limits her role as witness; it is the most powerful tool available in the church today to neutralize someone like Lavina. But remember, Lavina is a visionary, a light-bringer, an agent of the life force persistently shaping humankind's spiritual evolution. Lavina remains active; Lavina still goes to church. If she had chosen "to get out," if she had renounced the church in exchange for a probably more comfortable "life in exile," it would be easy for church members to ignore her and discount her message. Yet as she offers her "testimony of presence" each Sunday in her ward,⁵⁶ she reminds us all that she exists and that structural means of redress for spiritual abuse have yet to be

54. David Edgar, *Pentecost* (London: Nick Hern Books, 1995), act 1, scene 4, pp. 37-38.

55. Paul Anderson to Marlin S. Miller, 2 September 1993.

56. Lavina Fielding Anderson, "A Testimony of Presence" (paper presented at Pilgrimage [women's retreat], Provo Canyon, Utah, 13 May 1994), 4. Lavina credits the concept of testifying with her presence to Sharon Conroy Turnbull (talk given at the Circle of Love service at the Utah State Capitol, 2 April 1994, Salt Lake City, Utah).

created in the church. She also reminds us, as Levi Peterson suggests, "that excommunication is not, after all, an effective weapon against a sincere and prayerful conscience."⁵⁷

Serious procedural irregularities marred Joan's trial in 1431; they later played a role in the reversal of judgment pronounced in 1456. Serious irregularities also characterized Lavina's disciplinary proceedings and "may"—in the words of Shaw's Inquisitor—"be useful later on: one never knows" (*SJ*, scene 6).⁵⁸ Lavina herself has told us, "Nothing I have sensed in answer to my prayers suggests that the process [of her reinstatement in the church] will be anything but very long."⁵⁹ She has spoken of the passing of "ten, fifteen, even twenty years" before she sees any possibility of rebaptism.⁶⁰ For Joan, it was twenty-eight years before the sentence of excommunication was revoked. For Lavina, whose rebaptism waits inevitably on the horizon, may the years be shorter, swifter, and filled both with the joy she deserves and the changes in church procedures that she heralds.

The length of time until Lavina's "rehabilitation" is probably more up to us than we might realize. In the wonderfully imaginative epilogue to Shaw's play, a host of Joan's accusers and countrymen are brought back from the dead, as is she, to hear the proclamation of her canonization. One by one, they kneel and offer her praise—that is, until she offers to "rise from the dead, and come back to [them] a living woman." Quickly, they offer their excuses and take their leave. Joan is left alone on stage as "the last remaining rays of light gather into a white radiance descending on [her]." Hers are the last words of the play: "O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive Thy saints? How long, O Lord, how long?" (*SJ*, epilogue). The reader we are to honor unflinchingly the voices of inspiration which speak to us in the quiet of our own hearts, to be ourselves "saints for all seasons," the shorter that time will be.

57. Peterson, "Lavina Fielding Anderson," 178.

58. See *ibid.*, 175.

59. Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Covenants and Contracts: Renegotiating Membership in the Church" (paper presented at Sunstone West Symposium, Burbank, California, 12 March 1994), 2.

60. Anderson, "A Testimony of Presence," 3. For developments of the last ten years, see Lavina Fielding Anderson, "The Church and Its Scholars: Ten Years After," *Sunstone* (July 2003): 13-19.