

The Founding and the Fortieth: Reflections on the Challenge of Editing and the Promise of *Dialogue*

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From the editorial preface in the first issue of *Dialogue*:

Some of the more general purposes of *Dialogue* are: to stimulate excellence in writing and the visual arts throughout the Mormon community; to present fresh talent and to offer established authors a new vehicle of thought; to sustain a serious standard of objectivity, candor, and imagination in dealing with Mormon culture; to give students and thoughtful persons across the land a journal directly concerned with their quest for rational faith and faith-promoting knowledge; to provide professional people from a variety of disciplines a place to publish findings on Mormon topics which are of interest to the general public; to help Mormons and their neighbors develop an understanding and concern for each other through an exchange of ideas; and perhaps most important of all, to help Mormons develop their identity, uniqueness, and sense of purpose by expressing their spiritual heritage and moral vision to the community of man.¹

We are now celebrating forty years of continuous publication of this journal, quite a feat for an enterprise that was launched on a wing and a prayer. My purpose in this essay is to give a short background on my early interest in becoming an editor, how I wound up at Stanford, met Gene England and my other founding colleagues, how we developed a new publication over a six-year period (including our many trials and tribulations), the reaction to this enterprise, and how we transferred the journal to UCLA and created a mechanism that has provided an orderly transition

for forty years. Also included is a concluding analysis of why I think *Dialogue* has more than lived up to the promise its founders hoped for.

Being able to ruminate over these questions has been a distinct pleasure, and I must pay tribute to the many men and women who over the years, whether as chief editors, associate editors, staff members, or business personnel, have given unselfishly of their time to create the success we now witness. There has been a shared belief from the beginning down to today that exploring the life of the Mormon mind in all its peculiarities and power is a wonderful challenge. I am only sorry for one thing: that my co-editor, Eugene England, is not with us to share in this happy occasion. But his contributions, stimulating mind, and charismatic teaching personality will long be remembered. He and I had a personal, trusting relationship which was essential for the launching of a new enterprise dedicated to exploring terra incognita.

On Becoming an Editor

Everyone has a childhood ambition. Mine was to become an editor; and at age eight, I launched my first magazine—hand written, circulated to family. The next year I was sent to a commercial college to learn how to type and run a mimeograph, which meant that I could now actually produce a printed product. These skills were useful, preparing me to become an editor of my high school paper, and also to help found a monthly magazine for teens in my home town of Phoenix, the *Fadical Newsletter*. This publication, commenting on local politics and society, was important, because we had to learn to walk a narrow path and not overly criticize our school or elders, while still providing provocative commentary. We were an instant success and ran in the black for three years. The exercise was essential in helping me launch *Dialogue* in later years: we started *Fadical* with no sponsorship and few resources but with a great deal of passion and commitment.

After high school, I was admitted to Harvard but decided to spend my freshman year at BYU to learn about my Mormon heritage, associate with other LDS young people, and study with LDS professors. But I had always nurtured a desire to become an editor of the oldest college magazine in the country, so I transferred to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was elected an editor of the *Harvard Lampoon*. It was a letterpress publication that appeared monthly. That three-year experience writing, editing, and bringing to publication the *Lampoon* would also serve me well later at *Dia-*

logue. Harvard was a great place to discuss the Church and its relationship to society. Some friends I met there, such as Richard Lyman Bushman, Chase Nebeker Peterson, and Cherry Bushman Silver, later played important roles in *Dialogue*. Claudia Lauper, later Bushman, who co-founded *Exponent II*, was also there.

After Harvard the French Mission beckoned. An added benefit of living in France was to become acquainted with the many intellectual reviews published in Paris. Working with the French people was delightful, if at times maddening, since they liked to discuss all sides of an argument and then disagree on the conclusion. My mission was a rich, spiritual, humane, and intellectual experience.

When I got home, I had several options. Through friends of my mother I met Henry Luce, head of Time, Inc., who offered me a chance to join the staff of *Time*. But my experience overseas had changed my angle of vision: I enrolled at Columbia to do a Ph.D. in modern European history. I became editor of the *International Fellows Newsletter*, which allowed me to keep my hand in publishing. I was elected president of the graduate history club, which enabled me to schedule a wide range of authors and editors for speaking dates. One unforgettable evening was spent dining with Alfred A. Knopf, dean of American publishers.

I also met Marian Ashby on the steps of the Manhattan Ward; and after marriage, we embarked on a three-year Ford Foundation traveling grant to France and West Africa. My time in Paris also put me in touch with *Lampoon* friends who had started a new transatlantic literary journal, the *Paris Review*. Marian and I enjoyed living in Dakar, Senegal, West Africa, where I researched my thesis on French African nationalists. We were impressed with our black African friends, who abstained from drinking and smoking, were family oriented, and knew more about genealogy than we did. We believed that some day many of them would become members of the Church.

By late spring 1964, it was time to think about returning to the USA. I received several offers to spend a year writing up my doctoral thesis. One was at the University of Chicago, the other at Hoover Library at Stanford. It was a difficult choice—a real turning point in our lives. Chicago was intellectually more attractive; but since we had been away from the West for many years, we chose Stanford, within striking distance of our families in Provo and Phoenix. That proved to be a fateful choice, since it put us in Palo Alto just at the time that a social ferment was taking place on many

university campuses—sparked by the “free speech” movement at Berkeley. It was also a lucky choice, since later that year Stanford decided to hire a faculty member to teach about the developing areas of Africa, and I got the job since I was on the scene.²

Stanford in 1965: Creating a New Journal

Stanford held the perspective that it was a privilege for young scholars to begin their teaching careers there. Marian was astounded to find out via radio announcements that rookie police officers in San Francisco were going to make \$2,000 a year more than an assistant professor. Housing was so high that we got special permission to live in Escondido Village, the home of married graduate students. That ultimately proved to be fortuitous because it meant meeting a host of LDS graduate students, many of whom would become crucial players in launching *Dialogue*.

Stanford in the 1960s was an aggressive, freewheeling institution, open to innovation, quite different from my experience at the more conservative campuses of Harvard and Columbia. Professors came to class in sports shirts, and there was an informality between faculty and students that took a while to get accustomed to. I spent my first nine months working at Hoover Library on my dissertation and then started teaching in fall of 1965.

The students were bright and outspoken, and it was a pleasure to become acquainted with the LDS graduate students from the different faculties. Stanford was in the midst of becoming a truly national university instead of a first-class regional school, and I found many new colleagues who had also been hired from mainly Ivy League campuses. Two historians, who were chairmen one after the other, Gordon Wright (French history) and David Potter (American history), became great colleagues and friends. Their forbearance and *laissez faire* attitude later made it possible for *Dialogue* to set up offices for five years at History Corner on the Stanford quad. Stanford's indirect contribution of office space, meeting rooms, phone, typewriters, etc., cannot be underestimated in the founding and success of *Dialogue*. In fact the Stanford University Press advised us on many matters, and at one point we were going to have it print the new magazine until we got a better quote from Salt Lake City.

Let me backtrack for a few paragraphs. The idea and need for an independent, serious LDS publication had been in the air for many years.³ At the Manhattan Ward in the late 1950s, some friends and I discussed

the need to discuss in print what we thought were the two key issues the Church was facing: the black exclusion question and the status of women. When I accepted the Ford Foundation fellowship, it was suggested that I attend UCLA for one semester before leaving for Paris to sharpen my knowledge of Africa at its African Studies Center, at the time a pioneering institute. It was directed by James Coleman, a Harvard-trained political scientist, who was of LDS background and a Provo native.

Jim Coleman took me under his wing and prepared me well for black Africa, since he had lived in and written about Nigeria. At our UCLA ward in 1962, when I was asked to give a long sacrament meeting talk, I chose to speak on the need for an independent, serious, intellectual journal to enrich the Mormon community. It was greeted by much enthusiasm, and several persons asked, "Can't we explore getting such a project started?" That was a thrilling experience, except for the fact that we were leaving in a few months for Paris and West Africa. But that warm reception to the idea stayed with me and confirmed the *need* for such a project.

So now return to Palo Alto, where every day I bicycled to the Hoover Tower to work on the dissertation. Meanwhile, one of my closest mission companions visited Stanford where he had earlier studied. This was Paul Salisbury, then a Salt Lake architect, who had a gift for things esthetic and who was a great fan of French culture. In fact, he flew in on business several times during spring of '65, and we spent hours talking about this idea left over from UCLA. Paul, too, was convinced that, with the civil rights movement underway and the war in Vietnam heating up, there were issues in the Mormon community that needed to be discussed. We agreed that the *Improvement Era*, the official LDS magazine, was family oriented and would never discuss controversial current topics.

I showed Paul some of the French intellectual and cultural journals I had collected. We talked about the fact that in France, the buzz word at this time was to "*dialoguer*"—that is, to discuss important matters by maintaining a dialogue between two parties. We both thought that an LDS magazine, loosely modeled on these French reviews, could make a vital contribution to the Mormon community and also be a lot of fun to do. Sitting outside in lawn chairs at Escondido Village, we had big ideas but no resources with which to carry them out.

Then in May a friend from Harvard days, Diane Monson, stopped off in Palo Alto to see friends. She visited with Paul and me, and we brought up the idea of a journal to see how she, a doctorate in political sci-

ence, would react. She was very positive; but most important, she observed: "Do you know a graduate student in English named Gene England?" We replied that we did not, although we had heard of him. She replied, "You two need to contact him, because Gene and a few other friends—mainly Gene—are talking about doing precisely the same thing you are discussing: to found an independent Mormon publication." To say the least, we were stunned. Some other people with the same idea? And here in Palo Alto?

Needless to say, soon after Diane's news, we contacted Gene England, and he proposed a meeting at another graduate student's apartment in Escondido Village to explore our respective ideas and positions. This was Frances Lee Menlove, who was completing a Ph.D. in psychology. Also present was Joseph H. Jeppson, who had recently finished an M.A. in history and was teaching at San Mateo Junior College, and of course Gene England, obviously a far-seeing individual, who was just as anxious to meet us. Marian and Gene's wife, Charlotte, were also present.

As we discussed our respective ideas, it became clear that the two groups, if combined, would make a good fit. Gene and Joe were graduates of the University of Utah and had contacts in Salt Lake City that I certainly did not have. Moreover, Gene was also teaching at the LDS Institute of Religion at Stanford and, although majoring in English, was really focused on LDS theology. Frances brought high ethical standards to the enterprise, and her essay on honesty in *Dialogue's* first issue has proved to be a classic.

Joe had a somewhat ambiguous agenda. Interested in satire and irony, Joe favored creating a column patterned after Joseph Fielding Smith's "Answers to Gospel Questions" in the *Improvement Era*, but called instead "Questions to Gospel Answers." However, it now seemed to me that a straightforward journal of ideas was called for. Joe was later instrumental in persuading such distinguished scholars as Klaus Baer to participate in a published roundtable on the Egyptian papyri discovered at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the 1960s. Joe served for many years as our "Notes and Comments" editor.

Paul, an architect, was particularly interested in the publication's format and design. He wanted us to be known for impeccable artistic and esthetic standards. He had an unerring eye for good taste. But as a veteran of observing the French intellectual scene, like me, he also favored a publication that would openly discuss a variety of intellectual matters.

It soon became apparent at that meeting that, if we were to join forces, Gene and I would have to share responsibility. We were the only members who had extensive editing and publication experience. After that meeting, there were several more exploratory sessions where we talked about commitment to such an endeavor. It became apparent that, for Gene and me, this project would require a major allocation of time and energy. We became joint managing editors.

Gene had already won a place for himself in the hearts of the Stanford students with his Institute teaching and with his desire to relate current problems and ideas to LDS gospel standards. He was a firm disciple of two outgoing Mormon intellectuals, Lowell Bennion of the Church Educational System, and Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of the Seventy. Gene also had a deep insight into some of the issues the Church would be confronting during the next few years. As discussions progressed, it was apparent that Gene should become our man with special reference to Utah, while I, as a traveling Arizonan, was more at home with other Latter-day Saints who also were outsiders. My earlier experiences living in Boston, New York, and Los Angeles had given me a broad perspective on the Church outside Utah, while Gene had the experience and contacts to be involved with the insiders in Utah. It was a formula which gave both of us spheres in which we could operate and where we could bring to bear our own special talents and experiences. At times, these opposite perspectives created minor differences between us, but it is fair to say it was a dynamic that made the enterprise go. In retrospect, it is doubtful that I could have succeeded on my own, and I think the same is true for Gene. The two of us, so different in many ways, bonded and formed a wonderfully resilient working relationship. Although we had differences, I never remember having an argument. We both knew how far to push on an issue and when it was time to compromise—which happened quite often.

One thing the two groups agreed on instantly was the need for such a publication. The *Era* was not designed to address issues nor was the *Church News*. While *BYU Studies* was around, in those days it was primarily an outlet for BYU professors to publish research papers in a variety of disciplines. It did not primarily address the nature of Mormon thought and culture, which at our journal was the main theme. (Only later did editor Charles D. Tate Jr., under some influence from *Dialogue*, begin to refashion that journal into an excellent Mormon-subject-oriented publication.) So we believed there was a problem—a lack of an outlet for creative expres-

sion for the general LDS public—and that we could fix it. We were united in believing there was a definite need for an independent periodical.

At our second meeting later that week, the five of us decided to put up \$25 each to help launch the enterprise, a pitiful gesture in a way; but we made up for it with passion and enthusiasm. I was just beginning my teaching career in the fall, and Gene was getting his doctorate underway. Everyone was busy, but somehow we believed we could do it, because it was necessary to do. We had an idea but no resources.

For the next several months, we met often to decide what to name the publication, what its content and focus would be, and what format it would take. Paul Salisbury, who flew in from Salt Lake quite often, joined me in favoring the French-oriented dialogue concept and we pushed for that name in the title. Since I believed the Mormon community needed an intellectual journal, I thought it important to describe in detail what we were attempting to do. After several weeks, several suggestions (the list of potential names was long on creativity but not very pragmatic) were put forward. With Gene agreeing wholeheartedly, we finally opted for *Dialogue* and tacked on the subtitle *Journal of Mormon Thought*. (I wanted to get our publication in libraries across the country as a recognized scholarly journal.)

I was very pleased; but now, what would be our main thrust? Here Gene later came to our rescue and wrote up the frontispiece for the journal that still appears on the first page of every issue. To me, that credo is as fresh today as it was some forty years ago last summer:

Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of world religious thought and with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or of the editors.

Our understanding of why the name *Dialogue* was relevant is that we wanted to engage in a dialogue with other churches, other communities, and other intellectuals (both outside and inside the Church) about all aspects of Mormonism. We favored the idea of having discussions by Church members who were part of the great reverse migration which was

taking Mormons to major cities all over the country. But as time went by, rumors spread that our purpose was to engage in a dialogue with the LDS General Authorities, which was patently false. (Once in publication, we sent free subscriptions to the First Presidency, Twelve, and Seventies so they would know from our publication first-hand, not from rumors, what we were attempting to do.)

Creating the Board of Editors

Our non-LDS intellectual friends at Stanford applauded the idea of dialogue, and we had people like Lewis Spitz, a Reformation history professor and former Lutheran pastor, who encouraged us. Robert McAfee Brown, one of Stanford's theological lights, also praised our efforts. Word also began to arrive that at other campuses, such as UC Santa Barbara and Wisconsin, LDS students were exploring similar ideas of publication. The idea was in the air, and we knew there would be a race to see who would publish first. The pace picked up; and the weekly meetings we had were vital, creative, and at times funny. As time progressed, we also picked up endorsements from two mainline Mormon intellectuals: Lowell Bennion at the University of Utah and Leonard J. Arrington at Utah State. They agreed to be advisers to our publication, which gave us a sense of gaining momentum.

To my mind, however, this was not enough. We had already wrestled with the idea of format, with Gene and Joe favoring a more open, popular periodical type of publication, while Paul and I, old Francophiles, held fast to the Parisian journal idea. Moreover, I argued that we needed more than two advisers. We needed a board of editors to review manuscripts. I was given *carte blanche* by the group to see what I could do, so I wrote a number of letters to people I knew around the country, suggesting that the only way this publication could succeed was to have a sense of collective responsibility. That meant that each manuscript would be reviewed three times before it could be accepted for publication. I hoped this process would screen out materials that were not worthy of publication. I firmly believe that this concept is what persuaded many potential board members to join our enterprise. Most of them also anted up donations to help us print the first issue.

The list of whom I approached was long, but most important, almost everybody I contacted accepted the invitation to join our board, even though we had not yet published an issue. An immense help was our

first flyer, designed with great care by Paul Salisbury and mailed in the late fall. It seemed to strike most people who saw it as in good taste. Gene, I, and the others worked on the text of the flyer, which announced our values and ideas. That also seemed to please the public, because subscriptions for this unseen publication began to pour in—more than a hundred in some weeks.

It turned out we had a star salesman but didn't know it. This was Chase Peterson, M.D., who apparently urged patients who walked into his office to subscribe. As the subscribers' coupons and money rolled in, we realized all of this was for real, and the general public was expecting us to put out a smashing first issue. During the winter, we labored greatly, rounding up articles from friends, writing some essays ourselves, and constantly refining our position and point of view. We wanted to be independent, but we decided to keep the LDS authorities apprised of what we were doing at all times—no surprises. Some friends said, "But why don't you get the Church's endorsement?" To us, especially to Gene and me, that would be giving up our independence, which we believed would be the hallmark of our credibility in the dialogues to take place with other churches and intellectuals. Although we didn't (and couldn't) bill ourselves as defenders of the faith, we often felt that it would be one of our major roles.

There is no question that we hoped our audience would be intellectuals both inside and outside the LDS Church. We were careful to avoid any entanglements with anti-Mormon groups, such as Jerald and Sandra Tanner, although some misinformed people often linked us to such groups. In seeking to put together a viable board of editors, I sought to find members of the Church who were engaged in the broader community, people who were beacons of light for the Church. Fitting that profile were such individuals as Carlfred Broderick, the family relations specialist whom I had known, like Chase Peterson, at Harvard. I contacted another Harvard friend, Richard Bushman, who was teaching at BYU. In a very courageous act (this was the Wilkinson era), Richard joined our efforts and became one of our most trusted advisers. Thanks uniquely to his personal efforts, the BYU Bookstore agreed to sell *Dialogue*.

Others who accepted invitations were a diverse lot. There were financier Gary Driggs, from the Phoenix savings and loan family, a high school friend, and Dallin H. Oaks, then a University of Chicago law professor and former BYU social club friend. He would prove to be one of

our most astute reviewers, always getting to the heart of the matter: Should we publish, and if not, why? His counsel and observations were temperate and well informed. Cherry Silver, a friend from Radcliffe days, was one of our most perceptive reviewers. For a season we had the advice of Stanford O. Cazier, a Columbia friend, later to become president of both Chico State and Utah State. We also had the advice of persons such as historian Stanley B. Kimball of Illinois, political scientist Kent Lloyd of USC, Joseph Monsen of University of Washington, De Witt Paul Jr., of Johnson and Johnson, Ed Maryon and Victor Cline of the University of Utah, Doug Bunker of Harvard, Norman Tolk of Columbia, Garth Mangum of Washington, D.C., and many others.

A few persons didn't take the step to join our board but remained closet advisers. One such person, much appreciated, was G. Homer Durham, then president of Arizona State University. On visits to my parents in Phoenix, I never failed to meet with Homer to get his informed commentary on how we were doing. In summary, a number of valiant souls decided to accept our invitation, and the names printed then (as today) on the inside front cover was a roster of courage and conviction, of people who agreed that discussion and dialogue, in their most constructive senses, were necessary at this time.

Getting the Right Format and Creating a Staff

Paul and I worked on the format. At one point, the *Stanford Law Review* became a sort of model for us. We were ready to sign Stanford Press as our printer when Paul found a small letter-press shop in Salt Lake City, Alphabet Press, which better matched our budget. Its first job, our initial flyer, got rave reviews from almost everybody. Paul and I discussed typography, design, and graphics content long into the night on many long-distance phone calls. Paul had taken his architecture degree at the University of Utah and was well connected with its art department. He persuaded a number of talented artists to furnish us with sketches and drawings which visually enlivened a scholarly journal. To suggest our potential permanence, we selected Baskerville, a classic, conservative type font, featured for many years by Columbia University Press.

When the first issue came out, our fellow staff members approved of the appearance wholeheartedly. In fact, without blowing our own trumpets, I think we exceeded the public's expectations. We showed that we could produce a professional quality publication, sophisticated in design,

yet accessible to the general reader. Although there have been minor changes, the general format has remained the same during these past forty years.

Many of us, but mainly Gene and I, accepted invitations to speak at firesides, then a more popular institution among Church wards and stakes than today. We spoke about our hopes and ideas even before the first issue and especially during the first two to three years of publication. We both spoke at many places in California; but since Gene was Utah-bred, he became a very popular speaker at home. Furthermore, Gene was now developing what could only be called a charismatic style, nurtured by his CES teaching at Stanford and now being extended to *Dialogue* evenings.

To our pleasant surprise, the cash flow from the flyer had continued so that we had enough funds in hand to pay for the first issue. That first issue, in the spring of 1966, with the classic woodcut type of cover selected by Paul showing two persons talking under a tree came out in spring and was an instant hit. During the first year, we had to go to a second printing to keep up with demand. (Note for collectors: There's a difference between the first and second printings.)

During fall and winter, it became apparent that we needed staff members to do a lot of routine but important work. Here Gene was essential, because he put out a call to Stanford students, both undergraduate and graduate. The response was vigorous. My History Corner office had also become *Dialogue's* general editorial office, and we had permission from the History Department to use several large seminar rooms next to my office as staff meeting rooms in the evenings, usually Tuesdays. Those meetings were lively, dynamic affairs. Literally dozens of volunteers, over the six years the journal was located at Stanford, would come out on Tuesday nights and lend a hand. A complete list would almost read like an LDS who's who today—so many of these students went on to accomplish great things.

Our volunteers gave needed help in receiving and sending out manuscripts for review, logging in new subscribers, helping with letters. Gene and I would dictate to a wide range of people, developing a public relations campaign, locating more artists to grace our pages with drawings, and above all, nurturing our budding authors.

If asked to identify our greatest accomplishment in those half dozen early years of *Dialogue*, I would respond unequivocally that it was the dis-

covery and development of new talent. Where else could the Mormon general public send serious articles, essays, fiction, and poetry? Where else could LDS artists communicate their works to the public? Word quickly spread among both veteran and neophyte writers, and especially wannabees, that here was a new outlet for creative expression. I cannot recall how many times over the six years I edited *Dialogue* that people would write the same letter: "I knew someday someone would create such a publication; there are so many of us out here." It was a great irony that, given the Church's emphasis on participation, there were few ways that anyone who wrote or had ideas could be read. That was the journal's greatest contribution: the discovery and encouragement of Mormon writers and intellectuals.

We needed help even beyond the many students Gene recruited during the first several years. We needed a permanent staff. We found several people who now became key players. One was Ralph Hansen of the Stanford Library who took over our book reviewing and bibliographic chores. Another was Edward Geary, a graduate student in English, who was our very effective manuscripts editor. Later, as a BYU English professor, he became editor of *BYU Studies* and an acclaimed essayist and fiction writer. Others included Bob and Shirley Griffin, Kent Robson, our first employee, Pat Bacon of Palo Alto, a devoted woman who handled our subscriber affairs for many years, and Christie Redford, a loyal secretary.

Summing up why we were able to create a viable publication where other groups had failed: First, we were located on the campus of a major university, with a Stanford mailing address, and we were hosted by a sympathetic administration. Second, we had a mix of interested parties who had the necessary skills to put out a major publication. Gene had edited the *Pen*, the University of Utah's literary magazine, and I the *Harvard Lampoon*. Third, we had committed, volunteer staff members who truly believed it was time for an independent LDS publication to appear that would speak to problems that were surfacing in the 1960s. Fourth, the immense cash flow we generated initially gave us enough capital to finance publication and distribution of the first four issues. Fifth, we had high standards of taste and scholarship which demonstrated that Mormons could put out a sophisticated publication. Sixth, and perhaps most important, we were filling a pent-up need fueled by the great expansion of LDS people who were migrating across the country to many cities and universi-

ties; these people had a need to express themselves and to read what their colleagues had to say.

Spreading the Word

The first two issues of *Dialogue* attracted a fair amount of attention on the national scene. The *New York Times* did an in-depth interview with Gene and me, which led to other phone calls and interviews. *Time* magazine ran a complimentary article accompanied by a photo of our key staff members. These national media were intrigued by the idea that the Mormon community now wanted to establish some intellectual credentials and to have an open dialogue with the rest of the world. They judged it a breakthrough, which it was.

We received congratulations from *Christian Century* and a variety of other independent religious publications. We felt we were paving the way for ecumenical relations that had sometimes been ignored in the past. And we were joining a larger community of independent, religiously oriented publications that every religion we knew—whether Jewish, Catholic, or Protestant—seemed to have—except Mormons. As for me, it was particularly gratifying to send copies to former Harvard and Columbia professors, to former graduate school colleagues, and even to some French intellectual friends, to show them what an invigorated Mormon community could do.

This was before Leonard Arrington became Church Historian, and Church archives were mostly closed to everybody. This was also before President Hinckley's tenure when the Church paid little attention to its public relations. We did not realize it at the time, but we were a new kind of Church spokesperson: committed, articulate, knowledgeable about issues, but not official. Numerous interviews with newspapers, radio stations, and periodicals helped spread the word about our endeavor. We also received invitations to give scholarly speeches and convocation addresses. The round of firesides was continual.

I particularly remember flying to New York where I met with friends and new acquaintances connected with Columbia and the Manhattan Ward. There was great excitement among the New York Saints about the long-term prospects for this new journal, and we drummed up much support for submission of manuscripts. I then flew to Chicago where Dallin Oaks had arranged for Jack Whittle, BYU graduate and son-in-law of banker David Kennedy, to host a gathering at his home. This stimulating

evening drew participants from both Northwestern and the University of Chicago. I think such firesides helped establish that faithful, loyal Saints were putting out this publication and that we wanted to increase the visibility of the Mormons in the larger intellectual community—a goal we thought was worthwhile. After all, didn't we as a people encourage our LDS sports heroes to mingle with the public? Didn't we favor business people participating in the larger world? Didn't we lionize singers and performers such as the Osmonds who were competing in a worldly setting? At times of discouragement, I had simply to remember such evenings and the great interest and enthusiasm we were generating among discriminating yet faithful people.

We also needed financial help. A new acquaintance, Roger Sant, did a study of the journal's financial situation. Roger, who today heads one of the world's largest energy companies and chairs the Smithsonian's board of trustees, said that as long as our cash flow from subscriptions kept pouring in, we would have enough capital to continue. Roger's prediction proved true for three or four years; but subscriptions leveled off, and it became apparent we needed to find donations to stay in the black. I went to the Danforth Foundation in St. Louis, the Lilly Foundation in Indianapolis, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in New York, all of which had shown some interest in religious endeavors. My reception was cordial, and we were complimented on our efforts, but the Rockefeller staff member summed it up: "You Mormons have a growing affluence and you should really seek help to develop your journal from your own people." Since at the outset we had created the journal as a publication of the not-for-profit educational Dialogue Foundation, we were perfectly positioned to do fund raising. But that was easier said than done.

The first breakthrough came on a visit to Provo, when BYU physics professor John Hale Gardner called and said he understood we needed help. He invited me to meet his neighbor, Charlie Redd, who had endowed the Redd Center for Western History at BYU. Charlie was a no-nonsense person and, after a few tough questions, whipped out his checkbook and gave me a check for a thousand dollars, a rather large sum forty years ago. Word got around that we needed help, and soon donations came in from Ken Handley, a retired New York banker who liked the discussion in *Dialogue*; Lola Van Wagoner, who for years has supported Mormon cultural and history activities; and the family of Barnard Silver, an old friend from MIT, whose Denver family foundation set up the Silver

Awards for good writing in the journal. Over the years *Dialogue* has been fortunate to attract many donors who believe in its mission to promote discussion of Mormon issues. Without their continuing interest, it is doubtful that the journal could have survived and flourished during these past four decades.

Dialogue also developed friends in such places as Washington, D.C., where Garth Mangum and Mary Lythgoe Bradford, later the journal's third editor, put out a special issue on Mormons in the nation's capital. We had a special issue on the status of Mormon history edited by Leonard Arrington and a special women's issue, the first of three so far. We also published a variety of roundtables and symposia in addition to our regular features. We were gaining national visibility, national authors, and a national audience.

Problems Encountered: The Messenger Gets Shot

No feature created more consternation during Gene's and my tenure than the Stewart Udall affair. He was the U.S. Secretary of the Interior under John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, and scion of one of Arizona's most prominent pioneer families. His brother was the humorous congressman, Morris Udall, who became a national figure in his own right. Stewart Udall, like many Mormons of the times, was greatly concerned about the exclusion of worthy African American men from the LDS priesthood. He submitted an article to the journal that called upon LDS General Authorities to rectify this situation in the near future. The editorial staff determined that his article was a case of special pleading that did not meet the criteria for inclusion in our journal. Our three referees who read the article agreed completely.

But how do you turn down cold a colorful, nationally known personality, a member of the U.S. president's cabinet from a famous LDS family? We wrestled with the problem and finally explained to Udall that we could not print his article for the reasons stated above but that we would print a briefer version as a letter to the editor, where he could properly express his personal opinion without having it construed as an implied endorsement by the editors—although it is fair to say many of us agreed with him. Udall took his time in answering, probably shocked by our turn-down. But he graciously took our offered option, and we printed his letter. Yet from the minute it appeared, that letter caused us more grief than any other material we ever printed. The gist of the public outcry

against Udall was that he presumed to tell the General Authorities how to run the Church. Although we believed we were only the messenger, we found out the hard way the truth of the old adage: that the messenger of ten gets shot. We knew we had to walk on a very narrow path; but a few years later when we published the breakthrough articles by Lester Bush and Armand Mauss on the black issue, the subject was out in the open and subject to comment. Our readers seemed more ready to listen and more inclined to participate thoughtfully in the discussion. In retrospect, the Udall letter, the Bush article, and other articles helped create a conversation about the priesthood issue, since it was on the minds of many LDS members. But it was the Udall letter which broke what had amounted to a taboo on bringing up the subject in print.

The United States is a free nation and we have liberty of opinion; but we learned that, in dealing with a centrally run institution, it was wiser to stay away from any kind of prescribing, even if only implied by a letter to the editor. It took me back to my days on the *Fadical Newsletter* in high school in Phoenix, where we had been obliged to walk a fine line to survive what seemed to be implied slights to the principal, high school faculty, or school board—which we had managed to do. But in the case of Udall, we dropped the ball. It was a good lesson. Privately, I wondered when the policy on priesthood for black men would change. After all, I was a young professor teaching African history. I had lived among the Senegalese. Field research and personal experience suggested to my wife and me that all blacks should qualify for full membership in the Church. But once again, patience was the necessary virtue.

Despite the Udall affair, we had really very few setbacks.⁴ Word trickled in that some stake presidents were suggesting that their faithful not read *Dialogue*. But interestingly enough, for every such story, we heard others about people using the journal to supplement Sunday School lessons, help prepare sacrament meeting talks, etc. It was before the advent of Church correlation. The Church had not yet established its current Sunday School curriculum of dealing with one standard work every year and discouraging teachers from using supplementary materials. It was an era when President McKay's liberality made possible lesson manuals by such people as Lowell Bennion and Obert C. Tanner. During these early years, *Dialogue* enjoyed a vogue with discussion groups, many of which were called *Dialogue* groups. In later years, many of these became *Sunstone* groups, since that new publication tended to enter more controversial ar-

eas than the more cautious *Dialogue*. On the other hand, the solid scholarship that *Dialogue* has always insisted on has kept it in a class by itself.

Toward the end of the fifth year of our joint editorship, Gene finished his Ph.D. and was appointed to a professorship and deanship at St. Olaf's, a distinguished small liberal arts college in Minnesota. For the sixth year, I would be *Dialogue*'s sole editor. Editorial succession weighed heavily on our minds; but at this point a white knight appeared in the person of Robert Rees of the UCLA English Department. During the rest of the fifth year and during the sixth, he became prepared to take over the journal.

Before Gene left, we held a historic meeting of the Dialogue Foundation in the law offices of John Carmack in Westwood, a *Dialogue* subscriber who would soon become president of the Los Angeles Stake. We crafted the transfer of the *Dialogue* name, assets, and authority to Bob Rees and to the new staff he had assembled. Gene and I were, to say the least, relieved, because I, too, would be leaving Stanford later in the year for a tenured professorship at UC Santa Barbara. That meant the end of the glory days at Stanford. But the journal had come of age and would now travel to a variety of new homes over the next thirty-four years.

Meanwhile, in 1970-71 when I became the sole editor, changes were taking place. It was a tumultuous era of anti-war protests, civil rights marches, even the trashing of the Stanford campus—a half million dollars worth of windows broken. History Corner became too crowded, and evening classes meant that our meetings had to be scheduled elsewhere. The Stanford authorities, ever generous, arranged for us to utilize the back part of an older row house on Stanford campus. Here we set up our office for our final year in a verdant setting. It was, in fact, a historical location, near the famous garage where in the 1930s Messrs. Hewlett and Packard founded their computer company. It was ironic to obtain such splendid quarters on the eve of our departure.

Our move turned out to be timely, because in that year of 1970-71, the Stanford sports program broke off relations with BYU because of the priesthood issue. After the murder of Martin Luther King, Stanford had started recruiting African American students in earnest, and some on campus brought pressure on the administration over the Church's policy. Thus began an era of strained relations between the two campuses that would last for a few years until President Spencer W. Kimball's 1978 revelation extending priesthood to worthy black men. The presence of a Mor-

mon journal on the campus during those years would undoubtedly not have been welcome by the Stanford administration, which was now bending over backward to formulate an educational policy vis-à-vis African Americans.

During my last two years at Stanford as a European historian teaching African courses, I took an interest in the university's plight. At one point, in fact, for about six months during my sole editorship of the journal, I was asked to serve as chair of the committee planning the new Black Studies program. At Stanford we wanted to integrate African with American Black Studies, an approach which eventually became the model even at a conservative campus such as Harvard. Most campuses in those early years of racial struggles after the death of Dr. King floundered by looking at the black situation only in America, thus ignoring the relevant history of the Caribbean, Brazil, and black Africa—in other words, the entire black diaspora. At any rate, at Stanford it was a strained time, with many misunderstandings between the races. The new black students were trying to find their way in an almost totally "lily white" environment, and often lashed out at the administration and faculty. Finally, I was able to step down from this difficult assignment with the recruitment of St. Clair Drake, a black scholar from Roosevelt University of Chicago. A prince of a person, Drake agreed with my committee's planning and soon implemented a first-rate program.

The Stanford-BYU break plunged the Mormon community at Stanford into an ambiguous position. At one point, I became an envoy to BYU from the Stanford president's office to see what might be done, but there was no solution. Only the LDS General Authorities and the prophet could rectify the situation. At Stanford, many Saints felt that it was wiser to keep a low profile. Officed in the row house, *Dialogue* escaped the major trashing, window breaking, and confrontations now frequently occurring on the quad. This difficult time also caused us to fall behind on subscription fulfillment and manuscript screening. It seemed that our mail bags were filled every week with new offerings from around the country. By late spring, as the tumult began to die down, Marian and I started packing up to move south.

Dialogue in Transition: Off to Southern California

In the summer of '71, I prepared to go back to Senegal for a year's research on a Social Science Research Council grant. I would then take up

my new professorship at UC Santa Barbara. During spring quarter, Bob Rees shuttled back and forth between Westwood and Palo Alto, overseeing the journal's move to UCLA. Bob's keen interest and devotion to the journal was much appreciated, and it is no wonder that his editorship, despite logistical and financial problems, was editorially a most successful period in the journal's history. It was a nostalgic summer because an exciting era was ending for those of us in Palo Alto who had jointly created what we believed to be an institution of great value, a worthy addition to the larger Mormon community. Stanford, a university dedicated to innovation, had proved to be an ideal birthplace for our own innovation.

I remember thinking that the challenge of creating this journal from scratch was the same thrill, but on a larger scale, I had enjoyed in developing the *Fadical Newsletter*. We had no backing, no guarantors except our own pluck and energy. That is what made the whole enterprise exciting, and it is why Gene, others, and I hung in there to make things go. We had a mission we believed in. We felt we were adding value to the Mormon community, that we were improving public relations with many other religious groups, that we were entering into dialogue with Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals, Jews, RLDS, and even atheists. We created an interest in our pages in the fact that Mormonism was becoming a world church long before the *Ensign*, successor to the *Era*, wisely began to cover international Mormonism. One of my proudest moments was when I began to read articles in journals, both religious and secular, where the footnotes included articles from *Dialogue*. The fact that we were now taken seriously in the world of scholarship was a great thrill. And we had done all of this on a shoestring, with mainly human capital to make the enterprise succeed. That was perhaps the most gratifying aspect of *Dialogue*; and for my career as a part-time editor, it was indeed a Golden Age.

At a personal level, it was certainly broadening. It brought me in contact with all manner of writers and intellectuals in and out of the Church; it gave me a wonderful overview of current Mormon scholarship in a variety of fields. We were particularly fortunate to have the backing of Leonard Arrington. In San Francisco, in the fall of 1965, I was asked to speak about the new journal at the founding meeting of the Mormon History Association. Arrington backed my plea at that meeting that the new organization should not start its own journal but use the pages of *Dialogue*. This decision was a crucial one because, for many years, a variety of Mormon luminaries published their original articles in our journal. It gave us

instant substance and helped make our effort a credible one in the face of many doubting Thomases. It was 1971 when the MHA established its own scholarly journal.

The editorship also deepened my understanding of what Mormonism was all about, the contributions our people have made to society, and the way in which this Church has been a force for good in the United States and now around the world. Receiving hundreds of manuscripts and letters over six years enabled me to take the pulse of an important segment of the Mormon community. I was lucky to have a co-editor who became one of the most original LDS thinkers of the twentieth century. Gene England was oriented toward Mormon theology while I was oriented toward Mormon society. We were both interested in exploring Mormon cultural life. In retrospect, it was a good fit. Gene was generous and hard working to a fault; he generated infectious enthusiasm everywhere he went. But he was also very sharp and shrewd—no pie in the sky intellectual. In my view, it would be hard to find a person who loved and believed in the Mormon Christian gospel more than Gene England. He was refreshingly original in his ideas and outlook. His tragically early death a few years ago caused a void which probably never will be filled.

In 1972 I returned from my West African sabbatical and settled into my new professorship at UC-Santa Barbara. I thought my editing days were over now that *Dialogue* was transplanted to UCLA in Bob Rees's capable hands. But within several years I helped found a new graduate program called Public History, to train historians for roles in public service other than as teachers. It was the first in the nation, and its visibility soon made it imperative that we publish a national refereed journal. Thanks in part to my experience editing *Dialogue*, I received that assignment and served as editor in chief of the *Public Historian Quarterly* for ten years. Printed by the University of California Press, Berkeley, after twenty-eight years it is still a flourishing journal.

Then after fourteen years at UC, I accepted an offer to join the BYU faculty. It was a new experience to be back in the center of Mormonism rather than on the periphery. This move ended my career as an editor. I had enjoyed it immensely, but it was now time to revivify my own voice rather than helping others find theirs.

Considering the Impact of *Dialogue*

This journal's impact can be measured in several ways. First, it was

the first magazine in modern times issued independently by believing and active Latter-day Saints. The climate was not overly welcoming, since many Mormons thought that, unless it came out of 47 E. South Temple, it must be anti-Mormon. I think *Dialogue* helped reduce that defensiveness with its pioneering issues. Second, soon a number of other independent publications followed; and although the road was rocky for some of them, they too have survived. First was *Exponent II* for women in New England, next came *Sunstone* in Salt Lake City, both publications of opinion. More popular publications have been *This People* and the two recent publications: *LDS Living*, a four-color glossy published in Orem, Utah, and the online *Meridian Magazine*, based in Washington, D.C. In my view, all of these publications benefitted from *Dialogue* paving the way in the 1960s.

The journal also made an impact on other publications. *BYU Studies* was transformed from an in-house publication to a journal of Mormon culture. According to Professor Henry Eyring of the University of Utah's Chemistry Department, who sat on the committee to design the new *Ensign*, *Dialogue* impacted even the Church publications. Today, the situation is quite different from 1965. LDS writers have many venues for publishing in pro-LDS independent periodicals. It can also be argued that the continued discovery of new writers paved the way for the outburst of independent book publishers in our time. That was perhaps *Dialogue's* greatest legacy: identifying and nurturing new talent.

One of the main points we set out to prove was that intellectuals could keep their faith and loyalty to the Church; we believed that persons who valued their thinking could remain active and productive members of the Church. We helped to put to rest the old cliché that intellectuals were doomed to fall away from the Church. The postwar period of Mormon expansion and outward migration from Utah created different circumstances than before World War II, when that cliché was common. All around the nation, campuses were expanding and bright LDS graduate students soon appeared. The campus branches they attended became places where reason could be reconciled with faith. We believed there was no reason for a person to lose one's faith while acquiring higher education. We believed that *Dialogue's* open discussions would help students find their testimonies and their own identities as intelligent and believing members of the Church. Letters from hundreds of readers substantiated this belief.

In preparing this essay, I sampled the new DVD of past *Dialogue*

numbers. I hope a cultural historian will some day analyze the impressive array of materials contained—essays, fiction, poetry, art, roundtable discussions, book reviews, and notes. My guess is that such a study would demonstrate conclusively that this journal has amply fulfilled the promise that the founding editors hoped for forty years ago. Let us not forget the turmoil of that decade—with civil rights demonstrations, Vietnam rallies, movements among ethnics, and heightened awareness among women. Ironically, we are facing many similar challenges today, verifying the old French saying, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.”

We still live in a world in chaos. If there was a need for discussion and dialogue then, there is a greater need now. The LDS community has grown, expanded nationwide and worldwide, and is ethnically diverse. Although the hierarchy is still centrally located, the membership is now global. The dilemmas Mormons faced in becoming part of the larger society are now greatly magnified and more challenging than ever. It seems remarkable to critics of Mormonism that the Church is able to keep control since there is no paid clergy. The secret, of course, has been the leadership skills learned in priesthood quorums, in the Relief Society, and on missions. LDS people are prepared to travel anywhere in the world and replicate wards and stakes. It is likely that, on the eightieth anniversary of this journal, which I am certain will occur, we will still be facing challenges, and there will still be a need for *Dialogue*.

In spring 2006, the Mormon History Association’s annual meeting took place in Casper, Wyoming, on the theme of center and periphery within Mormondom. In one sense, that is the story of *Dialogue*, which has sought to bring the experiences of those on the geographical periphery of the Church to bear on its central areas. One could refer to the old sociological construct of cosmopolitans and locals, with the former as people who have traveled and moved about and have a larger view of society, and the locals as persons more wedded to the perspective and continuity of the center. A related angle of vision would be the difference in perspective between outsiders and insiders. All of these angles deserve to be pursued since Mormon society is becoming more complex year by year. However one fashions it, I believe this journal has served as a messenger for those participating in the larger society.

The increasing number of high achievers in business, professions, government, education, science, and so forth, suggests that there will be a continuing need to assess how our beliefs can inform and contribute to

this larger society. It would not be entirely accurate to call this missionary work but, in its own way, it is. Who can deny that the example of a Kim Clark leaving a deanship of the Harvard Business School to become president of BYU-Idaho has impressed the general public with his willingness to forego worldly honors to serve his church? Who cannot be impressed by a person such as Kevin Rollins, now active head of the world's largest computer company (Dell), who tells inquiring reporters that he has no magical recipe for advancement in the business world but that his success flows from putting his family and the Church first? And what of Richard Bushman, whose new major biography of Joseph Smith puts the Church's founder in a new national perspective for thousands of non-LDS readers? Or Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, whose Pulitzer Prize winning work has helped shed new light on the role of women in American society? These individuals are LDS role models for the larger society and beacons of Mormon thought and practice.

If this journal can continue to chronicle and discuss the happenings, travails, and issues that beset the LDS community as its members venture forth to interact with the larger mainstream society, *Dialogue's* promise will have been validated and updated. I congratulate all the editors and staff after Gene and me, who so diligently kept the journal vital and added new ideas to keep it fresh. I only hope we can persist for another forty years and continue to make contributions to the continuing dialogue both inside and outside of the LDS community. It's worth the effort.

Notes

1. G. Wesley Johnson, "Editorial Preface," *Dialogue*, 1, no. 1 (Spring 1966): 7.
2. The sections that follow are my personal reminiscences; see also Gene England's impressions of this period in his article commemorating the twentieth anniversary of this journal: "On Building the Kingdom with *Dialogue*," *Dialogue*, 21, no. 2 (Summer, 1988): 128-34.
3. Gene England also had discussed the possibility of creating an LDS type of publication with friends (including Mary Bradford) for several years, beginning in the late 1950s.
4. For a more detailed description, see Devery Anderson's well-researched article, "A History of *Dialogue*, Part One: The Early Years, 1965-71," *Dialogue* 32, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 15-16.