persecution of black Christians, Jews, and Catholics provides insight into the violence that accompanied America's attempts at religious pluralism. It is especially interesting to learn that more Catholics were lynched in the South than any other group except black Christians—more than Mormons and Jews combined. However, the victims were Italians and Mexicans who, we can assume, were at least nominally Catholic, and their murderers were Irish Catholics. In these cases, at least, ethnicity and race appear to be more salient than religion, so the violence doesn't technically qualify as religious persecution.

A review would be incomplete without mentioning that the book is a pleasure to read. Mason has command of facts and details but nonetheless manages to keep the narrative moving without getting bogged down in minutiae. Readers are reminded that the skirmishes over religious freedom and individual rights are not settled and really never have been. In addition, we also see fascinating hints at several other avenues of fruitful research that lie beyond the scope of this book, including the way that the experiences of missionaries in the Southern States Mission shaped the way the Church related to the rest of the United States in later years, the influence of Southern converts on the Utah church, and the way young men's mission experience informed their leadership in later years when they served in the leading quorums of the Church.

Can Mormonism Have a Systematic Theology?

Charles R. Harrell. *"This Is My Doctrine": The Development of Mormon Theology*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011. xii, 583 pp., index, chapter endnotes. $34.95. ISBN 1589581032

Reviewed by Matthew Bowman

This is a wide-ranging and detailed book, consisting of an extensive examination of a wide variety of topics in Mormon theology from the time of scripture to the present. Harrell announces his methodology in the first chapter: "Theology: A Divine-Human Enterprise." He wants to examine "how LDS doctrines taught to-

day were understood in early Mormonism and even earlier Biblical times" (12). His overall argument is that Mormon doctrine changes. This may seem a rather unexceptional point, but Harrell's work is methodical, exhaustive, and not infrequently, impressive simply for its scope.

But though his effort is to be respected, one at times gets the sense that Harrell may have attempted to do too much. The book has the sort of carefully wooden structure of a work struggling to wrap its arms around the entirety of a hugely sprawling and messy subject. It is organized by topic—some obvious, like "Atonement," some fuzzier, like "The Gospel Plan," which includes within it everything from ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood to the notion of making one's calling and election sure. Harrell chops each topic up into chronological subcategories: the Old Testament, the New Testament, American Protestantism at the time of early Mormonism, "early Mormonism" (into which Harrell categorizes the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants), "Nauvoo Mormonism" (in which Harrell includes the Book of Abraham), and "present day Mormonism." In each subcategory Harrell discusses whatever teachings or material is relevant to the topic. In some cases, this commentary is extensive; in others, Harrell restricts himself to a sentence or two, saying, for instance, "There are no prophecies in the New Testament that can be reasonably construed as references to Joseph Smith," followed by a scant handful of sentences about a few passages that enthusiastic Mormons have understood as references to Smith (13).

The book is probably most useful as a reference tool, a handy encyclopedia for quickly assessing the key notions about, say, "Satan" or "the fall and nature of humanity," or "the preexistence" in the Kirtland period or contemporary Mormonism. Harrell's citations will be useful for other scholars seeking to get a quick sense of the primary sources, and his thumbnail sketches—all the space, likely, which such an expansive effort allowed—raise a number of questions they might pursue.

But the book unfortunately suffers from a title that's doubly a misnomer. Perhaps unintentionally, Harrell's premises raise interesting questions about what "doctrine" may be. He does not sketch out epistemological issues with any great depth; but his very premise—that people Mormons regard as authorities be-

lieved different things at different times—carries with it theological implications about the nature of doctrine and belief that he never quite explores fully. Harrell is largely content to disrupt what we think we know rather than sketching out a new way of understanding Mormonism. Second, though the book claims to illustrate the "development" of ideas, the firm lines of Harrell's structure inhibit the natural growth of that sort of argument and complicate its status as a true work of history. Harrell seems overwhelmed by his own ambitions.

So the question follows: What precisely does Harrell understand himself to be doing: theology or history? Harrell's first chapter, "Theology: A Divine-Human Enterprise," makes explicit a theological argument for how we should best understand Mormonism. He argues, basically, that all theology can be broken down along an axis whose poles he labels "liberal" and "conservative." According to Harrell, conservatives believe in scriptural inerrancy and prophetic infallibility and hence believe that all doctrine is "uniform": pristine, eternal, and, most of all, taught unchangingly from the mouths and pens of God's representatives from Adam and Moses on down to Neil L. Andersen. On the other hand, liberals can still be "faithful" but may see evidence of "cultural conditioning" or "inconsistencies" in these sources of authority and hence are more comfortable with ambiguity (3–4).

To make this case, Harrell relies very heavily on an odd assortment of writers—and on them heavily. Very heavily. Each paragraph seems to introduce a new name, always introduced as "Protestant scholar" or "LDS theologian" or "Catholic thinker," a tic which grows slightly annoying and only emphasizes the extent to which Harrell appears more or less ignorant of the history of theology. He seems to see little amiss in citing a contemporary Anglican and a medieval Catholic and a nineteenth-century Protestant Evangelical to make the same point. This is, oddly enough, a scholarly version of the prooftexting Harrell decries in his "conservatives."

In that first chapter, for instance, he leaps from the analytic Mormon theologian Blake Ostler to the radical Catholic Hans Küng to the Protestant scholar and founder of "canonical criticism" Brevard Childs, to (blink) Benjamin Warfield, the late-nineteenth-century Princeton professor who did the intellectual

spadework behind the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. All of them are described as advocates of the "creative coparticipation" (4) of God and humans in scripture. This may be true to a very superficial extent, but the vast and yawning gulfs between, say, Ostler and Warfield on the question illustrate how facile Harrell's simple dichotomy is.

Further, if Harrell does understand himself to be making theological arguments, his approach seems strange, particularly when he deals with scripture. His analysis of the Bible is entirely dependent upon the historical-critical method, which seeks to interpret these texts as historical documents reflecting the interests and preoccupations of their presumed authors. Such a reading concludes, for instance, that "Christians since New Testament times have traditionally held that Isaiah 53 is a direct reference to Christ's suffering. Scholars, however, are less sanguine" (278). Isaiah 53 is one of the prophet's "servant songs," a poem describing a figure who suffers pain and abuse but who is, nonetheless, a chosen messenger of God. While Christians see prophecy in this figure, historical-critical scholars prefer to read in it and the other servant songs allegories that are representative of Israelite culture around the time of the Exile: Isaiah himself, for instance, or the nation of Israel suffering under foreign invasion. Thus, Harrell argues that it would be anachronistic to the author of that particular section of Isaiah to connect such suffering to redemption from sin.

This is an entirely respectable scholarly argument and one on which Harrell cites "Jesuit professor of Christology Gerard O'Collins" and "Anglican theologian N. T. Wright." They are undoubtedly learned and pious men; but critically, the argument in question is not theological. The biblical text seen through the lens of historical critical scholarship is not necessarily the same text—nor even relevant—to the biblical text seen through the lens of theology. It is thus unclear what sort of relevance Harrell believes his recapitulation of the work of scholars of the higher criticism on topics like priesthood and atonement in the Bible should have to Mormon theology. Put another way, I am unclear as to what Harrell would like us to do: Simply acknowledge that "Gee, what Isaiah seems to say about the Messiah sure isn't what Samuel Hopkins or Joseph Smith or Harold B. Lee thought he said"? This

conclusion would require a radical revision of the ways Mormons use their canon, and it's not clear that Mormons should, in fact, be reading scripture in the same ways that critical scholars do. Had Harrell read more of Brevard Childs (or Walter Brueggemann, another scholar whom he cites, or say, Hans Frei), the difference between historical critical work on scripture and theological work that takes historical criticism into account, like Childs's own canonical criticism, might have been better developed here and a greater sense of thematic continuity preserved.

But perhaps Harrell does not understand himself to be doing theology but simply intellectual history, tracing the arc of thought on such diverse topics as "priesthood" and "Jesus Christ" and "the creation" and "salvation for the dead" and a dozen and a half others from the Hebrew scriptures to contemporary Mormonism. Put that way, such a summary seems magnificently ponderous; and indeed, perhaps the only thing Harrell can be faulted for here is biting off more than he can chew.

With such a massive task, an author could go either of two ways: first, he or she could make a work heavily thematic, arguing something specific about the nature of theological change, or using, as many systematic theologies do, a particular idea or concept as a governing structure. Second, he or she could avoid such broad arguments and focus instead on particulars, leaving out any number of examples and producing a work that reads like a reference book or encyclopedia rather than a monograph. This is the route that Harrell has taken; and I believe, unfortunately, it's the weaker of the two choices.

He claims in his title to be studying the "development" of Mormon theology, but there's very little sense of continuity, evolution, or change over time in any of his treatments. Little connection is drawn between his periods; indeed, Harrell tends to emphasize contrast rather than continuity. While it is quite clear that Mormon doctrine (if Harrell's examination of the Bible can be called "Mormon doctrine") has changed over time, we are not given any real reasons why, or what such change might tell us about Mormonism in total. And because the book covers such a vast expanse of time and theme, Harrell, by necessity, cannot spend more than a few hundred words in any given section. The reader might spend seven or eight minutes examining the four

paragraphs that cover the concept of "foreordination" in the Bible and the eight that cover it in nineteenth-century American Christianity, including Mormonism, and be left with the vague sense that there must have been more to it than this. And indeed, there is.

Harrell's book is representative of a long stream of works in Mormon theology. Deep attention here is paid to the familiar voices: Joseph Smith, Orson and Parley Pratt, James E. Talmage, and Bruce R. McConkie. Mormonism is contextualized in a rather oversimplified, early nineteenth-century American evangelicalism. The language of theology is used haphazardly by authors as well as by those Mormon thinkers they study. There is little effort to systematize Mormon doctrine or to relate its changes to deeper developments in Mormon culture, American culture, or to the context of American Christianity more generally in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The value of this sort of work should not be downplayed, and I want to stress that I believe Harrell's work will be useful in any number of ways to scholars of the future. But Mormon historiography is changing, and Harrell's work is monumental for reasons other than those which now seem most pressing.

Inside the "Loyal Opposition"

Philip Lindholm, ed. *Latter-day Dissent: At the Crossroads of Intellectual Inquiry and Ecclesiastical Authority.* Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011. 236 pp. Notes, index. Paperback: $24.95. ISBN: 1589581288

Reviewed by Stephen McIntyre

Few books convey the pain and poignancy of Mormon ecclesiastical discipline as compellingly as *Latter-day Dissent: At the Crossroads of Intellectual Inquiry and Ecclesiastical Authority*, a newly published paperback from Greg Kofford Books. The volume is the product of editor Philip Lindholm's conversations with several prominent Mormons whose writings and speeches have provoked the ire of the LDS Church. While these dissidents' recollections and reflec-