

Anderson's study is also an expression of the author's own advocacy. In fact, one of the photographs is of Anderson and his spouse, Michael Ferguson, who were the first couple to marry when the legal ban on same-sex marriage was lifted in Utah in December 2013 (83). Ferguson was also a plaintiff in *Ferguson v. JONAH* (Jews Offering New Hope and Healing), filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, which found in 2015 that JONAH's claims for successful reparative therapy were "fraudulent and unconscionable."

Some potential readers may be put off by Anderson's activism and/or by the topic. For others, however, the book will serve as a revelatory introduction to a history that forms an integral part of the LDS and Utah experience.



The Garden of Enid: By a Mormon and For Mormons

Scott Hales. *The Garden of Enid: Adventures of a Weird Mormon Girl, Part One*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016. 168 pp. Paperback: \$22.95. ISBN: 9781589585621.

Scott Hales. *The Garden of Enid: Adventures of a Weird Mormon Girl, Part Two*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2017. 169 pp. Paperback: \$22.95. ISBN: 9781589585638.

Reviewed by Brittany Long Olsen

At its core, Scott Hales's two-volume graphic novel *The Garden of Enid: Adventures of a Weird Mormon Girl* is a coming-of-age-story through a Mormon lens. Self-proclaimed weird Mormon girl Enid is a misfit who

feels equally misunderstood in her church community and at home with her single mother, a former alcoholic struggling with illness and depression. Some self-introspection and life-altering experiences lead Enid to care about other people and appreciate how much they care about her.

The Garden of Enid: Part One is a book about a confused teenager. She dutifully goes to church dances but purposefully tries to get sent home. She doesn't want to dance, but she gets offended when no one asks her. Due to the strained relationship with her mother, she turns to other parental figures in her life and then resents that she has to. She flaunts her weirdness yet fears the backlash for being too weird. Enid's experiences and thoughts ring true to the turmoil of any young woman; for the author, a father of four young kids, to be so in tune with the indecisiveness of teen girl years is remarkable.

Although Enid experiences struggles with "the big questions" surrounding her faith, the majority of her relationship with the LDS Church evolves through imaginary conversations with Church leaders such as Joseph Smith Jr., the Book of Abraham's mummy, and Eliza R. Snow. At one point, Enid praises Minerva Teichert for being "gynocentric." So is Enid's story. Her relationships with her mother, her Young Women leaders, and even other girls are the catalyst of the development in her life. It's no wonder that so many people seeing these comics online thought Enid was real, as Hales says in his preface. Hales skillfully portrays the heart of a teenage girl and helps us relate to her as Enid is learning to relate to the other women in her life. *The Garden of Enid* could be recommended reading for Young Women leaders. There's a lot to be said about a Young Women leader who recognizes that each girl is unique and cares for them in the ways they personally need.

There are two stories trying to be told in this book—one is a poignant narrative of a girl with a troubled home life who faces pressure at church but earnestly seeks to be strong in her faith. The other is the author's using his character as a vehicle for Mormon in-jokes, like personal preferences on actors in Church films or other cultural references,

some of which were only made to get the attention of someone famous on Twitter, as Hales writes in his commentary at the end of the book. The four-panel Mormon culture in-jokes pull the reader out of Enid's narrative as she converses with historical figures and makes references to obscure facts that belie the author's true age; would a modern teenage girl really know about MoTab directors from the '80s or studiously learn the Deseret alphabet?

It's obvious that Hales gained confidence in Enid's story as the book progressed: Enid evolves as a person, her life takes direction, and she makes more decisions to do good things for herself rather than simply act in rebellion to people around her.

In *The Garden of Enid: Part Two*, the Mormon jokes are far less prominent, and Enid's spiritual and social conflicts comprise the main narrative. Enid's commentary on her experiences at church is likely to be relatable to everyone who's ever been a teenager; Enid realizes that the happy-go-lucky churchgoers she's surrounded by each have their own pain and history, and she opens herself up to the possibility of real friendships and connections with them. She relies on her Church leaders and a few unexpected friends as her home life takes a turn for the worse. Though her future is uncertain, she's no longer a weird Mormon girl taking on the world alone—she has real friends to help with her doubts.

Throughout *Part Two*, Hales deftly addresses the hardships of Enid's family situation, some of which come from her conflicted relationship with her mother and others that come from members of her own church congregation. The characters in the narrative are very human, which adds, as another reviewer put it, a richness to Mormon fiction that simply can't be found in seminary films and *Saturday's Warrior*. Enid's life is often messy, but a desire for faith and understanding is the driving force behind her actions.

Visually, there's a lot that sets *The Garden of Enid* apart from most comics. Scott Hales made a very distinct choice to include the faint blue lines of his underlying sketch in the final artwork. This might suggest

that Enid as a person is a work in progress. Panels overlap each other, and the handwritten text is scrawled wherever it fits. These non-traditional stylistic choices offer readers a unique look at Enid's personality.

The Garden of Enid: Adventures of a Weird Mormon Girl is exclusively for a Mormon audience, and lifelong Mormons especially. Readers may have a hard time navigating the narrative without knowing Primary song lyrics and what EFY is like and how tortuous a "thanktimony" can be to listen to. Most Mormons will be able to relate to Enid very well, and to everyone else, she'll just be a weird Mormon girl.



Laughter, Depth, and Insight: Enid Rocks Them All

Scott Hales. *The Garden of Enid: Adventures of a Weird Mormon Girl. Parts One and Two*. Kofford Books. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016. 169 pp. Paperback: \$22.95. ISBN 9781589585638

Reviewed by Steven L. Peck

When I was growing up, comic strips provided part of the ontology of my world. I devoured regular comic books, graphic novels, and other bubble-voiced media, but comic strips played a different and more important role than these other closely related forms. It was in the four-paneled strip that I was first introduced to philosophical thought, political commentary, satire, and the exploration of questions rather than the explication of information toward an answer. Plus they made me laugh. There was a point being made. About life. And often about