

CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER SIX

In September 1993, six people were excommunicated or disfellowshipped from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The events were widely covered in news media. Lynne Kanavel Whitesides, Avraham Gileadi, Paul Toscano, Maxine Hanks, D. Michael Quinn, and Lavina Fielding Anderson were the main figures. Others were summoned to disciplinary councils around the same time, but their excommunications were delayed, including David P. Wright in 1994, Janice Merrill Allred in 1995, and Margaret Merrill Toscano in 2000. Gileadi and Hanks returned to the Church over time. Anderson's request to rejoin was denied by the First Presidency in 2019.

The publications and media attention these individuals generated played a key role in their disciplinary hearings. Some of them were founders or officers of the Mormon Alliance, an organization that gathered reports of LDS ecclesiastical and spiritual abuse. Others had written on controversial topics relating to LDS history, feminism, theology, and scripture. Many of the scholars had published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* over the years, including a Spring 1993 article by Anderson, "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology." The article cited several examples accusing Church leaders of abusing their authority to silence LDS intellectuals.

In the last thirty years, this story has been told many times, often as a cautionary tale, or remembered as an act of great injustice. *Dialogue*

has asked a group of scholars who were in formative stages of their lives and careers in the wake of the September Six to reflect on the significance of the story today and its ongoing impacts.

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