

Letters to the Editors

The sketches of Europe in this section are by Gerreld L. Pulsipher.

Dear Sirs:

We enjoyed your recent satire on provincial Mormonism (published as a review of *The Graduate* by one Rustin Kaufman). H. L. Mencken could not have inserted the knife more deftly. It takes an optometrist from Rexburg to help us see ourselves as others see us.

We can't help wondering, however, if "Kaufman" isn't a trifle too caustic for a scholarly publication trying to tread the narrow path *Dialogue* has set for herself. Even the master Mencken stepped past the bounds of propriety and good taste all too frequently.

Mr. & Mrs. Dean L. May
Cambridge, Mass.

P.S. If the review is for real, may we offer our services as movie critics?

Dear Sirs:

Although Rustin Kaufman's review of the movie *The Graduate* was a put-on (and this could be the only explanation for it), still the racial connotations that it contained were in unbelievably poor taste. One wonders whether the publication of writing of this nature is in the best interests of either your journal or the Mormon Church.

Gary M. Bell
Pasadena, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

After reading Mr. Rustin Kaufmann's review of the motion picture, *The Graduate*, I was impressed with the saying "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and "we are shocked only by the things we are most interested in."

My home teacher and I and later, my family and I all saw this picture. I recommend it to all parents who have concern for their children. I view the film as *moral*, dealing with exploitation of youth with the use of sex as the conduit — the review by Kaufmann *immoral*, using bigotry, Jew hatred, and self righteousness as the conduit.

I saw an entirely different picture than Mr. Kaufmann. I saw a young man who after four years was hit with the irrelevancy of his studies to human needs, the hypocritical tinsel of the homecoming. Disillusioned, confused, not a person but a commodity to be used by friends and parents, he became easy prey for one (Mrs. Robinson) who had selfish exploitation as her definite goal.

If we Mormons would admit (like our ancestors used to) that sensuality and sex exist, maybe we could see how one so uneducated (to life) would be easy prey for those who use men and women as means to acquire wealth and self-gratification. The main objection I have to the picture is that the unrealistic use of the bed scenes could easily obscure the moral impact present.

I wish more of our young girls would fall in love with men who are tender and compassionate though not sophisticated, and maybe look Jewish — rather than blue eyed Nordics, who in the finest American tradition look for kicks among our virgins and count conquests like our ancestors counted scalps. Then, maybe we would not have to add so many young girls (though legally wed to a fraternity brother) to the list of the formerly married.

The wedding scene depicted the oft-times legal facade which sounds good in church,

but is devoid of the tender feelings of two who should accept each other for what they are. It showed the irrelevant form and sham of modern Christianity. I saw true love prevail over the sick force of empty form and parental ego. Thank goodness, the lack of consummation gave legal sanction to this triumph of young love.

I saw little of civilized and decent people at the wedding — only the masses of non-responsible and soulless bodies which had no moral conscience for their conduct.

To me, a great day will bloom when hatred of Jews or someone different is gone, sexual acts and emotions are not dirty, men in business and church accept each other as brothers, and we humans quit playing God.

Del C. Haws
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

My first reaction was that there must have been a mote in the good doctor's eye; then I reasoned that such a blatant example of mental myopia and spiritual stigmatism was included as an example of "How *not* to be a rational reviewer." But the name haunted me . . . Rustin Kaufmann (spelled Kaufman on page 3)?

After dialing 208-555-1212 and harrassing the Idaho information operators while they double-checked every village from Porthill to Riddle, from Fruitland to Victor (beginning with Rexburg) my third suspicion was confirmed. Again *Dialogue* has scored with a prodigious put-on; was the Reno blast on page four from the same bag? If most readers were as curious as I the *Journal* owes that Rexburg operator an apology!

Roger Wayne Knight
Santa Barbara, California

P.S. And so à propos, an optometrist!

Dear Sirs:

As I first began to read Rustin Kaufmann's review of *The Graduate*, I thought I was encountering a rather amusing bit of satirical writing. Continuing however, I discovered that the writer was actually in dead earnest.

Brother Kaufmann is entitled to whatever opinions he wishes to hold concerning

the film. However, there was no excuse for the vicious anti-semitism which he used to justify his criticisms. I suppose one could go through the article and pinpoint examples of Brother Kaufmann's bigotry, but this would be to belabor the obvious. Of more immediate concern is why *Dialogue* printed this kind of demagoguery in the first place.

In short, was the purpose of Kaufmann's article to get what appeared to be a perceptive review of *The Graduate* or show up bigotry within the Church?

If the purpose was a review, then there must have been qualified individuals available and able to argue their position in a manner calculated to invite meaningful debate. Kaufmann's criticisms are more likely to generate heat than light.

On the other hand, if you wanted to reveal member attitudes toward Jews, then call for specific articles concerning this issue. Kaufmann's article does not deal adequately with either the film or why he has certain attitudes toward Jews.

Philip Langer
Concord, California



Dear Sirs:

How ridiculous and ineffectual was the review of *The Graduate* by "Rustin Kaufmann" (Spring, 1969)! It was intended as parody, I suppose, or satire; it failed in these, and succeeded only as monotony and coarse taste. Such a hodge-podge neither enlightens nor amuses. A pity, since the truly moral issues raised by the film could have been seriously discussed, or the provinciality and prejudice of fanatic religionists successfully lampooned.

H. O. Dendurent
Evanston, Illinois

Dear Sirs:

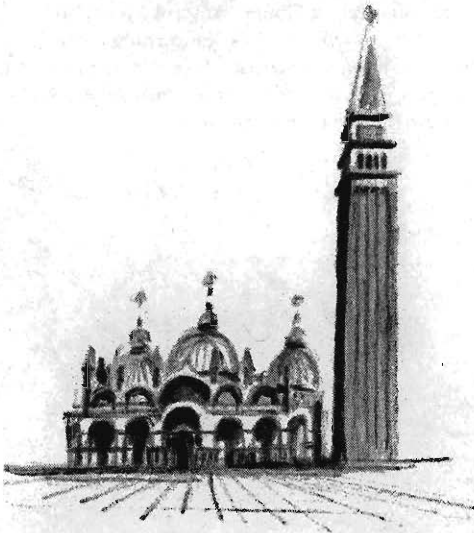
I might quibble with your editorial judgment but not with your sense of humor in publishing the movie review of *The Graduate*. Let me know if you would be interested in a review of "Goodbye, Columbus."

Ben J. Richards
Hollywood, California

P.S. I am a Sunday School teacher.

Dear Sirs:

You are to be congratulated for filling a need that has long been lacking in your publication — humor. I have, from time to time, recognized your clever little way of inserting it under the guise of "History," "Interviews," "Art," and some of



the "Notes and Comments" had an underlying chuckle here and there, with, once in a while, an eye-winkle.

On an occasion or two (no more, I promise) I almost giggled out loud at the laughable reasoning cleverly hidden in some of your authors' work. But your Volume IV, Number 1 issue has really brought Spring to my life — Mormon humor has been brought forth to the light! — and it is you who have done it. I now can look forward from this Spring of awakening to a never-ending Summer of thigh-slappers in future issues which, if the rollicking item in this one is any example, will en-

shrine your efforts alongside those of the Black Theater of Prague, Grand Guignol of Paris and the colorful phraseology of Mussolini's eldest son when describing the effects of a bomb on a crowd of Ethiopians as a "thing of beauty — opening up like a beautiful crimson flower" which, as you remember, broke people up all over the world a few years ago.

How delightful of you to tuck away among "Reviews," unannounced and unheralded like a rose in a thorn bush — or is it the other way around?

And how cleverly you camouflaged the author's name, but I recognized in a moment that "Rustin Kaufman" is really Dustin Hoffman, currently incommunicado, writing a sequel to *The Graduate* based on the thoughts of an optometrist in Rexburg, Idaho. And the style! So refreshingly reminiscent of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"!

Ah, well, DIALOGUE, you've done it again.

Michel M. Grilikhes
Los Angeles, Calif.

P.S. But seriously, it has to be put on. Someone who writes like that would have to be receiving his *Dialogue* in a plain brown wrapper.

Dear Sirs:

Who was the clever but caustic reviewer of *The Graduate* in the Spring issue? What a devastating put-on!

I'm alternately amused and dismayed. I thought yours was a serious journal. Most readers will not be deceived, of course; still it's neither kind nor fair (especially to the citizens of Rexburg) to play that sort of game.

Geraldine Monson
Hayward, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

You certainly hit an all time low when you published Rustin Kaufmann's review of *The Graduate*.

The inclusion of this review in a publication which has won national recognition for its academic and literary excellence seems pointless and farcical. Reviews like

this can be heard in almost any barbershop in America.

It appears that its inclusion is a deliberate attempt by the editorial staff to represent the conservative point of view as something just a little less than ridiculous. The selection of this particular person and review over others which might have been available represents a bigotry almost equal to the thoughts expressed by Mr. Kaufmann.

If it is grist for the liberal mill you were looking for, you certainly got a bagfull with this one. I would hope that in your search for fodder for your academic cannons you might consider the possible pain and misery caused the naive contributor in the process.

Max W. Swenson,
Director, Institute of Religion
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Sirs:

Rustin Kaufmann's review of "The Graduate" (Spring 1969) is not so much a commentary on the film as an exposition of his own value system. He constructs out of pure empty air the notion that the protagonist is a Jew, and then proceeds to infer that short, dark, dirty, hippy Jewish movie producers, actors and singers are using the film to corrupt our "tall," "neat, blond-haired, blue-eyed," "Nordic," "traditional American" ideals. Strange how one who demonstrates such disdain for Jews could express shock at the blasphemous use of our Lord's Jewish name. It's like an echo from another place and time — say, Germany in the late '30's.

While I completely agree that *The Graduate* is not a film for L.D.S. families, I suggest that one could also entertain some qualms about values that children might pick up in a certain Sunday School Class in Rexburg.

Sam Henrie
Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

I am curious why *Dialogue* published the review of *The Graduate*. Please check one or more of the following reasons listed below.

.... 1. *Dialogue* is hard up for material, so a staff member contributed an inconsistent, inaccurate article.

.... 2. Satire on Mormons who see controversial movies and enjoy complaining about them.

.... 3. *Dialogue* has an Arab on its staff.

.... 4. *Dialogue* staff member saw the movie and did not understand it.

.... 5. Optometrist saw the movie thru his glass darkly.

.... 6. Article was submitted by a graduate student in sociology to stimulate response by *Dialogue* readers.

.... 7. There really is a Rustin Kaufman? There really is a theater in Rexburg, Idaho?

.... 8. *Dialogue* is adding a humor section.

.... 9. *Dialogue* is accepting rejects from *The Improvement Era*.

....10. Other:

(please explain)

Mike Nichols
San Francisco

P.S. "The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls."

Joseph Jeppson, a staff member who is in continual contact with Rustin Kauffman, tells us that Rexburg is a typographical error; that he is gratified to find that Mormon liberals share with him the conviction that some opinions should be suppressed; that he is no longer teaching Sunday School; and that he is currently working on a review of John and Mary at a location which will not be disclosed because of possible vigilante action by the aforementioned liberals. (Ed.)

Dear Sirs:

The discussion by Hunt and Blacker on Mormons and Psychiatry (Winter, 1968) provokes the following response from one who is basically sympathetic to their message but not quite ready to throw in the towel. The criticism centers around the right of psychiatry to claim anything but a semantic victory in altering the non-psychotic patient's life for the better. Hunt and Blacker would imply Mormonism leaves its followers with many unanswered questions and conflicts. Being involved almost constantly with qualified and respected psychiatrist colleagues, I take license to point out psychoanalysis has done little better. How much does supposed insight alter behavior? And is not insight often the view of the

psychiatrist unintentionally transposed into the patient? If all the unbalanced and disturbed souls who enter into psychotherapy came out productive and stable citizens there would be little room for criticism. That the result is something less than this needs no support.

Hunt and Blacker see the strongest man as the one who stands most alone, ". . . one whose decisions are authentically his own." This heuristic approach forms a major basis for their system, and of course their system is "scientific." (Once again science is invoked to support a group of preconceptions that are really philosophical). One of the great sources of strength in the Church has been its cohesiveness and unity. This helped the Church in a migration across this continent, in the establishment of a community in the West, and in sending out an army of young men to win by dialogue what our nation is losing by the sword. These feats were accomplished at times by the sacrifice of "my will" for "Thy will." The psychiatrists of course realize the necessity of balancing this independence with obedience, but so often they fail to convey that balance to the patient. Their finished products, with newly discovered independence but the cohesiveness of an explosion, are left struggling for a place in a society whose basis is conformity. At this point the patient is more in need of psychiatric help than before. The weaning is often financially determined.

The authors introduce psychiatry, then explain some common misconceptions concerning their discipline. They proceed to explain religious belief and experience in terms of their discipline. They would tend to establish the psychiatric approach as the standard of reference, and their own value judgments are then made in the context of their newly formed vocabulary. Some of us would prefer to think the "standard reference" is yet just beyond the fingertips' grasp. It is not professional heresy to say "Who says so?" when the psychiatrist says, "Mr. B. is really expressing his hostility to his father when he kicks the dog." It is difficult to argue semantics with the men who wrote their own dictionary, however. But where is the court review for the psychiatrist? The pathologist reviews the specimens of the surgeon. The radiologist

keeps the orthopedist honest. The conclusions of the psychiatrist are not subject to such review. He is professionally autonomous except for those of us who occasionally say, "Who says so?" Just one week before writing this letter we removed a brain tumor from a young lady who had been followed for seven years by a psychiatrist with a diagnosis of involuntional melancholia. Under the microscope the tumor looked more like astrocytoma than melancholia.

Finally a word about semantics and morality. Without trying to criticize or defend the situation ethic concept let me relate the absurd extent to which it can be carried. Last year a psychiatrist was censured by his colleagues (a group of neurologists and psychiatrists) for having sexual relations with three of his patients. His defense was that the act was therapeutic in each of these particular cases. Majority rule rather than semantics continues to determine moral value even among psychiatrists and despite the "context," "relationship," "motives," etc. he was censured. There are of course good and bad psychiatrists, and this necessary value judgment, rather than the textbook and journal infatuation with method, influences my Mormon attitude toward the psychiatrists with whom I work. After all, the method can at times be quite ridiculous, as exemplified by a ward nurse who when asked by a patient, "What time is it?" replied, "What time do you think it is?"

Fred K. Christensen, M.D.
Division of Neurosurgery
University of Kentucky
Medical Center
Lexington, Kentucky

Dear Sirs:

Recently I read an Associated Press dispatch from Salt Lake City stating that the Church would drop cigarette advertising on its 11-state-five-state chain of radio and television properties:

MORMONS BAN CIGARETTE ADS ON
CHURCH-OWNED STATIONS
SALT LAKE CITY (AP)

Cigarette advertising will be dropped from an 11-state-five-state chain of radio and television properties owned by the Mormon Church, which opposes smoking.

Arch L. Madsen, president of the Church's Bonneville International Corp., made the announcement Monday. He said cigarette advertising provides more than \$250,000 per year, or about 10 per cent of Bonneville's gross revenue.

Madsen said the board of directors made the decision over the weekend, based on evidence gathered by government agencies.

Madsen said the advertising will be dropped June 1, or when current contracts expire.

Bonneville, owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) has these properties: KSL-TV-AM-FM, Salt Lake City; KIRO-TV-AM-FM, Seattle; KMBZ-FM Kansas City; KBIG-AM-FM, in Los Angeles and Avalon, Calif; and WRFM in New York City.

Madsen said network cigarette ads would be out locally.

I have written Arch L. Madsen, expressing my reaction to this announcement, but have received no answer.

When I read Mr. Madsen's announcement I was amazed, and I would respectfully suggest that Bonneville, a commercial arm of the Church, reach over and review the longtime teachings of the Church Doctrinal Division. Mr. Madsen said the board of directors made the decision, "based on evidence by government agencies." He also says that the Church has received more than \$250,000 per year from tobacco advertising.

I think Mr. Madsen is being somewhat less than frank. The Church has received millions of dollars from tobacco advertising, and has also received many many dollars from beer and coffee advertising. The thought of my Church receiving money for services they render tobacco people, whose sole object in spending this money is to induce young people into using tobacco bothers me no end. As one who has spent his life in medicine I have seen the ravages caused by the use of tobacco. Furthermore I question the motives of Bonneville in discontinuing tobacco advertising. I think they concluded that the golden goose would soon be killed, as evidenced by a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* which says that the Federal Communications Commission intends to remove tobacco advertising from television and radio outlets. I have strong feelings on this sub-

ject and simply cannot understand that which to me is a complete contradiction.

Research over a long period of time has led to the following conclusions:

1. The tobacco habit if begun in youth will shorten the life of the average user by 6 years.

2. It is a causative factor in lung cancer, emphysema, and circulatory diseases.

3. Only 25% of tobacco users who decide to discontinue the habit are able to do so.

Why should my Church preach tobacco abstinence (and rightfully so) from the pulpit and then accept millions of dollars from tobacco companies for subtly and effectively nudging thousands into tobacco addiction? Why should my Church advertise the beauties and pleasures of beer drinking and thereby transform young people into alcoholics with all the physical, mental, moral, and economic sorrow which such a course of action entails? Why should my Church advertise coffee with emphasis on the pleasure and companionship experienced at coffee-breaks, and then as official doctrine tell Church members they should not partake of this beverage?

Melvin Lloyd Kent, M. D.
Mesa, Arizona



Dear Sirs:

It was a lazy Sunday afternoon; I was enjoying the Sunday paper. The two youngest boys had read the funnies and left them all over the floor. The oldest one was devouring the sports page (or at least that is what I thought he was doing) and their mother was doing the dishes in the kitchen.

"What do you think of people who make up advertisements for cigarettes, Dad?" the oldest asked in a very serious voice.

I didn't answer for some time as I was just barely conscious that someone had asked a question. I finally felt the silence, flipped the corner of the paper downward

so I could see his face. He was waiting patiently for my answer.

I put the paper all the way down on my lap and started out kind of slowly. "Well, I guess that I think that it is pretty bad." It hardly seemed enough, so I continued. "What it amounts to is men using their God-given creative talents and resources to entice other men into an evil, useless, dirty, addicting habit." I was sounding much stronger than I intended, especially since I knew from the tone of his first question that he was leading to a second. But parents have to take every opportunity to preach the gospel to their children. I even thought about using the incident in a sacrament talk sometime. I'd call it, "Exploiting Opportunities for Testimony Building." He started to say something else, but I thought I had better throw in a little scripture just in case I did use it in a talk. Not many parents quote scripture to their kids any more, and this would set a good example. "The Doctrine and Covenants tells us that the warning against the use of cigarettes and other things was given because there would be evil and conspiring men in the last days who would take advantage of people. I guess that's where the cigarette selling people fit in: evil and conspiring men."

He was waiting until I was through, "Why does the Mormon Church advertise cigarettes?"

"They don't, son," I said flatly and sternly, my voice betraying disappointment at the ignorance of his question.

"It says right here that the Mormon Church has decided to stop advertising cigarettes on their television stations."

"Where?" I took the paper and read the news release, taking an extra long time so that I could answer his question properly. "You see," I hesitated, wondering if I could make a twelve-year-old understand some of the intricacies and realities of the adult world. "It is the Bonneville corporation; it's not the Church. They are a business."

"Well, if they aren't run by the Church, how can the Church tell them to stop?"

"I guess in a way the Church does run it, but . . ."

"Why have they been advertising cigarettes?"

"There were probably good reasons."

"But Dad, you've always told me there weren't any good reasons for smoking cigarettes; how can there be good reasons for telling others to smoke?"

"Maybe the government wouldn't let them have a license unless they agreed to advertise cigarettes."

"The government is telling people to stop smoking; in fact, they might stop cigarette advertising over TV all together."

"I don't know, when the Church started KSL it was different. Government and business didn't like us then like they do now. Maybe they thought we would take advantage of the public airways, so to get a license the Church went along with everything."

He bowed his head and started rereading the article. "It says here that they weren't the first stations to quit."

I didn't say anything. He kept reading.

"Oh, I see." His eyes were glued to the paper as he talked, "They didn't want to lose the profit that they were making from advertising cigarettes, that's why they were so slow."

"I don't think the Church would advertise cigarettes just to get a little profit. We're not that kind of people who spend hours and hours of time and energy telling people how bad it is to smoke cigarettes on the one hand and with the other hand accept a few pennies to tell people with all the cleverness of Satan how great it is. The Church has plenty of money already and the one thing we wouldn't do is sell our birthright for a mess of pottage. There are some good reasons for advertising cigarettes and we'll find them out as soon as they tell us." My voice was getting higher and higher. I calmed myself down and continued, "I know it's hard for you to understand, but you will when you get older."

"I understand, Dad, I understand."

I thought it was over, I began reading the paper when he said, "Does the Church advertise beer, wine, coffee and tea over their stations?"

I pretended like I didn't hear him. It is very difficult to explain advanced ideas and principles to youngsters.

R. Garry Shirts
Del Mar, California

Dear Sirs:

In your next issue of *Dialogue* would you please correct the erroneous biographical sketch of myself which prefaced my article, "Concern for the Urban Condition," which appeared in the Spring, 1969 issue. I hate to see myself misrepresented to your readers. I am a social worker in the Phoenix Head Start program, live in Tempe, Arizona and *am not* working on an advance degree in Sociology.

Now to a more important matter. Since the Spring issue came out, a couple of *Dialogue* readers have told me that my article stopped where it should have begun — feeling that they want to know more about how to get involved. I am concerned that more L.D.S. members are not involved in voluntary services in their communities — particularly in the areas of race relations and poverty. Some who have expressed their interest to me appear timid, perhaps fearing a negative reaction from their Mormon friends. Others appear to lack direction of how to get involved. The section last fall dealing with Mormons in the City, gave some excellent examples of involvement, which hopefully has had an impact on *Dialogue* readers.

What would you think of the idea of *Dialogue* having a special section on "Urban Involvement," like you now have a special section on "The World Church." The "Urban Involvement" would offer guidelines — pointing out different ways in

which L.D.S. members could get involved in voluntary services to their community beyond the traditional and middle class oriented Lions, Jaycees, Rotary regimen (Not to detract from the good they accomplish.) Readers would also be encouraged to submit short sketches of their experiences. The editor of this section might also solicit guest writers from both our own people and other denominations.

Such a section might eventually promote the organization of a centrally located group of involved Mormons with other groups being formed in different communities which could be held together with a monthly newsletter, and by the sharing of their experiences and insights within their own little study groups. I doubt that there is enough interest in this sort of thing now, but the special section might generate it.

It would be interesting to survey your readers to see if there is interest in this sort of thing and whether they would appreciate some help in getting started.

Stanton L. Hovey
Tempe, Arizona

Our sincere apologies to Mr. Hovey for our errors in his introduction. We welcome his excellent suggestions concerning a special section on urban responsibility and invite our readers to contribute ideas and experiences so that we can judge if such a section is needed and viable. (Ed.)

