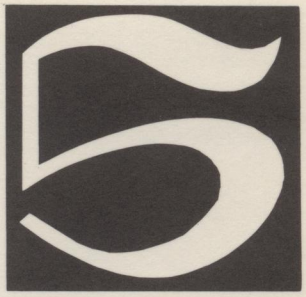
DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



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DIALOGUE: A Journal of Mormon Thought is an independent national quarterly established to express Mormon culture and examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue 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 insure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Mormon Church or of the editors.

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REVIEWS

AMONG THE MORMONS

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ART CREDITS

Cover photo by: DAVID BIEDERMANN

The sketches in this issue are by: JERRY PULSIPHER

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Letters to the Editors

The sketches in this section are by Jerry Pulsipher, a frequent contributor to DIALOGUE.

Dear Sirs:

I have been very interested in *Dialogue* since its beginning. Congratulations for a "job well done" in the face of tremendous obstacles. Particularly, I have admired the broad coverage you have given the Egyptian Papyri situation. Learning the fuller details, insofar as we are presently able, may shake a few people's faith, but probably not many. I think that we should be able to survive learning that God expects each person to learn his individual responsibility in discovering where full truth lies, and to learn that the position of a Prophet is most complex wherein he must blend his fullest personal abilities as a man with available revelation, after he has exercised those personal abilities to their fullest.

By the way, I was interested, if not surprised, that none of the writers analyzing Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham, as a product compared to the few lines under reference from the Papyri, ever considered that Joseph could have been very naturally using the Urim and Thummim through which he received the total story expressable in his own idiom, something scholars of a dead language admittedly can never master. Of course, this poses a question that to my knowledge has never been answered relating to the disposition of the Urim and Thummim. I know of no place where reference was ever made that Joseph returned the Urim and Thummim! Nor do I see any logical reason that he should have, since the instrument was a traditional mechanism used by prophets to communicate with God.

In other words, I can heartily agree with Brother Nibley when he concludes that far too little is known concerning the papyri possessed by Joseph, the ability of the scholars to deduce the subtleties of a dead language, or the purposes and extent to which Joseph was restoring a lost scripture to attempt to bind the Book of Abraham to the fragment papyri of The Book of Breathings.

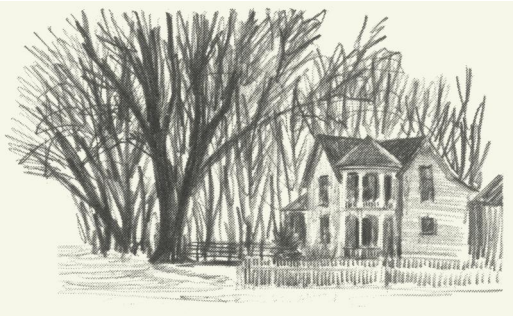
Laurence C. Cooper
Cedar City, Utah

Dear Sirs:

It must be a constant debate in the minds of the editors of *Dialogue* what its role would best be. In the last several issues, it has become evident that the editors have decided to try to appeal to conservatives by covering issues normally taken up by the obsequious *Era* and the defensive *BYU Studies* and ignoring social and theological issues almost entirely neglected by those publications. Perhaps this shift is necessary in order to placate conservatives' criticisms of the journal and to gain subscribers for it from among those only marginally interested in "the weightier matters of the law" that it has discussed in the past.

But it seems to me that to satisfy all factions and attitudes in the Church and to cover all bases would require a considerable compromise with principle. No journal can hope to satisfy everybody; *Reader's Digest* has something for everyone but has little or no effect because it is so superficial. *Dialogue* has its effect by going into depth on subjects that perennially get distorted

into superstitions in pulpits, classes, and publications in the Church. What *Dialogue* should be able to do best is to make solid the thoughtful liberal position often espoused on its pages. There is, to be honest, no other place in the Church for the expression of such. At this point in its history, the danger is that *Dialogue* will go the way of our sacrament meetings, communicating the gospel at the lowest common denominator only. *Dialogue's* importance may lie not in converting the conservative to a sane and truly spiritual Christianity but in making the truth strong.



Please don't go out into the fields to gather in the sheep who might possibly look your way. Instead, build a magnificent fortress where a light can shine out over all the land. The good light will most certainly attract those who care about the truth. To reverse an old adage, in strength there are numbers.

Mrs. Elfriede Fercalek
El Cajon, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

The reviews of Stanley P. Hirshson's book on Brigham Young, *The Lion of the Lord,* seem to have overlooked an essential aspect of this work. I can well understand the dismay of Donald R. Moorman and Chad J. Flake in trying to assess the book as biography and history, because it simply doesn't fit these categories. It is no more biography than is *Pilgrim's Progress;* it is as futile to compare it to Mormon historical works as it would be to measure *Gulliver's Travels* against Richard Haliburton's adventures.

It is a commentary on the extreme paucity of humor in Mormon literature that no reviewer has, to my knowledge, seen the Hirshson work for what it actually is, a joke book. Viewed as such, it might be more charitably received. It is a veritable gold mine of anecdotes, bits, yarns, gags, jokes and one-liners. I found it screamingly funny, and I predict the book will become invaluable for scholars looking for a little spice to liven up the heavy research.

Small wonder that in writing a joke book Hirshson should ignore the material in the Church Historian's Office. These tremendous archives contain few laughs. He went to exactly the right sources for the type of book he produced. Instead of being denounced for his deficiencies as biographer and historians, he should be commended for his pioneering work of humor. He has collected more howlers about Mormonism than any other author has ever put between two covers.

Samuel W. Taylor
Redwood City, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

I just received, with great rejoicing, the spring issue of *Dialogue.* Most of my rejoicing is for Douglas Thayer's story, "The Opening Day." Would it be possible for me to obtain about thirty offprint copies of the story by September 30th? I would like to use the story in a special section of Freshman English I will teach this fall.

Bruce W. Jorgensen
Director of Composition
South. Utah State College

Dear Sirs:

It seems to me that it seems to Louis Midgley ("The Secular Relevance of the Gospel," Winter 1969) that conservatives are by and largely a bitter bunch of hypocrites. Our problem, Louis C., is thee, and thine; far more so than the hypocrites amongst us. For it is the problem of an historical capitulation to cancer; the difficult problem of dealing with frontrunners for the Party Line. Your kind, Professor, will do us in yet, if allowed to get away with your twisted tongue ties with the collective voice throwers, among other things. Your half-truths are far more execrable than the rationales of the Right because It [the Right]

is not poised on the leading edge of world takeover — and if it were, would still be nearer *my* God than thee. Because conservatism allows for the legitimate exercising of free agency — in point of fact is hinged on it. In the collective, the choice door is slammed shut, and all are "good" by fiat.

If *we* changed, and were suddenly no longer in a state of consumption with the Nephite Disease, would that *alone* change the dirtycommies . . . ? They may not "be healed by the gospel" soon enough for it to do any good . . . to . . . *us* . . . or . . . the world, since as we go, so goes it. And we have a higher duty than to surrender to Satan. Or have the liberals forgotten about the kingdom of *God*?

I must take exception to the professor's conclusions about the way to overcome the world — that is to say, to be not of it. It is he and his kultured klass kind who are leading this country into slavery. And I say with all studied seriousness that we are being led to capitulation just as sure as shooting. While Russia presses steadily on for a knockout punch — or just the irresistible threat of one — we are told not to rock the boat, not to do anything to antagonize the enemy — we are told, then, that the answer is to nonresist evil; and presumably it will thereby go away, or at least not bother us soul-saved saints. Or is it even evil after all? Not according to the gospel according to S. Rigdon.

And no, Midgley. You are going — admit it — for a classless society in this equality interpretation, where in reality men are not equal that way and never will be and viva la difference, say I; for it *allows for growth*; for challenge and self-discipline; and in any society that does not have enough of all for all, it rewards accordingly, being the natural distributor of the material produce. Hairy humanists would artificially dampen down the availability of the matter is the matter; so that all would have equally, therefore to do away with envy. Which way does not do away with it at all, of course, just doesn't allow to be called up what's still in there; and what will still come out, sooner or later, until it is dealt with directly.

I suggest you re-reason your position, using less of the questionable philosophy in the Book of Mormon and more of the innate intelligence you were born with. That is to say, to think for yourself, and not let others do your thinking for you. A difficult thing to do in the Mormon church, I grant you, with the power coming from on high and all that . . . .

Sorry if I seem to contribute to the corrosive confrontation between the wings of this house divided. I don't question the integrity of your viewpoint. I question its wisdom. Granted, when we "seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness" we run into error. But a greater error is not to discriminate: is to allow ourselves to be duped into living in satanic servitude, and thinking, Oh, well.

Duane Stanfield
San Leandro, California

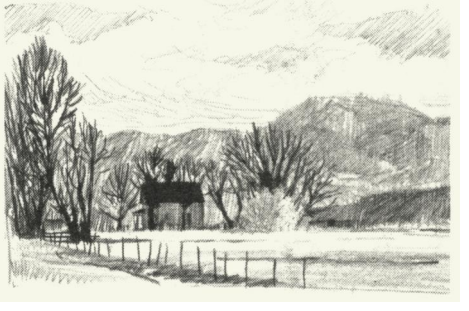
Professor Midgley responds:

Dear Sirs:

I am sorry that Mr. Stanfield has received with considerable consternation the news that his particular political ideology is neither consistent with the gospel nor supported in the scriptures. It is commonly assumed that this or that worldly ideology is an obvious corollary to the gospel. I tried to show in "Secular Relevance of the Gospel" (Winter 1969) that nothing could be further from the truth. It is disheartening to find that Mr. Stanfield is now quite ready to jetison the Book of Mormon rather than his particular political ideology, one, incidently, he admits is inconsistent with the teachings of the Book of Mormon. I do not believe that most Latter-day Saints will readily follow Mr. Stanfield's advice about "using less of the questionable philosophy in the Book of Mormon and more of the innate intelligence" one is presumably "born with." In addition, his insulting remarks about what he calls "the Mormon church . . . with power coming from on high and all that" may not endear him with those saints who believe that they are members of *the* Church of Jesus Christ. Mr. Stanfield sees the Church as a "house divided" and refers to the "corrosive confrontation" now occasionally taking place between those of his or some similar persuasion and those who strive to remain consistent with the prophetic message of the scriptures and the

authentic witness of the spirit. I believe that the "corrosive confrontation" Mr. Stanfield mentions is a direct product of the very common desire among the saints to find an accommodation between some feature of our culture and the gospel. In the case of Mr. Stanfield, it is obvious that his views are more or less typical of what is called Social Darwinism. I believe, however, that the Prophets who speak for God are better guides than Charles Darwin or Herbert Spencer and their "conservative" friends on the so-called American political "Right-Wing" and certainly the prophets do a better job than those who merely use "the intelligence they were born with."

Mr. Stanfield is angry with me for quoting with approval Hugh Nibley's remark about the prophetic warnings in the Book of Mormon about the dangers of inequality in communities. It is instructive to compare Mr. Stanfield's remarks on the desirability and necessity of inequality with the teachings found in, for example, the Doctrine and Covenants (see e.g., 49:14; 70:14; 78:5-6) where it is made clear that "the world lies in sin" because some men "possess that which is above another" and that



we "cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things" unless we "are equal in earthly things."

Mr. Stanfield is also very worried about Russia and the Communist threat. He fears both because they would restrict freedom and frustrate the Kingdom of God. On both issues I can agree with him. But what are we to do about such things? His letter does not offer a clear program. I part company with Mr. Stanfield when he begins to suggest that the Kingdom of God can somehow ultimately fall prey to the Communist threat. Oh ye of little faith! Because we do not see clearly the way to overcome some threat does not mean that the Lord cannot in his own time take care of the matter.

Finally, the "cute" little remarks about my "leading this country into slavery" or "going — admit it — for a classless society" are absurd, false and, if stated in less oblique language, a form of personal slander that is perhaps legally actionable and also a good example of the lack of charity which is common to worldly political discourse but which the saints might well not copy.

When it is brought to their attention, the saints, I believe, quickly realize that the scriptures present a radically different message than that found in the narrow, radical political ideologies currently being advanced here and there in the Church. All efforts to align the Church with political mass movements and worldly ideologies are serious threats to the spiritual welfare of God's people because they divide the Church, causing what Mr. Stanfield calls "corrosive confrontations," and direct the attention and energies of the saints away from the gospel and the Kingdom of God. Those who engage in such activities often show a profound lack of confidence in the Lord and his power to accomplish his plans.

Louis Midgley
Provo, Utah

Dear Sirs:

"He jammed his fingers down her throat." "He saved the epileptic's life." These two sentences describe one and the same action. He didn't perform two actions but only one: that is, he saved her life by recovering her tongue which she had swallowed and thereby saved her life. Here is simply one event which is described in two very defferent ways.

Professor Richard Bushman in his essay "Faithful History" (Winter 1970) acknowledges that historians no longer completely accept Charles Beard's interpretation of American history. It is interesting, however, that Dr. Bushman himself seems to still accept some views about historical writing which Beard and Carl Becker espoused. What Dr. Bushman says about historical "facts" could almost come straight from a famous essay on the same subject by Becker.

Dr. Bushman says that facts are not "predetermined." They can be selected and molded. By molding them the historian "cannot escape sculpturing the past. . . ." Such talk about "facts" conceals a crucial ambiguity: that facts can be taken as (1) events themselves, and (2) as true *descriptions* of events. By running these two ideas together an important mistake can be made: namely, the mistake of believing that changes in one's descriptions change, or "mold," or "sculpture" the events themselves. Once the event is over, it cannot change. But, our descriptions of it can change. We can provide various true descriptions of any event, as the little example of the man saving the epileptic demonstrates, but our descriptions are always bound by what actually happened, if we want to give *true* descriptions. Dr. Bushman seems to sense this when he says, "I do not mean to say that historical materials are completely plastic." But what he doesn't point out is that *facts,* if interpreted as *events,* are not "plastic" at all. On the other hand, when facts are interpreted in the second way as *true descriptions of events,* we are still bound by whether or not the descriptions are *true.* I agree that very diverse true descriptions can be given of any event, but I would like to stress that the two mentioned limitations considerably circumscribe the historians activity, and make it much less arbitrary and more objective, than seems to be suggested by Dr. Bushman.

I also have some serious misgivings about other sections of Dr. Bushman's important and interesting essay. His discussion of faith seems to me to restrict faith only to religion and only to one kind of historical activity, which sounds suspiciously like apologetics — not history — to me. He suggests that we relate the categories of faith to our professional practice. I would like to believe that proper faith is not so categorialized, that it is not only "religious faith," but faith that suffuses through one's outlook and activity. Personally, I find such faith even in the work of what Dr. Bushman might call economic or political histories by Mormon historians. This essay, along with it's sequel "The Historians and Nauvoo" (Spring 1970), are deserving of further attention.

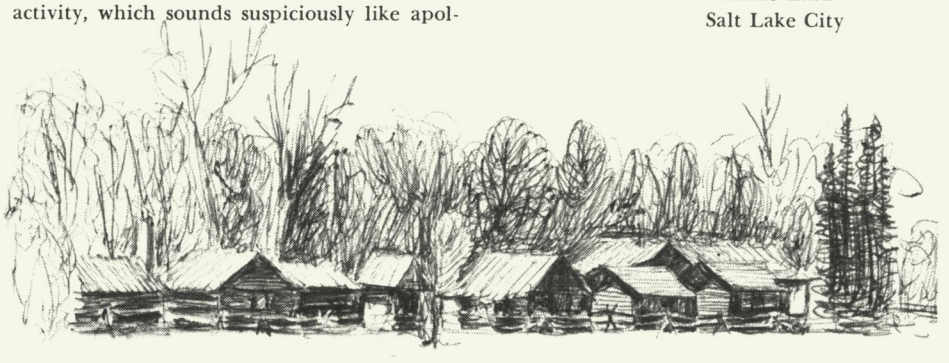
Kent E. Robson
Logan, Utah

Dear Sirs:

I would just like to say that I always enjoy reading Dialogue — both of my sons are subscribers and I always get to read it one place or the other. There are always not just one, but several articles in each number that are stimulating. To list just a few: Thomas Asplund's "Heart of My Father," Dennis Smith (both poetry and art), Ralph Reynolds' pen-and-ink graphics that are so "tough," Clinton Larson, Wayne Carver, Sam Taylor, Karl Keller (I *like* to *think* I know what he says), T. Edgar Lyon and many others.

I read Douglas Thayer's "The Red Tail Hawk" and thought it was superb. A couple of things about it reminded me of the prize-winning short story "The Ledge." I am not any judge of the short story — I just read a lot of them, exhausting the public libraries volumes of O. Henry Memorial and O'Brien collections and current periodicals, but I enjoy equally those I read in *Dialogue.*

Maxine Lind
Salt Lake City



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THE TRANSFORMATION OF MORMON THEOLOGY

O. Kendall White, Jr.

O. Kendall White, Jr. is currently completing a Ph.D. at Vanderbilt and teaching sociology at Washington and Lee University. The following article, which reveals Mr. White's special interest in the sociology of religion, is based on his forthcoming book, MORMON NEO-ORTHODOXY: A CRISIS THEOLOGY, *to be published by the University of Utah Press.*

Mormons are usually startled by the appearance of new theological movements in Catholic or Protestant circles. Without probing into their content, analyzing their presuppositions, or seeking to understand their origins, they often dismiss these movements with the assertion that they are merely further evidence of Catholic and Protestant apostasy. Mormons generally abhor the thought that their own theology could in any way be influenced by these same movements or even by social conditions similar to those out of which these movements have emerged. For most Mormons tend to think of their theology as a relatively constant, unchanging set of doctrines and beliefs, influenced little by social environment.

Yet traditional Mormon theology is quite amenable to environmental analysis, suggesting a profound influence from Protestant fundamentalism and liberalism. At least one cannot deny that the basic doctrines of traditional Mormon thought, both liberal and fundamentalist, were floating around during the formative period of Mormon theology. Nor can one deny that early Mormon leaders, assuming a rather eclectic approach to the acquisition of knowledge, encouraged the saints to "gather" truth from such disparate sources as infidels and Methodists, Universalists and Baptists, Cath-

olics and Shakers. Consider, for instance, Brigham Young's admonition to missionaries: "It is the business of the Elders . . . to gather up all the truths in the world pertaining to life and salvation, to the Gospel we preach, to mechanism of every kind, to the sciences, and to philosophy, wherever it may be found in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and bring it to Zion."[1]

Despite such advice from early leaders, Mormons typically, by refusing to admit to the fundamentalist and liberal antecedents of their theology, neglect its historical development. This posture enables them to ignore the impact of today's social environment upon contemporary Mormon thought, elements of which are combining to create a critical situation for the Mormon community. One response to this modern crisis is the elaboration of a theology not unlike Protestant neoorthodoxy. While this essay does not examine the social conditions underlying this new theology,[2] it does describe Mormon neoorthodox thought.[3]

PROTESTANT NEOORTHODOXY

At the hands of its most celebrated and articulate theologians, Protestant neoorthodoxy affirms three basic doctrines — the sovereignty of God, the depravity of man, and the necessity of salvation by grace. To anyone even remotely familiar with Reformation theology, these doctrines are not new. Both Martin Luther and John Calvin built their respective theologies around an almighty, sovereign God; a depraved, helpless man; and a human predicament requiring the gracious, saving act of God. While these doctrines have persisted from the Reformation to the present in the form of Protestant fundamentalism, Protestant neoorthodoxy appears as a more sophisticated attemp to reconcile these traditional beliefs with different social conditions and centuries of theological criticism.

In both traditional and neoorthodox theologies, the primary argument for the sovereignty of God is found in the affirmation of the *ex nihilo* creation.[4] Here God, who alone exists, decides to create other entities; and, of

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[1]*Discourses of Brigham Young*, comp. John A. Widtsoe, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961), p. 248.

[2]For a discussion of the social context out of which this theology is emerging, see the author's *Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy: A Crisis Theology*, forthcoming from the University of Utah Press, or "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New Orthodoxy" (master's thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Utah, 1967).

[3]The Mormon counterpart of Protestant neoorthodoxy is referred to as Mormon neoorthodoxy throughout the remainder of this essay. In order to avoid certain associations, "new-orthodoxy" appeared in the original thesis (see "Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," pp. 7–8). However, the term has proved unsatisfactory, so I have decided to employ "Mormon neoorthodoxy," The reader should realize, though, that Mormon neoorthodoxy in no sense implies a return to the orthdoxy of early Mormonism. On the contrary, it is employed to suggest similarities to Protestant neoorthodoxy. Yet, at least two differences between the Protestant and Mormon movements should be noted: (1) the Mormon theologians, as far as I can ascertain, do not take seriously modern biblical scholarship (i.e., do not accept many of the fundamental conclusions of such work), while the Protestants do; (2) following from the above, the neoorthodox Mormons are literalists in their orientation toward Scripture while the neoorthodox Protestants are not.

[4]Perhaps the finest brief primary statement of the neoorthodox conception of God is to be found in Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959).

course, they owe their very existence to Him. Typical Mormon criticism of the *ex nihilo* creation challenges the notion that God created the world out of nothing — an assertion Mormon theologians think absurd.[5] But, these critiques fail to confront the real meaning of the *ex nihilo* creation. The important point is not that God created the world from nothing, but that everything which exists is totally dependent upon God for is being. Without God, it cannot exist.

In sharp contrast, God is not dependent upon anything. He has always existed, and there will never be a time (time is His creation) when He does not exist. He had no beginning, and He will have no end. He was not created, and He cannot be destroyed. However, unlike the Mormon God, who always existed but not in His present form, the God of neoorthodox Christianity has never changed. The creation which He brought into being has no autonomy and imposes no conditions upon Him. Since everything other than God is dependent upon Him for its existence, we speak of it as being characterized by "contingent being," while God, who is not dependent upon anything, is characterized by "necessary being."

The importance of the *ex nihilo* creation for Reformation and neoorthodox theology can hardly be overstated. Not only is it easy for theologians to argue for God's omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience from this premise, but they can also establish the pronounced discontinuity between the Creator and the creature — between God and man — that so characterizes their theologies. Thus, the inordinate preoccupation with the complete "otherness" of God both affirms the sovereignty of God and proclaims the depravity of man.

The emphasis on total otherness would be quite unnecessary if man were basically good. But, of course, the fundamental message of neoorthodoxy is that man is not basically good. In fact, it is that he is by nature evil — that man is depraved. This conception of depravity is expressed in a qualified version of the Reformation doctrine of original sin in which the Fall results in a transformation of human nature, and the product — "fallen," "sensual," "carnal" man — is completely estranged from God. From this condition, man can do nothing to effect a reconciliation. He can do no good. He can only sin. Whenever man acts, which is always, he acts against God, and this inevitable act of rebellion is neoorthodoxy's original sin.[6]

Belief in the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man consistently leads to the neoorthodox doctrine of salvation by grace. A helpless, depraved sinner is in no position to "work out his own salvation." He must rely upon God — not, as Mormonism has claimed, to point out the way by which he

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[5]For a discussion of this misunderstanding on the part of Mormon theologians, see Sterling M. McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1965) and White, *Mormon Neo-orthodoxy*, ch. 4. The implications of the *ex nihilo* creation for Christianity and the denial of it for Mormon theology are also treated in the author's "Mormonism — A Nineteenth Century Heresy," *The Journal of Religious Thought* 26 (1969), 44–55.

[6]Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt*, trans. Olive Wyon (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), p. 150.

may live to attain perfection but rather to transform his innermost self, his basic nature. Only God can work these changes. Thus He initiates grace. He acts. He reaches down to man. Through this act of redemption, God saves man. Man is thereby restored to his true nature, for the cross of Christ is more powerful than the sin of Adam.[7]

MORMON NEOORTHODOXY

Not unlike Protestant neoorthodoxy, the Mormon neoorthodoxy conception of God is characterized by a pronounced discontinuity between God and man. Unlike traditional Mormon thought, it emphasizes the otherness of God. In fact this sets Mormon neoorthodoxy apart from orthodox Mormonism. This is not to say, of course, that traditional Mormonism has no affinity for the greatness and otherness of God, but it is to suggest that historically, at least, Mormonism's concern has been with the similarities rather than the differences between God and man.

This is clearly evident in the Mormon doctrine that God is a person with a tangible body, a doctrine which has led to Mormon claims that man is literally the offspring of God. Through its entire history, orthodox Mormonism has employed its extremely anthropomorphic conception of God to illustrate the likeness and similarites rather than the otherness and differences between God and man. Indeed, to the orthodox Mormon, the apostate character of the traditional Christian conception of God is to be found primarily in traditional Christianity's denial of God's physical and personal similarity to man.

In contrast, Mormon neoorthodoxy seeks to abandon this traditional emphasis. In an address at a Brigham Young University Leadership Week, Hyrum Andrus, a Mormon neoorthodox theologian, lamented Mormon preoccupation with anthropomorphic descriptions of God, at least when they are employed to deemphasize the hiatus between God and man.[8] He argued that Mormons pay too little attention to God's greatness, and he implied that they should more fully recognize his otherness. An interesting preoccupation with the "glory of God" permeates Andrus' writings.

Both traditional and neoorthodox Protestantism emphasize the creation in order to exaggerate the differences between God and man. The central meaning of the *ex nihilo* creation, as previously observed, lies in the fact that the creature is completely dependent upon the Creator. As a creature, man owes his total existence to God, who is the source of all being.

Mormon theologians, on the other hand, emphatically reject the *ex nihilo* creation and employ the creation story to show God's desire to help man, who is also an entity with necessary being, to realize his inherent potential. God does not bring nonexisting things into being but rather helps existing

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[7]For an excellent discussion of this problem, see Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam*, trans. T. A. Smail (New York: The Crowell-Collier Publishing Co., 1962).

[8]Hyrum Andrus, "The Greatness and Majesty of God," *"The Doctrine and Covenants* and Man's Relationship to Deity," Brigham Young University Leadership Week (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Extension Division, 1960) pp. 1 ff.

entities change into forms better suited for their eternal progression. God's creative act gives man's primal form of "intelligence" a spirit body, which makes him capable of actualizing, capable of becoming like God. Thus the creation story, in orthodox Mormonism, is not told to accentuate the differences between God and man, to reveal the profound otherness of God, but rather to demonstrate God's love for man.

Even though Mormon neoorthodox theologians accept the traditional metaphysics upon which the above account rests, their use of the creation story is often intended to emphasize the differences between God and man. While acknowledging the necessity of man's being, they deemphasize it, underscoring the elements of contingency in man's premortal condition. David Yarn, a Brigham Young University philosopher and one of the more articulate representatives of this new theology, writes, "Mortals should take no special pride in the necessity of their original being, for they share this characteristic in common with all other things which exist. Furthermore, they would have remained in that original state were it not for God's goodness in having provided spirit bodies, the light of eternal truth, and opportunities for progression."[9]

Moreover, the otherness of God is enhanced by the typical Mormon neoorthodox position concerning the progression of God. God is no longer, as in traditional Mormon theolgy, best described as a God in process, as "becoming" rather than "being." With the possible exception of Andrus,[10] Mormon neoorthodox theologians appear to believe that God no longer progresses in knowledge, power, or goodness. In all of these God is absolute. Whatever "progression" He now experiences is manifest in increases over His dominions through the organization of new worlds. Arriving at an absolute point from which He can no longer progress, God now possesses the attributes of the classical Christian God. Though beginning finite, God is now infinite.

For their conception of God, Mormon neoorthodox theologians rely heavily upon the early *Lectures on Faith*.[11] In these lectures, God is described in the normal vocabulary of traditional Christianity. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He is the same yesterday, today, and

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[9]David Yarn, *The Gospel: God, Man, and Truth* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965), p. 152.

[10]In a recent book, Andrus attempts a reconciliation of Mormonism's progressing God with Christian absolutism. This is accomplished by suggesting that God knows everything and has all power over his domain but that there are realms above God which apparently involve greater truths and more power. Celestial beings continually move to "higher and higher realms." *Doctrinal Commentary on "The Pearl of Great Price"* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1967), p. 507.

[11]While there is some question of authorship of these essays, with many scholars attributing them to Sidney Rigdon (see, for example, Leonard Arrington, "The Intellectual Tradition of the Latter-day Saints," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 [Spring 1969], 17), for our purposes it is of little importance who wrote them. If Joseph Smith did, as most neoorthodox theologians seem to believe, then he clearly reversed his position on the absolute nature of God in his later work. See "The King Follet Discourse," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938).

forever. He is unchanging and unchangeable. If God did not possess these attributes, the author of the lectures argued, He would not be worthy of man's worship, for He would not be God.[12]

After quoting freely from the *Lectures on Faith*, Yarn argues that Alma, a Book of Mormon prophet, put it nicely when he said that God "has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding,"[13] and Glenn Pearson contends that God is not subject to law because he is infinite while man is subject to law because he is finite.[14] While discussing man's agency, Lynn McKinlay maintains that God knows all things and has foreknowledge of all events.[15]

To the student of contemporary Mormonism, this absolute and unchanging God is hardly novel. Mormons often speak of God as infinite. At the same time, they suggest He changes. Of course this position should not be construed to mean that Mormonism is flirting with a theology of paradox, an approach entirely foreign to Mormon thought,[16] but rather that Mormons often misunderstand the implications of concepts like infinite, absolute, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. When the implications of these terms are clarified, as sometimes occurs in priesthood meetings and Sunday school classes, Mormons usually modify their positions on the absolute or infinite nature of God.[17] The apparent confusion probably derives from a lack of philosophical or theological training.

In spite of professional training in philosophy, theology, or related disciplines, the neoorthodox theologians either ignore or evade apparent conflicts between Mormon metaphysics and absolutism. Their evasiveness often assumes the form of depreciation of the role of reason in understanding God, including the advocacy of a nonreasonable, "a-logical" sort of revelation. Thus, Pearson and Bankhead write,

> There is hardly anything more clearly revealed in the scriptures than God's infinite foreknowledge; for every case of prophecy is witness of it. Yet many men do not believe it because their finite minds cannot grasp how it can be so if men are free to choose. If they cannot understand this, they at least ought to exercise enough faith to believe that if God says he has an infinite foreknowledge, it

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[12]This argument is developed in the third lecture. See *Lectures on Faith*, comp. N. B. Lundwall (Salt Lake City: N. B. Lundwall, n.d.), p. 36.

[13]Yarn, *The Gospel*, pp. 6–8.

[14]Glenn L. Pearson, *Know Your Religion* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961), p. 221.

[15]Lynn McKinlay, "For Behold Ye Are Free," *Know Your Religion Series* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, n.d.), p. 33.

[16]The traditional Mormon conception of revelation stands in sharp contrast to those conceptions in which the major purpose is to reveal the paradoxical nature of deity. In Mormon theology, the purpose of revelation is to clarify, not to "baffle the intellect." Basically, Mormon revelation is rational. For an elaboration of this point, see the section dealing with the implications of Mormon neoorthodoxy.

[17]It is hardly plausible to argue that God is infinite, meaning that no limitations can be imposed upon Him, and at the same time affirm a metaphysics in which several entities in addition to God (i.e., intelligence, matter, time, space, good, evil) exist necessarily. If God has no ultimate control over them, He then exists within an environment which imposes limitations on Him.

> must be so. And if he says men are free, they must be free. And if he says both these things, they must not conflict with each other.[18]

In contrast with traditional Mormon theology, then, Mormon neoorthodoxy emphasizes the creation, man's contingency, God's absoluteness, and the inadequacy of human reason to accentuate the differences between God and man and to establish the otherness of God.

However, it is not its conception of God that most radically distinguishes Mormon neoorthodox theology from traditional Mormon thought. Neoorthodox Mormons most radically depart from orthodoxy in their assessment of human nature. While traditional Mormonism emphasizes man's necessity, neoorthodoxy underscores his contingency. That Joseph Smith recognized the radical nature of the traditional Mormon doctrine and the implications it held for the classical Christian conception of man cannot be denied. For, in the speech defining the doctrine of man's necessary being, Joseph warned that his remarks were "calculated to exalt man" and that the "very idea" of ultimate contingency "lessens man in my estimation."[19] Yet, neoorthodoxy suggests that "mortals should take no special pride in the necessity of their original being. They, nevertheless, are contingent."[20]

Mormon neoorthodox theologians appear determined to minimize the implications of man's necessary existence. Implying that intelligence possessed free will in its uncreated state, Yarn nevertheless argues that free will would have been lost in mortality were it not for Christ. With the fall of man, Lucifer "had for all intents and purposes destroyed the agency of man."[21] The position is extended considerably by another neoorthodox theologian who claims that intelligence is merely "undifferentiated mass" from which God creates spirits. With this transformation, a "conscious entity" is born. Not until man reaches this spirit state, which is a direct product of God's creative act, is he an "ego," a "self," a "conscious entity." So opposing orthodox Mormonism — in which the essence of man, the ego or self, is uncreated and coeternal with God — this theologian contends that before man's spirit was organized he was "undifferentiated mass," void of consciousness.[22] For all practical purposes, this notion represents the intrusion of a peculiar version of the concept of the *ex nihilo* creation into Mormon theology.

Even though this preoccupation with contingency constitutes a departure from traditional Mormon thought, it is less significant than the neoorthodox attitude toward man's natural condition. Here the denial of ortho-

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[18]*A Doctrinal Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1962), p. 67.

[19]Smith, *Teachings*, p. 353.

[20]Yarn, *The Gospel*, p. 152.

[21]Yarn, *The Gospel*, p. 33.

[22]Since this information was obtained in a private rather than a public situation, I do not feel free to disclose the individual's name. However, according to a letter in *Dialogue* by John H. Gardner, the teacher's supplement for the 1967 Gospel Doctrine Course, "The Gospel in the Service of Man," expresses essentially the same position. He quotes the manual as saying: "the eternal intelligence was organized into 'intelligences'. . . ." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Spring 1967), 5-6. Such a theological position functions to minimize the importance of Mormon denials of the *ex nihilo* creation.

dox Mormon optimism is readily apparent, especially in neoorthodoxy's pessimistic interpretation of the Fall and subsequent predicament of man — a position much closer to traditional Christianity than to traditional Mormonism.

In contrast with the typical Protestant notion that the Fall resulted in a condition of human depravity and the Catholic conception that it led to the withdrawal of supernatural grace, the orthodox Mormon view asserts that the Fall was a necessary condition for man to realize his ultimate potential. His premortal existence as a spirit did not provide him with a physical body, which in Mormon thought is necessary for man to "experience a fulness of joy." A most important consequence of the Fall was the acquisition of physical bodies. Moreover, it was necessary to leave the immediate presence of God, to "enter the school of mortal exprience," in order for man to overcome evil and develop the requisite moral character to become like God.

Obviously this interpretation of the Fall, with the consequences primarily positive, implies that the Fall is no fall. It is one of the most fortunate events in human history, a necessary condition for salvation. Without the Fall, man could not realize his ultimate potential. The Mormon reinterpretation is nicely expressed in Sterling Sill's claim that "Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction";[23] and in the oft-quoted Book of Mormon passage asserting that "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy."

Mormon affirmation of the goodness of human nature naturally follows from its positive conception of the Fall. Brigham Young challenged the notion that the natural man is an enemy to God:

> It is fully proved in all the revelation that God has ever given to mankind that they naturally love and admire righteousness, justice, and truth more than they do evil. It is, however, universally received by professors of religion as scriptural doctrine that man is naturally opposed to God. This is not so. Paul says in his epistle to the Corinthians, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God," but I say it is the unnatural "man that receiveth not the things of God."[24]

Mormon neoorthodoxy, in contrast, takes a much more dismal view of the Fall. Though holding that it was necessary for the exaltation of man, their interpretation is negative. Instead of traditional Mormon emphasis on positive scriptural verses describing the human condition, the neoorthodoxy emphasizes such passages as "the natural man is an enemy to God and has been since the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord" (Mosiah 3:19).

Scriptural passages asserting that the natural man is an enemy to God receive the most attention in neoorthodox literature, and the frequent use

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[23]*Deseret News* (Church Section) (Salt Lake City), July 31, 1965, p. 7.

[24]*Journal of Discourses*, 9: 305.

traditional Christian terminology such as "carnal man," "sensual man," "devilish man," and "original guilt," "evils of the flesh," and "seeds of corruption" abundantly attest to Mormon neorothodoxy's pessimism. This language is employed to support a negative conception of the Fall and to describe man's inherent propensity to evil, his natural opposition to God. While discussing Karl Marx, Pearson observes that "anyone who rejects Christ is already condemned since that which makes him reject Christ is the inherent wickedness already in him."[25] And Yarn believes man to be possessed of a "rebellious, perverse, recalcitrant, and proud disposition."[26] Though very familiar to orthodox Christians, this language used to describe a pessimistic doctrine of man is generally foreign to traditional Mormons.

While speaking of the corruption of human nature and describing man as "carnal," "senusal," and "devilish," Yarn warns his readers not to confuse this with the "apostate doctrine of depravity." He is not suggesting than man is born evil. The infant is born innocent; but, as he becomes accountable, through free decisions, and he

> refuses to make his will submissive to God by accepting him and making covenants with him, he is carnal, sensual, and devilish.
>
> An examination of the matter suggests, however, that the words "carnal," "sensual," and "devilish," must not be limited to their more narrow and specific connotations, but that they are accurately, though more broadly, interpreted by the scriptural phrase "enemy to God." That is, not all men who have not made the covenants with the Christ are given to indulging in practices which are appropriately designated carnal, sensual, and devilish. Yet, all men, regardless of how moral and pure they may be with reference to those practices called carnal, sensual, and devilish, are enemies to God until they yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, accept the atonement of the Lord, and are submissive to his will.[27]

The Mormon neoorthodox conception of the human predicament is not quite the same as the classical Christian conception of original sin. Mormon neoorthodox theologians still work within the context of Mormon metaphysics. They do not deny Mormon doctrines proclaiming the innocence of infants. They perceive the Fall as having at least some positive consequences. Yet, all disclaimers to the contrary, they perhaps approach the traditional Christian conception of man as closely as possible without abandoning central Mormon beliefs. Though generally retaining a conception of actual sin — a position not necessarily irreconcilable with the doctrine of original sin as indicated by Protestant neoorthodoxy — some Mormon neoorthodox theologians define sin in terms barely distinguishable from the Reformation doctrine of original sin. Not unlike John Calvin, Andrus, in a rather explicit instance, argues that the seeds of corruption are hereditarily "transmitted to each embryo at conception." He writes,

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[25]"Socialism and the United Order or Law of Consecration," unpublished paper with criticisms by Van L. Perkins and a reply by the author (n.d.), p. 2 of the reply.

[26]Yarn, *The Gospel*, pp. 129–30.

[27]Yarn, *The Gospel*, pp. 55–56.

> . . . The effects of Adam's transgression and of man's subsequent transgressions are transmitted in the flesh and are thus inherent therein at conception. It is said in a revelation that no less a personage than God explained this fact to Adam. After observing that the atonement took care of the legalities of the "original guilt," God said: "Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good." Observe that it is when children begin to grow up that sin conceives in their hearts; and this because they are initially conceived in sin. Not that the act of conception, properly regulated, is sin, but the conditions of corruption resulting from the Fall are inherent in the embryo at conception. For a time the power of the atonement holds them in abeyance; but, as children grow up and begin to act upon their own initiative, sin conceives in their hearts. . . .
>
> From this statement it is plain that men are not merely born into a world of sin. Instead, the effects of the Fall and the corruption that has subsequently become associated with the flesh are transmitted to each new embryo at conception. As the physical body develops, these elements of corruption manifest themselves by diverting the individual's drives and emotional expressions toward vanity, greed, lust, etc. These elements of corruption are in the flesh.[28]

In addition to the above evidences of pessimism, the Mormon neoorthodox fear of reason and education also indicates a basic lack of faith in man. The notion that reason and sensory experience are unreliable is aggressively argued by neoorthodox theologians. They hold that the only way to acquire ultimate knowledge is through revelation.[29]

Traditional interpretations of Mormon Scriptures used to encourage academic study are abandoned for more restrictive and novel exegesis. Andrus, for instance, reinterprets the passage asserting that the "glory of God is intelligence," a scripture employed through Mormon history to encourage the unlimited pursuit of knowledge, to mean that the "brilliant element" encircling God is "intelligence."[30] And Yarn reinterprets the same passage by suggesting that intelligence means character, not knowledge or learning.[31]

The scripture asserting that "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance" frequently employed to encourage intellectual pursuits and academic excellence is reinterpreted to involve only a testimony of Christ's divinity. Thus Yarn writes,

> These words, as others previously discussed, have been used extensively to encourage people to seek excellence in the traditional academic disciplines with the express intent that these were the

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[28]"Joseph Smith's Idea of the Gospel," *Seminar on the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Adult Education and Extension Services, 1961), p. 66.

[29]Both Hugh Nibley and Chauncey Riddle, who lean toward neoorthodoxy, argue this position. See Nibley's *The World and the Prophets* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954) and Riddle's "The Conservative View in Mormonism," discussion with Lowell Bennion at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (n.d.).

[30]*Liberalism, Conservatism, and Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965), pp. 81–82.

[31]Yarn, *The Gospel*, pp. 201–2.

> things of which man could not be ignorant and be saved. And yet the context of this revelation, which is almost enthusiastically ignored, has little if any relation to the traditional academic disciplines, but does speak of one of the most sublime things available to mortals.
>
> The knowledge of which man cannot be ignorant and be saved is knowledge of the truth, that is, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, and the principles which he has revealed.[32]

Not only do the above depart from the spirit of traditional Mormon faith in education but, along with the emphasis on man's contingency, the denial of the basic goodness of human nature, and the acceptance of a peculiarly Mormon doctrine of original sin, they constitute striking evidence of Mormon neoorthodoxy's rejection of traditional Mormon optimism. Furthermore, they imply a conception of man like that of Protestant neoorthodoxy.

While the Mormon neoorthodox doctrine of salvation may be more similar to traditional Mormonism than either its conceptions of man or God, it does depart significantly on occasions, in tone if not substance, from an orthodox Mormon position. Though basic Mormon beliefs in the afterlife remain intact, a more restrictive pathway to salvation is defined and a greater reliance upon God is demanded. Indeed, it is these trends that constitute Mormon neoorthodoxy's departure from orthodoxy on the question of salvation. A shift from traditional Mormonism's fundamentally man-centered doctrine of salvation to a more Protestant God-centered conception is apparent in Mormon neoorthodoxy's doctrine of grace.

I am not suggesting that traditional Mormonism has no conception of grace, but rather that the role of grace differs radically from that of classical Christianity. Not unlike Christian orthodoxy, Mormons hold that mortality is one consequence of the fall of Adam which is overcome through the atonement of Christ. Furthermore, as a result of the Fall, Mormon theology asserts that man experienced "spiritual death." In other words, he is separated from the presence of God. Yet, unlike traditional Christianity, this spiritual death does not alter human nature. In fact, it is conceived as a necessary condition for man's moral and spiritual development. For it is through man's own meritorious efforts, outside of God's presence, along with the atonement of Christ that he may be saved — that he may overcome spiritual death and return to the presence of God. Thus, it is essential to an understanding of Mormonism to recognize that the fall of Adam is an expression of the grace of God in as real a sense of the atonement of Christ. Both are necessary for the salvation of man.

Even so, traditional Mormonism does not emphasize the grace of God and indeed repudiates extreme conceptions of it while opting for a doctrine of individual salvation by merit. In contrast with orthodox divines who quote Paul's "by grace are ye saved," Mormon spokesmen quote James's "Faith without works is dead." There is a striking absence of Pauline theology in Mor-

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[32]Yarn, *The Gospel*, pp. 203–4.

mon orthodoxy. Still, Mormons often quote Paul, but it is important to note that they do so primarily in reference to the resurrection or in his ethical exhortations. When confronted with his pronouncements on salvation, Mormons generally distort his concept of grace to mean that man will be physically resurrected by the gracious act of God.

Though the traditional Mormon doctrine of salvation is a rather eclectic composition of grace, sacrament, and merit, it is basically set apart from classical Christianity by its emphasis on merit and its insistence upon the perfectability of the individual. Embodied in the notion that man must "work out his own salvation," a central element in Mormon doctrine, are the basic imperatives that the individual submit to various sacraments such as baptism, receiving the Holy Spirit, and temple endowment; that he obtain the necessary knowledge, secular and religious; and that he develop the requisite moral character to become like God. To be sure, traditional Mormonism's frequent application of Jesus's life as the example par excellence of the way to salvation naturally follows from its doctrine of salvation, in which the primary responsibility is assigned to man, not God. In contrast with traditional Christianity, man, not God, is the primary actor.

While Mormon neoorthodox theologians agree that the individual must submit to sacrament, acquire knowledge, and develop the requisite moral character if he is to be saved, they dissent from the traditional conceptions of what this implies. The neoorthodox definition of the sort of knowledge essential to salvation and prescription for development of the requisite moral character depart from traditional Mormon thought. Again, if the differences are not strictly substantive, they are at least differences in emphasis.

In contrast with traditional Mormonism's commandment to seek knowledge, secular as well as religious, in order to be saved (exalted), neoorthodoxy demands only religious knowledge. Consequently, Yarn draws a sharp dichotomy between "secular" and "redemptive" truth, arguing that only the latter is necessary for salvation. He writes, "To call some truths secular does not mean they are valueless. It means they have a different value from those called redemptive. We know secular truths do have value for mortals. They may have value for post-mortals, and probably do, but to what extent they are needed we do not know. Redemptive truths have value not only for mortals but are essential for post-mortals if they are to fulfill the true purpose of their being."[33] Rejecting the traditional Mormon notion that the gospel embraces all truth, Pearson writes, "He who teaches that secular education and cultural attainment are part of the gospel, is either mixed up in his vocabulary or else on a foundation of sand. There are very excellent reasons for obtaining secular education and cultural attainment; but their acquisition does not constitute obedience to the gospel."[34]

This neoorthodox position implies an interesting discontinuity between natural and supernatural realms generally foreign to traditional Mormonism.

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[33]Yarn, *The Gospel*, p. 193.

[34]*Know Your Religion*, p. 52.

As correctly argued by Leonard Arrington (in the first issue of *Dialogue*) the concept of *secular* was really not applicable to early Mormonism. Continuity between the natural and supernatural was such that areas typically regarded as secular were embodied in the Mormon religion. In short, there was no secular. All things were religious. And, knowledge of all things — natural, physical, moral, spiritual — was essential to salvation. Implied in these assumptions is the notion that the Mormon religion embraces all truth.

The neoorthodox departure on the proper character development is no less interesting. Consistent with its conceptions of God and man, orthodox Mormonism strongly emphasizes the performance of good works. Character defects are to be eradicated by behavioral changes. The individual stops being a sinner by not committing specific actual sins. In the language of former Church president Wilford Woodruff, "The man who repents, if he be a swearer, swears no more; or a thief, steals no more; he turns from all his former sins and commits them no more."[35] This is the fundamental message of Mormon orthodoxy, that man should turn from his sins and commit them no more. Through this course of action, along with participation in the necessary sacraments and acquisition of the requisite knowledge, man may hope to realize his ultimate objective, often articulated by ecclesiastical officials and theologians, in the admonition of Jesus to "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Mormon neoorthodoxy, on the other hand, exhibits less concern for the piecemeal development of character through repentance of actual sins and performance of good works. Its doctrine of salvation implies a total regeneration of man. Moral behavior is secondary to "spiritual rebirth." The central task for the sinner is to put off the natural man and become a saint through the atonement of Christ. The "transition from the realm of the natural to the spiritual," writes Andrus, "is required of all men, if they are to obtain the good life here and salvation in the world to come."[36]

Turning away from specific acts of sin, combined with the resolution to commit them no more, does not constitute an act of repentance in Mormon neoorthodoxy. This behavior is merely a moral change, a reform. Man needs a much more basic "regeneration"; he needs, as Yarn says, to be "changed in the inner man."[37] Only through a "spiritual" and not a "moral" change can man be saved. Pearson writes, "One must repent 'towards God.' A reform is not enough if spiritual salvation is the goal. The intent must be to make oneself worthy of God's mercy and forgiveness. Repentance, in this sense, is a theological term, describing an act of compliance in the struggle to be saved, while reformation is an act inspired by an intelligent desire to improve one's lot in mortality."[38]

It now is not difficult to understand why Mormon neoorthodox theologians are so attracted to Pauline theology and so set on identifying Mormon-

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[35]*Journal of Discourses*, 23: 127.

[36]*Liberalism*, p. 78.

[37]Yarn, *The Gospel*, p. 74.

[38]*Know Your Religion*, p. 134.

ism with a classical Christian doctrine of grace, though orthodox Mormonism's denial of typical doctrines of grace is reflected in its own aversion to Pauline theology. Objecting to the typical Mormon interpretation of Paul's doctrine of grace, Pearson says, "You know that we very often in the church nowdays think that Paul meant that the grace brought about the resurrection and that everybody would be resurrected by grace, but you notice that Paul said you are saved by grace through faith and you don't have to have faith to have the resurrection and so we know Paul was speaking of another salvation other than the resurrection."[39] This predisposition toward a classical doctrine of grace, the affinity for a pessimistic doctrine of man, and the flirting with a conception of an absolute God not only set this new theology apart from traditional Mormonism but also illustrate its similarities to Protestant neoorthodoxy and, I believe, justify the label of Mormon neoorthodoxy.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

We now turn to a brief discussion of some possible implications of Mormon neoorthodoxy for the future of Mormon theolology and religion. These implications are not necessary consequences of adopting a neoorthodox perspective. In some instances, Protestant neoorthodoxy has effectively avoided them while in others it has fallen victim. What will happen to Mormonism obviously remains to be seen, but I believe there are good reasons for concern over the survival of some fundamental Mormon values.

A dangerous tendency of Mormon neoorthodoxy appears in its conception of revelation. Not only is revelation defined in more narrow terms than in traditional Mormonism, but it also appears to have a somewhat different function. When Mormon neoorthodox theologians argue that two principles cannot be said to conflict merely because both appear in Scripture, they assume a form of revelation not entirely consistent with traditional Mormonism.

For, unlike Protestant neoorthodoxy, traditional Mormonism has little sympathy with a revelation of paradox or for a revelation designed to "baffle the intellect." On the contrary, Mormons have opted for revelation which makes matters more intelligible. Its purpose is to clarify, not to confuse, to solve problems and answer questions, not to indicate that problems are illusory and questions illegitimate. Mormon revelation is explicit. When God revealed Himself to a confused boy, He neither tried to baffle the boy's intellect nor to demonstrate His own paradoxical nature. He was not something so large that He could fill the immensity of space and yet so small that He could dwell within the heart of man. He was a person, with a tangible body, with spatial and temporal dimensions. He was comprehensible, not something beyond the logical grasp or understanding of man. While differences between God and man were apparent, they were not so significant that the young boy could not *intellectually* apprehend God's message.

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[39]"The Book of Mormon in Its Own Defence," *Know Your Religion Series* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, n.d.), pp. 27–28.

Though Mormon neorothodoxy denies the rational nature of traditional Mormon revelation, it stops short of the extreme position assumed by Protestant neoorthodoxy. The inordinate preoccupation with God as "totally other" has led some Protestant neoorthodox theologians to distinguish sharply between revelation and religion. Since revelation is conceived as God's gracious act of reaching downward to save depraved man and religion is arrogant man's attempt to become God, the former is praised and the latter damned. Wicked, helpless man cannot legitimately reach for God. Such an act is the epitome of arrogance, pride, and blasphemy. God must initiate all interaction. If any saving is to be done, God must do it. A real danger of Mormon neoorthodoxy's conception of revelation is that it could possibly lead to this sort of distinction between revelation and religion in which man's search for God is vigorously condemned.

Related is the distrust of rationalism and empiricism so characteristic of Mormon neoorthodoxy yet so unlike orthodox Mormonism. In traditional Mormon thought, human reason and sensory experience are enthusiastically supported, not only as ways of helping man acquire knowledge useful to him in his earthly sojourn but also as means of learning information that will enable him to become like God. For, Mormon metaphysics — assuming an orderly reality based upon eternally operative natural, moral, and spiritual laws — demands that individuals learn these laws in order to realize their destinies. Only when all of man's learning faculties are developing to their highest potential is he living in accordance with the basic teachings of his religion.

This fundamental faith in the human intellect has characterized Mormonism from its beginning. It was built into early Mormon experience. Mormons vigorously proclaimed that not only would education provide the solutions to basic problems, but it would also vindicate Mormon claims to truth. It would be most unfortunate, I believe, if the Mormon commitment to education — an attitude intrinsic to its metaphysics — were to disappear and the educational achievements of the Mormon people end.

Thus, a very real consequence of the Mormon neoorthodox contempt for reason and empiricism, combined with its narrow definition of the sort of knowledge necessary for salvation, may be a form of anti-intellectualism that will sap the Mormon religion of its vitality and destroy its commitment to education. For without faith in the human intellect, Mormonism will lose one of its most important checks against superstition and emotional excess. While such an extreme posture may not seem imminent, its realization is by no means impossible. It is the logical extension of anti-intellectualism.

Though contemporary Mormonism exhibits an apparent lack of concern for many of the world's most pressing problems, I fear that Mormon neoorthodoxy may lead even further from such considerations, since, unlike Protestant neoorthodoxy — which emerged with profound moral and social sensitivity, considering itself an expression of greater moral vitality and zeal than Protestant liberalism — Mormon neoorthodoxy exhibits relatively little

interest in ethics and social problems, excluding possibly its concern with governmental expansion, the welfare state, and extension of the franchise. In its literature, little concern with problems of war and peace, racial discrimination, poverty, or population expansion is evident. Yet, few things characterized early Mormonism more than its concern for social justice and interest in creating the perfect society here on earth. It would be a real tragedy, I believe, if Mormon neoorthodoxy's preoccupation with the otherness of God, the corruption of man, his reliance upon grace, and the discontinuity between the natural and the spiritual were to induce the Mormon community to ignore the profound insight of orthodox Mormonism that that "religion which cannot save man temporally cannot save him spiritually."

THE PEOPLE:

A MORMON STUDENT'S REACTION TO THE RADICAL MOVEMENT

Morgan D. King

Morgan D. King, a law student at the University of California at Davis, has been active in campus-centered student movements as well as in M-Men and L.D.S.S.A. activities. At present he serves as editor of THE MESSENGER OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA *("The Voice of Mormon California") and as a literary editor of* CANDLE, *an art and poetry magazine published by L.D.S. students in the Bay area. The following essay grew out of his direct involvement in student movements at Berkeley and Davis.*

In the spring of 1968 a Mormon fellow-student, Bob Lemkau, and I attended sessions on nonviolence and revolution taught by radical students at U.C., Berkeley. Through four years of classes at Berkeley, and culminating in this course, I gained some understanding of what "The Movement" was all about. These are some of my observations of the people and the ideas of the New Left Movement, as seen through Mormon eyes.

Part one deals with people, the conversations, the feelings. Parts two and three are a response to the political movement criticized in terms of my religious views.

I

As the first session of the class began, Gail, barefoot and dressed in jeans and a sweater, told us in quiet tones what the course would be like. She would assign no required readings. She intended to give all of us A's or B's if we simply showed up for class. She would appreciate everyone participating in class discussions. "We will be discussing various aspects of the move-

ment . . ." Her voice droned on in the background as my mind began to wander.

It was raining outside. Inside the room, which was an upstairs bedroom in an old house a few blocks from the Berkeley campus, were twelve or thirteen students sitting on the floor or on chairs. Some of the men were bearded. Most of the girls wore simple miniskirts and sweaters. Some wore sandals and shawls. One wore a button which said, "There's A Change Gonna Come."

Two cats played among the students. The little white kitten had two names. Some nights she was called "Whitey." Other times she was "Honky." The large, passive Siamese did not seem to have a name at all.

There were no beds, only mattresses with covers spread on the floor. On a small wooden table near the door Gail's roommate, Virginia, had placed a coffeepot and paper cups. The table was coffee-stained. The only thing on the wall was a chalk drawing of Virginia. There were two or three chairs and a small, dusty rug.

My mind came back to Gail. She was finished with preliminaries. We were discussing which times were most convenient for everyone to attend. The students spoke softly, using their hands in slow, expressive gestures to illustrate points. I noticed another button: "Hell No, We Won't Go!"

After lengthy debate we decided that 7:30 to 10:00 P.M. Tuesday nights was best for everyone. This accomplished, we adjourned until the following Tuesday.

This was my first intimate impression of The Movement. What would I learn here that I had not seen in the confrontations on campus, in the Free Speech Movement, in the Vietnam Day demonstration? What was The Movement? Who were these people?

My first impression of Gail was that she was, like many intelligent students I had met at Cal, disorganized in her thinking and somewhat ineffective as a person. This impression was due to her mannerisms and to the fact that it took us an hour and a half to decide which hours to set for class attendance.

But I think now, a year later, that Gail simply felt she was among equals and therefore bent over backward not to impose herself on the group. She was twenty-six, a graduate student in sociology, and experienced. She could have demanded more discipline without causing resentment. But her suggestions were timid; her eyes glanced back and forth from face to face searching for, sensing disapproval; she retreated at the first sign of disagreement and offered an alternative. Often she said, "It's up to you," or "It really makes no difference to me."

The weeks went by, and I learned about the others.

Gail's roommate, Virginia, had dropped out of school and had driven, in what she called a car, to Washington, D.C., where she had somehow obtained some funds from the government and had used them to begin a small poverty project in Berkeley. It was Virginia who made me feel at home the first night. She leaned over to me during the first session, nodded toward Gail, and whispered in my ear, "She likes to let these discussions ramble all

over the place. She knows I don't approve of that." Gail overheard this. She turned slightly, smiled, and turned back to the discussion.

John, with black hair hanging down over one eye, passionately hated the police. His conversation was salted with choice epithets describing the Berkeley police, whom he considered brutal and malevolent.

Mary, who usually sat in the hall because there was no room in the bedroom, reminded me of a horse. She spoke with gentle shakes of her head to emphasize each word. Her "bag" was passivism and nonviolence. She reacted in quiet agony to John's violent denunciations, and tried from time to time to get him to consider a different position; "I met a cop once in a non-stressful situation [she meant somewhere other than a riot] and he turned out to be a really nice guy." Her offering was turned down by John.

Janet was pretty. In conversation with me she described her father as a passionless college professor for whom she felt some lingering respect, but no emotional attachment. She told Bob and me one night, as we drove her home, that her father had always been "too logical," and had never really "felt" anything. Jan had finally become alienated and left home. She came to Oakland and lived with an impoverished black family there, stealing and selling the loot "to keep those poor children from starving." She attributed the plight of her adopted family to "an imperialistic, corrupt society."

It is difficult to make generalizations about students in this setting. They were from all over the country and brought with them a wide variety of experiences in student movements and attitudes about university life and society in general. But most of them discussed "the revolution" with ease. This was not, of course, the American or Russian Revolution, but "the revolution that's coming." I expected to see a lot of marijuana but did not, nor did I ever seen anyone on a trip (perhaps I wouldn't know if I saw one). Most of the students were dedicated to peaceful, nonviolent tactics. Militancy and violence were definitely not in vogue. Nevertheless, they were in a state of anticipation about a vague "revolution." They seemed to accept this as fact, without discussion, and continually urged that they "discuss tactics."

Not being a dedicated revolutionary (but only the armchair, philosophical type) I usually objected at this point, stating that I was opposed to The Revolution and did not want to discuss "tactics." Until they found out, near the end, that I was both a Mormon and an ROTC cadet, none of them suspected that I was sincere in my objections. As time went on they began to consider me affectionately as a retarded radical, one of "them," who simply needed reassurance and guidance along the right paths.

Halfway through the quarter Gail suggested that we might be interested in "playing a game" next week. I had visions of the whole class getting up and playing at revolution by marching down to the Oakland Induction Center and lovingly bombing it down, taking turns dragging their retarded revolutionary along.

The following Tuesday night Bob and I arrived a half hour late (although the class was supposed to start at 7:30, everyone wandered in with coffee or Cokes at about 8:00). John had neatly arranged a hand-drawn map

of the Oakland Induction Center and the surrounding area of Oakland. On this map he had placed black and white chessmen. The blacks, he informed us, were the police, and the whites were the students (as I write this, a year later, I wonder if John's equating the evil police with the color black did not reveal a little of that "latent race prejudice," where white is good and black is bad, which is supposed to be lurking in all of us). The object of the game was for us to play various roles in a situation in which the students would attempt to "liberate the induction center" by preventing the induction buses from entering with their cargoes of draftees. The game would be played out on the map, using the chessmen. A visitor, a girl, would referee. Gail suggested that the liberation should last only an hour or two "to demonstrate to the middle class our opposition to the war." The object, as she saw it, was "to gain the sympathy and moral support of the middle class." John did not agree. Since students had tried this approach on several occasions, using peaceful tactics, and failed, he believed the time had come to use more determined tactics. Mary bristled at this and offered more virtuous alternatives. We argued for thirty minutes on whether sticking a long-stemmed flower down the barrel of a policeman's rifle was more or less effective than spitting in his face. Gail tried in vain to get the discussion back to the game. The visitor sided with John, interjecting her own provocative statements, and at last the whole class collapsed into an anarchy of noisy side debates and shouting matches, with Gail in the middle looking beseechingly at Virginia, who, I suppose, was thinking she had expected this all along. I rose to the visitor's bait and accused her of having a "pathological egotism" in trying to ram her political beliefs down people's throats by violent means. This had a greater effect than I had planned. The conversation stopped. The girl smiled a slight, sad smile, nervously flicked ashes from her cigarette, and then got up and walked out.

Gail did not let my indiscretion go unnoticed. When it came time for the students to choose roles for the game, everyone in the room wanted to play radical and no one wanted to play police. I volunteered to play police, figuring this would lend realism to the exercise, but Gail intervened. In a rare fit of decisiveness she announced, "No, Morgan has to play radical! It will do him good!" I decided it might, after all, do me some good.

A week later I finally asked, point blank, what was wrong with our present system, and why they wanted a revolution. From their widely diverse answers, I got a picture of their goal. It was similar to Jefferson's idea of the simple, agrarian life, free of bureaucracy, war, IBM cards, and race prejudice.

One of the group asked if such a life wouldn't result in a nation of small-town people, with the abhorred small-town, narrow mentality. I said that I thought the Jeffersonian life could result in a breed of nice people, but when I described the towns of Utah as the example I had in mind, the reaction was John's "Oh! But they're so prejudiced!" I replied that I had read a sociological study showing that Mormons were not abnormally prejudiced. But they dismissed my study with contempt.

It was that same week that Mary bumped into me one day on campus when I was wearing my ROTC uniform. At first she didn't notice who I was. But when she recognized me, she stared at my uniform, stunned. "Hi," I said, and smiled. She smiled weakly, then said, "What kind of a person are you, anyway?" Before I could answer, she had turned and was gone.

II

The Movement is more than just people and confrontations and coffee stains and no bras. What is it that unites them all, despite their divergent attitudes? What is the philosophy of The Movement?

Its ideas are developed by such writers as Herbert Marcuse, Eric Fromm, John Kenneth Galbraith, Michael Harrington, Malcolm X, Thomas Hayden, and others. To delve into all of its implications is not my purpose here, but its outlines look like this:

It is a philosophy of "community." What is "community?" To Lyndon Johnson it was "a place where men are more concerned with the quality of their goals than the quantity of their goods," . . . where leisure would mean "a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness," . . . where the city would serve "the desire for beauty and the hunger for community."[1]

To George Chang, a black revolutionary in Sacramento, it would be a society in which the people at the bottom rungs of the social ladder would "have some control over the decisions which affect their own lives." To student leaders it would emphasize "participatory democracy." Other ingredients would be a lack of regimentation and a minimum of bureaucracy. It would stress individuality and creativity. It would be a community based on love rather than a heavily hierarchical system based on power and economic interest.

I can not explain what all of these terms mean because they are slippery ideas, even to the New Leftist. They are almost more feelings than ideas. A recent article in *The New Yorker,* discussing the political activities of certain members of the Catholic clergy, said, "The theology of . . . the religious New Left precisely parallels the principles of the political New Left. Both are collectivist, pacifist, unstructured, utopian, verbose but anti-intellectual, obsessed with 'community,' centered on a style of life rather than on any systematic ideology . . . ."[2]

The spirit of this community is almost, therefore, an instinct rather than a philosophy. And it is this instinct which senses giant forces in society gradually spreading out to wash away whatever is left of "community" in American life.

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[1]Michael Harrington, *Toward a Democratic Left* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 3. 1968), p. 3.

[2]Francine Du Plessix Gray, "The Bread Is Rising," *The New Yorker Magazine,* January 25, 1969, p. 64.

What are these forces? The forces responsible for the encroachments on community spirit are seen as, (1) application of vast technological resources in the interests of privileged elites; (2) too-rapid change of life patterns, also caused by the technological revolution; (3) a national obsession with armaments and consumption; and (4) corporate and public bureaucracy.

As these forces loom larger and larger, what happens to the community spirit? The fate of the community is really only the fate of the individual in the community; loneliness sets in, and a sense of being invisible, of going unnoticed and unlistened-to; creativity and individuality are smothered; interpersonal love becomes shallow and corrupted. Eric Fromm writes, "We have a well-functioning economic system under the condition that we are producing goods which threaten us with physical destruction, that we transform the individual into a total passive consumer and thus deaden him, and that we have created a bureaucracy which makes the individual feel impotent."[3]

The instinctual sense of alarm which is aroused by all of this gives rise to "The Movement." The Movement, therefore, is a collection of people who sense a disintegration of community in the United States and who are trying to halt those forces in society which they see as responsible for it. Their methods run the range from electoral politics (McCarthy, Kennedy) to civil disobedience bordering on guerilla warfare.

This, in simplified form, is the radical critique.

A Mormon's reaction to The Movement can easily be a troubled one, for while the radicals seem, in gospel terms, to be antireligious, promiscuous, and valueless, one cannot fail to notice a resemblance between the philosophical direction of the New Left and the precepts of the gospel.

The introduction to the biography of Apostle Melvin J. Ballard states, "The measure of life is how closely it equates with its potential. Few men have their potential clearly defined in childhood and few can, at life's end, feel an assurance of having matched the achievable with the achievement." Similarly, the policy statement of the New Left, the Port Huron Statement, declares, "We regard men as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love."[4] These statements show a philosophical link between our religion and present student radicalism; they express a basic faith in the godly potential of human beings.

Another analogy is seen in Mormon community theory. Our religion is a kind of enlarged family structure in which individuals relate to one another in many ways. The Movement, also, has a vision of this kind of life. The Port Huron Statement says, "Personal links between man and man are needed, especially to go beyond the partial and fragmentary bonds of function that bind men . . . ." The Movement's experiments with communal activity reflect a desire to construct communities which, like those in our Church, integrate worship, work, play, and personality all at once.

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[3]Eric Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), p. 2.

[4]"The Port Huron Statement," *The New Student Left, An Anthology*, Mitchell Cohen and Dennis Hale, eds. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 12.

A third connection is found in the prophets' repeated warnings against materialism, on the one hand, and the New Left's conviction, on the other hand, that personal peace will be had only when society overcomes its "idolatrous worship of things by men."[5]

It is possible that any similarities in doctrine between Mormonism and radicalism are superficial, fading in the light of larger incompatibilities. But it is also possible that the Church may someday view society's values and institutions as the same threats to family unity and human fulfillment as does the New Left.

III

Aside from issues of philosophy, another question occurs to the observer of the scene; assuming the radical critique of society is correct, does The Movement offer a constructive way to redirect society from bureaucracy and isolation to liberation and community? Will a strategy of pressure to effect structural changes in the system obtain the desired results?

In contrast to other viable rebellions in our nation's history, the New Left seems chained to logical and practical contradictions. There are three major contradictions.

First, the students demand a rational, uncompromising and efficient national policy directed toward a reallocation of national priorities from war and consumption to social welfare and urban reconstruction. Such a policy would require a highly unified, powerful elite at the head of the government. On the other hand, The Movement demands a more democratic system, a "participatory democracy," more responsive to the individual in the national community. Such a system would require sharing of policy-making authority and slow, inefficient implementation. The two goals are mutually exclusive. Thomas Jefferson said, "We have a choice between efficiency and liberty." The New Left wants both.

Second, the students demand that the universities be autonomous and free from political manipulation. At the same time they demand that the universities take a more active role in the positive correction of community inequities and poverty. In other words, what they're saying is, "Everybody who's political leave our university alone, but we demand the right of our university to jump in and meddle with everybody else's politics." Again, the two goals are mutually exclusive.

Third, "participatory democracy" would require, of course, responsiveness to the demands of everyone. The ethic of compromise would be a premium in such a community. As Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., said last year at Boalt Hall, "Democracy is the renunciation of absolute goals." But the New Left has rejected the doctrine of compromise in favor of absolute demands. Time and again I have heard the leaders of the Berkeley movement denounce administrative compromises as "sellouts."

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[5]"The Port Huron Statement," p. 13.

These contradictions hopelessly confuse the direction of The Movement and create frustration and irrationality among its constituents. We see, therefore, not the development of a movement, but a perpetual process of a movement being conceived, followed by a perpetual abortion of itself.

This is indeed a peculiar and complex problem: a movement whose abstract goals are justifiable, but whose efforts at implementation are self-defeating. This phenomenon suggests that we may be reaching a critical point in the progress of our national experience.

If a conservative reaction suppresses The Movement, we could be justified in presuming that our society was unable to respond in a beneficial way to the New Left. It may be, therefore, that political systems reach a point of complexity and improvisation, after repeated rebellions and reforms, at which they no longer can be improved upon by structural modifications. This may be because political systems are only a reflection of the quality of the people who make them up. They are constantly rebuilt and improved, therefore, until their defects are due relatively less and less to the systems themselves, and relatively more and more to human nature. And so it may be that the New Left is attempting to correct by political means what can only be corrected by religious or spiritual means. The radicals attack the weaknesses of human beings, and this makes their own constituents vulnerable. The Movement turns against itself.

Is there any road that The Movement could take that might lead to real results?

Political revolution seeks to affect the quality of the individual life by changing the system. Religion would more probably try to affect the system by changing the individual. The New Left would alter the system so that instead of satisfying only temporal needs and guaranteeing property and civil rights, as it has been geared to do for thousands of years, the system would create a humane, spiritual community. But as Michael Harrington admits, "Social structure cannot create spiritual life. It can help make it possible."[6]

A true revolution, therefore, would not aim at institutions as much as it would aim at the individual. It would have to be a spiritual upheaval, effected man by man, child by child, until a society was transformed. Anything else would seem to be superficial, missing the root causes of the problem.

If radicalism seeks to transform the world by changing the system, and if organized religion addresses itself narrowly to the individual, is it possible that a link might still be found in the *type* of individual which religion attempts to produce? Would it be possible for the Church to avoid broad social issues but, in directing itself to the individual inspire that individual to look beyond his personal moral world and to work for fundamental changes in society as well as for his own salvation? Would, in fact, his involvement in the moral issues confronting his society facilitate his spiritual growth and

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[6]Harrington, *Toward a Democratic Left*, p. 144.

his personal salvation? I think such an idea is not outside the spirit of our religion.

Whether there is any possible fraternity between the New Left and the gospel is the question I have raised in this essay. Whether organized religion can retain its vitality if the committed, creative young increasingly spend their passion elsewhere, whether the radical movement can sustain its positive moral quality over the long, difficult road ahead of it without the stability and perspective of organized religion, and whether the New Left has, in fact, anything worthwhile to offer, are questions which ought to be asked. They ought to be asked because, like our religion, The Movement commands the loyalty of hundreds of thousands of idealistic youth, and because, like our religion, it is less an economic or political program than it is a concern for the spiritual quality of life, and because, like our religion, it exhibits an increasingly significant influence on our national culture.

CACHE VALLEY LANDSCAPE

If viewed in terms of quantitative measurements, economic progress dictates not only the physical image of a landscape but, more potentially, the cycles and processes inherent in that landscape as well. There is, of course, a fragile but forceful relationship between quality and quantity, actually a continual interrelationship. In a landscape, this interrelationship is projected in various aspects and proceedings, both ecological and cultural. So, when the balance of relationships affects the processes from a significantly quantitative point, the continuity of the landscape experience is no longer perceived; awareness of the essential cycles and life enforcing movements becomes obscured by disharmonious elements.

But witness a landscape where the cycles, spatial continuity and visual satisfactions function as dynamic, healthy processes. Such a landscape exhibits the attainment of meaningful form through a balance between vital interrelationships.

David Biedermann

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WHEN DOES AN INTELLECTUALLY IMPAIRED CHILD BECOME ACCOUNTABLE?

Walter L. Maughan

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Twelve-year-old Missy watched as her younger sister Becky walked exuberantly down the steps into the baptismal font. She saw the shiver of excitement that possessed her at the first touch of the water. She listened to her father pronounce the words of the baptismal prayer. And then as eight-year-old Becky came up from the water "in newness of life," Missy turned to her mother and said, "I want to be baptized."

From Missy, in whom the ability to use vocal language was almost totally lacking, the statement was miraculous. And it broke her mother's heart. Missy's parents had already discussed the matter with their bishop. And he had told them that he could not recommend her for baptism. Missy was retarded and did not need baptism — or so the bishop asserted.

But how do you tell a child who wants to be like others that it is unnecessary for her? No matter how you put it, it will sound like a punishment. If baptism is a blessing for Becky, then it must be just as much a blessing for Missy. But Missy can't have it. Missy must not be worthy. It must be that the Lord does not love Missy.

This true story is being reenacted in many places throughout the Church.

But just as frequently children who are as handicapped as Missy are being baptized, either as a matter of course when they turn eight or later at the discretion of the parents. The bishops who make these decisions are honest men acting in good conscience, according to the dictates of their own understanding.

The reason for the discrepancy in treatment is that the instructions regarding the baptism of handicapped children are not clear enough for a bishop to be certain how to proceed. So he is forced to place his own interpretation upon those instructions. Since bishops come to their jobs from a variety of vocational and educational backgrounds, it is not surprising that their opinions should differ markedly.

Nor is it difficult to understand why the Church has failed to develop a clear-cut policy regarding the baptism of these children. The question is not an easy one to resolve.

How do we determine when a child becomes accountable?

The Scriptures speak of a child arriving "unto the years of accountability" (D.&C. 20:71). And parents are instructed to see that their children are baptized "when eight years old" (D.&C. 68:25). Obviously not all eight-year-olds are equal in their capabilities. Some mature more slowly and others more rapidly. There is nothing magical about the child's eighth birthday which suddenly makes him accountable, except according to the law as defined by the Lord.

Still, the nagging question plagues us: If a child is severely retarded, is he accountable at the age of eight? And if we were to baptize him, and he were not accountable, would the Lord condemn him for his mistakes?

More to the point, what is accountability?

The few brief scriptural passages which refer to accountability speak of our responsibility to control our own behavior and to repent of any mistakes which we may make (D.&C. 20:71, 29:47, 101:78; Moroni 8:10). They do not suggest any need for an elaborate understanding of the gospel, but only a willingness to rectify unacceptable behavior. This concept is further substantiated in the following scriptural instructions given to the missionaries:

> And of tenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Savior, and remission of sins by baptism, and by fire yea, even the Holy Ghost. (D.&C. 19:31; see also D.&C. 11:9 and 18:14)

Clearly the prospective convert may be baptized with a minimum of knowledge concerning gospel principles. He does not have to be a scholar or a student of the Scriptures. He needs no knowledge of Church history. He does not even have to know how to pronounce the name of the prophet. All of these understandings enhance one's position in the Church and make membership more meaningful, but they are not necessary prerequisites for baptism.

The Scriptures make it plain that a certain amount of understanding and self-control are required, but anyone who has had any association with retarded children knows that they frequently understand things which they

cannot communicate through language. This is suggested in their behavior, not through their having answered specific questions that may be put to them. And only after an extensive observation of the child's behavior can we begin to get an idea of his ability to govern his own actions, to alter his course if it proves to be in error, and to avoid sin or show remorse and repentance if he fails to avoid it. Probably no one other than the parents, or in rare instances a perceptive teacher, has the time to make this kind of in-depth study of the child's behavior.

The usual method of determining a child's worthiness for baptism, the bishop's interview, is of little value with these children. It places them at an unfair disadvantage, because almost universally they are severely handicapped in verbal ability. They simply cannot answer the questions, even though they may understand them.

If only there were some simple test that could be employed to measure accountability. Unfortunately, an intelligence test wouldn't work. Whatever it is that intelligence tests measure, it has little to do with accountability (or the ability to be responsible for one's own actions). Indeed, some of the most irresponsible of people are highly intelligent mentally ill individuals. These tests were designed to measure the academic skills required for success in school. Most intelligence tests are highly language-oriented. And a variety of abilities, including various types of creativity, social aptitude, and moral maturity are not touched by most intelligence tests.

In an article entitled "The Dynamics of Mental Retardation" (Public Health Service Publication No. 1267, 1964), Dr. Gunner Dybwad lists as a major source of confusion the tendency to think of a child with a particular mental age — determined by an intelligence test — as if he were "just like a child of that chronological age." There are a multitude of differences. Among other things, the adult retarded person with a mental age of five will be vastly more responsible for his own actions than will the normal five-year-old. This is particularly true if the retarded person has been to school.

The validity of the test scores themselves is considerably in doubt at the lower levels because the test items require skills other than those which are supposedly being measured. Many brain damaged children cannot be tested due to language and motor problems which invalidate the results. Not infrequently, IQs below 50 will be reported more in the nature of estimates than as absolute scores.

Another factor which is often overlooked is that two retarded children with identical IQ scores can be as different as any two children chosen at random from the general population, even in the skills which are measured by the test. A mongoloid child, for example, may have a generally low level of performance on all of the abilities tested. A brain damaged child, on the other hand, may demonstrate surprisingly high ability in some isolated areas, such as memory for numbers, and be profoundly retarded in others. The IQ score is based on the total number of items passed, with no regard for which skills they measure. Some experts feel that the "spread" of the scores is more significant than the overall IQ.

But the most valid argument against the use of intelligence tests as a determiner of accountability is that they simply were not designed to measure moral responsibility.

If the intelligence test will not work, then what shall we use? The limitations of the interview have already been discussed.

Extended observation of the child's behavior seems to be the only reasonable answer. But there are dangers even in this. Neurological damage can cause a multitude of behavior problems which are totally beyond the control of the child, and which ought not to be scored against him in our appraisal of his accountability. The grand mal attacks of the epileptic are well known. Less well known are the similar seizures which occur in many brain damaged children. The behavior of these children is typically cyclical. And there will be times when the disease takes over. This may come on suddenly, just as it does for the epileptic. The child will appear to be fully conscious. He may go through a "fit" of crying. He may strike out blindly at whatever happens to be in his way. He may kick and scream. He may bite himself or bang his head against the wall. The lay observer would call it a tantrum. But it is a product of forces within the child's impaired nervous system and is not subject to his control.

We do not deny baptism to the blind because they cannot see, nor to the deaf because they cannot hear. We should not deny it to the language impaired merely because they cannot communicate their understanding vocally. And we should not deny baptism to the brain damaged individual who may be fidgety or noisy or unresponsive to certain kinds of stimuli on the basis of this behavior alone. For this is as much a physiological problem as is blindness or lameness.

Accountability is the power of the person to govern his behavior within the framework of his own world of experience and limited by his physiological handicaps.

Within that range of behavior which is not dictated by the brain damage, the child will be able to choose between right and wrong and to alter his course through repentance. To that extent he will be accountable. And it is this area of behavior which the observer must learn to appraise in order to determine the child's readiness for baptism.

It has already been suggested that the parents are in the best position to do this.

Still there are those who seem to feel that they are doing the parents a favor by taking the decision out of their hands and passing the buck — so to speak — to the bishop. Such reasoning fails to take into account the peculiar psychological attachment which the majority of these parents have for their handicapped children. The need to be responsible is so deep-seated in their personalities that it is psychologically impossible for them to abdicate from it.

The intense resentment which can build up in the mind of a parent when the choice is removed from him can lead to acts of rebellion and even apostasy. One such example came to my attention several years ago when

the president of my local seventies quorum approached me after learning that I had a retarded child in my home. "The Church won't let me baptize my son," he said, with tears in his eyes. Later he confided to me that he had seriously considered taking the boy to a secluded place in the mountains, where he could perform the ordinance in secret.

Now, was this man deluded? Was he lacking in testimony? Was he ready to run off half-cocked for no good reason? No. He was a man whose keen sense of responsibility for his handicapped son would not let him rest. And because he believed the gospel ordinances to be efficacious, he could not find peace until his son had the blessing of baptism.

From my own experience both as a parent and as a teacher of retarded children, I am forced to the conclusion that the dangers of baptizing these children too early and of giving them too much responsibility too soon are vastly outweighed by the dangers of waiting too long. This is particularly true of the child who is living at home and who is in contact with other children of baptismal age. People have traditionally expected too little of these children.

The children who are most frequently denied baptism fall into the group who for educational purposes have been classified as "trainable." These are children with IQs below 55. Dr. Dybwad (quoted earlier) says of them, "It is this group which has astonished even the most experienced mental retardation practitioners by their capacity for achievement." Recent trends in education demonstrate unequivocally that they can accomplish things that were formerly considered to be impossible for them. Indeed, they can do almost anything we *expect* them to do. Educators today are recommending that we place them under considerable pressure to achieve. This is not to say that we will ask them to compete with so-called "normal" children in academic things. But we will expect them to compete with themselves and to be responsible for their own actions. Isn't that, after all, what accountability is all about?

By far the most important consideration in all of this is the mental and moral health of the child. The handicapped child who is forced to sit back and watch younger children enter the Church through baptism while he is denied membership can only conclude that he is somehow not wanted. He is somehow not worthy. He is somehow not of value in the sight of the Lord.

Only through the kind of identification which comes through membership can these children feel a part of the Church. We must learn to trust them . . . for if we do not, we may lose them. Perhaps, after all, the wishes of the child ought to be the deciding factor. What right do we have to place a ceiling on his progress or to damn him to a life of infancy and dependency?

My feeling is that if a child is physically able to be baptized, we ought to bring him into full fellowship with us in the Church when he reaches the age of eight, or soon thereafter. Certainly if he expresses a desire for baptism, we ought to give it to him. If a delay is justified, it should come about only with the consent of the parents. It is true that the bishop must sanction the decision. He must fill out the recommend. But difficult as the ultimate de-

cision about baptism may be, it will be more palatable to the parents if they make the choice themselves. Bishops who try to ease the blow with their own arbitrary decisions may find that they are making enemies rather than friends.

And the tendency to hesitate, to shelter these children too long, is certainly no act of kindness. Progress is an eternal principle, for the handicapped as well as the so-called "normal."

SOME IMPLICATIONS OF HUMAN FREEDOM

Marden J. Clark

The following essay, which won honorable mention in DIALOGUE'S *1968 Silver Awards competition, was originally presented in a somewhat different form at the Senior Awards Banquet of the English Department at Brigham Young University in the spring of 1968.*

Let me begin by admitting that my title, and perhaps my entire paper, begs a major philosophical question. I am well aware of the age-old debate over the reality of free will. I am aware of most of the arguments against free will and in favor of predestination or determinism or scientific mechanism. But I write out of a Mormon background that assumes the absolute reality of "free agency," that sees freedom of the will as an irrevocable gift of God, or as coeternal with Him. I write out of an absolute personal commitment to that belief and an absolute personal assurance that we make meaningful decisions: physical, ethical, moral, spiritual. I know that our freedom is impinged upon from every direction: by physical limitations of all kinds, by internal limitations both genetic and environmental, by social and economic forces, even by God's will, and by all the other forces that restrict or nullify our choices and actions. But beyond all these I profoundly believe that decisions and actions we sense to be willed *are* very often actually and meaningfully willed. I can not prove they are. I only "know" they are. And on this partially empirical, partially existential, wholly religious knowledge I premise all that follows.

I take the fact of human freedom to be so fundamental that it can tell us something about nearly every philosophical, moral, social, and religious

problem that man can explore. My essay is limited to only a few major problems. It works backward, of course, from the usual discussions of free will, which try to affirm or deny the fact of free will from other facts of the universe and of human experience.

Because so much else depends on our concept of God, I want to begin with implications for that concept. We Mormons have very definite concepts of the God we believe in, probably more definite than those of any other Christian group. Yet these distinctly anthropomorphic concepts of God raise significant questions. In what sense, for example, can God be omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and all-good and at the same time be an individual with definite "body, parts, and passions"? Or how can He have these absolute attributes and still Himself be eternally progressing? We have our answers — at least as good as most. But even after the answers are in, we are left with the broad and frustrating difficulty of trying to explain the inexplicable, the ultimate. And sooner or later we have to come to terms with that most fundamental of religious-philosophical problems: how to reconcile God's absoluteness with the fact of evil in His universe.

Nearly all of our usual answers to the problem involve, whether we recognize it or not, an implicit denial of either the absoluteness of God or the reality of evil. We Mormons, with our stress on the need for "opposition in all things," tend toward the latter. That is, if we argue that evil is necessary to know good, we are essentially arguing that evil itself is somehow ultimately good, simply because we cannot have good without it. Similarly, if we argue that God permits evil for His purposes or uses it to help bring about His ends, we wipe out the problem by making evil essentially good, or "privative," or merely the absence of good.

On the other hand, if we see Satan as the author of evil, we have to do so with one of two beliefs: either God permits Satan's activity (or uses it or turns it to good), in which case we are back to some kind of denial of the reality of evil; or He somehow cannot control Satan, in which case God cannot be completely omnipotent. Or if we say that God wills evil without our seeing it at the same time as somehow unreal or positively good, then we are making God the essential author of evil and hence not absolute in goodness. Old Nickles in Archibald MacLeish's *J. B.* sums up the dilemma in his jingle, "If God is God He is not good / If God is good He is not God."

Fortunately, the doctrine of free agency has profound implications for the dilemma. If man is really free, then at least within those limitations in which he is, God cannot be free. That is, God cannot create man free and then retain complete control over him. He cannot tell me, "Thou shalt not kill," and then nullify the implied choice by either preventing me from killing or forcing me to kill. If I am free, He cannot tell me, "Thou shalt not eat of that fruit" and "Multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it," and then *predetermine* which of the conflicting commandments I will obey. He cannot even tell me to "Love the Lord thy God" and to "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and then somehow extract that love by force — not if He is to leave me free.

Similarly for that other age-old religious-philosophical conundrum: how to reconcile man's free will with God's foreknowledge. Here, too, most of our attempts either fail to satisfy or lead to alternatives worse than the problem. We may argue as energetically as we wish that God somehow exists outside of or beyond time, that in His absoluteness all time is spread out before Him as eternally present. Or we may use perhaps the most common response: that just as a parent "knows" his child so well that he can predict almost infallibly how the child will react to a piece of bubble gum placed within reach, so God can know us, His children, infinitely better because of His infinite knowledge.

But whatever absolute validity either may have, both answers disturb me worse than the original dilemma. We escape the dilemma not by handling the horns but by killing off the bull — or the toreador. For if God really exists outside of time and all time is spread out before Him as eternally present, then I find myself in a universe where one of my most certain perceptions — that I live and think and plan and act in time — becomes some kind of trick, a cosmic illusion. And no reassurance that God's foreknowledge is absolute and exerts no causative force on events can rebuild my real world for me. A world where time, with all its sense of reality and significance, disappears into mere illusion — this I recoil from. I become a character on a TV tape, capable of unrolling in time and thinking that that time is absolutely significant, but capable of unrolling only as the tape "knows" I will.

But the other is even worse. If God can know me absolutely — as I know my children partially — then this must mean that I am a knowable creature: absolutely knowable. And I recoil from the implications. The positivistic psychologist could accept the picture, without even bothering to posit God as the knower. To be absolutely knowable, predictable, I must be an absolute mechanism.

No, if we are meaningfully free, God cannot see us spread out in a timeless and meaningless present. Nor can He know us absolutely. Either way, our choices become illusion, possibly real from our standpoint, but cosmically meaningless except perhaps as they fulfill God's foreknowledge.

If I thus summarily dispose of these two oldest and most challenging of philosophical dilemmas (and, of course, I haven't really disposed of them), I do so only from the complete conviction of the meaningfulness of the freedom that poses them in the first place.

Fortunately, I can do so well within the limits of Mormon orthodoxy. For to see the elements as eternal, law as eternal, intelligence as eternal, and the Creation as an organizing of elements (including "intelligences") rather than as creation from nothing, is to see God as limited by the very materials He works with. To see God as somehow involved in, as part of, as leading us forward in a process of "eternal progression" is surely to leave room at the ultimate end of that process for God himself to be somehow progressing, to be struggling with forces or laws or conditions — including the effects of freedom itself — not entirely within even His control. What else do we mean when we say that God is Himself subject to law? or that Christ is the God of this

earth, under God, and hint at a God beyond Elohim? or that the good Mormon is himself progressing toward eventual Godhood? or when we repeat, as we do so often, "As man is, God once was; As God is, man may become"? or when we glory in the promise, "For I the Lord am bound when ye do as I say . . ."? I am aware that other emphases can be — and are — put on these concepts. But the broad center of Mormonism, both historically and presently, tends to put the emphasis where I have, though perhaps not really coming to the implication that the concepts ultimately limit God — but limit Him, I hasten to add, only on a cosmic, an absolute scale: His freedom must seem absolute in comparison to ours — thence, of course, part of the reverence and awe and worship we tender Him.

That very fact — the obvious difference between God's freedom and man's — carries profound implications for freedom itself. Especially if we stress eternal progress and God's having developed to what He is now, freedom cannot be static, either quantitatively or qualitatively. As we exercise it (and grow in doing so) it grows and expands too: freedom begets freedom. In this sense, Plato's early description of the poet fits freedom: "a light and winged and holy thing." It is worthy of our finest understanding, our deepest commitment, our highest quest.

The fact of man's freedom also has profound implications for the nature of man. That he makes meaningful, willed choices should perhaps be enough. But the implications reach out from that central fact in many directions. Perhaps the most far-reaching is that man's freedom, like man himself in Mormon thinking, is not contingent but necessary. Or if contingent, then contingent only on its being exercised. We tend to assume freedom as a gift from God to man. But I suspect the relationship is more complex than that. "In His own image" must surely involve something more than appearance. I have to assume that it refers also to other of God's attributes: His intelligence, His freedom, even His creativity. I would go further. Perhaps God really had no choice in some of these matters. Perhaps, as is suggested by Mormon belief in free agency as an eternal quality of eternal intelligence, Satan's plan was not really an alternative at all. Had God created man without freedom, would He have created *man* at all? Is not man's freedom the real measure of man? Is not man's freedom even the real measure of God's creativity? Otherwise the creation would have resembled much more closely a manufacturing process than genuine creativity.

But whatever its source, the existentialists are right to conceive man's freedom as an inescapable part of his condition as man. Blessed with freedom, condemned to freedom: either way man is free, necessarily free. And what he does with that freedom becomes the measure of his being as man. He can *choose* to ignore it, he can refuse it, he can fritter it away by enslaving himself to habit or to others, he can blanket it under routine: by all these he blasphemes against it. But given normal powers of intelligence and normal capacity, he can also exercise it, expand it, create with it, aim himself (Mormons believe) toward Godhood with it. But escape it he cannot — not and be *man*. Or not and *be*.

If inescapably free, man must be largely on his own, much more so than we Mormons usually consider him. That is, man himself carries much of the responsibility for his own affairs and for God's affairs among men. It is possible, of course, and popular in some recent Mormon thinking, to conceive of this freedom as primarily the freedom to yield oneself to the promptings of the Spirit, who will then take over and guide one's life infallibly as God would have it go. Such a concept has its temptations and surely some truth. But I distrust it as too easy. The choice, once made, passes the responsibility of freedom to the Spirit. Or if we think of the process as a continuing choice or series of choices, it remains always the same choice: to yield or not to yield — though not necessarily always a decision of the same degree of difficulty. Perhaps this oversimplifies to the point of parody. But the concept asks too little and promises too much and offers too easy a scapegoat: Once one has yielded completely to the Spirit, whatever happens can be credited to or blamed on God. It asks for little of even the strenuous positive exercise of freedom in the multiplicity of choices on the broad scale of complexity that we associate with ordinary life.

Much of this also applies to our usual concept of prayer, which we too often consider a means of wheedling from God the blessings He wants to give us anyway. We pray to fulfill our responsibility in a more or less mercantile relationship; God for His part responds by pouring out blessings on us. Again the choice is to pray or not to pray. But as Huck Finn found out, it don't work — at least not this way and not this simply. We have no way of really knowing the extent to which God controls events on earth. But, again if man is really free, God cannot control them completely. Perhaps He *could* end the Vietnam war any time He wants. Perhaps He *is* only waiting for man to achieve a spiritual condition worthy of such a blessing. But to believe so is to believe that God willed the war and wills it to continue. And this I cannot do, any more than I can believe that He willed my mother's fifteen years of suffering or the riots tearing at our cities.

No, men are responsible for these things. Or man's condition as man is. Part of that condition obviously includes forces outside his control: natural forces, group — or mob — action outside the control of any individual involved and often outside anyone's control — and the force of freedom itself, which tends to jostle against other freedoms or other men's freedom. Of course prayer can help. Most of us have seen it help. But we have also seen it fail to help, in any practical sense. We have all prayed for things, for help, for blessings we have not received. Generally we explain this by saying that it was not God's will that we have them, that He simply said no. But again this makes God's will often seem arbitrary or whimsical. I prefer two other explanations: (1) We usually pray wrongly when we pray *for* something (again the mercantile concept of our relations with God). Our prayers should act, I have to believe, primarily as the expression of our reverence, as communion. (2) The fact of man's meaningful freedom prevents God from very much overt interference with man's life. Man can, of course, be free because there is no God or because He does not care about

man, or man about Him. But man can also be free precisely because God does care about him — cares too much to interfere under most circumstances with the exercise of that freedom. To be meaningful, freedom needs constant exercise. Man's constant struggle is the real source of that exercise. Man *has* to be on his own if his free will is to be more than mere theoretical gift.

It follows that the fact of human freedom implies that man himself is neither innately depraved nor innately divine. He is potentially both, or either. But free will places him, as does the Psalmist, a little lower than the the angels, with dominion over the works of God's hands. Here is the key: dominion over God's works, including himself, so long as he genuinely exercises it, so long as he acts as a free agent.

"Natural man" may be the enemy of God, but only if we limit "natural" to mean that which is most brute in us, only if we assume that somehow the Fall changed man so drastically that God could no longer recognize His own image in man. But free will is part of that image. Surely the Fall did not change that. And the Fall itself we see as part of the original creative act: a most crucial part, because only in choosing to eat the fruit could man make possible other meaningful choices, that is, only through such a choice could man bring the gift of freedom to the level of action. To see man, therefore, as naturally evil brings us back to the position I have already rejected of limiting man's freedom to the choice of yielding or not yielding to the Holy Spirit. Man largely creates his own goodness or badness by a continuing process of choosing — not merely between good and evil but between good and good, evil and evil, good and lesser good or higher good, God and whatever is not God.

From here the implications of human freedom spread out so broadly that I can indulge myself only with summary treatment.

If we make meaningful choices between good and evil, it follows that both are completely real. The reality of good, Mormons never question. And only by closing our minds to the world can we any longer question the reality of evil, can we see evil as privative, as merely the absence of good. Dachau and Buchenwald have their absolute reality — still. And so do Birmingham and Dallas and Memphis and Watts and Vietnam. Even the basic idea that we need opposition in all things, with its implicit denial of the reality of evil, needs to be reinterpreted in the light of the reality of free will. Evil, of course, has many sources — but never God. Or God only in the fact of His active creativity and of his having created man. Perhaps God *could* have created a world that had no earthquakes, no volcanoes, no hurricanes, no floods. But He did not. Perhaps He could have made man more peace-loving, more honest, more kind. But He did not. Therefore, I have to see both nature's and man's awesome powers as built into the very process of creation, especially the process of creating free, and hence meaningful, man.

The implications for education are similarly broad. Let me suggest only one. The concept of dynamic freedom involves not merely the right but the capacity to make meaningful choices. And capacity in this sense involves

not merely will but awareness — awareness of alternatives and of their significance. Such awareness is surely the most important product of education. Hence education itself becomes vital and dynamic, not mere preparation for earning a living, not merely the accumulation of knowledge (though knowledge is often vital in how we exercise free will), not even merely preparation for living. Very few periods in what we invidiously call "real life" demand of such constant decision making or present such broad and complex alternatives to choose from — though more may be immediately at stake in real life. Education, then, becomes the process of broadening the base from which significant free will can operate and of providing more or less sheltered situations for it to grow by exercise. And the best education will be that which provides for and encourages the most meaningful and constant decision-making.

Similarly for politics and society: that political and social system is best which provides the broadest base and develops the highest capacity for meaningful decision making. Here, especially, freedom must be conceived as being far beyond rights. Personal or internal capacity would be largely meaningless for some kinds of freedom without the external and public right to exercise it. But conceived dynamically and creatively, freedom is much more an internal matter than an external one. Of course we must protect our freedoms and defend our Constitution. But to prize these primarily as property rights or business rights — or merely as the right to use four-letter words — is to misconceive and degrade them. Freedom cannot mean very much to one who simply isolates himself and hoards it, nor can it mean very much to the ghetto child who brings neither understanding nor experience to bear on possible alternatives. Society's high duty — a free society's high destiny — is to provide the best conditions for conscious and meaningful exercise of freedom.

For morals and ethics as well, the fact of freedom multiplies the significance of choice and even gives moral and ethical implications to choices that have little such apparent concern. For to see freedom as a fundamentally creative force within both the individual and society is to tinge nearly all questions with connotations of right and wrong: What we create of ourselves and our society becomes the ultimate moral question.

The one implication I want to explore is that moral and ethical problems probably should not be resolved in either of the extreme ways often used: the social approach which derives standards from the broad standards of the community, or the absolutist approach that refers all problems to an "idea" of morality or to God's commandments. This is not to say that communal practice or God's commandments should exert no moral pressure in our lives. But to have dynamic freedom, we must (again) consciously and meaningfully choose, and choose as aware as we can be of possible alternatives and probable consequences. Put differently, a commitment to human freedom implies distrust of simply going along with the crowd for any reason, and especially a distrust of what Milton calls a "cold and cloistered virtue." Virtue as mere abstinence may be a way to get through crucial years toward maturity; but it can never bring genuine maturity. The Pill obvious-

ly has its moral dangers. It probably can and does increase premarital unchastity, and perhaps even adultery. But virtue based on fear — whether of social disapproval, pregnancy, or disease — has never been virtue at all. Like freedom, virtue must be conceived as a positive, creative, even healing force: He "knew that virtue had gone out of Him," at the touch of the hem of His garment. We probably can never un-invent the Pill. What we can do is insist on its significance for positive moral action and let it broaden the scope and meaning of our free moral choices. What kind of a *me* will result if I commit fornication or adultery? What kind of a society will I tend toward creating? Such questions do not leave behind the fact of God's commandments. They even intensify, especially for Mormons, the probable personal and social results of violating the commandments. But they also squarely place the responsibility where it has to rest anyway: on "me" as agent consciously and creatively willing the act, or the abstention.

And now to implications for literature, which generated much of my interest in the implications of freedom. If man's freedom involves some kind of limitation of God's absoluteness, if God *had* to create man free, if man's freedom itself, or the way men exercise it, is largely responsible for evil and suffering in God's universe, then it follows that tragedy is built into the very structure of freedom, the very structure of the universe. On the simplest level, the capacity to choose involves the inevitable capacity to choose wrongly. On a much higher level, the capacity to choose involves a multiplicity of choices. One choice rubs against and influences other choices. My choices rub against and influence yours. Freedom rubs against and conflicts with freedom. King Lear is free to choose Regan and Goneril and to reject Cordelia, Macbeth to murder Duncan, Medea to kill her children. But none of them can escape the consequences of his or her choices. And the choices profoundly involve others until finally they reverberate on the cosmic level.

If God was not free to create man other than free, then man's capacity for tragic action is part of God's creativity and God is profoundly involved Himself in tragedy — cosmic tragedy. I have dreamed of, even projected, all this toward a cosmic tragedy in which I envision a series of parallel scenes on earth and in heaven. The central scene will show man poised in agonizing indecision with his finger on the Button. Atomic war, he knows, will destroy his universe. And yet his earlier choices, events for which he must be held at least partially responsible, have brought him to this supreme and terrible choice. Either alternative is terrible, both for him and absolutely. In heaven, God and the angels watch. God, too, knows that atomic war will destroy this part of the universe He has created. He too knows the alternatives. Perhaps he can reach out and stop man's hand. This the first scene, and the last. In between a series of flashbacks: to the Council in Heaven, to the Garden, to Noah and the flood, to Abraham and Isaac, to God and Satan and Job, to Gethsemane, to Cumorah. And always if man is really free, God is not — not entirely. In this fact may lie the ultimate Gethsemane of a creating, loving God. But also perhaps His ultimate glory. My tragedy has no ending, at least none that I can conceive as dramatically viable. To

push the Button ends all choice. Not to push it means the choice must be repeated over and over and over — as indeed it must if man is to be man. But the projection of these ideas as basic facts of man's condition might be all I could ask.

For all this, I must believe, is built into man's condition, into his freedom. I can interpret in no other way those conflicting commandments in Eden, the willed suffering of Gethsemane, the panorama of human suffering all along the way, the awesome responsibility forced on man today by the fact of the bomb. It is hardly a comfortable picture. No wonder our existentialist writers contemplating the fact of human freedom dramatize their sense of alienation and *angst*. Whatever else, the picture tells me that Joseph Wood Krutch is fundamentally wrong when he argues that, because of the shrunken stature of man, we cannot create tragedy in the modern world or even respond meaningfully to the great tragedies of the past. Experience tragedy! If my analysis has any validity, we cannot avoid experiencing it — not if we sense deeply the fact and the implications of our freedom. We experience it the more profoundly in the theater and in our reading, precisely because we experience it in our awareness of life, of what we are as humans, of what it means to be free.*

But tragedy, Northrup Frye argues, is incipient comedy. What we recognize as the regenerative — or generative — effects of his suffering on King Lear reaches toward the happy ending at the same time that it intensifies the tragedy. The highest comedy (as in *The Divine Comedy)* can follow only from the descent into the Inferno. Considered mythically, the happy ending completes the cycle. And I do not want to leave my reader in the Inferno: My essay does have a happy ending.

But we must return briefly to cosmic things. If the fact of human freedom implies a God not fully absolute, not fully controlling man's universe and destiny; if it implies a heavy burden of responsibility for man himself and less certainly of the outcome of his exercising of that responsibility; if it implies tragedy built into the very structure of God's creativity and of his universe — it also relieves God of the primary responsibility for suffering and evil in His universe and man of the responsibility of worshiping a God who is the author of evil as well as of good. It relieves our religious leaders of the burden (a terrifying one it must be at times) of infallibility: They too are human, hence free, hence subject to error. And I can honor and respect them far more and follow them far more meaningfully because I do not have to believe that everything they say is absolute. Again, such a response forces evaluation and choice, but these are the very life and meaning of freedom.

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*I wish here to express again my debt to Dr. P. A. Christensen, for many years Chairman of the English Department at Brigham Young University. I cannot know the extent to which his ideas of tragedy infuse those I have just outlined. I do know, however, that I consider his treatment of the relation of tragedy to religion one of the great original essays on tragedy. I do know that he sparked my interest in tragedy and kept pumping oxygen to it. And I do know that I seldom start following an elusive idea down a difficult trail without at some turn meeting the mind of Dr. Christensen. I thank him for having been there.

But the real happy ending is still more positive. For, I have argued, the struggle itself to choose, to know alternatives, to grow in freedom (as to grow in the gospel), involves us in a self-expanding, self-creating process: freedom begets freedom. We create — always within limits — ourselves, our freedom, our world. And since we do so, man's freedom itself becomes absolutely meaningful, a light and winged and holy thing, but also profoundly a thing of substance, a kind of self-renewing plastic clay that, even as we mould with it, increases in both quantity and quality: the sculptor's dream! The sculptor's dream — suggesting we are all sculptors of our lives — but also his necessity, the necessity of any art.

And I finally come to the significant implications for creativity. The human freedom I have tried to define implies an absolute commitment to creativity itself. Art thrives on freedom, as we all know. But art is also one kind of ultimate exercise and expression of freedom. When Taine posited a deterministic theory of creativity, he may have committed the final blasphemy against art. For no matter how much we can explain about any given work of art by knowing the race, the milieu and the moment that produced it, we still have the work itself that transcends explanation. It stands as achieved, as created fact: the product of a succession of conscious or subconscious choices — a choice in every word of a poem, every note of a symphony, every stroke of a brush. Hence the artist may well be the freest of humans, though most bound by the necessity to impose significant form on his materials. Whatever the internal pressures that help force it into being, the achieved actuality, the created work, has to be the product of choices. This is what we mean by creativity. A magic enough process, to be sure, but largely a very conscious process, a conscious exercise of willed, aware, responsible choices, all directed toward the supreme end: the work of art.

This much for the artist himself. No matter how much he may profess to believe in a blind, deterministic universe, he knows that his own act of creativity is not blind or predetermined — that it is a conscious, willed struggle. And if he consciously believes the universe absurd but man free, then his created work becomes the gauntlet he throws in the face of that absurdity, his ultimate assertion and proof of his freedom. He is driven by what I call, awkwardly enough, the creative imperative: the imperative to create of his freedom meaning in his meaningless universe. I have to see that imperative as forced on anyone really committed to the fact of human freedom. We may know that our universe is not ultimately meaningless, we may know that it is absolutely meaningful in a cosmic scheme. But if we are free we are committed to create of it and ourselves the highest meaning inherent in it and ourselves.

I assume that all this applies most fully to the creative artist, the one who finally achieves significant art. But on differing scales it must apply just as absolutely to all of us. Our freedom imposes upon us in our reading or experiencing of any work of art the necessity to involve ourselves actively in a kind of re-creative process that participates somehow in the original creative act. It imposes upon us in our writing, any kind of writing, the

responsibility to see writing not as assignments or work to be "done" but as opportunities to engage ourselves in creative activity — for that is exactly what every kind of meaningful writing is. It imposes upon us as teachers and prospective teachers, and even as present students (all Mormons are always students), the imperative to make of our classrooms living demonstrations, somehow, of freedom in action and of freedom's complex meaning. It imposes upon us in our scholarly work, our business activities, our day-to-day labor, the imperative to make these activities help us create an ever higher potential within ourselves. It imposes upon us in our religious activities the imperative to create the profoundest spiritual awareness and spiritual communion and spiritual selves that we are capable of creating. Our freedom imposes upon us the imperative to offer our highest worship through our creativity to the God who used His freedom to create us.

Again, such an imperative will not necessarily make for comfortable, well-adjusted Mormons. It may even make us discontented. But discontented, I would hope, with a measure of what Dr. P. A. Christensen used to call "divine discontent." Such discontent must be largely the *vertu* that engenders all creativity: artistic, religious, educational, personal. Such discontent coupled with our sense of the cosmic, public, and personal significance and dignity of freedom, all grows out of the imperatives it imposes. We cannot, at least at this stage of our being, *be* gods. But we *can* participate on our level and with our capacities (nearly always much greater than we let them be — or force them to be) in His most vital attribute: His creativity. We cannot all write a *King Lear* or a *Paradise Lost* or compose a *Ninth Symphony* or synthesize diamonds or create a General Electric. But we can and do participate in the creativity that produced all these. The joy and glory of our humanness comes in our so participating. And in the process we may even come to know the absolute significance of our commitment to creativity and to meaningful human freedom. We may even come to know, in other words, something of the implications of our human freedom.

Above: Junked station wagon used as gate in division fence at Hite, Utah (now underwater). To go through the gate, one opened the car door, slid through the front seat over the packrats' nest and out the opposite door, closing it behind one. Left: This old community mailbox by the cottonwood tree is gone now.

ART, BEAUTY AND COUNTRY LIFE IN UTAH

Elizabeth Sprang

Illustrated with sketches by the author

Elizabeth Sprang is an artist who lives with her husband on a ranch in southern Utah. She has exhibited her art work at the Library of Congress Annual National Print Show, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Denver All-Western Exhibit, the Northwest Printers Annual Exhibit, and The Los Angeles County Art Museum (but not, she informs us, in Utah). A convert to Mormonism "after being an unbeliever for nearly fifty years," she has taught Sunday School and Relief Society.

"Thank goodness I don't have to live *there*! How do they stand it?" The revolting, depressing drabness and ugliness of the little Mormon towns we were driving through made my artist's soul shiver. Never had I seen more gorgeously gaudy scenery and wide horizons than on my first trip to Utah in the 1940's – and never more contrast between the beauty of the land and man-made patches of ugliness.

Later my life changed. I came to live in rural Utah. Though my husband was not a Mormon farmer, fate set me down on a ranch outside town, in an area scenically beautiful, economically depressed. After about a year there, I joined the L.D.S. Church.

In the thirteen years since, I have developed great affection and respect for some Mormon country people. They are my friends. No, I haven't grown to love messiness, but I have reached some conclusions as to why things are as they are. Some I wouldn't want to change, some I don't know how to, and some I'm not about to try to.

In our part of the state nearly all land not federally owned belongs to Mormons. People from "outside" are barely beginning to come in, attracted

by the low taxes, the outdoor life, the slow pace, or the possibilities of profit from tourism. On the other hand, young people raised here usually leave to find jobs or more scope for their talents — the land won't support them. According to Peter Gould, geographers with computers have made surveys and maps which show that as far as a place to live is concerned, "people tend to carry in their heads an image of America with a high ridge of desirability along the West Coast that falls steeply over Utah and Nevada."

But I believe our kind of land will be increasingly important aside from its production of beef, wool, timber, and the like. The phrase "recreational values" doesn't quite express it. It involves an even more vital meaning in people's lives, which a little later I'm going to try to explain.

The fact that I have chosen to speak from the aesthetic viewpoint doesn't mean I am unaware of all other aspects from which one could write about Southern Utah; it simply means that this aspect is the one which drives me to expression.

These poplars have been cut down.

I am a painter and printmaker who has worked in one field of art or another all of my life. I can no more help being affected by the way things look than I can help breathing. In this respect I am an oddball among most of my neighbors. Visual satisfaction means little to them — they're too busy with "important" matters: their children, their salvation, the unending fight to make ends meet. When we try to communicate across this gap, it's sometimes baffling to both parties.

I will say sweepingly that women are generally the motivating force behind making things look better, and any progress in that direction will be largely due to them. This doesn't mean I think women are better, finer, more artistic, or more civilized than men. It means I think local social attitudes have caused love of beauty to be classified as belonging in the women's department. Since masculinity has more prestige than femininity in contemporary life, it is taken for granted that men suppress, ignore, or turn into other channels their artistic energy.

This may or may not have any relation to Church doctrine or teaching.

It could be a matter of interpretation and emphasis. "God's house is a house of order." "If there be anything virtuous, lovely, of good report, or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." "Man is that he might have joy."

Maybe I'm wrong, but it seems not to have occurred to most Mormon farmers, sheepmen, cattlemen, miners, timber-cutters, road-builders that there is any connection between their Church's teaching of eternal progress toward a goal of perfection and a creative, loving, appreciative interest in their environment. I have met a few local men (very few) who are concerned with the looks of their corrals and yards, a few who express real love for the landscape. Come to think of it, they are divided about half and half between Church members and non-members. I conclude these rare souls must have an unusual great inborn love of order that overcomes other considerations. But to most of them it's irrelevant. Why?

I theorize it could never have been made clear to them that aesthetic considerations are part and parcel of the creative wellspring which could transform every corner of their lives. They have compartmented love and beauty into one area alone — priesthood and family. They have no interest in art as art, certainly, and no desire to develop their own knowledge or taste; if there is any question, they gladly accept the pronouncement of an Authority. They say,

"I don't give a hoot for the scenery."

"I never look up at the cliffs."

"I never thought anybody'd want to *look* at the danged thing [an interesting rock formation] so I took my rifle and shot its head off."

Despite the fact these men are rooted here, love it, and wouldn't want to live anywhere else, they seldom express any feeling for the region's loveliness and grandeur. Some collect rocks, arrowheads, or artifacts; but any admiration they may feel for the visual aspects of nature seems largely inarticulate. Stewart Alsop has well said, "Out of our closeness to the frontier there has grown, I think, an American cult of ugliness. When survival came first, a man who cared about beauty would be hounded out of town. Out of the frontier past has grown a subconscious consensus that there is something manly about messiness and ugliness, something sissified about whatever is handsome, or well-ordered, or beautiful."

Contributing to the situation may be the humble, unaspiring notion that anything well designed has had too much thought wasted on it, is pretentious, and "too fancy for us Mormons." I can think of many examples of this that have stopped me cold. Thinking about it, I've wondered whether it isn't bound up with a parallel unwillingness to use good English in everyday speech in our part of the country. It seems to be socially disapproved as a sign of one-upness or trying to be "better'n anybody else."

One might say there is a good solid tradition of non-neatness here. No one questions it. A perfectly acceptable status symbol is a new car parked in front. But a house and yard too well-kept, or a barn and fence in back that are clean and neat — that doesn't mean anything! "Whyn't you get a new car instead of that old heap?"

Once I made a list, in order, of objects piled by the front gate of a nearby ranch:

1 saddle
1 moose antler
3 old tires
1 empty Havoline oil can
2 rusty sleds
1 busted bicycle
2 five-gallon cans
3 lengths of chain
1 rubber boot
3 Coke bottles
1 rusty caulking gun
1 packsaddle
1 wad of rope
Another rubber boot
1 jeep can
2 galoshes
2 Indian grinding stones
1 clotted mass of unidentifiable cardboard and papers

Wow! I've sometimes wickedly wished I could see the expression on a Swiss farmer's face were he magically transported to a layout in Southern Utah. A Swiss who has five cows is rich, yet there is no over-grazing in Switzerland, no despoiling of natural features; no tree may be cut without permission; junk yards are concealed behind high fences; wood for the farmhouse is sorted by size, stacked in piles so straight you'd think a transit was used, and laid in pretty geometric patterns with evident pride of workmanship. Manure is raked into strikingly handsome, even mounds. Back yards, barnyards and outskirts of villages are so incredibly neat it makes you think all debris, garbage, and rusty machinery must vaporize in thin air — none is ever visible.

People in other rural regions as well have managed to live in harmony with nature and fit in with the landscape. I'm thinking of the Navajos, the Mexicans, the Japanese, the Balinese — all before modern civilization came, of course.

But Utah farmers are used to their way of doing things. They've never been to other countries. Their last surviving small farms, their little towns with inhabitants still tied to a one-cow economy (milk shed in the back) are, to the elder generation at least, a sort of ghetto. Until television came, they were unbelievably cut off from the world. But even if the people do know more of the outside, their religious beliefs reinforce habit. They're used to being different, to never doubting the rightness of their ways.

Reinforcing the status quo are financial considerations. It takes a lot of time and energy to keep a place cleaned up, and if a man's working hard at something else, how can he afford the time? In some cases where people

do have the money to hire it done, they have been so long cramped in the bonds of rigid economy they can't change. It amazes me how they let saving a few dollars take precedence not only over beauty, but over comfort and convenience as well. (The glorious thing is they usually don't let it come above human considerations.)

Bound up with the whole problem is a certain amount of human inertia, of course. After two generations of neglect it would indeed be a task to clear all the trash, scraps of wire, and rusty metal out of a pasture, or clear the accumulated fallen trees and limbs away.

But how is it such maniacal energy can always be summoned to the task of cutting down trees? Not dead trees. Live ones. The early settlers planted them. We seem to be obsessed with getting rid of them. How many times have I seen magnificent cottonwoods chopped down because (1) they "made it hard to grow a lawn," (2) the roots were heaving the sidewalk, (3) a limb might fall on the roof, (4) the leaves obscured a business sign — when the main reason tourists would stop would be to get shade, or (5) they were in the way of one out of several possible routes surveyed for a highway.

Nobody, nobody at all, protested when local power company employees went through small towns amputating every tree on Main Street (the towns' only real attraction) instead of merely trimming the limbs around the wires as is required by law elsewhere. The town of Mt. Carmel had *all* trees on the road through town cut down years ago. The town of Torrey assassinated a row of giant trees along a side street (a wide dirt road actually, with no sidewalks, then or since) because they were four feet over a hypothetical sidewalk line on a town map.

To balance things off, sensitive artistic perception is found when one least expects it. Perhaps it's inborn like creative talent, and later events accidentally bring it out.

When my husband and I designed and built a house using local labor,

we used many native materials such as lichened rocks, juniper trunks, weathered gray timbers. People are still coming to see this strange thing.

"Why would anyone spend a zillion dollars on a new house and then put some kind of gunk on it to make it look old?"

"You going to varnish them old planks, aren't you?"

"Why didn't you get some *new* bricks instead of *that* old stuff?"

But we heard also:

"Well, I've been cutting them junipers for fence posts all of my life, and I never noticed till now they're beautiful!"

"When I first saw you getting them old shack boards to use on a wall inside, I thought isn't that the damndest thing, but now you've got 'em in, I like 'em. It's an oddity."

Some of the local workers seemed truly to enjoy contributing, and showed real talent in craftsmanship as well as in helping to arrange the landscaping. They seemed to take pride in the finished whole. We don't flatter ourselves we've had any transforming influence on the community, but of course people do incalculably influence each other. Things are changing in our county. Children come back from college, from missions abroad. Ideas come in, circulate, and germinate. In the short time I've lived in Utah I've noticed definite improvement in civic beautification, town clean-ups, use of modern agricultural methods, better service to the traveling public.

As I say, women are usually responsible for initiating these projects. Of course they couldn't have carried them out without the men's help. If the women had the physical strength, I believe they'd have long ago found the time to tear down the eyesores, haul away tons of junk, remove worn-out cars slowly sinking into the earth at the spot they breathed their last gasp, or get a few yards of gravel to spread in front of the house to make it possible to get out of the car without stepping in mud.

This is but one of local women's frustrations. They have to cope with more than men do — not only the common external pressures, sometimes including the demand for heavy labor, but biological functions to which their whole lives must be adjusted. They not only have to make the best of everything, subject themselves to the priesthood, adapt their lives to the patterns of their men's, but are trapped by the inexorable demands of child-bearing and rearing, which in their economic stratum often means years of first-class slavery.

I stare in awe at the miniscule log cabins in which families of ten or more children are known to have been raised; at the ancient lonely blackened farmhouses without conveniences, where women managed to keep house for years without going queer; at the forlorn children's graves bounded by homemade markers. I've talked to women who can remember when there was no doctor, only a couple of midwives, in an area of over 20,000 square miles. I've heard hair-raising tales of pioneer women's deaths in childbirth. My hat is off to all these country women. They didn't just "come in and grow flowers after the men got things cleared away"; they had it the worst.

I sense in many of the farm wives I know, in spite of their sometime

indifference to appearance, a reaching out, a hunger for beauty which undeveloped taste prevents from finding a channel. I've heard it expressed wistfully, resignedly –

"I'd like to live just *once* where you didn't come in through the corrals and have to come into the house through the kitchen!"

"I'm *tired* of sweeping mud out of the house. This winter I just give up."

"The winters ain't so bad but it's the danged spring that goes on for so long."

"I think I need a vacation, but I don't know how I'm going to get one."

"When we first come, I spent two years getting the yard and corrals cleaned up, all by myself. Now we've moved to another farm, and it's just as bad. I'm not going to do it this time. It's nothing but a waste; John, *he* don't care."

"That's a purty tablecloth. You care a lot about them kind of things at first, but after you git a few babies, there ain't no time."

"Them danged cows got in the yard again and ate up all the stuff I planted! Darvon, he can't seem to get the fence fixed so they don't get in."

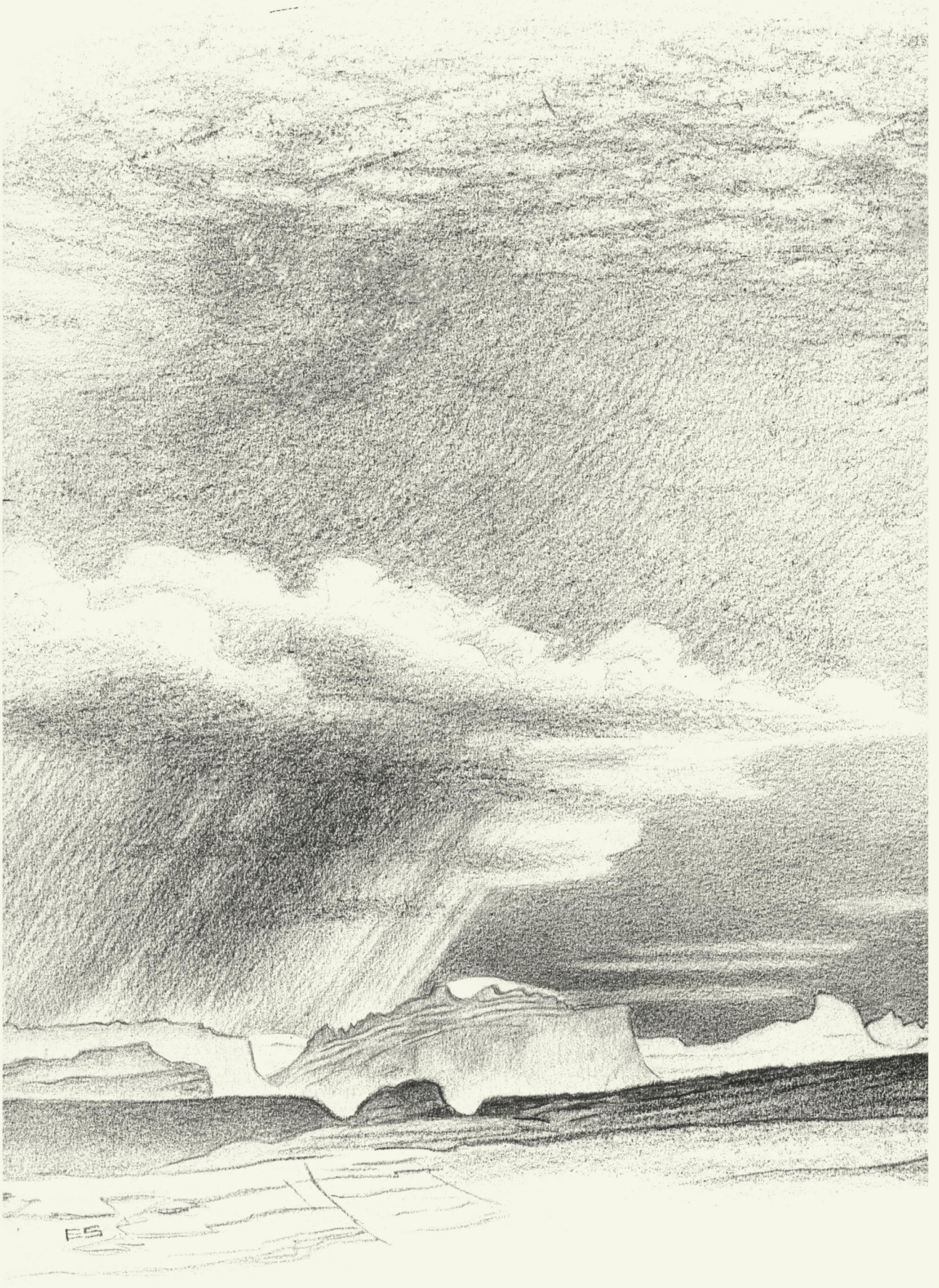
In spite of these rare complaints, which no one seems to take very seriously, many women I've met are happy dynamos of energy during the years of raising their families. Obviously they take real satisfaction in cooking, sewing, keeping house, and mounting a continuous attack on dirt and disorder. To me they seem more secure and content than their city sisters, although their interests are far narrower.

Probably it's only lack of education, tradition and opportunity which prevents them from blossoming out with some kind of folk art, from wearing more imaginative clothes, or insisting on good design in objects of daily use. I'm sure they have the ability; it just hasn't been channeled that way, for reasons too complex for understanding.

In other cultures, as Franz Boas notes, even the poorest people have produced work of aesthetic value in decorating their tools, their houses, their clothing. I think of the modern Quechua women on the altiplano of Peru and Bolivia, a locality reminiscent of Utah. They too are busy having babies, and they work in the fields. They are so poor as to sometimes be totally outside the money economy. They produce folk art – woven, knitted, and embroidered articles that are ravishingly beautiful. Their color sense is so sure that they come up with costumes so brilliant they make well-heeled foreign tourists look tacky.

How do they do it, when we don't? For one thing, the Andean Indians have no access to the cheap, badly designed manufactured articles we are wallowing in. They've been handing down their knowledge of pottery and weaving technique, color and design for two or three thousand years. In all that time they've not had enough contact with the world outside to break up their traditions.

Our Utah women haven't that kind of background. They don't nurture originality. They treasure little things like a "boughten" TV ornament made of shells, coral, plastic flamingos and palm trees; or a quilt or pillow they've



made in Relief Society from a copied design; or a bad reproduction of a bad painting.

I can see why. No one has shown them that good design and function can be part of everything they handle — not a separate thing kept in a compartment labeled "luxury." These little bits of beauty bring them pleasure while they live in a daily scene of disorder, clutter, and confusion — which can be as much a destructive force as hate, meanness, or evil.

I understand perfectly why, when they are able to move a step up the economic ladder, they don't want to buy anything Provincial or Early American, but usually enter with joy and relief into the Outer Space Modrun, overstuffed 1920 Sears catalog, chrome-and-shiny-varnish, painted velvet picture stage of taste development. That type of furnishing is almost the only thing available hereabouts; our merchants have local taste figured to a hair.

While I have no right to imply to a neighbor lady that her new furnishings are in hideous taste, I have spoken out — to no effect — when people started cleaning up so drastically that away went valuable relics of the past. Here again is a communications gap: to me, old gray fences and board corrals and log cabins aren't necessarily crummy. Some have marvelous design and texture. My artist friends and I greatly enjoy drawing, painting, and photographing them; they're part of the scene. But I'm frustrated because I haven't found any way to explain to a non-artist the difference between a picturesque landmark and a scabrous old building. Particularly when some structures contain elements of both.

Summer or winter, rocks and trees and anything that's been long in the weather have an ancient, worn kind of beauty that I love. I can find no word in English for this. The Japanese have two, *wabi* and *sabi*. *Sabi* means serene, lonely, desolate — a look that can be produced only by time — a sort of bloom things have for awhile before they go. *Wabi* means forlorn, abandoned, humble. Examples of both are plentiful in our county. I've seen color schemes created by the elements on junked car enamel that you wouldn't believe. (Not that I wish to preserve junked cars in a museum.) There are old wagons, old markers, old grinding stones, wooden mining machinery, exquisite old barn boards that have been in the sun and snow for forty and fifty years. I hear in other parts of the country people are gathering these up and getting high prices for them. Utah hasn't been picked over yet. These weathered objects, when they're not just rubbish, convey a hint of the nostalgic, the poetic, the days that are no more. They are symbols of the fact that all things pass away, only the elements endure forever.

I've tried to point out this kind of beauty to local people, usually without success. It's too closely associated in their minds with poverty and early hardscrabble days. They are unable to find anything good in what's old, worn, rough or natural. It seems to take a couple of generations' remove.

I do enjoy seeing things tidied up, yes, but please use discrimination! As it is, pioneer cabins with hand-hewn square logs have been torn down. The first settler's hut in Fruita was wiped out. Charming old Victorian houses are allowed to go to rack and ruin, way past the point where they

could be profitably restored. The Bureau of Land Management has been guilty of removing many landmarks of the Old West in our area, such as the corrals and building at Eggnogg and The Post — presumably under the theory that people want a sanitized version of former days, not a reminder of the way people actually lived.

The National Park Service took apart and carted off a wonderful, great ripple-rock slab fence that once ornamented Doc Inglesby's place in Fruita. It was very beautiful, unique, weighed tons, and wasn't in anyone's way, but perhaps because it was a relic of an old-timer it was thought unsuitable.

Utah schools are somewhat to blame for an attitude of non-conservation. They teach nothing of local prehistory. Indian petroglyphs and pictographs and old Indian living sites are routinely defaced by school children and stripped of their artifacts (to be kept in a cigar box that eventually gets lost). There is no "outdoor education" such as California and many other states have been giving fifth and sixth graders for many years. Such a course would include education in conservation, scientific awareness, ecology, aesthetics based on contact with nature and appreciation of our country's rich natural heritage of the outdoors. That kind of thing is taught in Israel, in England, in Germany and other places, but not here. In this, our school boards of course reflect attitudes of local people who have been fighting nature all their lives and can't understand the need to re-program themselves.

It's hard for anyone to realize how fast the situation has changed. As the rest of the world becomes more and more crowded, countryside like ours becomes rarer. Many Utah communities have been too isolated to have an overall view of their assets to the nation. For instance, the town of Boulder was within living memory reachable only by pack train — the last "pack horse town" in the United States, always snowed in in winter.

Glen Canyon of the Colorado is already gone — replaced by a dammed lake — gone because Utah didn't have the vision or the political power to protest.

When so much of our natural landscape is being destroyed by the demands of mass housing and transportation created by overpopulation, places like Southern Utah are welcome islands where the works of man can be seen in proportion to the rest of the universe. Contact with nature is supposed to be a human necessity. Rural Utah is about as far away as one can get from the bureaucratic-industrial complex of modern American cities, unless it's somewhere in the Adirondacks. How often I see people who come to visit us take deep breaths as they gaze around them at the landscape with a look of incredulous relief and satisfaction mixed with longing!

Our Utah is sometimes almost *too* beautiful. For me, in summer and fall living here can be like eating cake everyday. Occasionally I need a visit to the city, with its vital stirring of crowds of all sorts of people and events, the free exchange of variegated ideas, the stimulation of rushing about — and the noise, congestion, smog and stink to make me appreciate quiet, space, peace and pure air! Before long I have come back, however.

Even in the stark winter aspect there is something that satisfies my soul.

Not that I don't realize on another level its real grimness: the filthy barnyards, the mud-caked livestock, the endless mud tracking into the houses (drearily exposed as needing a coat of paint), the monotony of life, the fight against cold and isolation, the daily hassle to get the truck started, the wind that blows till one is ready to dig a hole, crawl in, and never come out. Sometimes driving through town in winter I have to set my teeth and tell myself, "You chose this. It's your habitat now. Get used to it."

At the same time I can't help drinking into my being the delicate loveliness of the lines of rip-gut fences scribbled against the untracked snow, the remote-looking mountains, the cozy house lights of the little towns shining out as the ultramarine dusk deepens: bleak, harsh beauty pure and clear as a cathedral bell ringing.

The fascinating textures of earth and grasses in frozen fields with varying amounts of snow powdered or blown on them are endless sources of interest. The silhouettes of bare trees and barns, or the new moon etched behind Lombardy poplars dark and sharp, make patterns so handsome there's no end to looking and studying.

Rimbaud said, "The goal of life is the transformation of the self into a maker of poetry or beauty. This transformation is more important than anything done along the way." To me this is the same as the Mormons' teaching that in the highest state of life to which we may progress, the ability to perceive, savor, and to *live* beauty will be total. The Navajos say it too: "May you walk in beauty."

Nowadays anyone who persists in believing in the perfectability of man should probably have his head examined. But I do know that definite advancement in sensitivity to environment can come to an individual with the passage of time.

I sometimes wonder how to hint to my neighbors that they could begin now — with small questions of taste like buying paper kitchen towels plain instead of imprinted with a bad design, or *really* looking at what's around their feet when they get out in the hills. But I don't believe in anyone's right to impose concepts on anyone else. They must come of themselves.

Everyone who knows how to open himself to them can discover his own particular delights somewhere to counterbalance the bad things of life. To find them is vital to survival. For some, a place to retreat from the coming megalopolis will always be necessary. When the country people in sparsely populated parts of Utah see how outsiders regard their heritage, they may be inclined to hold all its aspects more dear.

THE CONVERSION OF SIDNEY RIGDON TO MORMONISM

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Late in October 1830, four tired Mormon missionaries reached the village of Mentor, Ohio. Their leader, Parley P. Pratt, had persuaded them to walk two hundred miles out of their way to bring the message of the Book of Mormon to his friend, Sidney Rigdon. It was to be a most opportune meeting for both Rigdon and the representatives of the infant Mormon movement. The Book of Mormon gave Rigdon answers to questions which he had been asking for years. The Mormon movement was to him the end of his quest for the fullness of the gospel as Jesus had taught it in New Testament times. Mormonism found in Rigdon a mighty spokesman and dedicated leader.

Rigdon was one of the best known and respected revivalists in the Western Reserve. He had been an important leader among the Mahoning Baptist Association and then the Disciples of Christ. However, in the spring of 1830 Rigdon had separated himself and his Mentor congregation from the Campbellite fellowship. When the Mormon missionaries visited him, Rigdon was desperately searching for a religious organization which contained the fullness of the New Testament gospel. Pratt and his companions brought to Rigdon and his congregation the claims of a latter-day prophet, a new

religion, and a new Scripture. "They professed to be special messengers of the Living God, sent to preach the Gospel in its purity, as it was anciently preached by the Apostles."[1] This claim greatly excited Rigdon, as he had constantly tried and failed to establish the "ancient order of things" in Alexander Campbell's religious movement. Rigdon was nevertheless very skeptical of Mormonism because "they had with them a new revelation, which they said had been translated from certain gold plates that had been deposted in a hill" (Corrill, p. 7). Pratt offered to debate the matter, but Rigdon refused; he preferred to learn about Joseph Smith, who claimed to be a prophet, and to read the Book of Mormon. He believed that if this religious body really contained the New Testament gospel in its purity he would know it through inspiration. Rigdon fervently hoped that this new movement would give the solution to his search for religious truth.

Rigdon's consuming passion for the truth and his pursuit of knowledge began when he was a boy on his father's farm near St. Clair Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Sidney's brother, Loammi, was unable to earn a living by farming because some undescribed illness made him unfit to work in the fields. "It was the rule in the country, that when a boy was too feeble to work on a farm they would send him to school to give him an education." Loammi's parents sent him to Transylvania Medical School at Lexington, Kentucky. William Rigdon, Sidney's father, believed that he could afford higher education for one of his sons if compelled by necessity, but not for more than one. "Sidney Rigdon wanted to go to school and pleaded with his father and mother to let him go with his brother . . . , but they would not consent to let him go, saying to him, he was able to work on the farm."[2]

Sidney Rigdon had learned to read at a log schoolhouse near his home. A rudimentary education was generally considered sufficient; as late as 1816 fewer than one quarter of the school-age children in the neighboring area of Pittsburgh were receiving any formal education.[3] When he was not allowed to accompany his brother to medical school, Sidney rebelled against his father's authority. He told his parents that "he would have as good an education as his brother got and they could not prevent it" (Rigdon, p. 3). He read all the books he could borrow from his neighbors. His particular interests were history and the Bible and these two sources of information became the undergirdings of his intellectual life.

William Rigdon, a stern Baptist farmer who had no tolerance for idleness, believed that a young man with a sound body should not waste time

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[1]John Corrill, *Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints (Commonly Called Mormons) Including an Account of Their Doctrine and Discipline with the Reasons of the Author for Leaving the Church* (St. Louis, 1839), p. 7. Hereafter cited as Corrill.

[2]John W. Rigdon, "Lecture on Early Mormon Church," delivered at Salt Lake City in 1906 (holograph manuscript on deposit at the Washington State Historical Society Library). Hereafter cited as Rigdon.

[3]Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1770–1830* (Cambridge, 1959), p. 136.

reading books. He would not allow Sidney a candle by which to read at night, so the boy gathered hickory bark, which was plentiful around the farm. "He used to get it [the bark] and at night throw it on the old fireplace and then lay with his face headed towards the fire and read history till near morning unless his parents got up and drove him to bed before that time."

History and the Bible became one for Sidney Rigdon. The Bible told the history of a so-called "chosen people," and Rigdon interpreted the history of the world since New Testament times in terms of biblical prophecy. He did not share the interests of the other farm youths in his neighborhood. "He was never known to play with the boys; reading books was the greatest pleasure he could get" (Rigdon, p. 3).

In 1817 Rigdon professed to have had a conversion experience. His pastor, the Reverend David Phillips of the Peter Creek Church, encouraged him to became a Baptist minister. After his father died in 1819, Sidney supported his mother on the family farm. During this time he continued to read constantly. He taught himself English grammar, which made his language very precise. At the age of twenty-six, Sidney set out to find a new life for himself, and his mother went to live with her daughter, Lacy Boyer. Rigdon's knowledge of the Bible and history and his excellent command of English greatly aided his career when he chose to become a minister of the gospel. He spent the winter of 1818–19 with the Reverend Andrew Clark of Beaver County, Pennsylvania. Rigdon read the Bible with Clark and received a license to preach to a Baptist congregation.

Sidney Rigdon soon acquired a reputation as a powerful preacher and an effective minister. He was "an orator of no inconsiderable abilities," according to a contemporary, and "his personal influence with an audience was very great." He was of "full medium height, rotund of form, or countenance, while speaking, open and winning, with a little cast of melancholy." His actions were graceful, "his language copious, fluent in utterance, with articulation clear and musical."[4] He was five feet, nine and a half inches in height and weighed around 215 pounds. His hair and beard framed a fine-featured face which mirrored his emotions. His countenance was both handsome and striking. His personal manner and friendliness won him many lasting friendships. He loved to meet the members of a congregation, shake their hands, and tell them his personal testimony. He was an excellent conversationalist and took a genuine interest in the lives of the people he met. He believed it was his mission to urge all to repent and accept the gospel which he preached. Rigdon looked, acted, and sounded like a religious leader.

In May 1819, Sidney Rigdon left the Reverend Andrew Clark's home in order to work with Adamson Bentley, the popular Baptist minister of Warren, Ohio, about fourteen miles northwest of Youngstown. Through Bentley he met Miss Phebe Brooks, Mrs. Bentley's sister, and on June 12, 1820, Rigdon

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[4]Amos S. Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio: With Biographic Sketches of the Principal Agents in Their Religious Movement* (Cincinnati, 1876), pp. 103–04. Hereafter cited as Hayden.

and Miss Brooks were married. Adamson Bentley was one of the founders of the Mahoning Baptist Association. Baptists on the frontier often organized several congregations into an association in order to protect their group against heresy, to devise better ways to spread the gospel, and to encourage fellowship among the ministers. Both Bentley and Rigdon were active in the Mahoning Association; Rigdon enjoyed a reputation as a great orator among his fellow ministers, and Bentley was elected three times as moderator, the highest office of the Association.[5]

In the spring of 1821 Rigdon and Bentley read a pamphlet by Alexander Campbell and decided to question him about his beliefs. For almost a decade after that time the careers of Rigdon and Bentley were to be linked with Alexander Campbell. Rigdon and Bentley visited Campbell at his home, where they discussed the Bible. Campbell explained that with the aid of his father and their followers he was trying to establish the so-called "ancient order of things," or the restoration of Christ's church as it was in New Testament times. Campbell told his visitors that he believed doctrine had to have its origin in the New Testament in order to be essential to salvation; the idea of a difference in authority between the Old and New Testaments struck Rigdon favorably.

The conversation was lengthy. Campbell commented, "After tea in the evening, we commenced and prolonged our discourse till the next morning." Rigdon's conversation with Campbell marked a turning point in his life and he became a biblical literalist. According to Campbell, "On parting the next day, Sidney Rigdon, with all apparent candor, said, if he had within the last year taught and promulgated from the pulpit one error, he had a thousand." Campbell happily accepted both Rigdon and Bentley as converts to his cause of reformation, but he worried about Rigdon's compulsive nature: "Fearing they might undo their influence with the people, I felt constrained to restrain rather than to urge them on in the work."[6] Rigdon adopted Campbell's goal of the restoration of the "ancient order of things" as his own.

Campbell induced Rigdon to accept a position as pastor of the First Baptist Church at Pittsburgh, a member of the Redstone Baptist Association. Rigdon had considerable success at Pittsburgh and his congregation soon became one of the most respected in the city. He possessed a "great fluency and a lively fancy which gave him great popularity as an orator (Campbell 2:44-45).

When Campbell was driven from the Redstone Association because of what some of the members regarded as heretical ideas, ministers who considered Rigdon to be Campbell's outspoken disciple were determined to drive him out of Pittsburgh as well. While Rigdon's so-called "peculiar style of

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[5]Minutes of meetings of the Mahoning Baptist Association on August 31, 1825, August 25, 1826, and August 23, 1827, quoted in Mary A. M. Smith, "A History of the Mahoning Baptist Association" (Master's thesis, University of West Virginia, 1943), Appendix, p. 28.

[6]Alexander Campbell, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell Embracing a View of the Origin, Progress and Principles of the Religious Reformation Which He Advocated*, Robert Richardson, ed. (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1868), 2:44–45. Hereafter cited as Campbell.

preaching" had filled the church, certain influential members of the congregation saw in it cause for alarm. When the Redstone Association met in 1824, the ministers who comprised it brought charges against Rigdon for not being sound in the faith, that is, for being a follower of Campbell. The ministers who tried him "denied him the liberty of speaking in self-defense." Rigdon resigned his pastorate and "declared a non-fellowship with them."[7]

Because Rigdon had a wife and three daughters to support, he took a job working as a journeyman tanner for his wife's brother. He obtained permission to preach in the courthouse on Sundays, and continued to proclaim Campbell's ideas about the restoration of the "ancient order of things." His meetings were attended by a portion of his former Pittsburgh congregation who followed him into religious exile. In 1826 Rigdon left Pennsylvania to accept a pastorate at Mentor, Ohio. Then Mentor congregation was in the Mahoning Baptist Association, in which his friend Alexander Campbell and his brother-in-law Adamson Bentley had become influential ministers.

Sidney Rigdon's reputation as a reform Baptist preacher spread throughout the Western Reserve as a result of the revival meetings he held in Mentor and neighboring communities. In 1827 he held a series of preaching services at New Lisbon and Mantua, Ohio, at which he declared the gospel of the restoration. He was so successful in March of 1828 that Amos S. Hayden, his associate and the Campbellite historian, described his efforts as "the great religious awakening in Mentor" (Hayden, p. 204). In the following year, Rigdon held revivals in Kirtland, Perry, and Pleasant Hills, as well as again in Mentor.

By 1830 Sidney Rigdon had developed a personal theology which, although following the teachings of Alexander Campbell in many respects, rejected some of Campbell's ideas. Both Rigdon and Campbell accepted baptism by immersion as the biblical form by which Christ was baptized and which all men should follow. Rigdon disagreed with Campbell over whether the so-called "manifestations of Spiritual Gifts" and miracles had a place in the restoration. The gifts of the Spirit were the speaking and interpretation of foreign tongues, prophecy, visions, spiritual dreams, and the ability to discern evil spirits. Campbell declared that the miraculous work of the Holy Ghost was "confined to the apostolic age, and to only a portion of the saints who lived in that age."[8] Rigdon, however, sought "to convince influential persons that, along with the primitive gospel, supernatural gifts and miracles ought to be restored" (Campbell, 2:346). Rigdon wanted to incorporate into Campbell's restoration every belief or practice which was a part of the New Testament church. He also differed from Campbell over the issue of a communal society. Rigdon wanted to establish a community in which all

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[7]Sworn statement by Carvel Rigdon and Peter Boyer dated January 27, 1843, quoted in Daryl Chase, "Sidney Rigdon — Early Mormon" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1931), p. 14.

[8]Alexander Campbell is quoted in Joseph W. White, "The Influence of Sidney Rigdon upon the Theology of Mormonism" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1947), p. 127.

property was held in common, which he believed to be the practice of the early Jerusalem church. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (Acts 2:44–45). Campbell wanted no economic experiments which involved communal life within his religious sect.

Rigdon's and Campbell's theological differences caused friction which grew steadily more abrasive until a complete break occurred in 1830, when Rigdon withdrew his Mentor congregation from the Mahoning Baptist Association. The group was thus not affiliated with any religious body when the missionaries arrived with the news of the Book of Mormon. Rigdon sought evidence which would substantiate Pratt's claim that the Book of Mormon contained the fullness of the New Testament gospel for which he had been searching since 1821. He judged the Book of Mormon the same way he evaluated all material which purported to contain religious truth, that is, by prayerfully comparing it with the Bible.

To Rigdon, the doctrine which he found in the Book of Mormon compared most favorably with that in the Bible. Indeed, he found in his new Scripture answers he had been seeking for years. If the Mormon movement embraced the doctrines contained in the Book of Mormon, then he had found the true restoration gospel. The prophet Moroni asked the question which had plagued Rigdon as a disciple of Campbell, that is, whether miracles ceased because Christ had acsended to heaven. Moroni answered his own question by declaring that "angels [have not] ceased to minister unto the children of men" (Moroni 7:29). The Book of Mormon also contained the idea that one must be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, which Rigdon believed to be the true form of baptism. Moroni told of the gifts of the Spirit, which were wisdom, knowledge, healing, miracles, prophecy, speaking and interpretation of tongues, and the discernment of spirits. Rigdon had been unhappy because these things were not manifested among the followers of Campbell. Rigdon believed in the literal return of the Jews to their homeland, as was prophesied in II Nephi 9:2: "And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possession."[9] The Book of Mormon also bore witness that Jesus was the Christ and that he established a church in the New World with twelve disciples who were to carry on the work of the gospel after He ascended to heaven.

When Rigdon finished reading the Book of Mormon, he claimed that Mormonism was truly the apostolic church divinely restored to the earth. Realizing that this religious change might bring about economic hardships, as had his removal from the First Baptist Church in Pittsburgh in 1824, he asked his wife, "My dear, you have followed me once into poverty, are you willing to do the same?" (Jaques, p. 586.) Phebe Rigdon replied, "I have weighed the matter, I have counted the cost, and I am perfectly satisfied to

[9]John Jaques, "Life and Labors of Sidney Rigdon," *Improvement Era*, 3 (1899–1900), 100. Hereafter cited as Jaques.

follow you; it is my desire to do the will of God, come life or come death."[10] There was no indication at this time that Mormonism would be acceptable to his congregation, who were in the act of building Rigdon a new house. Rigdon's life-long quest for the fullness of the gospel compelled him on several occasions to abandon positions of prestige, power, and financial security. Joseph Smith captured the essence of Rigdon's long and difficult quest when he stated, "Truth was his pursuit, and for truth he was prepared to make every sacrifice in his power."[11]

Sheriff John Barr, a non-Mormon of Cuyahoga County, was present when Rigdon informed his congregation of his decision to embrace Mormonism, and he recorded the incident. Rigdon told them that "he had not been satisfied in his religious yearnings until now." Previously, "at night he had often been unable to sleep, walking and praying for more light and comfort in religion." While in the midst of this soul-searching, "he heard of the revelation of Joe Smith . . . under this his soul suddenly found peace." The Mormon message "filled all his aspirations." According to Sheriff Barr, the congregation was much affected by Rigdon's testimony that he had found religious truth (Mather, pp. 206–07). Rigdon's congregation at Mentor followed his leadership once again; this time they embraced Mormonism.

Although some members of traditional religious denominations bitterly opposed the principles which the Mormons taught, the missionaries had an opportunity to preach their new gospel in the towns of Medina, Kirtland, Painesville, and Mayfield, where Rigdon had previously held revival meetings. Pratt, who was spreading the world of Rigdon's conversion to the Book of Mormon, declared that "the interest and excitement now became general in Kirtland, and in the region round about." Mormon missionary activity in the Western Reserve was such a great success that, according to Pratt, "in two or three weeks from our arrival in the neighborhood with the news, we had baptized one hundred an twenty-seven souls, and this number soon increased to one thousand."[12] Rigdon's conversion and the missionary effort which followed transformed Mormonism from a New York-based sect with about a hundred members into one which was a major threat to Protestantism in the Western Reserve.

In December of 1830, Rigdon traveled to New York to meet the founder of the Mormon movement. Rigdon believed that Joseph Smith was chosen to be God's prophet in the last days. A revelation given through Smith revealed to Rigdon that he had been called to be Smith's counselor, scribe and spokesman: "Behold, verily, verily, I say unto my servant Sidney, I have looked upon thee and thy work. I have heard thy prayers, and prepared thee for a greater work. Thou are blessed, for thou shalt do great things. Behold

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[10]Frederic G. Mather, "The Early Days of Mormonism," *Lippincotts Magazine of Popular Literature and Science*, 26 (August 1880), 206–7. Hereafter cited as Mather.

[11]*Journal of History* (Lamoni, Iowa), 3, no. 1 (1910), 7–8.

[12]Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt, One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Embracing His Life, Ministry and Travels, with Extracts in Prose and Verse from His Miscellaneous Writings* (New York, 1876), pp. 65–66.

thou wast sent forth, even as John, to prepare the way before me" (D & C 11:2). Rigdon thus believed that God had called him to become a latter-day John the Baptist, a voice crying in the wilderness, to proclaim the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the second coming of Christ.

Rigdon acquired a well-earned reputation for being a mighty spokesman for the Lord. Sheriff John Barr described one of Rigdon's baptismal services near Kirtland, Ohio, which he attended with Vernem J. Card, a lawyer, who "was apparently the most stoical of men – of a clear, unexcitable temperament, with unorthodox and vague religious ideas." Rigdon inquired of his audience whether anyone desired to come forward and be immersed in the Chagrin River. The only respondent was "an aged 'deadbeat' by the name of Cahoon, who occasionally joined the Shakers and lived on the country generally." The baptismal service was set for two o'clock in the afternoon, but long before that time the spot was surrounded by as many people as could have a clear view. After Cahoon was baptized, Rigdon, who was still standing in the water, "gave one of his most powerful exhortations." He called for any others who desired salvation to step forward. "They came through the crowd in rapid succession to the number of thirty, and were immersed with no intermission of the discourse on the part of Rigdon (Mather, pp. 206–07).

Suddenly Vernem Card seized the Sheriff's arm, pleading, "take me away." Steadying his friend, Barr saw that "his face was so pale that he seemed to be about to faint," and they rode almost a mile before a word was uttered. Card finally gained control of himself and said, "Mr. Barr, if you had not been there I certainly should have gone into the water," because "the impulse was irresistible" (Mather, pp. 206–07).

Besides being an effective preacher of Mormonism, Rigdon was intimately involved with Joseph Smith in directing every major endeavor of the Mormon Church during the first decade of its official existence. He did not share in originating Mormon theology, but the "Hiram Page Affair" illustrated that the infant Mormon movement did not need another prophet. Rigdon became Smith's strong right arm and spokesman. They blended their energies, abilities, ideas, and dreams for the future to become an exceedingly dynamic and successful leadership team. Rigdon's tremendous contributions came when Mormonism needed them most critically.

In the early 1840's new developments in Mormonism were seen by Rigdon as straying from the essentials of Christ's church, and in 1844, after the death of Joseph Smith, he was defeated in his attempt to redirect the course of Mormonism. Rigdon then formed a schismatic sect, called the Church of Jesus Christ, which sought unsuccessfully to reestablish Mormonism in its former purity; after the failure of this religious group, he believed that no church on earth represented Christ's New Testament teachings. The last thirty years of Rigdon's life were years of religious isolation during which he refused to associate with a Mormonism which practiced polygamy. Yet Sidney Rigdon remained faithful to the early concepts of Mormonism which Pratt and his companions had introduced at Mentor, Ohio, that October morning in 1830.

DISCOVERING A MORMON WRITER: DAVID L. WRIGHT 1929-1967

James Miller

James Miller, a prize-winning poet himself, has introduced DIALOGUE'S *editors to the unpublished and generally unknown work of his close friend, David Wright, who died in 1967 at the age of thirty-eight. Much impressed with what we have seen and anxious to end the unfortunate neglect of this fine Mormon writer, we print here the first section of his "River Saints," with a biographical introduction and elegy by Mr. Miller. We plan to publish other work by Wright in the future and would welcome reader responses to this first selection.*

In his writing lifetime, David L. Wright, a brilliant young author from southern Idaho, did come to know some measure of fame after the publication of his short story "A Summer in the Country," brought out by *Mutiny* magazine in the fall of 1960. And there followed other appearances of his stories about his real and mythic home country the same year in *Arizona Quarterly, The Humanist,* and *Inland* magazine. In 1961, when Wright was thirty-two, "A Summer in the Country" was reprinted in *Best Articles & Stories* magazine. Later that year it was named to "The Roll of Honor" in *Best American Short Stories 1961* (Foley and Burnett).

When John Hall Wheelock first read "A Summer in the Country" (Wheelock was a distinguished writer, poet, and editor who worked at one time for the publishers of Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald and had greatly helped Thomas Wolfe with his editing of *Of Time And The River*), he had this to say about David Wright:

> As a former editor with the house of Charles Scribner's Sons, and its senior editor for ten years . . . I have formed the habit, while

> reading periodicals, of looking for fresh talent. I have not often been rewarded by finding it. It was while reading a story by David L. Wright, called "A Summer in the Country," in an issue of the magazine *Mutiny*, published about two years ago, that I realized I was in the presence of a new talent, a writer whose work, previously unknown to me, seemed to hold the promise of an important writing career. So strongly did I feel this, that I wrote at once to the editor of *Mutiny* to express my enthusiasm. My conviction is that David L. Wright is a man of outstanding literary talent.

Wright was born in 1929 in Bennington, Idaho, a town of perhaps two hundred, composed mostly of hard-working Latter-day Saint farmers. He was raised in a family of five children, the fourth-born of Mormon parents whose ancestors were among the earliest settlers of Bear Lake County. He went to grammar school in Bennington and attended high school in Montpelier, five miles south, not far from Bear Lake. In the fall of 1946 he began his college education at Utah State, coming to the Logan school on a football and track scholarship. It was in college that Wright began to find himself, especially in his sophomore year, feeling without doubt that his destiny lay in literature, in teaching and writing. He had already begun to fill the first of many 500-page journals, writing daily in them and at length, recording what the town of Bennington, its history and its people, meant to him, his entries sometimes profound in their poetic richness. He wrote steadily with great love and nostalgia for the Bennington valley, its mountains, its fishermen, the Bear River flowing west of the town and the great night-haunt of the locomotive trains whistling through the homes of his "river saints." And also he wrote in painful, unable grief over his brother Rich, who had died at fifteen when Dave was seven. The dead brother later was to become the living, full heartpound of "A Summer in the Country," and the tragic protagonist of Dave's very successful first play, *Still The Mountain Wind.*

Wright had a welterweight's quick fist, backing away from nothing that challenged his intellect or the swift athlete alert and fleet within him. Yet he was a gentle and loving young man capable of going to great coaxing, comic pains to let a single housefly or mosquito out of his boardinghouse window.

He wrote hard and he read hard in college, and there were two English professors of great encouragement to him — A. N. Sorensen and Ira Hayward. And Dave didn't disappoint them, academically or creatively. The emeritus A. N., who was still teaching, cried out one day ecstatic, after reading a piece of Dave's, of the "burnings of genius," he was so overwhelmed. But Dave was not being published — outside of the local newspaper with sports articles, the college newspaper, and the school literary magazine called *The Scribble.* And frequently, especially after college when he was sending out his stories and poems for publication and being rejected, the coalpiece eyes would brood mistrustingly, and he would return again, solitary and dejected, to his journals — his face silent, his head lowered and his hands in the waves of the thinning rust hair, and write there, gloomily, of his failures.

But the dominating emotional structure of Wright was one of insomniac creator energy. In college he was coach Dick Romney's sports publicist, and he halfbacked and hurdled and was an excellent high-jumper. He decided to become an English teacher before graduating, and so went on to teach at high schools in Rexburg and Downey, Idaho. And he married, wrote, and raised children. Yet hardest upon him was his desire to create, to see himself in print — in the publications that truly mattered. His submissions though were always returned, and his despair mounted while he worked and reworked his stories and poems, constantly, in the early 1950's. And he would wade and plunge into all of life he could possibly touch, with his reading, teaching, and young family, and joy in it, and argue with it, and lament at it when he wrote of the machining transportation of a once simpler Bennington, and Bear Lake County, filling his journals with protesting chants and questioning life and requestioning with passionate search and hunting for skillful artistic hope — always, incessantly, on the move for the creative experience. And his students idolized him — their "unconventional teacher," whose contracts were never renewed, because he knew, too handily, how to deal with and oppose power that was too satisfied with itself and unwanting of change or unresponsive to a "screwball Shakespeare-talker." So, to feel vital again, refreshed, Dave would go to visit with his great fisherman friend of "The Conscience of the Village" printed here, play with the Bennington youngsters, enjoy his parents whom he held in affectionate respect, and walk in the mountains east of Joe's Gap, "the gorge" of his fiction and plays.

His last year of teaching was back to his beloved old grade school in Bennington, a stone's throw from his birth house where his parents lived — small, fascinating Bennington whose children packed about Dave and piled upon him, his personality freeing and attractive. For he was the children's conscience and entertainer, their nature-listener, mountain-walker, song-fetcher, and athlete king. But after that year in Bennington the Air Force called him to active duty as a second lieutenant and he had to leave.

Yet it was in the Air Force that he began to know, at least, a little of the writer's hope — he began to win Air Force short story contests. He had been bottomlessly discouraged, in college and while teaching, over the quality of his writing, but now he was warily confident by that bare saving amount that gives hope. And he was receiving check prizes — money, about which he had seldom thought. He worked in terms of how well his writing captured a past remembrance. And finally he did it magnificently while stationed in Florida, during one week, after all the trying trial years — the recreation of his brother Rich. While lying on a couch, he dictated *Still The Mountain Wind* to a woman transcribing his words who had to stop occasionally to weep.

Still The Mountain Wind was premiered at the Lyric Showman Theatre in Logan, Utah, by The Utah State Theatre in February 1956, and met by filled-house, gratifying, moving success. It was later performed by The Poets' Theatre, Cambridge, Massachusetts, near Harvard Square in late 1960, and at the universities of Minnesota, Massachusetts, Idaho, Eastern Oregon Col-

lege, and in southern Utah towns. The story form of the play became the celebrated "A Summer in the Country."

Wright now began to feel greater confidence and that belief in himself that he had needed — desperately — earlier. Only by the strongest encouragement and urging of a few friends, years before, was he saved from thorough desolation and hopelessness. For time and again we would tell him — "Dave, you're that writer — you are! — truly creative honest Mormonborn writer. And they are rare. When Vardis Fisher read your stories he said as much — that you were writing better at twenty-four than he was at that age. And hell, he won Harper's big prize — $10,000 — for *The Children of God!*"

So Bennington now would not pass away, would not be machined-clean, peopled-off, highwayed and fenced to death, and gentiled under, and Monsanto'd-out from the face of the earth of Joe's Gap, the gorge in the mountains of *Still The Mountain Wind* and "A Summer in the Country." Dave had stopped such a dying and passing — catastrophic to his mind; he had stopped it lastingly in the captivity of his drama and story. His people, his place, would not be cultured dead or civilized bare with freeway worlds and International Harvester tracks.

He saved his mythic reality too in *River Saints*, and in a thousand other fiction truths. Loving these, his villagers, he became the truth of them, *their* consuming, preserving, voicing artistic spirit — grown and writing, staged and published. Their poet of innocence and tragedy.

Created by the responding originality of his own life-fires to the fire of life, he was unsaintly divided through his most honest awareness of the people he loved, that he had appointed himself to immortalize. And it took him twenty years to immortalize incongruities. Writing, struggling, journaling to capture what he could of a truth, to leave to truth, in his stories, poems, plays — unorthodox, funny, attractive, wry, revolutionary-fresh. Air Force-moving from the Dakotas to Florida to Iceland to Alabama to Vietnam, and being published, at last, praised, Wright felt that he had arrived somewhat, at least at the beginnings of arrival.

One of the editors responsible for first bringing Wright before the public was Jane Esty of *Mutiny* magazine, who wrote:

> Because of Wright's peculiarly intense interest in the background and the origins of the American experience, he can make an important, original contribution to our cultural heritage. His particular insight into the folk-myth of our rural past, with special reference to the agricultural West, gives strength to our national purpose and pride in our emergent consciousness of America's role in this perilous time. His insight represents a powerful vision into the American dream.

Co-editor Paul Lett of *Mutiny* added this appraisal of Wright's creative mastery:

> Only now, almost two years after its publication, has "A Summer in the Country" begun to have its real impact on creative writing in this country. I feel safe in predicting that in some twenty years time this story will be in the lexicon of American Letters and that it will

> be used as a standard in textbooks on writing throughout the world . . . . it drew letters of praise from John Fischer, the distinguished editor of *Harper's* magazine, John Hall Wheelock, former senior editor of Charles Scribner's Sons, and the editor-in-chief of *Kenyon Review*, Robie Macauley, to name only a few.

Unregimental as Wright was, but remembering low wages for Idaho high school teaching and unrenewed contracts and the tension of opposition to dead educators living in towns asleep across the bright chances of youth, he decided to remain in the Air Force as a career officer. And despite military stiffness, he found himself able to preserve his identity and startlingly individualize life about him among Air Force officers and their families, even to the point of being ordered to write formal addresses for generals. With this oncome of energy, amusing tact, underlying forcefulness, he found quickly that it "took him places," places where he wanted to go, which culminated ultimately in a "request granted" to attend the University of Iowa for one year for a master's degree in Fine Arts in creative writing, previously unheard of in the Air Force. It was during this time that he produced novels, and began to be called "little Tom Wolfe," because he would show up in class with novels fat like Wolfe's, written through nights, through weekends, holidays — days, hours squeezed in, burning out, as he once confided, in the march towards advanced degrees. He graduated with honors under Paul Engle and Vance Bourjaily.

Out of this Iowa experience came a Wright story (unpublished but accepted — Dave withdrew it so as not to hurt his family and Bennington) entitled "Of Pleasures and Palaces" — a powerful, harrowing piece centered about Bennington, and a play, which he called *The Rough Edge Of Experience*, greatly moving and equally masterful in the dramatic form, though it has never been staged.

Veritable masses of writing out of the twenty creative years of Wright's life are stored now with his brother in Montpelier, Idaho. They have been there for over three years. Some pieces are in the possession of his oldest daughter in Logan, Utah. His publishable works ought not to remain cellared, yellowing in burials of huge packings, there to wrinkle down, brittley mummify, crack and rust dead. For Wright was an important western American author. He had a mind of great originality, and I believe that he did not fail to create the epic of his River Saints, woven throughout his novels, stories, plays, and poetry, the greater part of which lies, today, dark, in direct reversal to the blaze Wright's grasp and powers of vision beautifully and painfully wrought with his creator's mind. Some forty or fifty 500-page journals are a mine in themselves, and several hundred letters which unfold the development of his great struggle on earth to become an artist.

Two of Wright's unpublished novels — one of southern Idaho and the other of Iceland — contain some of his most excellent fiction, the best of his infectious originality, his humorous as well as strong and moving characters, and action and descriptive passages. The Idaho novel deals with contemporary Mormon society and contains a very fine love story; the book about Ice-

land is fictioned unforgettably, humorous, sad, swift and reflective, concerning Air Force people on tours of peacetime duty — jet pilots, noncoms, and the storm rages of the geophysical insanity of Icelandic winds which affect the novel's moods and characters. Both novels, of course, are serious undertakings, but they are never without the relief of Wright's wit and mingled comic inevitability.

Dave went to Vietnam in November of 1965, after a tour in Iceland, to work in the administration in Saigon (he received the Bronze Star for his diplomatic abilities). There he compiled notes and outlined another novel. He returned from Vietnam to his home in Montgomery, Alabama, in November 1966, worn out but anxious to get on with his new book. He had become very close to many of the war's Vietnamese sufferers, of regime after regime, and wanted to write about them. But after his return home, Wright and his wife separated. In February, 1967, he suffered a severe heart attack, and four months later, a month after his thirty-eighth birthday, Wright was dead.

DAVE ELEGY

James Miller

When he left for Saigon
I asked him what about killing if you have to —
We were pointing around in an Idaho cemetery
the villager
graves kind
but one overlooking
small, barn villages

the Air Force major my friend grew up in —
What will you do?
Shoot blanks he said. Ancestry subjects kept him pointing around.
That's Amos's, he said. Grandfather Wright's.
Shot the hell out of the meetinghouse lights —
rode his horse right in and shot out the lights.
I was listening.
Got excommunicated, he laughed. But got back in.
Amos settled Bennington.

A bees blue wind kept clovering, and working the sunflowers
running east to Joe's Gap, to John the Baptist's mountain.
He meant what he said about blanks.

In Saigon he found a beat up pocketknife he kept
and he hipped a regulations gun, risking enough
to come come looking whiter to some,
having knowledge of bankrupt coups
for the common good — understanding revolutionary blood.

Then it happened. Having always tried
facing things bravely he usually won —
a gutty endurer, whether battling small
as halfback or barefist fighterboy
or grieved to his brother's grave from childhood
Right there by Rich I'll lay, he used to say —
by his singer brother Rich

the dead brother
laughing with voice
boy-young, in fun

If fyew go to Hev'n bufore ah do,
Jus' bore a hole and pull me through —

Oh — ah aintta gonna 'gree
Mah Lord no more . . .
That life is worth its masterpiece,
alive, the major believed.
His *Still The Mountain Wind* had played at Cambridge —
Minnesota — schools of the West towns
of Rich, the dead brother

no more . . .
Then wide as Joe's Gap pulled open — home looked chasm.
The agreement his wife could leave, be free
for some
one other
and he have the children. Somehow —
agreed. Decreed and agreed.

Yet, split in,
it killed him
and the Air Force about to discharge him
after an intensely cared for heart. He died.

Above in the children hills the writer Dave.
Deep in the wind the silver, manlength coffin.

And the Air Force saluted why airmen die.
By the wind gap mountain, in the wind grass silence —
shot blanks above goodbyes.

David L. Wright

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE VILLAGE

from "River Saints — Introduction to a Mormon Chronicle"

His eyes milky, intensely blue,
Fasten totally upon the life that was living
From 1884 to nineteen hundred and twelve;
Not seeing the life that has been his dying since,
Though he has braked the crawl toward surcease
More courageously successful than we (even I, the Valley's Poet)
In our existing.
Now, in the final year of his dying, unfamiliar people,
Like Sadie his long-suffering, gentle wife,
Plunge his hat on his head and speak of things
(Eat your bread, Father, then we'll help you to the bathroom)
Having nothing to do with the untranslatable essence
Of those Maori days worshipping with savages who loved him,
And the boyhood before it, fishing the river,
Talking with God,
They — Sadie, his son Nathan, his granddaughters (two) —
Occupants and masters of his home now,
Caution him, watch your step, Father,
Sit down, shut up the girls are studying,
Try not to cry, Father, sleep well, Father,
We know what's best for you,
Hushing his twanging outbreaks of Maori war and wedding chants,
The sharp-syllabled cries likely to disturb or frighten
The granddaughters, who must study and listen to
The Beatles.
(: Well, what are they doing here anyhow? This is my house)
(: Shhhh, Father, you're not well . . . behave yourself . . .
You wouldn't want us to take you to Blackfoot would you?)
At which mention of Idaho's mental institution
He cries,

Crumbling the bread on the oilcloth,
Sipping water (perhaps in remembrance of his blood?)
And wipes his nose with a middle finger large
With arthritis, its joint broken by a kicking hog,
Thirty years ago, in the middle of the dying time;
Now guiding that finger to grasp at crumbs,
(*Surely*, the Poet thinks, in remembrance of the Lord).

Sadie saying: now Father . . .
Gently washes his hands with a washrag
: Your friend is here, you haven't
Seen him since he went away.
But he cries still, his head bobbing to table's edge,
His hand uncaring loose
In the kindly grasp of his long-suffering
Who endured and never blamed him for their children's rags
Throughout the carefree, dying years.
: Father! Don't you remember?
Carl's son . . . he's coming to see you.
He turns his milky eyes up, his lips form, break,
And re-form angles over the cavern of mouth
: Carl's Boy?
? . . . ?
Yes, yes . . .
For the Poet heard and saw the Maori world,
As a village boy listened and seemed
To understand
The war and wedding chants:
Saw empathetically, visions and remembrances,
As they were —
Of young Mormon missionary, Matthew Daniels,
Baptizing natives in fish-filled streams,
Eating ceremonial trout,
Tempted by but not submitting to barebreasted daughters
Of the chief
Because of Judith, his village sweetheart,
In the days of living when vows were not mired
In the moss of lust.
Saw too, himself pleading for more tales,
More songs, more images of rivers and oceans
Aborigines paint-smeared and loin-cloth
Naked —
Saw too the young Matthew equally vermillion and naked,
Dancing chanting with them,
Like one of them —
Saw too his leading the chief
Into the river,
Baptizing him in the name of God, Son, and Holy Ghost,

Not insisting as all missionaries were ordered
That the otherwise pure in heart
Must discontinue smoking pipes –
Seeing Matthew smoking with the chief,
Minutes before and minutes after
The dunking ceremony
(: I tried to do right. I tried!)
(: Now, Father, hush, we're here)
: Carl's son,
And his arm goes out, recognizing.
: Brother Daniels, I've come to take you for a drive . . .
To the river.
The long-suffering jams his hat on his head
: Father, you hear that? He wants to take you
To the river? Won't that be nice?
But he has been searching not her words,
Nor the poet, but
A remembrance;
The milky intensely blue eyes frown,
Then see the memory.
: You asked me,
The memory asserts authority now,
:How could you know, and I told you I don't know . . .
It's different for every man.

His eyes dance now with the days of two decades ago,
When the boy often touched the time of the old man's living;
When those in the village thought him only pleasantly eccentric,
And blamed him affectionately for being improvident
To his now well-employed children
The saints milked his cows,
Cut his hay,
Stacked it,
While his carefreeness mocked
Their industry and sweat,
With Maori songs; and along the river
He trapped in constant dialogue with elusive fish;
The Saints of Zion loving him full well,
Unconsciously asking him the light and the way,
Envying him, clucking tongues forgivingly
Over the frightfulness of such sloth that dared
Comb abnegation through the beehive of their Mormondom;
Yet innerly knowing he knew secretly
Grandeurs of heaven and earth they
Could only pretend to know
While they righteously worked their days
Honestly
Paid tithes

Honestly
Churched themselves
Honestly
Uttered Sunday platitudes
Honestly
And strove for honest tractors, electricity,
And plumbing, and education;
Acquisitions, all, he never argued with,
But preferred to fish into the cyclic nonsense they are,
Than have.
: It was one day I was hauling straw for your father, down from
Maple field. It was cold that day,
And you were just about knee high to a grasshopper.
Ignoring Sadie's hand, urging him to rise,
To go,
:And you said : I don't know, Brother Daniels,
How does a body go about knowing? And I didn't
Tell you like some others do, to pray and read
The Book of Mormon.
His voice rising, justifying his own form of
Honesty,
His milky intensely blue eyes straining,
Frowning into the Poet's face who
Is remembering that he too was blooded into the village
Life, then.
: Because it's different for every man,
And sometimes when you want to know, you *can't,*
You can't!
That's all there is to it!
He trembles as if
The powerful unseens of orthodox voices
Are claiming otherwise.

: Shhhh, Father . . . now here's your coat . . .
Don't keep him waiting.
: You can't!
Unaware of the coat she has draped over his arm,
Of the Poet's hand guiding him out of the chair,
Of long-suffering holding the door open.
: It's different . . . there's no telling . . .
And the Poet knows there is no telling . . . anything,
For that is why he is back to the old fisherman,
To learn to know, then to tell,
From the spirit of his old and first teacher,
In the glowing dying days;
In hay rack days.
: His arthritis is *so* bad,
Long-suffering's voice a sadness,

A story and a poem
She of patience and no complaints,
Whom no woman in the village ever envied;
She, waiting, knitting the two three four nights
Of his fishing absences,
His announced planlessness
While the hay burned and the unmilked cows
Broke half the fences in town.
: Arthritis this, arthritis that!
Mumbling, staggering,
Critical in his brief return to the world of his long-suffering's
Pitiful narrow-worldness,
She, never having had a vision on a hillside
Or anywhere else,
Never feeling wildly certain of anything
Except a loaf of bread,
A knitted sock.

: The sun was bright as a gold piece,
He says, his joints testing the pathway uncertainly,
: But it was cold that day . . . I tell you . . .
It was awful cold that day . . . and me with a fever
Like a bonfire.
His broken finger joint fumbling over his lips,
He limps and stops, repeating it was different for every man,
But the way he first knew was the night
He lay in a thicket on a New Zealand hillside,
Sick and feverish when
Lo and behold
God and Joseph Smith appeared in a bath of light
: I *saw* them,
He, nearly screaming,
Eyes and lips weeping.
From the porch: Now, Father . . . don't . . . please don't . . .
He turns, walks a jerked speed,
Lips angry now,
Eyes intensely blue searching the gravel path.
: She don't know
They think I'm two shades in the wind;
But they don't know . . . my own house!
But the poet busily deafens the traffic of sadness,
With noises of memory — the sleigh ride day, the load of straw
Among the many loads from maple field,
The snow crusty in the isinglass fields,
Hard and glistening beneath the runners of the long lane roads;
He and the old fisherman buried for warmth in the straw,
Noses dripping and feet yelling numbness,
In the days of dying

When animals seemed the lucky ones,
Fed and warm when humans sometimes weren't:
And the Poet sees the horses foaming in the traces
Snorting and defecating,
Their hooves crunching the hardpacked snow;
And remembering the old fisherman's telling again
Of God and Joseph Smith laying hands upon his fevered head,
Commending him for his faithfulness
In rejecting the chief's request to cohabit
With two of his unmarried daughters,
Hence to plant the seed of Israel in his royal blood;
Then the two personages, glowing brightly as a gold piece,
Commanded the fever from his body,
Bade him rise from the hillside —
: Go forth
And do a mighty work
Among a needful, heathen people;
And if thou are faithful it shall come to pass . . .

But neither in the living nor in the dying years
Did the personages finish their prophecy upon his head,
Leaving him to ask five decades of fishes for the means of his
Salvation.
: I tried,
Limping, clutching the Poet's arm,
: I tried . . . to do my best.
Small compensation since nineteen hundred and twelve
Talking to a river about what living was like,
Convincing elusive fishes of the agony
Of whistling into the graveyard of the villagers' ears
All that they could not know
Of his great knowing . . .

The Poet drives slowly beneath, then into,
The foothills of Pescadero
Seeing a yellow grove of aspens where,
Before his time, a bishop's son
Slew himself herding his father's sheep;
Not listening to the Gabble of where,
In countless fishing holes, the old fisherman
Sought answers to his fate
From fishes.
From hooks to lines to bait to water battles won and lost,
He gabbles.
Finally to Judith, his long-waiting sweetheart,
For whose gospel sake he spurned the barebosomed Maori maids,
He talks;
Of having married her in nineteen hundred and twelve,

Honeymooning at the quarterly gathering of Zion's flock
In Salt Lake City,
There seeing Brother Murdock his New Zealand
Mission President who said,
: Matthew, are you still fishing . . . good! . . .
Hugging the intense villager who
Converted more Maoris than all missionaries combined.
: So busy with real estate and church, I gave it up . . .
Don't let any get away! . . .
. . . But don't forget to love the Lord!
: He was a good man, President Murdock,
Never a better one ever lived.
Crying now, softly,
The big finger crossing under his nose;
For the day after, Judith took sick,
Dying in Salt Lake of appendicitis
Under the prayers of Murdock imploring the Lord
To spare her,
: I come home and started going with Sadie,
He said. But broke off.
: I don't know why I'm a-talking like this,
His eyes coming back with re-interest
As he sees a certain bend in the river,
Beneath Pascadero,
And his spirit lights with memory of a big one,
Landed in Hoover's time,
The very day? (the Poet ponders)
When he, the village constable, forgot to open the polls,
Was off fishing, and the saints had to hoist
A boy through the schoolhouse window.
: Nathan helped me pull him out . . .
Must of weighed six pounds!

Then the narrative of his beginnings,
Flowing as coherently and true as hayrack conversations
In the days of dying –
His father, a trapper named Billings;
Mother a half-breed Indian;
The child orphaned
(: I dunno if they left me or died or what)
And cared for by his mother's people,
Known of, somehow, by the Poet's grandmother who,
Also knowing of Old Gus and Hilda Daniels'
Long childlessness, took him
From the burdened grandparents,
And transported him in a boxwagon
To Bear Lake Valley, keeping him
Alive on mare's milk during the long and delayed journey

From Fort Hall.
Indulged by his foster parents into an idlyllic
River-fishing childhood, permitting him to determine
When or whether to go to school,
And leaving him with reasonable property and money
(As village legacies go) which he used
To perform his three year mission,
Then mismanaged and squandered through neglect
From nineteen hundred and twelve unto this day,
Preferring now, as eight decades ago, to fish
The river every day that the obstructive theys
Will let him,
Crying when they will not.
And through all the days of his dying
Always refusing the complications of family-rearing,
Plying the river for completion of the personages' promises;
But not knowing, the Poet thinks, that he was
Becoming a twentieth-century impossibility,
A wonder of the world that couldn't be,
But was;
Daily returning to the river to secure simplicity;
And though too kind to refuse office and task —
Constable, sexton, gravedigger, butcher —
Too near the magic of idyl to often perform them,
Paying the Saints the inconvenience of his unmilked cows
With messes of fish, and to the bishop too
His tithing — one fish in ten to the Lord.

In the car bumping through pioneer logging trails
Weeded over now, he speaks of recent reform,
Enforced by arthritis and winters too long.
: Been going to church,
He says, like a child learning to swim again.
: Going back now I'm old. But they think I'm
Two shades in the wind and . . .
Choking, bringing the broken joint to his nose,
. . . : They made me sit down . . . I was telling them
How I came to know . . . fever like a bonfire . . .
Wasn't half through and the bishop told Sadie to make me
Quit.
Because (the Poet thinks) he is the conscience of the village —
The Saints could not bear the chilling pierce of the Maori songs
Cracking the walls of the churchhouse and reminding those
Who have become old with him, that this is his dying year;
Or perhaps, because he announced the chant
As picturing dying suns, they felt
Premonitions of their own Yorick time.
I, the Valley's Poet, stop the machine

That I have accepted as consonant with my century,
And walk in the yellow aspen grove
Where the boy slew himself before my time,
Seeing in the eye of my soul
The Pescadero hills,
The stubble fields, reaped,
And the river, faint and long, below;
Tormenting myself not of dying
But of living in a rocket century.
Knowing the arthritically old man
Trembling in the car
In the final sign of sanity
In this the final year of his dying;
Knowing the *how can anyone know?*
Of our hayrack day gliding over isinglass snow
In maple field is no answer other than
The one he gave, and persisted in.
And now I long for his
Gift of leaving
A way and a time so rich;
To do as he has done;
To be as he has become.
Leaving a river for others to find
For more than they know will be.
Yet who can give such offerings as he,
At the water's edge,
Or offer the gift of self unto its flow?
Who? For eight decades unremitting?
Only he, whose mystery is to be reclaimed in that same innocence
From which, orphaned, he began.
The car starts, moves downhill,
Stung by the lashings of dead willow limbs.
: Be careful, Brother Daniels,
Of the river.
: Tumble in?
Mischief streaking the milky intensely blue eyes,
: O, I 'spect so . . . someday . . . this winter . . . maybe.
Caring not;
For he tried to do right in the days of his living,
Knowing he saw them one rainy night —
God and Joseph Smith.
: I saw them again the other night . . .
Funny thing, they looked a little
Like Judith,
Chuckling, gazing, now pointing the crooked finger to
A certain bend where
He and Nathan pulled a big one
Into shore.

Yvonne Romney Dixon

ADLAI STEVENSON DIED IN PALERMO

Adlai Stevenson died in Palermo.
In the airport. His face was pasted
On the newsstand, bobbing in and out among
Jabbering Sicilians, their sweaty hands
Sticky with orange soda pop,
Their bodies fat and rank.
But you picked a decent place to die, Adlai:
Sicily is good to death; it
Tricks it up with lavish trappings —
Even the horses wear wreaths and special livery.

Your name is now identified for me
With all that island's ancient monuments:
Segesta, majestic against the sunset;
Erice, preserving its mediaeval chastity
On its high proud rock; and the temples of Silenus,
Oddly sailing like flagships through fields of grain
As we looked up from splashing in the blue bay.

I am metamorphosed myself
For a woman I scarcely know.
She takes me, as I've found,
From my letter to a friend:
I am become for her a runner on white sands
Chasing crabs into secret lairs, racing free
Beneath new constellations in a southern sky,
Hungry in the breezy air
For a scent of cloves from Zanzibar.
It is a way I would remember myself.

So Stevenson be glad —
Whatever your life was, your dreams were,
I do not know and you cannot care,
Fallen like a stone on that hot street.
But I shall never think
Of Silenus rising from the wheat
Save coupled with your death.

FOR CATHERINE

Seeing her, with those first rude playthings,
The world growing large in the veins of a leaf,
I shudder. I grow old in her budding years.
She cadences my life with moth-like breaths,
This frail glory that measures ceaselessly my doom,
This child. But, humbly, we do as we must:
Send new shoots into a forest we shall never see.

Reviews

Edited by Edward Geary

THE FARM BOY AND THE ANGEL

Leonard Arrington

The Farm Boy and the Angel. By Carl Carmer. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970, 237 pp. $5.95. Leonard Arrington, a distinguished Mormon historian, is a professor of economics and history at Utah State University.

Readers of *Dialogue* who have been searching for a sympathetic, readable, and reasonably accurate introduction to Mormonism to present to their non-Mormon friends may well consider Carl Carmer's *The Farm Boy and the Angel.* This appreciation of "The Mormon Vision and the Winning of the West," parts of which previously appeared in *American Heritage,* can be easily read in an evening and the tone is neither syrupy nor disdainful. The narrative – or, more properly, the panorama – spotlights episodes and incidents that have inherent dramatic power; Mormon history flashes by at an exhilarating pace.

The earlier chapters, which describe Joseph Smith's First Vision, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the organization of the Church, the conflicts in Missouri, and the assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, touch these familiar incidents with new suspense. The latter portion of the book, which treats the Mormon trail, the early days in the Salt Lake Valley, the matter of polygamy, and the Church today, is less successful, but it still contains vivid "local color," some well-placed anecdotes and quotations, and some original description.

Latter-day Saint scholars will find nothing "new" in the book, either in the presentation of fact or by way of interpretation. The author is a distinguished poet, lecturer, and folklorist and does not pretend to convey the complexities and intricate details of the Mormon experience. (Bibliographers

would classify Carmer as a friendly non-Mormon.) Yet the text is a masterful literary evocation of the moods and emotions of Mormon history. For example, as the sad and forlorn little procession, carrying the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum, approached Nauvoo in late June 1844, it encountered a heavy and intolerable sound: "The sound was a composite of measureless cries of sorrow. Swelling and receding, it was a vast ululation of lament" (p. 122).

Carmer's description of the inherent tragedy in many early Mormon experiences, and his attempt to take Joseph quite seriously, causes the Prophet to be portrayed too solemnly. Joseph the frolicsome — Joseph the lighthearted friend of backwoods farmers and vagabonds — Joseph the exultant playmate of children — seldom makes an appearance.

The Farm Boy and the Angel concludes with a section "from the Author's Notebook," which contains some examples of pioneer vocabulary, folk expressions and idioms, specimens of Mormon humor, popular pioneer medical remedies, and Mormon proverbs and aphorisms. A new one to this reviewer was the complaint of a down-and-outer that a successful man needs three wives — two to beg and one to sew sacks!

A POVERTY OF INVENTION: A REVIEW OF *SING WITH ME*

Ruth Stanfield Rees

Sing With Me: Songs for Children, The General Church Music Committee. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co. $2.95. Ruth Stanfield Rees, the mother of four children, is working on a Ph.D. in musicology and participates in many aspects of the church music program.

"If there is anything virtuous, lovely,
or of good report or praisworthy,
we seek after these things."
—Joseph Smith

"For . . . the French contrive music in the
newest manner for the new times,
while the English continue to use one
and the same style of composition, which
shows a wretched poverty of invention."
—Tinctoris (c. 1476)

Like the sacramental prayers, the use of hymns is fixed in the Mormon worship service, and like Scripture, the hymns are used uncritically. But unlike the sacramental prayers or the Scriptures, a great deal of time in our services is devoted to hymns. Therefore, compiling a hymnal is no small matter. The "compleat" hymnal, we expect, would be doctrinally sound and very practical. We would also expect such a hymnal to be virtuous, lovely, of good report and praiseworthy.

Sing With Me, the new songbook for L.D.S. children, is for the most part doctrinally accurate and contains many usable pieces, and in this respect it is a welcome improvement over *The Children Sing*. Some of the new

pieces speak to our children in contemporary musical and verbal idioms. There is a movement away from the diction of popular nineteenth-century poetry to a more direct and meaningful kind of expression, an expression which is not less spiritual but which is less abstract in its content. Some of the songs are truly delightful. However, the book is seriously handicapped by the use of composers who lack training and imagination. It would seem that in seeking for that which is lovely and praiseworthy, we have not sought hard enough. *Sing With Me* shows an unfortunate poverty of invention. An analysis of the book, section by section, affirms this impression.

Sing With Me predictably relies heavily on previously published material. According to the preface it includes "established favorites from *The Children Sing* as determined by a survey of stakes throughout the Church, *Deseret Sunday School Songs,* favorite songs which have appeared in *The Children's Friend* and *The Instructor* and other supplementary publications . . . , and new songs especially composed for this volume. . . ."

There is clearly a need to begin with an established repertoire, but popularity polls have their pitfalls. To begin with, we must remember that establishing favorites is the business of adults — children have only adult favorites from which to choose. Furthermore, most of the material available through the Church has been very limited in style. The long Christian musical tradition, which is richly diverse, has been ignored in favor of music written essentially by Mormons in essentially one style — that of the late nineteenth century. To disregard centuries of great music and depend on Mormon composers, new and old, seems like a kind of premeditated cultural deprivation.

A desire for a children's musical tradition is valid. However, we must not limit that tradition to songs which we ourselves enjoyed or to those which our parents enjoyed before us. The tradition of our children should include Christian music from many times and many places. In *Sing With Me* the entire repertoire of Protestant congregational music is represented by a few gospel songs of the frontier. (Even our adult hymnal, which is no musical monument, is more generous.) In *Sing With Me* major composers are represented by bits and pieces of works never intended for group singing. There is not one work by a major composer that is printed as it was written. One is reminded of the John Thompson method of reducing entire symphonies to easy pieces for beginning piano students. Furthermore, *Sing With Me* doesn't include a single work by musicians who were primarily church composers. The periods during which sacred choral music was the dominant form of musical expression are not represented at all. A few selections (with good translations) by Bach and Palestrina would certainly enhance a book which relies so heavily on homegrown music. A few dignified chorales would be welcomed by many in the Church. And the inclusion of some medieval and early renaissance music, which is now available in modern editions, would appeal to simple as well as sophisticated tastes.

The section entitled "Songs of the Gospel" contains the best and the worst music in the book. The composers are highly diversified — there are

over sixty of them – and so is the music, falling along a continuum of complexity from the simplest of hymns to rather elaborate pieces which are presumably to be used for special occasions.

Within "Songs of the Gospel" questions of quality and propriety occur too frequently. In music for group worship, for example, good taste and tradition place limits on the kind and degree of motion which is acceptable in accompaniments. "Called to Serve" is clearly outside the bounds of a dignified worship service. The left-hand style of "Let the Little Children Come" is much less than satisfactory on an imaginative or a spiritual level, but the same style is used in many well-known songs within this section. Other repetitive accompaniments found in the section are somewhat less prosaic but they do not enhance sacred music. A good many of these songs should be firmly assigned to the archives. No matter who wrote them or whose grandmother loved them, they stand in the way of pieces which would be valued for reasons other than sentimental or political ones.

Some of the newer songs seek programmatic effects through accompaniments and must be approached on different terms. There is a tendency to fall into a commercial style, but the results may often be pleasant if the songs are performed properly. For example, "The Priesthood Is Restored" must be played to simulate a brass choir as closely as possible. "Praise" and "I Know My Father Lives" stand out as being very successful among the better new songs. Other pieces which succeed musically have rather unsuccessful texts.

Since there are apparently so many budding composers in the Church, the textual problems in *Sing With Me* warrant discussion. Many of the professional musicians in the Church have contributed to the songbook, but it seems that none of the professional literary people in the Church have done so. While there is no way of determining why this is the case, it would seem reasonable to suppose that no one asked literary people for texts. Great songs don't always have great texts, but it makes no sense at all for a composer to seek a text from anyone but the most highly skilled poet of his acquaintance.

Many of the difficulties of *Sing With Me* are matters of craftsmanship. "A Special Gift" is a case in point. The syntax is inverted twice in the first line. If it were only inverted once the rime scheme would not be harmed and the message would have much greater clarity. The words might read: "Kindness is a special gift,/Such happiness it brings;/When I am kind to others/My heart sings." "Lovely Appear," which is carried over from *The Children Sing*, has run irreparably amuck. The imagery of Isaiah is difficult enough in the Bible, but squeezed into Gounod it makes no sense at all.

In other poems writers undertake imagery which proves unworkable. In "Quiet Song," quiet is used inaccurately as a synonym for reverent. Quietness in children may be synonymous with reverence, but quietness in deep waters and meadows is not a manifestation of reverence but a manifestation of their innate nature. In "The Priesthood" the essential message will forever be overshadowed by the delayed phrase "and Oliver too."

"To Think About Jesus" presents an entirely different sort of problem. The whole message is incorrect in a rather insidious manner. It *is* hard "to think always of Jesus." In fact, it is impossible, and Jesus would be the first to admit that to restless three-year-olds. When the great goodness of Jesus is juxtaposed with relatively minor misbehavior in children — squirming in church — it makes the burden of that misbehavior disproportionately great. Small children should never get the impression that moving their feet in Sunday School had anything to do with the degree of Jesus' suffering.

Certain "Songs of the Gospel" need special comment. "Beautiful Savior" has for centuries been the very symbol of simple Christian faith. An accompaniment by a Moog Synthesizer would be almost as apt to that simplicity as the razzling, dazzling piano accompaniment here. In view of current ethnic enlightenment, "Book of Mormon Stories" may be offensive in a different way. Open fifths have been arbitrarily associated with Indians — and not always flattering implications. The "McGuffy Reader" music like "Angry Words! Oh, Let Them Never," "Never Be Late," and "In Our Lovely Deseret" consists of bad poetry, bad psychology, and warped Christian doctrine. I submit that it is a disservice to the memory of Eliza R. Snow to remind generation after generation that she wrote

> They must be instructed young,
> How to watch and guard the tongue,
> And their tempers train, and evil passions bind;
> They should always be polite,
> And treat everybody right
> And in ev're place be affable and kind.

It bears mention that several songs in "Songs of the Gospel" seem like songs without a section. "Let's Be Friendly," "Quickly I'll Obey," "Our Primary Colors," "Hello Song," and "Happy Song" all seem to be stuck here for want of an appropriate place to put them.

"Songs for the Sacrament" and "Prayer Songs" may be discussed together. The songs in both of these sections are very simple — hopefully within the grasp of the least talented branch — and will be used a great deal. The increased number of songs will be helpful. Unfortunately, as a group the pieces are tediously alike. Alexander Schreiner's use of rests in "We Remember Our Savior" and Harry A. Dean's use of half notes in "At Sacrament Time" are welcome breaks in what seems to be a long string of quarter notes. D. Evan Davis in "Our Savior's Love" and Robert P. Manookin in "A Prayer Song" provide a little harmonic daring. "For Thy Bounteous Blessings," arranged by Vanja Y. Watkins, is one of very few songs in the entire book written in a minor key.

The pleasant tune by Haydn which is used for Robert Louis Stevenson's "Thanks to Our Father" should be reset or eliminated since the melody demands a syllabic setting. Meanwhile, an enterprising composer might use Stevenson's poem and the first stanza of "Little Knees Should Lowly Bend" (eliminated from *The Children Sing*) as texts.

The vocal range of young children has been considered throughout the

book and several songs have been transposed; however, the smallest children should be able to sing the prayer songs and a few within the section are still beyond a comfortable range for them.

As a mother, I have taken it as somewhat of an affront that "Mother Songs" are frequently the worst songs that children sing. This is corrected to some degree in "Songs of Home and Family" where limits have been placed on sentimentality. However, while oom-pah-pah accompaniments and texts like "I love mother,/She loves me./We love daddy,/Yes siree" are still extant, we have a long way to go before the statements of our love match the beauty of our love. "Like Sunshine in the Morning" would seem to fit better here than in "Songs of the Seasons."

The "Songs of Home and Family" section has a number of songs for recreational singing. These are drawn from school texts or composed especially for this volume, but many are too self-conscious. If it is as much fun to sing as these songs tell us it is, we shouldn't have to say it over and over. In the future, editors might do well to consult folk music sources for purposes such as this. Many songs are available which are winning yet which avoid the musical cliches and textual effusiveness so apparent here.

"Songs of Our L.D.S. Heritage" should appeal to today's children. Some explanation may be necessary to account for the difference in outlook between the frolic described in "Whenever I Think About Pioneers" and the guarded optimism of "Westward Ho!" But the concrete images of our heritage have inspired some of the most imaginative songs in the book.

"The [Volga] Ox Cart" reminds one that credits within the book need to be regularized, and in some cases corrected. Extensive editing of works by major composers should not go unmentioned. ("Schubert and who else?" one is tempted to ask.)

"Songs of the Seasons" must be approached by absolutely ignoring some songs. "Catch the Sunshine," "Happiness" and several others are just about as child-centered and fun as whitewashing the second half of a fence. This music is "occasional music," but much of the language is so mannered that many children would have to practice all year long in order to understand it when the occasion for singing arose.

Within "Songs for Special Days" there are twelve Christmas songs. When one considers the wealth of carols available, some of the inclusions might be questioned. For instance, it would seem that the compilers could agree on one version of "Away In a Manger" and thereby make room for another good carol. The section contains a song about December, two about New Years, and six about birthdays. But, incredibly, *Sing With Me*, a book intended primarily for Christian worship, contains only two songs about Easter and one of those doesn't even mention the Savior! We must presume that the imbalance here is unintentional, otherwise the religious implications are absolutely unacceptable. It isn't really a matter of Easter getting equal time with Happy Birthdays, it's a matter of it being mentioned at all. In the entire volume the resurrection is mentioned only once. The sacrament songs all deal with Jesus to some extent. Several mention that He died for us,

some suggest that we should not move our feet in Junior Sunday School on that account and that folding our arms would be fine. None of the sacrament songs mentions the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. The celebration of the central event of Christianity is left to one Easter song. If we are to suppose that the two Easter songs in the adult hymnal help significantly to fill the Easter silence I think we are quite wrong. Much of the greatest music of the western world deals with the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. A children's hymnal that has room for six birthday songs and an adult hymnal that lists five "Militant Hymns" in its index should have room for more legitimate Easter music.

It would appear that *Sing with Me* has been prepared with limited vision. There are discrepancies between what we say to our children and what we do for them: we emphasize education and perfection but we don't seem to value it in composers; we emphasize the propriety of prayer language and ignore the possibility of addressing God with greater and greater refinement in music; we stress our understanding of God yet publish few songs that reflect His greatness; we believe in the Holy Ghost but often give Him the meanest musical vehicles with which to work.

For worship we borrow music and verse in order to express feelings which are beyond our own power to adequately express. Ideally, that which we borrow should accord with our highest sensibilities. Perhaps the greatest virtue of *Sing With Me* is that its flexible binding provides for songs to be deleted and added. The challenge to the General Music Committee is to take the best of *Sing With Me* and seek that which is most virtuous and most lovely to supplement it. Our children are malleable and willing to learn. We should give them an opportunity to worship according to their highest sensibilities as well.

DECAPITATING THE MORMONS: RICHARD SCOWCROFT'S NEW NOVEL

R. A. Christmas

The Ordeal of Dudley Dean. By Richard Scowcroft. Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1969, 272 pp. $5.95.

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Dudley Dean is a forty-year-old befuddled jack-Mormon professor of English. Wife Hannah has left him and married one of his teaching colleagues — a maudlin, oversexed boor named Ashton — and his devout Mormon mother has just died. Dudley returns to Salt Lake City after an absence of twenty years. He buries his mother, quits his teaching job, and decides to winter in the Wasatch while working on a book and angling for new employment. He sets up in the tower of an old East South Temple mansion, and divides his time between Elinore, a Mormon spinster left over from his eighth-grade

leatherwork class, and April, a South State coffee-joint waitress with a nice pink bedroom out by the airport.

The only lingering hang-up is seventeen-year-old son Tad, left behind with ex-wife and new hubby. Dudley's instincts tell him that he should have a hand in "shaping Tad into the fine man he had it in him to be." But the last thing he should become, of course, is a messed-up Mormon like his father. The book opens with Tad's arrival at the Salt Lake Airport to spend Christmas vacation with Dad. Before the holiday is over Dudley is to learn a great deal about his fatherhood, his son, and the part that his atrophied Mormon background wants to play in their relationship.

The theme of the book, in general, is individuality. Most of the comedy is generated by mistaken ideas of what individuality is, or by lack of respect for the individuality of others. Dudley's quest for mere rationality (Elinore is a "sex-starved virgin of forty"); Tad's precocious and subjective imagination (Elinore is "fascinating"); and April's simple-minded animality (going to bed with Dudley is "just like going to the bathroom") — these are the comically incomplete approaches to the problem. Tad's version seems to come closest to the ideal, since Dudley can't help trying to interest his son in a Mormon girl, and April, at the end, seems ready to fall for the phony tokens of a Mormon courtship.

The Mormons in the novel have no concept of individuality at all. Individuality to them means simply conformity to the "Truth" of Mormonism; all deviations are either attacked, ignored, or ridiculed; the only goal is the waters of baptism. Thus the Mormons perform the greatest comic sin in the book: they constantly seek to impose their one-track individuality on others.

Whenever Mormonism comes up, Scowcroft's narrative seems to shift gears: from realistic social comedy to direct, generalized satire. The average Mormon is simply not a "rational human being." Mormons think of people only as "meanings"; they "hang the moral price tag on every experience"; their naïveté is "scarcely to be believed"; and they go to their graves, like Dudley's mother, without ever questioning their lives. These and other negative traits are embodied in Hannah's sister Bessie and her family, and to a lesser degree in Elinore Alcorn and her maiden aunts. Elinore and her circle try to interest Dudley in a life of drinking sage tea, and Bessie and her tribe descend on Tad and Dudley in a misguided effort to brighten their Christmas by converting Tad and bringing his father back into the fold.

As the novel progresses it turns increasingly into farce and finally almost collapses under its weight of accumulated scorn. Bessie's people are, with minor exceptions, a collection of idiots. The standout is son Filmore, a returned missionary so insensitive that he can get himself invited to dinner (his second of the evening), and then accept half of Tad's steak and half of Dudley's, because he believes in "sharing the poverty of the Saints." Wife Hannah, it turns out, has returned to the Church and is now president of her Relief Society; and on New Year's Eve she and Ashton call to announce that they are "making a little sister for Tad . . . by God," and that Ashton

is going to be baptized. Bessie's household is piously aflutter over this news, but Dudley (lured over to take the call, apparently) has had it. He respectfully asks them to exclude him from their prayers, and so would anyone.

Most of these pokes at Mormon life strike me as accurate — considered as criticism. The question is whether Scowcroft's basically realistic structure holds up under the burden of so many judgments that would seem to be true only in general. At times he seems so obviously out to "get" his Mormon characters that a double standard seems to be operating in his comedy, a somewhat contradictory point of view. The Mormons come in for a drubbing, but Dudley's bathetic self-pity, Tad's almost unbearable conceit, and April's wasted life are portrayed with indulgent good humor. If the epitome of satire, in Dryden's terms, is "the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body, and leaves it standing in its place," then Scowcroft might be accused of decapitating his Mormons with a sledgehammer.

The problem is that Scowcroft's Mormons are not "characters" in the sense that, say, April and Tad are characters. His Mormons are too obviously embodiments of the many generalizations "about" Mormonism that lace the book from first to last — some of which I have already quoted. Others include: "The Mormon God is very long-suffering when it comes to listening to prayers"; "Why, when you say *no* to a Mormon, does he always hear *yes*?"; "In the Mormon bed, God is always there"; "the schizophrenic combination of cosmopolitanism and provincialism in Mormon society," etc. As if to compensate for all this footnoting, Dudley is given to say, late in the novel, that "The Mormons aren't the only ones like this"; and Tad replies, "Yes. Isn't it sad?" But if this is true, why all the emphasis on these as *peculiar* Mormon defects in the first place?

On the whole, Scowcroft has written a skillful and often quite witty novel. The troubling thing is that our novelists, both pro and con, still have this tendency to first "explain" what Mormonism is, and then to construct somewhat wooden characters to fit the generalizations. In *The Ordeal of Dudley Dean*, the Mormons must dance to the tune of the footnotes, and the result is a slightly incongruous comic structure in which Mormonism is only the dear, demented backdrop against which the meaningful action takes place.

REFLECTIONS ON *THE LION OF THE LORD*

Klaus Hansen

The Lion of the Lord: A Biography of Brigham Young. By Stanley P. Hirshson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969. xx + 391 pp. + xxvi. $8.95. Klaus Hansen teaches history at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. He is the author of *"Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty."* Although we reviewed Mr. Hirshson's book in our last issue, we feel Professor Hansen's review explores important questions about the nature of Mormon historiography not covered by earlier reviewers.

Not many years after Voltaire delivered himself of his much maligned observation that history is a pack of tricks we play on the dead, historians

began to attempt to prove him wrong by telling us about the past, in the words of the eminent "scientific" historian Leopold von Ranke, "as it actually happened." In order to achieve this high goal they have demanded, with increasing success, the opening of archives of governments, churches, and other organizations traditionally closed to them because of the skeletons in the institutional closets or the continuing demand for the promotion of historical myths. The apogee of this almost naive faith in the power of the historical record came with the Bolshevik revolution, when the Russians opened up their archives under the assumption that the truth was more potent than the sword. And yet it is precisely the Russian experience which has dampened the historical profession in its optimism regarding the eradication of historical legerdemain, for the historiography of few modern countries can stand as a more blatant monument to the correctness of Voltaire's cynicism.

Although the historians of the "free world" have severely condemned Soviet historiography, they have also become increasingly aware that the elimination of conscious or unconscious bias can be a knotty problem in the reconstruction of the past of any society. Historians of Mormonism might well reflect on this lesson as their demands for a policy of easier access to the Church Historian's Office are meeting with increasing success. Although such a change is of course encouraging to students of Mormon history, they should restrain their enthusiasm by keeping in mind that whether they like it or not, their image of the past is perhaps as much a result of the historian's point of view as of his sources. Stanley Hirshson's *The Lion of the Lord* provides a striking example of this caveat.

Most reviewers have made a great fuss over Hirshson's failure to consult the extensive holding of the Church Historian's Office. For example, in his by now famous review in *BYU Studies,* Leonard Arrington reveals a masterly knowledge of the materials Hirshson has missed. And yet, I believe, it may be possible to grant Hirshson extenuating circumstances. In spite of the recent thaw at the Church Historian's Office, much of the old conservatism still lingers, and I am inclined to give at least some credence to Hirshson's statement that "at the Mormon Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City, . . . I received no help or encouragement. . . ."

An explanation, of course, is not necessarily an excuse. Still, I find Hirshson's cavalier and even disingenuous *reasons,* which are of course intended to anticipate and defuse the charges laid against him, far more shocking than his actual failure to consult the sources that he should have. Having, perhaps too easily, given up on the "help or encouragement" of the Church Historian's Office, Hirshson went the fox one better by deciding not that grapes were too sour but, rather, the figment of other people's imaginations. Previous investigators of the life of Brigham Young, he claims, "have scoured in the wrong places. The key to understanding him is not in the Rocky Mountains but in the Midwest and along the Atlantic Coast. . . ." The logic and the evidence he marshals for this assertion provide a glimpse of some of the methodological deficiencies that mar the volume as a whole: "It is my

contention and, surprisingly enough, that of several of the Mormon scholars to whom I have talked, that the widely circulated stories of secret materials in possession of the Mormon church are, if not false, exaggerations. The specialized studies by those who have had free rein in the historian's office — *most of them were church officials* [my italics] — support this view, for in my opinion they offer nothing startling." Professor Hirshson, of course, isn't naive enough to believe that if the Church has indeed secrets to hide its officials would *deliberately* publicize them, and that therefore their failure to do so is *unqualified* evidence that such sources don't exist. But he does believe that under special circumstances the argument from silence is inadvertent proof of his assertion. If "the church archives in Salt Lake City contain secret materials," he reasons, Joseph F. Smith, Jr., would have used them in his *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City, 1905), "which is based on readily available data." Even if for the sake of argument I would accept the debatable — not to say dubious — claim that President Smith behaved according to Hirshson's logic, is Hirshson indeed justified in elevating one very specific instance to a general principle? Clearly, Hirshson is violating here a very elementary rule of historical evidence.

Furthermore, Hirshson's reasoning implies a very narrow definition of the term "secret materials." I am of course, one of those who have contended that the Church Historian's Office as well as other Church depositories may well contain important secret documents whose release might have a profound effect on Mormon historiography if not on Mormon history. The possible, even probable, existence of further records of the Council of Fifty and the political Kingdom of God — beyond those to which I inadvertently gained access — is perhaps the most obvious example. Still, I am inclined to agree with Hirshson that it is possible to exaggerate the number and significance of such documents, at least according to his narrow definition. If I, as a historian, delight in a scoop of secret documents as much as any journalist, I also realize that most of my sources consist of rather unglamorous diaries, letter-books, account books, office journals, and so on, which in fact comprise the bulk of the Brigham Young materials in the Church Historian's Office. But certain senior archivists in the Church Historian's Office continue to feel quite as nervous about these materials as about sources that may specifically be labelled secret. If Professor Hirshson has indeed delved into the Mormon past to the extent that he implies he has, he should know that the Church like almost any other institution has attempted to create a deliberately propagandistic version of its own past, a version that can be sustained more easily by keeping evidence secret or by "editing" — in conformity with the "official" version — those sources made available to the public. Understandably, a church archivist or historian cannot always anticipate what kind of surprises may be contained even in a seemingly innocent source. But neither can Hirshson.

Nevertheless, I believe it is possible to make too much of Hirshson's failure to consult the Church Historian's Office, or even his failure to use crucial and readily available secondary works and periodicals such as *Dialogue,*

an omission of which he seems unaware since he does not attempt to justify it. Frankly, judging from the use he makes of the materials he has collected, it is doubtful that he would have benefited from the riches of the Church Historian's Office. Ultimately, Hirshson's major flaws are a matter of point of view and of methodology. The puzzling fact is that Hirshson fails to make adequate use of his extensive research. Having spent endless hours in the Newspaper Annex of the New York Public Library and the vast holdings of bound newspapers in the New Jersey Historical Society, Hirshson has amassed an impressive and unprecedented number of journalistic accounts about the Mormons "in the files of the . . . Eastern newspapers prosperous and wise enough to keep correspondents in Utah, to send their best reporters to Salt Lake City . . . , and to interview leading Mormons who came east." That kind of material, in Hirshson's hands, unfortunately leads to an incredible confusion between belief and fact. Many Gentiles *believed* that Brigham Young was a murderer, or a thief, or a swindler, or a liar, or anything else the imagination can supply — just as the Saints believed him to be the very pillar of rectitude, honesty, charitableness, and so on. But what was the real Brigham like? The following illustration of the misuse of historical evidence, a passage taken from the celebrated Richard T. Burton's *The City of the Saints,* is but one of numerous examples revealing that this distinction was lost on Hirshson:

> It is believed by Mormons, as well as Gentiles, that Mr. Brigham Young has, in the states, newspaper spies and influential political friends, who are attached to him, not only by the ties of business and the natural respect for a wealthy man, but by the strong bond of a regular stipend. And such is their reliance upon dodgery — which, *if it really exists* [my italics], is by no means honorable to the public morality of the Gentiles — that they deride the idea of a combined movement from Washington ever being made against them.

Then comes Hirshson's clincher: "Young used the tithe well." As Leonard Arrington said, "This biography is based on hearsay." Arrington has counted "498 footnote references to New York City newspapers and 101 references to other eastern newspapers," and pointedly suggests that by way of analogy, perhaps "the key to understanding Robert E. Lee is not in Virginia, but in the Yankee correspondents' reports about him in the Big City newspapers."

It seems to me, however, that Hirshson's sources might have provided the foundation for an imaginative effort of a very different kind. If the study of symbol and myth has become perhaps an overworked field in certain areas of American studies, this cannot be said in regard to Mormonism, and much can still be added to the pioneering contributions of Leonard Arrington, John Haupt, Kenneth Hunsaker, and D. L. Ashliman. What a singular opportunity for Hirshson to have said something significant not just about Brigham Young, but about those who responded to him — to have written a more sophisticated companion piece to Preston Nibley's study, which is essentially a catalogue of the image of Brigham Young in the *Mormon* mind.

But it is perhaps unfair to ignore the rule that the reviewer should not stray beyond the bounds set by the intentions of the author. Even by these limited standards, however, Hirshson does not come off very well. Claiming to be "one of the few non-Mormons of this century to deal seriously with Young's religion," he has adopted a tone of almost mocking condescension, standing in sharp contrast to those non-Mormon scholars like Thomas F. O'Dea, P.A.M. Taylor, Mario DePillis, and Jan Shipps, whose serious intent — obvious in the work itself — needs no reaffirmation in introductions. If Mr. Hirshson has read his anti-Mormon literature he cannot have missed the almost obligatory professions of serious and scholarly intent gracing the prefaces of even the most blatant diatribes and exposés. But, perhaps, it is possible to quibble too much about tone, "favorable" image, and other subjective terms.

On a more objective level, Hirshson claims, "in contrast to . . . [his] predecessors," to "have tried to present Young's early years in perpsective and [to] have emphasized his Western experiences, which fully illustrate his powers of leadership. This later period shows that as perhaps no other American of his time Young covered numerous fields: religion, government, exploration, history, business, and sociology." Although I am inclined to agree with Hirshson's assessment, I want him to show me precisely how he arrived at these conclusions. That, after all, is what a biography is largely about. But in view of the niggardly manner in which Hirshson supports these assertions, it appears that his own estimation of Young may well be as much a matter of faith as that of any uncritical Latter-day Saint.

Because of Hirshson's heavy emphasis on Brigham's domestic affairs and the joys and trials of polygamy — and that in a most non-analytical and strongly anecdotal manner — it appears that the real intent of the author was to provide, behind a scholarly veneer, an entertaining and readable book that sells. Now, I do not share the opinion of those who — perhaps judging from their own prose — believe that history in order to be scholarly has to be unreadable and who, conversely, follow the corollary that therefore books like Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* cannot be good history because of their brilliant style. I can only applaud if Hirshson may well have tried to do for Brigham Young what Mrs. Brodie did for Joseph Smith. But unfortunately Professor Hirshson has not yet learned that it takes more than clever phrases and a racy topic to write a lively book. As a result, Hirshson's book is not only poor history, but incredibly dull. If, as a reviewer, I had not had the obligation to read it to the bitter end, I don't believe I could have finished it for boredom.

Lesser sins are perhaps the inevitable result of a treacherous topic that can easily lure the unwary into traps of theology, doctrine, and folklore — though some non-Mormon scholars have successfully avoided these. Irony becomes poetic justice when Hirshson lectures William Mulder on his failure to understand correctly the term "Zion," claiming that the author of the classic account of Scandinavian immigration to Utah "mistitled the book *Homeward to Zion.*" Several such gaffes reveal that the author is less than

at home in Mormon culture.

Finally, I wish to pick one nit because it had a kind of cumulative, annoying effect on me. The footnotes contain frequent references to the "Beinicke [sic] Library," though in one notable exception the name of the donors of the famous rare book library at Yale is spelled correctly.

By way of a postscript, it may be appropriate to amplify further on some of the questions Hirshson's book has raised explicitly and implicitly with regard to the Church Historian's Office in particular and the enterprise of Mormon history in general.

Every so often I am asked if my research into Mormon history hasn't strengthened my testimony — a rhetorical question which I am generally expected to answer with a resounding *yes*. My questioners, of course, assume either that the Church has no skeletons to hide or that, in the unlikely event that they do, it would be much better to exhibit them in public. I suppose not a few Mormons would be taken aback by Joseph Smith's remark to Brigham Young that "If I were to reveal to this people what the Lord has revealed to me, there is not a man or a woman that would stay with me." A historian who would make it his business to juxtapose myth and reality in Mormon history might not expect results quite that dramatic, yet the fact is that an unvarnished version of the history of the Church that lets the chips fall where they may is potential dynamite. If historians, therefore, do not necessarily agree with the still relatively conservative and restrictive policies of the Church Historian's Office they should at least understand that these proceed from an internal logic.

That logic, of course, is not without its own paradox, for those who believe that access to the sources of the Church Historian's Office ought to be restricted operate on the assumption that people tend to react rationally and predictably. But if in the minds of some people apostacy might well be a rational response to an unvarnished history of Mormonism, Mormons, of all people, ought to remind themselves that religion is not based primarily on reason or logic. To a professional historian, for example, the recent translation of the Joseph Smith papyri may well represent the potentially most damaging case against Mormonism since its foundation. Yet the "Powers That Be" at the Church Historian's Office should take comfort in the fact that the almost total lack of response to this translation is an uncanny proof of Frank Kermode's observation that even the most devastating act of disconfirmation will have no effect whatever on true believers. Perhaps an even more telling response is that of the "liberals," or cultural Mormons. After the Joseph Smith papyri affair, one might well have expected a mass exodus of these people from the Church. Yet none has occurred. Why? Because cultural Mormons, of course, do not believe in the historical authenticity of the Mormon scriptures in the first place. So there is nothing to disconfirm.

Therefore, the Church Historian's Office could relax completely and allow unlimited access to its holdings without fear of potential repercussions from either orthodox or cultural Mormons. If as a historian I would ap-

plaud such a policy I deplore the *reasons* that make it possible, for I believe that it merely highlights the melancholy fact that too many Mormons, whether "orthodox" or "liberal," regard their history as irrelevant. It is perhaps a supreme irony, then, that the implications of the old restrictive policy of the Church Historian's Office reveal the members of that organization — much maligned by certain professional historians — as upholders of a waning belief in the power of history, although, admittedly, it was they who, in the late fifties and early sixties, presented obstacles rather more formidable than those faced by Hirshson to those very scholars who inaugurated the "new" Mormon history. To some degree, Hirshson's failure must be measured against the work of these historians. In the strong reaction to *The Lion of the Lord* I see another auspicious sign that for the future of Mormon history, Voltaire's cynicism may not be justified.

CORN GROWS IN ROWS

Dennis Clark

Corn grows in my father's backyard garden
in ten green files, each row a week taller,
the tallest now past two months, nearly ripe.
The years he's planted gardens range beyond
the year that I was born in early spring,
but memory recalls three different plots
to me, and in the different three backyards,
corn grew beside the radishes and beans.
Onions, raspberries, strawberries, stringbeans,
podpeas and melons — several separate kinds —
carrots, squash, tomatoes, potatoes
spent summers in the yard and watched the corn.
Corn grows in tall rows assymetrically
and yields ears as often as it can,
and yields for months before September frost:
we've had fresh corn to spare all of my life,
and sparing hasn't hurt the stalks' supplies.

Dad took us out to plant the corn in spring;
after the cultivator turned the dirt
he furrowed with his handplow, turning back
a cover for the seeds he had us plant
in groups of three or so two feet apart,
two feet we marked off with a twig he broke
to measure so each stalk had room enough.
He plowed a water row next, turning back
the dirt into each furrow; as he walked
he trod the soil down to pack it hard
so birds would let the pink, parched kernels be
to draw the minerals and moisture in
from sheep dung and tap water Dad supplied
till root and shoot grew big enough to hold,
to break the dirt and push into the air
and light, and then we weeded everything.
We always watched the corn to see it grow
two feet apart; we always planted more —
until it wouldn't ripen if we did.
We watched and watered, weeded when he came
to show us weed from parsnip or rhubarb
and watch us work. I didn't like to work,
and always swore I'd never plant a thing
as I sucked some weed's sting or grass's cut,
and never make my kids watch after things
while I went off to school and hid away.

My Dad's a teacher, doctors people's words;
came from a farm and liked to smile and say
"I've hoed more weeds from corn rows in a day
than you'll set eyes on in our whole back yard,
so go and weed the corn, son." And I did,
sometimes; especially when he meant to say
"Get to those weeds before I get to you."
We used to pick the corn together, when
he wasn't tired from his school work,
brushing together sideways down the rows,
fingering husks aside around the silk
to thrust in eyesight at the growing corn,
picking the yellow-kerneled ears, leaving
the cobs with small white pointed knobs
to grow and fill out, row on yellow row.

But that's all several years back: I'm in school
making myself a spreader of the words;
married a girl who likes to see things green.
Despite the vows I took in weedy youth
I have a backyard and a plot to match:
I'm going to sow some seeds and see if Dad
was lucky or if it will work for me.

Among the Mormons
A Survey of Current Literature

Edited by Ralph W. Hansen

A sense of humor keen enough to show a
man his own absurdities will
keep him from the commission of all sins,
or nearly all, save those that are
worth committing.

Samuel Butler the Younger,
LIFE AND HABIT.

Reader who art too seriously
disposed, depart whither you will;
I wrote these verses for the man
of wit.

Martial, EPIGRAMS, *Bk. 11, epig. 16.*

These are times when the burdens of life, especially in my ivory tower, press down heavily. At such times, when attempting to meet *Dialogue*'s deadline, relief appears in the guise of an unusual thesis or dissertation. The spell-breaker this year was "The First Fabulous Flight of Flutter Hedgehop," a master's thesis accepted at a Utah university in 1969. Whether the "Flutter Hedgehop" is real or mythical is of little note. That the authoress conceived her subject to be light enough for a fabulous academic flight places her above the scholarly flock. Second choice for the most thought provoking title was "Ideal Size of Family among Unmarried Females in Northern Utah." It boggles the mind; but hold, I am assured that the "ideal size" is the goal sought by marriage-bound females *after* marriage. No doubt the prospective husband will have some influence upon the realization of these premarital desires.

And so once again we present the theses and dissertations accepted by American colleges and universities on the broad subject of Mormons and Mormonism. As in the past, all dissertations, except those on geology, that touch on Utah are listed. Theses are more rigorously screened, so that the connection with Mormonism generally must depend on more than that the thesis centers on life and conditions in Utah. Further information regarding selection and sources may be found in previous Summer issues of *Dialogue*.

Once again, I am indebted to Ida-Marie Logan Jensen, Chad Flake, and Everett L. Cooley for their assistance in providing sources for the bibliography which follows.

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Notes and Comments

THE RELEVANCE OF LITERATURE: A MORMON VIEWPOINT

Edward L. Hart

This essay was read May 5, 1969, at the annual awards banquet of the English Department at Brigham Young University. Professor Hart, a member of that department, has just completed a book, MINOR LIVES *(an edition of biographies from the writings of John Nichols), which will be published early next year by Harvard University Press.*

A short time ago, in *Brigham Young University Studies,* I published an article about Japanese and English poetry; I ended it with the statement that poetry in both languages carries the hallmark "Made on Earth by Man." A week or so later I received a letter from a member of the Church in California. He had read my article, and noting my interest in Japanese things he sent me a paper written by his son on the history of the Mormon Church in Japan, which I was very happy to get because I have a deep and continuing interest in everything Japanese. His letter, however, concluded with the statement that the paper he was sending me stressed "Made on Earth by God."

For a long time I considered the tone of the letter. I decided finally that my correspondent had intended merely to find a graceful transition from my article to the one he was sending, that he had not meant his statement as a rebuke. But the possibility of this latter interpretation stuck in my mind. What if he had meant to say that my emphasis on the creative works of man was a misapplication of effort, perhaps even almost a blasphemy to direct any effort away from the praising of God? Regardless of whether the question had been intentional, it had arisen. And any question that can

be asked, demands an answer and poses a challenge, just as to a mountain climber the mere presence of a mountain is the challenge. I continued to turn the matter over in my mind, and my thoughts here are largely the result of ideas that began to assemble themselves in response to the question. They become, in effect, a kind of justification for my life's work.

The things we call art are, by definition, the works of man, called thus to distinguish them from nature. People have, historically, valued art because of the very fact that, having passed through the mind of a man, it becomes a human interpretation of an object, an idea, or an event. In defense of this activity, I first asked myself the question: Is there anything in specifically Mormon beliefs that would preclude artistic pursuits on the part of church members? Or from a more positive position, an even better question: Are there specific Mormon beliefs that contribute to a justification of a career in the arts?

In approaching these questions, I felt I should be quite basic, and I could find nothing more basic than the Mormon concept of God: a God who not only loves his children as does an earthly father but who is, as well, their literal spiritual father. Proceeding from this, I asked: What kind of an earthly father is jealous of his children's accomplishments and advances or is wrathful if they do something worthwhile on their own? Is our Father in Heaven, then, likely to be angered at his children's presumptuousness if they become capable of creative thought or action and growth toward understanding? Perhaps the best answer is another question: Isn't every accomplishment of a man likely to be the occasion of his Father's rejoicing? One would certainly have to go to some other religion than Mormonism to find a concept of a god (not the loving Father) who frowns upon all the efforts of man, dismissing them with hautiness as puny and insignificant.

Related to the Mormon concept of God is the Mormon explanation of why man is on earth to begin with. We do not see ourselves as mere pawns and playthings at the mercy of the caprices of a higher being; rather, we see ourselves and God together working in harmony with irrevocable law. We are here to undergo the experience of mortality in order to learn what that experience has to teach; and we are to undergo that experience not only that we might suffer, but that we might find joy. Most of the rest that I have to say will be an exploration of the ways in which art (or specifically literature from now on) contributes to man's joy. And lest my statement about finding joy in literature mislead you into thinking I am going to approach the subject from the point of view of how it pretties up life, let me say immediately that I am not. I wish, in short, to look at literature not as decoration, but as a meaningful and functional part of life itself.

I want to begin looking for the ways by which literature contributes to joy by asking what joy is and how we come by it. For this purpose, I shall omit here the approaches to this subject that are familiar in a theological framework, although doing this is deceptive since our theology informs us that there is no clear and distinct separation between spiritual and temporal meanings. But this fact itself imposes an even greater responsibility to ex-

amine things on the path along which we are going, as being a trail that is less well explored than others.

If we assume that man's purpose on earth is to fulfill in reality all the potential that he had when he came here, then joy must be the gauge, as well as the reward, of our approach to fulfillment. The problem for man, thus, is to become that which he is capable of becoming. Literature is one way of becoming. I do not claim that it is the only way, nor even that it is at all times the best way: only that it is one way and a good way. Writing is one means that an author possesses to become himself, and he can become that self only by writing. Would Shakespeare be Shakespeare if he had written no plays? Would Milton have been Milton if he had not written *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*? Shakespeare became Shakespeare and Milton became Milton only as they realized their potential for creating their various works. By the same reasoning, we who have not yet completed our life's works are not ourselves yet. You are not you yet; you are still in the process of becoming you, and you will not be you until you have made those things and done those things which, when they are made and done, will define you to yourselves and to the world. Nothing but discovering and being that self will bring joy. A person who feels that he has within himself a talent that lies undeveloped, a seed that has never burst through its husk and grown, a light that is hidden under a bushel: such a person has not become his complete self and will feel incomplete or crippled in soul and therefore deprived of a joy. And man is that he might have joy.

The myths and the literatures of the world are full of the symbols of man's search for himself. In the Egyptian myth of Osiris, Isis must go in search of the dismembered parts of his body and put them together to make him whole. Most of the voyage stories involve travels in search of self: such were the voyages of Odysseus, of Huckleberry Finn, of Marlow into the Heart of Darkness, painstakingly selecting and interpreting scattered fragments of life and putting them together to make them form a whole picture. In this manner, literature (or art in general) is a close ally of religion in that both attempt to synthesize the disparate experiences of life into a unified whole. If this synthesis does not take place, a man is not a whole person, but a conglomeration of unclassified odds and ends, incomplete and unhappy.

Fortunately for men, the force that drives them to become themselves, to become one, is a strong force. It is, in my opinion, even stronger than the desire for self-preservation; and this opinion is demonstrable, for instance, in the life of someone like Joseph Smith, who chose to maintain the wholeness and integrity of his being even at the expense of life itself. This force that urges one to maintain or to attain his wholeness is, it seems to me, the source that we must turn to for an explanation of man's creative efforts. "This ache for being is the ultimate hunger," wrote D. L. Lawrence.[1]

Various explanations have been set forth as to why man creates art.

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[1]From "Manifesto," fourth poem from the end of *Look! We have Come Through!* (New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1920), p. 145.

W. H. Auden once said, for instance, that the artist is a misfit and that it is this that keeps him at his proper trade, which he might otherwise abandon.[2] If he were to find contentment, he would no longer utter the cry of anguish that becomes art. Aristotle introduced the therapeutic justification, which has been considerably amplified by present-day critics to include other types of therapy as well as catharsis. From this viewpoint, art is seen as the letting out of poisonous evils either from the mind of the writer or of the reader, or both. It has always seemed to me, however, that these and other similar theories leave a lot unexplained, though they have an obvious but nevertheless limited validity. I suspect that the greatest practicioners of literary art in English—Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Milton, for instance—were pushed into writing by something deeper, the necessity to become themselves, to synthesize their worlds of experience into meaningful wholes, and that there was no other way for them to do this than by writing their works. I believe that the explanation of art as the search for being can be extended to all manifestiations of art, and that it is the only theory that explains all such phenomena satisfactorily.

Even on the most primitive level, human beings must reach, through art, toward some form of being beyond the requirements for survival. An Indian blanket is no warmer because of the pattern woven into it. And no matter what the explanation of how it came to be put there (such as ritual significance) the effect is the realization of a richer being on the part of the person who uses it. Quite obviously, people in the most straitened circumstances can do something creative to their surroundings: even students living on meager means. The common things a person chooses to have around him, from saltshakers to cars, create an environment which is either an emanation of himself or alien to his being. Every person has to be an artist in order to live well. The subtle things over which one has a choice in his environment are far from important to his well-being and growth than are those things over which he has no control. Don't bring ugliness into your life in the form of a glass, and have to look at it and handle it every day, just because peanut butter came in it. Above all, do not let dishonesty creep into your surroundings in the form of things that pretend to be something that they are not: of boards masquerading as bricks, for instance. These things are corruptions that we do not have to tolerate. If we do tolerate them, and if we live among them long enough, we cannot help participating in their sham.

Thus it seems to me that being honest is a rule of life that extends to literature, and it is the first rule a person must follow if he is going to search for his true being either in his own writings or in the writings of others. Dishonesty in writing is the worst kind of perjury, because here a person is lying to himself about himself. The results, in terms of craftsmanship, appear in many forms. sentimentality, false figures of speech, irrelevant rhythms,

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[2]For a discussion of this see Robert B. Heilman's introduction to the Modern Library ed. of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1950), p. xx, n. 1. This note is omitted from the more recent ed. (1969).

all are distortions of the truth about life. If a person is basically honest and has any kind of sensitivity to language, he has a pretty good chance of discovering something worthwhile in his attempt to say what he thinks; but if he is not basically honest, no amount of skill in craftsmanship can cover the deficiency.

So by all means write. And don't worry about writing about your own experiences since all writers draw upon their own experiences. It is often only through writing about something that has happened to us that we find what it means; and we can find what the experience means in writing only by placing it in some kind of position where we are forced to look at it objectively, as though it were happening to someone else. If the writer can do this, he can often see the relevance of an isolated experience to a total picture of life. In this way he has gathered up a fragment and put it into place in a way that will make his being more complete and whole. Without the effort at composition, a fragment of experience might have lain forever detached and meaningless. More often than not the writer, again assuming that he is proceeding honestly, does not know how the pieces fit together until he is through. If a writer discovers nothing in the course of his composing it is not likely that he will startle any readers with the suddenness of a discovery.

If writing is a means of achieving being, so also is reading. We cannot hope to achieve in one short lifetime all possible discoveries by means of our own writing. Fortunately, if another writer has been honest also, in his approach to his writing, we may well learn from him how to put scattered, meaningless pieces together to make whole patterns. In the process, we are likely to learn to extend sympathies toward those to whom our sympathies might not flow of their own accord. Thus the range of our understanding is extended. The closeness of literature to religion seems at this point to be quite apparent. If we are to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, we must first have the capacity to imagine what it would be like to have it done to us. Is it really possible to live Christianity, to put oneself in the place of another, without this imaginative capacity? And is not anything — literature, for instance — that extends our imaginative capacity, therefore of the utmost relevance to Christianity? Remember that when Jesus himself was on earth he taught most characteristically by means of the literary device known as the parable, not by means of an abstract philosophy or theology. In an age of unrest, mistrust, hatred, and alienation, anything that produces sympathy, understanding, and accord must be given a high priority as far as relevance is concerned.

Nor need we fear that we are displeasing Deity if we attempt to create something on our own. We stand condemned for failure to use our talents if we do not. Surely a people who see themselves as eventually organizing and peopling worlds will not object to beginning the apprenticeship here on earth. From this point of view, everything that man accomplishes helps bring to pass God's work. The stamp on a work of art, "Made on Earth by Man," is, therefore, one that needs no apology, if it is done honestly and well, since it tends also to the glorification of God.

ENCHANTING MANLINESS

John Paul Kennedy

Mr. Kennedy sent us this essay with a letter written on stationery from his Chicago law firm: "My wife ordered me to send you the enclosed. Send the rejection slip to the above address."

Many people have observed something unusual about my relationship with my wife and people in general. Often, I have been asked by individuals wondering what my secret is, "Kennedy, do you know what you're doing?" Since this interest has grown to such great proportions, I have decided to reveal my Plan for Living so that all men may enjoy its consequences.

As everyone knows, Man's goal in life is to feel completely in charge, with the willing support of all those whom he controls. This essay is written to restore your hope in such a Goal — and to suggest principles which you must apply in winning such a commanding position in Life.

At the outset, if you are a woman, please read no further, because an educated woman will infinitely complicate the process of reaching the Goal all men seek. If you are a Man, do NOT allow your wife, girlfriend or daughter to peruse this essay. This would give her an unfair advantage over you and, goodnéss knows, Men need every advantage possible in this sea of Matrimonial Darkness in which we exist. Therefore, Men, guard the principles which are set forth herein as you would guard your manliness — for without these little rules you will be reduced to a hollow shell, led around by some fascinating woman.

Rule 1: Understanding the Dominated

To successfully dominate anyone, a thorough familiarity of the subject dominated is necessary. Usually, acquiring such a familiarity is a simple task, requiring only a few moments of the average Man's attention. It is suggested that you arrange to observe the subject in a revealing situation. Five-thirty p.m. is an ideal time — all weaknesses and failings are generally apparent at that hour. The slightest effort on your part during that period cannot help but bring out exaggerated responses.

If she reacts with child-like sauciness, BEWARE — you are dealing with a fascinating woman, who is generally the most difficult of the species to understand due to her carefully concealed emotions, poor communication habits and professional role playing ability.

However, assuming you can avoid such hapless pitfalls, your task will be quickly mastered and the first step along your road to Enchanting Manliness will have been successfully taken.

Rule 2: That Commanding Attitude

Women love to be pushed around and manipulated. Frequently, they will behave in a manner which seems to cry out for a commanding hand, or foot. Your job is to learn how to attain that Commanding Attitude which will be irresistable to everyone. Helpful hints follow: practice gritting your

teeth while shaving; incorporate strong words into your vocabulary like "Absolutely!", "Unquestionably!" and "Drivel!" Learn to endure pain — purposefully hit your thumb when pounding nails; when walking, repeat with each step, "I'm hard, I'm tough, I'm hard, . . ."

A word of caution: remember, you are away from home most of the day. Thus, your Commanding Attitude must be pronounced enough to win back all the ground which you lost during the day. Some Men find it helpful to make a mid-day telephone call, at which time a few carefully chosen orders may be issued to keep the tone of dominance ringing throughout the family and home.

Rule 3: Do Not Admit to Error

A sign of weakness which almost certainly will reduce your commanding position to one of compliance is ready admission of error. It is much better to feign a loss of temper than to confess inadequacy. Stamp your feet, pound the table, and shout. Women love such antics and cannot help but bow submissively before such a display of masculine strength.

Rule 4: Manly Dress

Even if you are not basically commanding inside, you can fool the world with a few well-chosen pieces of clothing. For example, always buy shoes which are a few sizes too large; wear golf shirts which are at least two sizes too small. Whenever referring to your suit size, say you are a "perfect 40" (regardless of your actual size). Above all, never consult a woman about your clothes, unless it is to direct the repair of a manly rip.

Rule 5: Develop Manly Habits

Snoring is enchanting. Women love to brag about their husbands' abilities in this area. To develop this trait, first go to sleep with a peach pit clamped between your teeth. This will keep your mouth open, but obstruct it just enough to require the inhaling of some air through your nose. Second, put your pillow under the small of your back, giving it a little arch, thus increasing your lung capacity. Third, tie your right hand to the bed post to prevent the muffling of any noise. Fourth, practice denying that you snore at all.

Last, you must acquire an interest in televised sports to the exclusion of all else. Women love the devotion of their husband to a cause — be it the Packers, Bears, Cubs or the Sox. Remember, each game is a "very important game" — don't miss any.

Rule 6: Avoid Demeaning Things

Garbage is demeaning. If you are to be enchanting, you must avoid such things. Thus, order your wife to undertake the responsibility to empty garbage pails and waste baskets.

Above all, do NOT do dishes. This is an extremely feminine pastime and should not be part of any Enchanting Man's repertoire. Ironing falls into the same category.

CONCLUSION

The above rules will undoubtedly thrust you into the euphoric Life of an Enchanting Man. Prepare yourself for this role. Do not act surprised or overly humble when people begin to comment about the change in your personality (and you can be sure, they *will* make comments).

Additionally, do not concern yourself with the fact that the above-enumerated principles are all extremely superficial and somewhat short-sighted. Although they have not yet been tried and proved, similar principles for *women* have been, and initial reports indicate overwhelming success and approval.* In any event, do not delay; start immediately to achieve your heart's Goal.

**Cf.* Helen Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood* (1963), American Publishing Co.

A REMINISCENCE OF JOSEPH SMITH

The following was called to our attention by Leonard Arrington, who writes, "In 1905, Susa Young Gates, editor of the YOUNG WOMAN'S JOURNAL *(Salt Lake City), interviewed a number of elderly women to obtain their memories of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These were published in subsequent issues of the* JOURNAL. *One of those whose recollections are given was "Aunt" Jane James, at one time a black servant in the house of the Prophet. The following is the full interview, as published under the general heading "Joseph Smith, The Prophet," in the* YOUNG WOMAN'S JOURNAL, *XVI (December 1905), 551-553. It shows the kindness and democratic manner of the Prophet."*

"AUNT" JANE JAMES
(Colored Servant in the Prophet's House)

Yes, indeed, I guess I did know the Prophet Joseph. That lovely hand! He used to put it out to me. Never passed me without shaking hands with me wherever he was. Oh, he was the finest man I ever saw on earth. I did not get much of a chance to talk with him. He'd always smile, always just like he did to his children. He used to be just like I was his child. O yes, my, I used to read in the Bible so much and in the Book of Mormon and Revelations, and now I have to sit and can't see to read, and I think over them things, and I tell you I do wake up in the middle of the night, and I just think about Brother Joseph and Sister Emma and how good they was to me. When I went there I only had two things on me, no shoes nor stockings, wore them all out on the road. I had a trunk full of beautiful clothes, which I had sent around by water, and I was thinking of having them when I got to Nauvoo, and they stole them at St. Louis, and I did not have a rag of them. They was looking for us because I wrote them a letter. There was eight of us, my mother and two sisters and a brother and sister-in-law, and we had two children, one they had to carry all the way there, and we traveled a thousand miles. Sister Emma she come to the door first and she says, "Walk

in, come in all of you," and she went up stairs, and down he comes and goes into the sitting room and told the girls that they had there, he wanted to have the room this evening, for we have got company come. I knew it was Brother Joseph because I had seen him in a dream. He went and brought Dr. Bernhisel down and Sister Emma, and introduced him to everyone of us, and said, "Now, I want you to tell me about some of your hard trials. I want to hear of some of those hard trials." And we told him. He slapped his hands.

"Dr. Bernhisel," he said, "what do you think of that?" And he said,

"I think if I had had it to do I should not have come; would not have had faith enough."

I was the head leader. I had been in the Church a year and a little over. That is sixty-nine years ago. [She was at the time about twenty years of age.] So then our folks got places. He kept them a whole week until they got homes, and I was left. He came in every morning to see us and shake hands and know how we all were. One morning, before he came in, I had been up to the landing and found all my clothes were gone. Well, I sat there crying. He came in and looked around.

"Why where's all the folks?"

"Why Brother," I says, "they have all got themselves places; but," I says, "I haint got any place," and I burst out a-crying.

"We won't have tears here," he says.

"But," I says, "I have got no home."

"Well you've got a home here," he says, "Have you seen Sister Emma this morning."

"No, sir," I says.

So he started out and went upstairs and brought Sister Emma down and says, "Here's a girl who says she's got no home. Don't you think she's got a home here?"

And she says, "If she wants to stay here."

And he says, "Do you want to stay here?"

"Yes, sir," says I. "Well, now," he says, "Sister Emma you just talk to her and see how she is." He says, "Good morning," and he went.

We had come afoot, a thousand miles. We lay in bushes, and in barns and outdoors, and traveled until there was a frost just like a snow, and we had to walk on that frost. I could not tell you, but I wanted to go to Brother Joseph.

I did not talk much to him, but every time he saw me he would say, "God bless you," and pat me on the shoulder. To Sister Emma, he said, "go and clothe her up, go down to the store and clothe her up." Sister Emma did. She got me clothes by the bolt. I had everything.

The folks that come to me think I ought to talk and tell what Brother Joseph said, but he was hid up (his enemies were seeking his life) and I cannot remember now. I could not begin to tell you what he was, only this way, he was tall, over six feet; he was a fine, big, noble, beautiful man! He had blue eyes and light hair, and very fine white skin.

When he was killed, I liked to a died myself, if it had not been for the teachers, I felt so bad. I could have died, just laid down and died; and I was sick abed, and the teachers told me,

"You don't want to die because he did. He died for us, and now we all want to live and do all the good we can."

Things came to pass what he prophesied about the colored race being freed. Things that he said has come to pass. I did not hear that, but I knew of it.

After I saw him plain, I was certain he was a prophet because I knew it. I was willing to come and gather, and when he came in with Dr. Bernhisel I knew him. Did not have to tell me because I knew him. I knew him when I saw him back in old Connecticut in a vision, saw him plain and knew he was a prophet.

This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and there will never be any other on earth. It has come to stay.

A MISCELLANY FOR THE SACRIPANTS OF RELEVANCE

Robert J. Christensen

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a schizophrenic church. Its ultimate concern is with things beyond — life after death, justice-in-judg-

ment, salvation, exaltation — and with their earthly preparation — baptism, repentance, endowment. But at the same time the Church is concerned with things here below — individual freedom, material welfare, social justice. With the exception of certain organizations, i.e., the John Birch Society, the Students for a Democratic Society, and the Catholic Inquisition, I have not found an organization as deeply committed in both precept and action to either the things beyond or the things here below as is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To some this schizophrenia may be a stumbling-block, to others mere foolishness, but for us it must be the very heart of the Gospel, to be both schizophrenic and sane, to keep our eyes and hearts on the things beyond while simultaneously being anxiously engaged in the betterment of things here below.

But while they should not be forgotten, neither should they be confused as so many would urge. The John Birch Society has valiantly attempted to steal for itself the garments of the priesthood, hoping thereby to enlist our aid in their search for little red arsonists while the house collapses from the domestic termite wolves. Others have tried to rewrite our history or to suppress the views of some of the brethren in order to call us to their conservative cause. The liberals of the Church have justly cried in alarm as the First Presidency simultaneously both rebuked the attempted use of the Church for conservative political and social purposes and reasserted the Church's neutrality. But now, under the guise of the "search for relevance" and the "challenge of secularism," the liberals seek to involve the Church directly in their own liberal political and social programs. Apparently both the conservative and the liberal believe us incapable of exercising our free agency and relevantly applying the Gospel in our lives and actions.

Within recent years more and more voices have been questioning the relevance of the Church, while ignoring the relevance of the Gospel to our secular or worldly concerns. J. D. Williams is quoted by *Time*, the weekly newsmagazine, while Richard L. Evans preached the same sermon six months earlier in General Conference. James Clayton wonders about the challenges and dangers of secularism in *Dialogue* while President David O. McKay, Hugh B. Brown, Marion D. Hanks, and even Ezra Taft Benson have been pondering in their individual ways the same challenges and dangers for years. The quest for relevance is not new; the prophets of Israel so quested centuries ago. The quest for Church-directed relevance is not new either, but I thought it too had been resolved in heavenly councils centuries ago, or earlier. No one seems to have noticed the First Presidency's timely letter of September 7, 1968, in which they counseled:

> The growing world-wide responsibilities of the Church make it inadvisable for the Church to seek to respond to all the various and complex issues involved in the mounting problems of the many cities and communities in which members live. But this complexity does not absolve members as individuals from filling their responsibilities as citizens in their own communities.
>
> We urge our members to do their civic duty and to assume their

> responsibilities as individual citizens in seeking solutions to the problems which beset our cities and communities.

The letter reminds me of Joseph's "teach them correct principles and then let them govern themselves," as each is made responsible for his actions and his concern for others. I often listen to the conservative or liberal counsel of others, thinking that I might gain in the ability to govern myself — but too often their actions outshout their words and I am forced to conclude they are no wiser in governing themselves than am I. They seem to absolve themselves of their duties in their own communities — and the Church — and seek to cover their inaction with noise about relevance. We might well spend less time questioning the relevance of the Church, and more time being individually relevant.

If the question of relevance, of the relevance of traditional Christianity to twentieth-century urban society, were not so pervasive, it might be well to drop the subject here, for the Mormon tradition only slightly resembles traditional Christianity. But the question is posed in such contemporary language — language that is so often our very own — that I fear we might be unthinkingly seduced into mistaking relevance's faddishness for profundity.

If we were to suppose that the Gospel is to appeal successfully to Everyman, to awaken within him the light of Christ, at that point we should begin to be concerned that there is "a marked trend away from traditional Christian belief" and that the churches in their orthodox efforts have failed to make their doctrines meaningful to modern man. The scriptures, however, suggest that the Gospel will at best be meaningful to a small handful. While carried away in a dream, Nephi beheld "the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, . . . and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small" (1 Nephi 14:12). When Christ observed that "because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14), he did not call for the gate to be redesigned and the road signs and lighting to be improved. If someone is caused to stumble in the dark, it is probably less the fault of the gate and the way, than it is the fault of the light that ought to be shining within us.

I am disturbed by the claim of some that we are not "in good faith" with the times, but I should rather be in good faith with myself than the times. James Clayton in his "The Challenge of Secularism" (*Dialogue*, Autumn 1968, p. 68) remarked that "by the mid-1960's secularism had become the prerational basis of virtually all sophisticated thinking in the United States." I suppose he is acknowledging the fad that now no sophisticated man ever feels the need — nor would he permit himself, if he felt the need — to call upon the supernatural to account for things and actions he finds on earth. I fail again to find anything terribly novel here; it was this same intellectual tradition that provided the intellectual structure of the apostasy from the Gospel. The Gospel was restored to challenge that very intellectual tradition, not to be co-opted by it; and I can see nothing today that modifies or invalidates that challenge. As one sophisticated Mormon thinker wrote, "If the history of Christianity has been one long undignified retreat, one

continual process of accommodation to the science of the hour, the time has come to reverse the process, since the science of the hour has brought us to a most dismal slough in which it is no delight to dwell."

We are urged to develop a sense of change in our doctrine, to realize that each generation has its own Mormonism, its fixed and unfixed principles and practices, its own Gospel. This is an "almost" sophisticated idea, but upon further reflection — and perhaps prayer, if permitted — we might conclude that the Gospel has an existence independent of my thoughts, of Brigham Young's thoughts, or even the apostle Paul's thoughts. It is the sophisticated man who perceives that the brethren do not always agree, that the art critics do not always agree, and that neither do the historians, and who then allows this perception of disagreement to justify his lack of further interest in the disputed subject. But it is the truly intelligent man who realizes that the cold facts of the Gospel, the painting, or the American Revolution — however hard those facts may be to ascertain — are not necessarily identical with the conflicting views of the apostle, the critic, or the historian, and who then stays to find and to glory in the great beauties of the disputed. He will see that we each grow in the Gospel at different rates, and he will not be overly disturbed by the differences. He will be aware that the emphasis we individually give to things will vary and will often reflect the environment in which we live, but he will also see the constancy of the Gospel. Once we realize this, we might be less willing to play idly with the Gospel and more willing to immerse ourselves seriously in its intellectual and spiritual depths.

How ironic, and yet tragic that the apostles of relevance are tripped-up by the irrelevant trivialities of skirt length, beards, and rock bands at Church socials. I would have hoped them wise enough first to consult their spiritual consciences and then courageous enough to follow them, prayerfully.

The secular intellectual tradition centuries ago created a god in whom they thought man could believe; now they celebrate the death and burial of their make-believe god. And we are asked to join in and declare that our God too is dead, beginning to stink, and in need of a rapid burial. As Mr. Clayton remarked, "the central thrust of the secular theologian's argument that the traditional Christian doctrine of God is simply unbelievable today applies more to Mormons [with their anthropomorphic God] than to virtually anyone else" (p. 73). I fail to perceive any cause for fear. The Mormon God so faintly resembles the dead god that only the blind (and perhaps the philosopher) could confuse them. Sterling McMurrin once declared in the pages of *Dialogue* that our loving Father-in-Heaven God could and should be transformed into a more profound philosophical formulation. Perhaps it is merely my naïveté, but I find this loving and caring Father-in-Heaven far more meaningful and with greater philosophical clarity than any other philosophical or theological concept I have ever studied. And now even some philosophers, particularly the positivists, begin to find anthropomorphism both philosophically meaningful and defensible. As Howard Hintz remarked several years ago,

> The fact of the matter is that the beliefs of Billy Graham (whether one agrees with them or not is irrelevant) are more philosophically and logically tenable than those of Tillich. To Graham, God is a person — and a *person* must necessarily be essentially anthropomorphic whom he worships and to whom he prays. Tillich worships and prays either to a symbol which cannot be conceptualized, or to a fantasy which cannot be objectified in the empirical world . . . . God is a proper name. Either he exists as a person or he does not exist at all. You can't have your cake and eat it too. (*Religious Experience and Truth*, p. 260)

For the past several years we have within the Church tried too hard to be accepted by the world. In too many ways I fear we have been co-opted by the society around us; we have become more average than average. We have forgotten that the Church is a community with values which differ from and often oppose those of the large community around us. And now we seem, both the high and the lowly, to have lost the will to be a peculiar people in any but the most trivial sense. Perhaps it is the malaise of the urban Mormon, to have eliminated so many "less-defensible practices," that he has lost his identity. Personal and communal identity will not then be found in further compromise with the urban secularism, but only in returning to the peculiarities of our Gospel origins and finding the life that is in them. Then we might ponder the real questions for the Church, such as the extent of our obligations in the large community to search for other less "ideal" solutions when the Gospel's "ideal" solutions have been rejected by the secular society, the extent of my obligation to abandon the battle for men's hearts and to tinker instead with their societies.

When we are bothered by the intellectual strength and by the relevance of the Gospel, I suspect we just have not considered the Gospel deeply enough to find the rich spiritual living that is revealed largely through the scriptures and righteousness. When we do not submerge ourselves in the scriptures we find it too easy to turn instead to a shallow juggling of philosophical terms that passes among us as wisdom and that is much easier to master than the Gospel, especially when the Gospel is so poorly taught in sugar-water strengths by our Sunday Schools, Seminaries, and Institutes. For the moment our scriptural ignorance is appalling, and itself is a sign of our secularization. But I cannot fault the Church nor the Gospel for my ignorance, as I so often try to ignore the spiritual center of the Gospel in my fascination with the peripheral, as I let the commandments usurp living by the spirit as the end of all Gospel activity and reflection. Struggling for a knowledge of the scriptures, not the glossy memorization that merely produces a series of instant proof-texts for every problem that we confront, but the richness that understands and feels the desperateness of each man as he approaches the Lord and his relief in the Lord's response and love, it is then that we begin to understand the Gospel and to live spiritually. I yet understand and see little, and am worthy even less, but I have seen scriptural flashes of Gospel vistas more beautiful than any the secular world has yet offered.

If I might steal from a mentor, "I have written too much and said too little. . . . It is a situation in which I find myself; I am stuck with the Gospel, I know perfectly well that it is true; there may be things about the Church that I find perfectly appalling – but that has nothing to do with it. *I know the Gospel is true.*"

Now, to be relevant is to be silent and to begin to . . .

One of the most important things in the world is freedom of the mind; from this all other freedoms spring. Such freedom is necessarily dangerous, for one cannot think right without running the risk of thinking wrong, but generally more thinking is the antidote for the evils that spring from wrong thinking. More thinking is required, and we call upon you students to exercise your God-given right to think through on every proposition that is submitted to you and be unafraid to express your opinions, with proper respect for those to whom you talk and proper acknowledgement of your own shortcomings.

You young people live in an age when freedom of the mind is suppressed over much of the world. We must preserve it in the Church and in America and resist all efforts of earnest men to suppress it, for when it is suppressed, we might lose the liberties vouchsafed in the Constitution of the United States.

Preserve, then, the freedom of your mind in education and in religion, and be unafraid to express your thoughts and to insist upon your right to examine every proposition. We are not so much concerned with whether your thoughts are orthodox as we are that you shall have thoughts.

President Hugh B. Brown,
From "An Eternal Quest–Freedom of the Mind," delivered at BYU, 13 May 1969.

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