DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought and 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 ensure 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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DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT is published quarterly by Dialogue Foundation, Editorial Office, 202 West 300 North, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103. DIALOGUE has no official connection with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Third class postage paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. ISSN 002-2157.

Subscription rate is $25 per year; students $15 per year; single copies, $7. A catalogue of back issues is available upon request. DIALOGUE is also available on microfilm through University Microfilms International, Dept. F.A., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106, and 18 Bedford Row, London, WCIR 4EJ, England.

DIALOGUE welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, selections for Notes and Comments, and art. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* including doublespacing all block quotations and notes. Use the author-date citation style as described in the thirteenth edition. Send manuscripts to DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT, 202 West 300 North, Salt Lake City, 84103.

LETTERS

"When They Are Learned"

I found R. Jan Stout's essay on the psychobiological approach to the study of homosexuality (Summer 1987) incongruous and disturbing.

The incongruity lies in the author's overconfidence in his own theories even though he acknowledges that psychiatrists, including himself, have consistently been compelled to repudiate precepts they once considered inviolate. Ironically, he begins his paper by recounting how he once felt "satisfied, confident, and correct" about a particular psychological theory only to realize sixteen years later that his views were "wrong and simplistic" (p. 29). He does not appear to have learned much from that experience.

Stout acknowledges that Freud's theories, once regarded as established truth in the psychiatric world, are now called into question. Yet he asserts that the theories espoused by his "new psychobiology" have been "demonstrated" (p. 30). Why is "new psychobiology" inherently more provable or reliable than "old" psychobiology, or Freudianism, or any other manmade doctrine?

I was disturbed by Stout's eagerness to exalt the opinions of a few men — opinions about which he admitted there is no consensus — above the unanimous expressions of revealed truth through the prophets. He does not suggest that tolerance of homosexual conduct might somehow be reconcilable with the words of the prophets. He simply assumes that the prophets are wrong.

Stout has chosen to reject the certain voice of revealed truth in favor of competing opinions and theories about which, he admits, "no consensus exists" (p. 30), even though "we are in the process of trying to separate fact from fiction" (p. 31). Not even the American Psychiatric Association can decide what it thinks about homosexuality. Inexplicably, Stout appears to *prefer* being "carried about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14).

As for the Church's unambiguous teaching that homosexuality is contrary to human nature and the will of God, Stout asks, rhetorically: "Does the revealed word of God in the scriptures supersede the experience and reality of millions of homoerotic individuals?" (p. 37) (as if scriptures were not based on "experience and reality"). Stout leaves little doubt how he would answer the question. He asserts: "*Clearly*, there is no easy solution to these most intimate of human circumstances" (p. 37, emphasis added), and "*clearly*, pursuing an extreme position is pointless" (p. 40, emphasis added).

Stout seems to use words such as "clearly," not when his argument is in fact clear, but when he seeks acceptance of a premise for which he can cite no support. He does not even attempt to justify his wholesale rejection of the words of the prophets; he simply takes it for granted that their pronouncements are entitled to no credence. He would have us disregard the Church's "extreme" (p. 40) and "simplistic" (p. 37) teachings on homosexuality despite his admission that neither he nor the other "experts" are capable of proving them wrong. He simply states: "I do not know the answers, and I suspect that no one among us does" (p. 40). Jacob's lament in 2 Nephi 9:28 has never been more applicable: "O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When

they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not."

What is Stout's paper doing in a journal that purports on its logo page to "express Mormon culture" and to "foster . . . scholarly achievement based on [Mormon] cultural heritage"? What is "Mormon" about flatly rejecting the words of the prophets? What is "scholarly" about arguing that it is unjust to expect homosexuals to refrain from consummating their urges because those urges may have biological roots? What urges do not? Carried to its logical extreme, this argument means that single heterosexuals should not be expected not to fornicate, that pedophiles should not be expected to refrain from molesting children, etc. Stout has been seduced into believing that homosexual acts are unique among abominations and are not immoral because those who commit them can't help it. By such a standard, no one could be expected to exercise self-control.

Stout also implies that AIDS cannot be the natural consequence of committing unnatural acts since "innocent children, hemophiliacs, and others [have] contracted the disease" (p. 35). Newborn infants inherit venereal diseases and drug addiction from their mothers, but that does not prove that venereal diseases and drug addiction are not consequences of immorality.

DIALOGUE does not advance its avowed purpose, as expressed on the logo page of each issue, by publishing articles such as Stout's. It seems to me that something more than just a controversial point of view should be required to merit publication in your journal.

Kurtis J. Kearl
Petaluma, California

Stout Responds

Eugene England is a thoughtful and eloquent person and I appreciate his letter (Fall 1987). He sees the dilemma and encourages us to react with empathy and understanding to the plight of the homosexual. Yet he attributes to me an argument that I do not espouse nor make in my essay — namely that there is essentially no difference between sexual feelings and behavior for the homosexual.

I asked a rhetorical question of the reader regarding sexual feelings, behavior, and sin. My very next question (which England chose to ignore) asks, "And, if homosexuals do not act on these sexual feelings, have they morally transgressed?" (p. 37). Indeed, I pointed out *the* moral choice that a Mormon homosexual must face to remain active, loyal and guilt-free and accepted — is to "remain celibate and abstain from engaging in eroticism with a member of one's own sex" (p. 39). As a clinical psychiatrist I am constantly dealing with the distinction between feelings and behavior, and the homosexual patients that I have seen over twenty-two years of practice have been struggling with this conflict since the earliest awakening of their sexuality.

The purpose of my essay was to inform the reader about new advances in psychobiology and the complexity that this presents in understanding the development of human sexuality. It was not to state an "argument" which England erroneously attributes to me. He seems to feel that if a therapist does not *condemn* sexual expression for the homosexual, that inevitably this implies *condoning* of the behavior. Defining sin and imposing moral judgment is not the task of a psychotherapist. My patients are universally aware of their moral conflict and the sin they feel, both in fantasy and behavior. Most of them have counseled with religious leaders long before seeing me or any other therapist. I was saddened to read England's conclusions that somehow this essay encouraged expression of homosexual feelings. It did not. Nor do I take that position in any therapeutic encounter.

My entire professional life is focused on dealing with psychic and emotional pain. I do agree that we all have "crosses to bear," but I would be very reluctant to compare or quantify mine or anyone's with another human being. Asserting that "I hurt as much or more than you do" seems to me to be the very antithesis of empathy.

Inevitably, an essay such as mine will confuse some and enlighten others. These issues expose the existential dilemmas and spiritual struggles we must face in our humanity. In the closing paragraph, I acknowledged that I did not know the ultimate moral and theological answers. Perhaps England's discussion of pre- and postmortal life will also confuse some and enlighten others.

Kurtis J. Kearl's letter is a diffuse, misleading, and irrational attack against me, the psychiatric profession, the scientific method, homosexuals, and DIALOGUE. A major complaint seems to center on my willingness to examine a new body of knowledge regarding the development of human sexuality. This is an alternative explanation to previously held theories which do not hold up under more rigorous scientific scrutiny.

Science is not a static, inviolate system, nor is it a comfortable place for insular and calcified minds. Rather, it relies on constant revision, flexibility in thought, and attention to the implications of new data. I acknowledged that "more difficult research is needed, but the evidence accumulated over the past two decades for the biological causality of sexual and gender identity, although inconclusive, is persuasive" (p. 34). Kearl sees that as "overconfidence" and being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." Perhaps he would prefer that we still view epilepsy and schizophrenia as forms of demonic possession?

In his diatribe, Kearl attributes attacks on the prophets and Church to me which are purely his own distortions. He calls the Church's teachings on homosexuality "extreme" and "simplistic" and then tries to pass those words on as quotes from my essay. They are not. He falsely accuses me of advocating that homosexuals consummate their sexual urges, when, in fact, I only present the moral dilemma they must confront. Kearl succeeds in thoroughly discrediting himself by launching into an attack on DIALOGUE for publishing such articles. I, among many, am grateful to this journal for providing the forum for controversial articles as well as for printing letters in response.

R. Jan Stout
Salt Lake City, Utah

Not Alone

Enclosed find a check for renewal of my subscription and for two gift subscriptions. The discovery of DIALOGUE was for me like finding I wasn't alone in a world of grayness after all.

Three of my favorite articles during the past year were those by Lavina Fielding Anderson, Eugene England, and Robert A. Rees. It is so important for us to share our thoughts and to listen to each other — to carry on the sacred sacrament of intertwining souls. Thank you for being there.

Ronald C. Ellis
Mancos, Colorado

In Celebration of Contradictions

Thank you for publishing Dave Grandy's *Of Quiffs, Quarks, and God* (Winter 1986).

I'm surprised Grandy did not include in his bibliography Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics* (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), excellent discussion for the lay reader of analogies between subatomic physics and eastern mysticism.

The behavior of subatomic particles sounds more and more like Joseph Smith's refined matter. At least, that thought opens the door for this unregenerate naturalist.

Perhaps our concerns for a severe logical consistency in Mormon history and doctrine involve an inability to perceive reality as, to borrow Churchill's phrase, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

Two experts, equally intelligent and informed, often disagree. One of them may know the value exactly (mass?) but miss the context (velocity?). The other may know, objectively, its position in "reality," but be unaware of the weight of moral implications. We all seem to see things best from private perspectives that block out other viewpoints, unaware of the relativity of all human perception.

I accept the fact I often hold opposing ideas simultaneously. My poem, "Memory's Duty" (DIALOGUE, Winter 1983), concludes my testimony as being "I don't believe what I believe." Since then I've moved into a new phase: "I believe what I don't believe," hoping the movement is toward that happiest of positions, "I believe what I believe."

A recent book, *Vital Lies, Simple Truths: The Psychology of Self-Deception*, by Daniel Goleman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), shows the rational mind blundering amidst inconsistencies of good intentions — very helpful for any Mormon getting ulcers over the latest infractions against common sense.

Studies in left brain/right brain thinking are also very helpful. Julian Jaynes's *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982) is a far-out but fascinating theory, especially for someone inclined to poetic explanations.

Jerald and Sandra Tanner, pursuing a relentless defense of what they perceive to be rational consistency, wield only one worn-out weapon in their attack upon Mormonism: *contradiction*. Our response, so far, has been a kind of stunned silence or anonymous muttering: (Who, *us*? The *Mormons*? *Inconsistent*?) That, or an overreaction against purveyors of rationality, i.e., intellectuals. Anyone who reveals Mormon contradictions *must* be of the devil, e.g., those bomb-throwing Mormon historians.

Whether it's the Tanners' simplistic view of consistency (sequence) as the single test of truth — a position made ludicrous by Hume two hundred years ago — or by Church bureaucrats in their shining armour of brittle, inflexible reaction — the anti-intellectual as virtue incarnate — somehow we need to find the middle path of sanity.

The time is long overdue to acknowledge the real glory of our history, a story not of perfection achieved (the theme of our brochures), but of a continuing and unquenchable desire for perfection in a real world of terror, failure, conflict, and inescapable bodily death — a vision of possibility amidst the mortality. No one needs to lie in Joseph Smith's defense, only to tell the whole truth. His complexities, inconsistencies, and contradictions will never be told in an atmosphere of timid acquiescence.

I believe the "Dialogue Mormon" — the person who sees and understands various and differing perspectives in an ongoing search for truth — will rise to the defense of the gospel in a world becoming violently factional and reactionary, where narrow pockets of private bias resemble terrorist camps sending out attack squads against anyone who disagrees with the latest party line.

Grandy's essay was most welcome and helpful in the continuing effort to maintain that fine balance between left-brain skepticism and right-brain faith.

Ronald Wilcox
Grand Prairie, Texas

Dialogue It Is Not

I am discouraged that DIALOGUE would choose to publish "The Third Nephite" by Levi S. Peterson (Winter 1987). I am even more disappointed that it should be awarded a prize. While I lack credentials as a secular critic of fiction, I offer several observations on the story from the vantage

of one committed to the principles behind DIALOGUE.

First: It is fiction. Any resemblance between Simpson and disciples of the Savior as reported in 3 Nephi is remote indeed.

Second: It is offensive. Fundamentalists, believers in the verity of the mission of the Three Nephites, and people of good taste will all be offended.

Third: It is not dialogue. The disrespect evident in this story is unbecoming to the purpose of DIALOGUE and can only add fuel to those who view DIALOGUE as dangerous and unvirtuous.

Surely the editors of DIALOGUE should have exercised better judgment than to publish this story and hopefully will do so in the future.

Joseph B. Romney
Rexburg, Idaho

Peterson Responds

I am sorry that my story, "The Third Nephite" (Winter 1986), has offended some readers. I would feel especially bad if they cancelled their subscriptions. DIALOGUE is a good cause and every subscription helps.

My piece is a fiction, not a sermon or a theological treatise. I hoped it would seem funny. Comedy almost always exaggerates and distorts reality. So, of course, Simpson, my third Nephite, is an unlikely representative of the Almighty. I did not intend an insult to either God or the Book of Mormon. I did intend a spoof upon the sentimentalized, mythicized stories about the Three Nephites which once were very common among Mormons and even now occur on occasion. Simpson solemnly declares that the rafters of the St. George temple are held together only by the magnetic power of the priesthood. I hear things almost as preposterous in high priests' meeting on the average of once a month.

Doctrine and Covenants 59:15 instructs us that much laughter is sin. Since the Church from time to time legitimately revises the scriptures, I sincerely hope it will someday expunge this unfortunate invitation to a grim sobriety. I pity people who can't shake their insides by hearty laughter.

I strongly resist the idea that reverence consists of rigid facial muscles and silence. Reverence is an emotion, not a physical condition. It can exist in the wildest uproar. I know that because I have felt unfathomably reverent beside a plunging mountain torrent.

During the prelude to sacrament meeting each Sunday in my ward, a "reverence child" stands at the pulpit to set an example. I thank God for those precious occasions when that child defies the unsmiling men on the row behind him, leans his (or her) chest on the podium, puts a finger in his ear, fidgets with the microphone, and waves at his mother. God isn't offended by movement and noise. Why should we be?

I don't think my story will be an indictment against me at Judgment Day. I am not being altogether facetious when I say that I adhere to a theology of the emunctories. God created human beings with intestines, bladders, sweat glands, and nostrils, and he does not despise his handiwork.

God is too great to be vulnerable to impieties, profanities, and obscenities. He is too magnanimous to take offense at human pettiness. Above all, God is compassionate.

Theologians and preachers have given heaven to a moral elite. God will surprise them by also giving it to the adulterers, kleptomaniacs, alcoholics, and insane. The gospel is especially for sinners; they need it, yearn for it, own it.

When God works through people, he works through sinners. No others are available.

Truly, Simpson of my story is an improbable specimen of the Three Nephites. He lies, he is undignified, he is ugly. All the more reason that God would work a miracle through him.

Levi S. Peterson
Ogden, Utah

Absolutely Androcentric

Tim B. Heaton's article "Four Characteristics of the Mormon Family: Contemporary Research on Chastity, Conjugality, Children, and Chauvinism" (Summer 1987) proved readable, even fascinating, which is quite an accomplishment for an article reporting statistical survey results. I can see why he got a prize.

I was particularly impressed by the optimism of his more speculative conclusions, "Prospects for the Future." Heaton generalizes from his research: "Recent changes in family size, divorce, and female labor force participation have not been a result of ideological confrontation" (p. 111). Heaton also asserts that LDS theology is "remarkably flexible" (p. 111) and illustrates that flexibility with regard to the family by suggesting that parents of today's smaller families "still feel they are multiplying and replenishing the earth" and are not rejecting "the Church's theology of the family" when they limit family size for economic or emotional health reasons (p. 111).

Similarly, that divorce is allowed is cited as evidence that reality can be accommodated without rejecting the ideal of an eternal family (p. 112). The acceptance of mothers who work "as a means of supplementing family income or to use their talents" is taken as a sign that there is no worry about these women perhaps "usurping the provider role of the husband" (pp. 111–12).

On the basis of this evidence, Heaton suggests that there is a high likelihood of further change, including changes in the husband-wife relationship "without changing policies regarding the priesthood" (p. 112). He even hints at the possible future demise of patriarchy (man in charge of woman) within the current priesthood theology: "This same priesthood theology may some day be used to encourage egalitarian rather than authoritarian relationships" (p. 112).

I found myself unable to share this optimism in light of President Ezra Taft Benson's 22 February 1987 "Fireside for Parents," a version of which was published as "To the Mothers in Zion," (pamphlet [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987]). I heard in President Benson's address the articulation of core values that contradicted Heaton's hopeful observations and forecasts point by point. For example, President Benson decries the curtailment of births for all reasons but the health of the mother (p. 4), decries divorce as an evil (p. 7), and places great emphasis on the need for mothers to leave the workplace and return home (pp. 6–8).

Heaton, I believe, overestimated the flexibility of the theology of the Mormon family. In his hopefulness, he thought that, since men and women are promised the same blessings in eternal marriage in Doctrine and Covenants 132:19, this suggests that "unity, interdependence, and joint priesthood rather than hierarchy and male dominance" within marriage is possible within the current theology (p. 109).

President Benson, on the other hand, reiterated the Mormon theology of the family, the vision of Mormon manhood/godhood, as it has been expounded since the 1840s, virtually unchanged. The continuity of this core theology was underscored by President Benson's use of quotations by Brigham Young, David O. McKay, and Spencer W. Kimball (pp. 4, 2, and 6–8, respectively). Heaton mistook, I believe, external changes in the size and appearance of the family for changes in the core theology. That unshifting core theology may be elucidated from President Benson's address.

President Benson cited Doctrine and Covenants 132:63: "The Lord states that the opportunity and responsibility of wives is 'to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfill the promise that was given by my father before the foundation of the world, and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified' " (p. 3).

The heart of the Mormon theology of the family, therefore, is the glorification of men by the reproductive ability of their wives. The subject of the original sentence, not included in the quotation, is "they," which in turn refers to "one or either [sic] of the ten virgins" who had in the previous verse been "given unto him ["any man" — v. 61] by this law." In short, this verse is talking about plural wives. Thus, plurality was instituted to aid the multiplication of a man, and it is the principle of plurality that will exalt plurally married women, making them eternally able to bear "men" and thereby bring glory to the Father.

Even if one ignores the context of plurality, as President Benson does, this scripture still states that childbearing exalts women and that exalted women will be able to bear the "souls of men" in eternity, bringing glory to the Father. Either with or without reference to plurality, woman's eternal value is as a reproducer of man; and Eternal Man, or God, is glorified by the extent or the quantity of his offspring.

This, then, is the core theology of the eternal family. It is a vision of the male God, governing and directing his (part of the) universe, which his dependent and obedient assistant, who reproduces him and trains his children until they are mature enough to be tested by him on a world such as this one.

It is this core theology of man becoming God and woman remaining his assistant that causes grown men to say in the name of the Lord: "Her place is in the home, to build the home into a heaven of delight" (p. 7), and "Two spouses working . . . creates an independence which is not cooperative, [and] causes distortion" (p. 7). These statements are sentimental mottos and not coherent statements about the nature and needs of women, men, and children.

This sentimentality becomes painfully obvious when President Benson quotes a son's tribute to his mother towards the end of his talk:

" 'I don't remember much about her views of voting nor her social prestige; and what her ideas on child training, diet, and eugenics were, I cannot recall. The main thing that sifts back to me now through the undergrowth of years is that she loved me. . . . Of all the sensations pleasurable to my life nothing can compare with the rapture of crawling up into her lap and going to sleep. . . . Thinking of this, I wonder if the woman of today, with all her tremendous notions and plans, realizes what an almighty factor she is in shaping of her child for weal or woe' " (p. 12).

For an adult male to utter these words is to admit he never knew or appreciated his mother as an adult human being. He never saw her as a source of wisdom or counsel regarding his functioning in the world. Her opinions were nonexistent or unmemorable. He remembers only the lap of security.

To quote this individual who never learned that his mother was, like himself, an insecure and inquisitive human being, is to reveal that the speaker also has not learned to see women as human beings with goals and needs and aspirations and insecurities. Is it not disturbing to find an adult man disturbed that all women are not a faceless refuge of God-like serenity? It is only from such a perspective that a person can put forth the notion that a home should be or should be able to become "a heaven of delight," if only the mother is always in it.

Perhaps President Benson and those who share his views believe that God's wife perpetually sacrifices herself to her eternal husband and his offspring and that righteous mortal women will share the same destiny. If so, then it is understandable why the most official message to women must always urge limitation and restraint. If woman were to follow her nature, unrestrained by men who represent God's will to her, she may become unfit for her eternal duties by competing with men, thus detracting from her husband's manliness and thereby "distorting" it.

As President Benson said: "In the eternal family, God established that fathers

are to preside in the home." Aspects of presiding are: "to provide, to love, to teach, and to direct" (p. 2). Since these remarks are about the eternities, when man shall be as God and woman shall continue to assist and reproduce, here is the true theology of the Mormon family. This address by President Benson reminds us that gender roles on earth imitate the eternal family which is our origin and our destiny. God is the head of his home while his wife or wives constitute the heart. Woman makes home a heaven for man on earth because so it is in heaven. Sacrificing to have children here earns rewards hereafter and brings glory to the father (and his Father) — just as God told Emma in Doctrine and Covenants 25:14 to "let thy soul delight in thy husband, and the glory that shall come upon *him*" (italics added).

It seems almost as if Mormon theology is the product of men who never came to know women, but whose entire experience with women consisted of being nurtured, served, pleased, and assisted by women who revered them as their gods to be.

This vision of men and by men suggests that if the woman trespasses upon the man's role, she distorts the clear division of labor as God intends and exemplifies it. Hence, independence in a woman disturbs cooperation, or the divine order of dominance implied in the man's duty to imitate God and preside and direct.

Heaton's positive and hopeful views regarding the flexibility of the Mormon theology of the family are brought up short by President Benson's address. It is President Benson who accurately portrays the LDS theology of the family, however. Heaton's use of Doctrine and Covenants 132:19, for example, to suggest that an egalitarian model of the husband-wife relationship is possible under the present priesthood paradigm ignores the latter part of that revelation wherein woman's eternal value is as reproductive device (D&C 132:63).

She is classed as part of "things" in verse 53; listed as a possession among "houses and lands, wives and children" in verse 55; regarded as property that may be collected as a man desires as long as she doesn't belong to anyone else ("they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with *that* that belongeth unto him and to no one else") in verse 61; becomes her husband's means for multiplying and replenishing the earth in verse 63; and is once again one of the "*things*" God will "*give*" him in verse 65.

Women are not things. Yet has not this type of reification taken place in the mind of one who utters: "No career approaches in importance that of wife, homemaker, mother" and who then defines these roles as "cooking meals, washing dishes, making beds for one's precious husband and children" (p. 7)? A wife, homemaker, and mother has been reduced to a list of chores that anyone — man, woman, or older child — could perform.

There is no difference between the human needs and aspirations of adult men and women. Yes, there are biological differences. But to ask a woman to base her self-definition on and find fulfillment in doing menial labor for her husband and children shows a terrifying blindness on the part of the one making the request. He seems unaware that women are complete, utter, and full-fledged human beings like himself, and that their humanity is also precious. This is particularly terrifying when the one making the request is speaking in behalf of God.

The theological implications of a quote such as: "Come home, wives, to your husbands. Make home a heaven for them" (p. 7) are shown when later (p. 8), after a similar plea to come home and be a mother, the statement is made: "Then you have achieved your accomplishment supreme, without peer, and you will be the envy of all through time and eternity." This implies that in sacrificing herself for husband and offspring, she prepares for her eternal reward which, as we have seen, is more of the same.

After repeatedly assuring the women that these calls to limit themselves are from

God (see pp. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, esp. 8, and 11), President Benson states: "Your God-given roles are so vital to your own exaltation and to the salvation and exaltation of your children" (p. 8). The implications are clear: Ignoring this advice will imperil her eternal reward and the eternal rewards of present (or potential, see p. 4) members of her family.

If I were to receive such counsel, I would feel not only warned but threatened. I would wonder if the men giving me such a message or the God in whose name they speak are threatened by an individual who claimed to be fully human, who had needs and aspirations beyond present and eternal self-sacrifice in the service of their Lord and the biological imperative that he enforces.

In fact, I believe it is so, especially since the God for whom these men speak has on one occasion uttered such a threat. Doctrine and Covenants 132:64 gives a very disturbing example of God threatening wives who refuse to give their husband permission to marry plurally: "I say unto you, if any man have a wife, who holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God; for I will destroy her." Men may also be threatened, as with punishments for transgressions, but such intense personal involvement by God is most unusual. And the threat is here directed to women who are already exemplary saints by virtue of their eligibility for participation in this "new and everlasting covenant" (D&C 132:4).

God's universe is absolutely androcentric, according to these men who speak in the name of God. According to them, eternal man is to be as God hereafter, while eternal woman just keeps on being generic woman, valued for the offspring and pleasure she brings her man. To prepare her for her eternal role, a continual effort is made to limit her spiritual, social, and economic powers.

When I see the difference between my eternal promises and my daughters' prospects for the eternities, an appropriate response could either be to thank God that I was born male or to curse God for creating woman with the strengths, powers, and aspirations of human beings but without the right or opportunity to develop and employ them. At every turn men must magnify and women must limit.

Heaton concludes that "working women, reconstituted families, and singles are each growing segments of the Church membership that do not fit well within the existing structure" but that "the reorientation of sex roles will continue within the Church" (p. 112). He also adds that "unwillingness to change may be more detrimental in the long run than open acceptance of change" and that such change is "a means to preserve the core values by alleviating existing stresses and strains."

He cites the discontinuance of polygamy as the archetypical successful change. This suspension operates only in this life, however, and does not directly confront the core values of the patriarchal order. But it is precisely the patriarchal order, the divine order, the definition of who God is, that is *the* core value of the LDS theology of the family, and this core value is directly confronted by changes that would change the dependent status of women.

Heaton is of the opinion that "attempts to induce change through direct confrontation with the core ideology of the Mormon family will fall on deaf ears" (p. 112). This is probably true, but poses a dilemma. In my opinion, whether a woman should work or determine the frequency of her pregnancies is morally trivial compared to the assertion that woman is not fully human — an assertion which lies at the heart of the Mormon theology of the family and is part of the Mormon definition of the nature of God. Although "they [man and wife] shall be gods" according to Doctrine and Covenants 132:20, he shall be God and she shall be his wife, not God. She will not be known by or accessible to

her own children while they are being tried by her husband, and many will fail to ever come back into her presence. It seems to me that a woman's greatest fear could well be that the Mormon doctrine of the family is indeed the true reflection of how the universe works.

Abraham Van Luik
Richland, Washington

The Church Mission Abroad

I hardly know what to make of Garth Jones's essay on the international mission of the Church (Summer 1987). His title suggests spiritual aspects of Church expansion abroad, but his paper for the most part is dedicated to such temporal concerns as poverty, hunger, housing, and how long and to what extent North American Saints might be willing to subsidize their Third World brothers and sisters.

Is this essay suggesting that sociotechnocrats should take over because the brethren are too parochial to know which policies will meet the "new" challenges of international Mormonism?

The long, successful history of Church growth "in strange lands" argues against tinkering with what is working well. None of the challenges are really new anyway. Initiated among the American Indians (Lamanites), missionary work moved successively to Canada, the Eastern states, and Great Britain. For over a generation, the restored gospel has had both a presence and a measured growth in such nonwestern countries as Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, not to mention the western-oriented third world Latin American countries where beginnings were modest but recent growth impressive. Nevertheless, success should not be defined by numbers of converts. The gospel is to be preached "to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." That does not mean that everyone or even most will be baptized. Early in this dispensation the brethren preached that the gospel was destined to fill the whole earth. Church leadership has, down to the present, presided well over the modest, logical, measured, and successful growth of the Church.

Now, if the Church has long understood its international mission and has been successful in dealing with the challenges thereof, it is hard for me to understand why Jones calls for the gospel to be custom-tailored and adapted to appeal to nonwestern cultures by "enlarging the Mormon vision of Christian ethics" (p. 68) — whatever that means. It should be axiomatic that gospel principles do not change or need to be modified. The gospel of Jesus Christ will elevate every soul who embraces it with all his heart — whether Jew, gentile, Buddhist, Hindu, or Moslem.

It is true that the international expansion of the Church has been subsidized generously by North American Saints, but why not? The resources of the Church are well known to the brethren, and there is every reason to expect that inspired, prudent stewardship will continue to serve the "international church" as well in the future as it has in the past. "For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare" (D&C 104:17).

The Church, indeed, should thank Garth Jones and many others like him for introducing the gospel in many parts of the world. Experience shows that great things can come from modest beginnings. Fancy buildings and a full church program are not essential for meaningful worship. I am surprised that Jones feels, therefore, that the Pakistani convert has "no future at home . . . unless he has a network of support" (pp. 64–65).

I have to agree with Jones on one point, however. The architectural statement of LDS temples built around the world in recent years leaves much to be desired.

Kenneth W. Taylor
Burbank, California

Jones Responds

I appreciate Kenneth W. Taylor's comments but suspect that we would give very different answers to the three perplexing questions I posed in my article. While gospel principles may be immutable truth, their interpretation and practice certainly are not. Nor do I see the Church's growth abroad as logical and orderly. Perhaps we are speaking out of drastically different world experiences.

My life spans the Great Depression, World War II, and the post-war hopes, successes, and frustrations. I have experienced personal poverty and have consequently spent much of my adult life attempting to alleviate poverty. Since I am a cultural product of Wasatch-front Mormonism, it has been my context for trying to come to terms with the terrible waste of human life which I have witnessed. I have literal nightmares from some of these experiences.

I accept the thinking of the remarkable Jewish theologian Martin Buber, who stressed that human experience without religion is "but dust and ashes."[1] Yet nothing so tests my faith as Taylor's quotation: "For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare. . ." (D&C 104:17). Mainly under the auspices of the United Nations, I spent three years of my professional life in the early 1970s working on the world population problem. I was finally forced to admit that nothing I could foresee would curtail the "killing fields." This was one of the principal reasons I moved to Alaska where the population is small and the air is pure.

Nevertheless, I still consult from time to time with various U.S. and international agencies on population matters. In 1980, under a World Bank project in Indonesia, I did the organizational and system design to relocate two and a half million poverty-stricken persons living on the islands of Java, Bali, and Madura. Over three million persons are born on these three islands each year. Over half die before age five. I realized that the project was somewhat fruitless but felt anyway that maybe a few hundred thousand lives would be better off. That was worth something.

Interestingly enough, I received another letter after the article was published. It came from an agnostic friend of Lutheran background:

"It is amazing that we have remained such close friends over the years when our religious beliefs so differ. I see no reason why your church can influence in any way whatsoever the dismal global future. I see no hope until (1) world population is brought under control (and your people are great offenders since they procreate beyond a reasonable level), (2) military expenditures are brought under control (and your Utah certainly benefits from them), and (3) Americans cut back their excessive consumption (remember I learned from you that each U.S. child consumes thirty-two times as much as each Indian child).

"Do not feel too bad about my assertions. Organized religions have nothing to offer the world [either] in the eradication of mass poverty [or in] setting [the] stage for massive social uplift."

Thus, I stand accused simultaneously of both optimism and pessimism. I feel both. My direct ancestors greatly benefitted from nineteenth-century Mormonism. But I worry about the future of Indonesian Saints I know living in the slums of Indonesia. Mormonism's first Indonesian convert now has Catholic leanings, and I feel he has embraced that church. The Pakistani convert who Taylor seems to feel has a fine future can, under Islamic law, be stoned to death and is completely rejected by his extended family.

Yet I must continue to live a religious life. Without belief, all life becomes senseless, even though my Mormon heritage does not provide a satisfying answer to the out-

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[1] In Walter Kaufman, *Religion in Four Dimensions: Existential, Aesthetic, Historical, Comparative* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976), p. 14.

rage of needless human suffering and premature death. So I try to live by the maxim, "Live simply so that others may simply live."

I wish my church was more involved in temporal salvation. It isn't. So I will continue to support — and at times work within — such religious organizations as Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army, both of which give me great spiritual sustenance and comfort. It is from such religious activities I gain the will to join secular efforts of human uplift like the U.S./Agency for International Development, special undertakings of the United Nations' family of agencies, and projects carried out by philanthropic associations.

Garth N. Jones
Anchorage, Alaska

In Response to "Obedience the Ambiguous Gift"

I am writing in response to Lavina Fielding Anderson's essay, "The Ambiguous Gift of Obedience" (Spring 1987). As either a gift or as ambiguous, I found this essay most stimulating.

Anderson asks the rhetorical questions, "Should we obey?" and "Is disobedience justified?" (p. 141). She answers both unequivocally "Of course," which suggests a high degree of ambiguity, but then continues by asking, "But whom? and what? and when?" I suspect that if she knew who or what we should obey, she would no longer find the principle of obedience ambiguous or need to ask when.

In my view, disobedience to authority does not per se make us disobedient. I doubt that Brigham Young considered himself disobedient because he refused to give up polygamy when ordered to do so by civil authority. If our obedience to some higher principle results in disobedience to some lower principle, in my view we are being obedient, not disobedient.

In addition, merely because an individual or organization claims that we owe them obedience does not mean that we are disobedient in rejecting that claim. For example, I am not disobedient for refusing to follow a commandment of the Roman Catholic Church, whose claims I do not consider valid. But what if they were valid, and I was simply unable to believe them? Would I then be disobedient? I think not. At issue is not merely the validity of the claim, but also personal conscience. If I am obedient to the higher principle of personal conscience, then I am not disobedient for refusing to obey a person or organization that I do not believe in.

Further, even if I *know* a commandment is from God, in my view I am not disobedient if I refuse to follow it when it conflicts with my personal conscience. Was Peter disobedient when he refused to eat the unclean beast, although commanded to do so three times? (Acts 10:9–16) Was Nephi disobedient when he refused to kill Laban without first receiving a satisfactory (to him) explanation for why he should kill a helpless man? If he had not received that explanation, would he then have been disobedient for refusing to kill Laban? I think not.

It is interesting to me that Anderson never once mentions personal conscience in her essay. She does mention that in rendering obedience to another person "we must decide as individuals whether . . . [someone] . . . is telling the truth — God's truth, not just wishful thinking or self-deception" (pp. 137–38). But, she does not say that personal conscience plays any part in resolving these issues. The examples of Gideon, Zacharias, Abraham, and Jephtah (p. 137) spring easily to life in the essay with all of their ambiguity, but she overlooks Peter and Nephi.

I realize that personal conscience does not flourish in Mormon soil. I also realize that many who have been unable to be obedient to Church teachings because of personal conscience have not fared well. Some are no longer with us because of such issues as blacks not receiving the priesthood (which of course they now do), the

ERA, homosexuality, women not receiving the priesthood, writing on subjects unfavorable to the Church, etc. Most of us, while uneasy with the Church's actions (or inaction), merely wait patiently for the Church to do the right thing. But for some, personal conscience makes patience impossible.

In the Church I have never heard talks about personal conscience, about the risks of abdicating personal conscience to those in authority, about the dangers of Dachau, Jonestown, the Inquisition, My Lai, or Mountain Meadows. Juanita Brooks in *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962) suggests that there were dissenters at Mountain Meadows who fired their guns in the air (p. 74). How many lives would have been saved if only one man had stood up and said as did General Alexander W. Doniphan when ordered to shoot Joseph Smith, "It is cold-blooded murder. I will not obey your order. . . . if you execute these men, I will hold you responsible before an earthly tribunal, so help me God" (*Comprehensive History of the Church* 1:490.) Integrity does not count the personal cost; it is the ultimate value to which we owe our obedience, and all else must give way before it.

But don't we risk losing highly valued rewards or suffering greatly feared punishments if we do not obey those with the power to reward or punish us? We do, and if that is what we value most, then personal conscience will always come second. And what of the uncertainty introduced when each of us substitutes our own values for those of established authority? Unfortunately, evil done in the name of obedience frequently harms many and then passes for virtue. When individual conscience fails, there is not usually the opportunity to injure great numbers of others. (Unless, of course, that individual leads other individuals who will accept such a failure of conscience as morally correct.)

Obviously not everyone will see personal conscience as the highest value. And even those who do will tend to suspect the motives of those who reach conclusions different from their own. At the same time, not everyone will agree that obedience to the "proper" authority is the higher value. What is the "proper" authority? Some may even decide that there is no absolute authority and each choice should be based upon each unique circumstance. Frequently our choices are automatic, unexamined — little more than acquiescence to our cultural norms.

As for me and my house, I cannot do what I know to be evil to obtain a reward or to avoid a punishment. My integrity is more important to me than the possibility that my ultimate fate may be less glorious or pleasant than yours.

Anderson does not really address the larger issues of obedience, but rather the narrower issue of obedience to the Church. She does recognize the dangers of Mountain Meadows (p. 138) and acknowledges that the Church does not define the total sum of her religious experience (p. 141). She does not confuse serving the Church or "building the kingdom" with the "Gospel" or service to our fellow man and to God. She is trying to find constructive ways to deal with the tension of living in a community of imperfect people who have a conviction that they alone possess absolute truth. Obviously she loves the Church and is dedicated to it. This, of course, makes it more painful when the Church or its members fall short of the gospel challenge.

In that context, I think her essay is most thoughtful and constructive. We do not resent what we give freely and with love, and our gift edifies us. We often resent what we give out of duty or duress and are not edified. Anderson's consecrated or mature obedience certainly makes obedience to the Church a free gift given in love — one that will surely edify the giver.

W. L. Williamson
Convent Station, New Jersey

Luggage

Dixie Partridge

(for one leaving)

You are required to keep the poundage low:
two large cases and a carry-on:
what you take for months overseas.
In a year of famine, you have volunteered
for hunger in a strange language
you begin to force onto your tongue,
words affirming ways of irrigation:
seeds salvaged, sprouts toward green
in the fields.

What you need most was there
before you packed, not fire in the eyes,
but deeper, not things you have
but what you enjoy.
You've planted vegetables and flowers
in old tires — a family's garden;
pruned massive lilac trees and honeysuckle
that crowded paths; painted fences
and repaired collapsing sheds
in that dying farm town.

When I walk back
toward my car and education, the acquiring
of whatever will allay my dread of poverty,
I carry nothing from the airport
but an ache and tremble in my hands.

DIXIE PARTRIDGE has published poetry in over forty journals and in several anthologies, including The Montana Review, The Greensboro Review, Quarterly West, *and* Sunstone. *She is completing the manuscript for her second book of poetry. Her first,* Deer in the Haystacks *(Ahsahta Press), was published in 1984. She lives in Richland, Washington. "Nocturne, October" first appeared in a slightly different form in* Crab Creek Review, *1986.*

Reflections from Within: A Conversation with Linda King Newell and L. Jackson Newell

After serving five and a half years, Linda and Jack Newell step down as editors of DIALOGUE *as this issue goes to press, turning the editorship over to Kay and Ross Peterson of Logan, Utah. Following is an interview with them conducted by Lavina Fielding Anderson, associate editor.*

Lavina: What has been your history with DIALOGUE? When did you first encounter it and what were your ties with the journal before 1982?

Linda: We read about the founding of DIALOGUE in *Time* magazine in 1966 and spirited a check off just in time to get Volume 1, No. 1. We haven't missed an issue since. With the exception of Jack's essay in Winter 1980, however, neither of us had written for DIALOGUE or otherwise served the journal until we assumed the editorship.

Lavina: Did you apply for the position?

Linda: Oh, no! Dick and Julie Cummings invited us over for dinner in the fall of 1981 and asked if we would like to be nominated. We were honored but declined. We didn't feel qualified to succeed Mary Bradford, and we didn't know where we'd find the time to edit a major publication anyway. We enjoyed the Cummings and their hospitality but didn't give their suggestion serious thought.

Lavina: Then what?

Linda: Fred Esplin and Randy Mackey, co-chairs of the editor search committee, came by one Sunday afternoon early in 1982 and told us we had been chosen! We were stunned. But by then Valeen Avery and I thought we were only a few months from finishing our book, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*, and Jack had just received word of his promotion to full professor. On the crest of these events, we were foolish enough to try anything. We have always worked quite well together and thought we would enjoy serving together

as editors. After a week of reflecting, we said "yes," on the condition that you serve with us, Lavina.

Lavina: What were your initial objectives?

Jack: To assure DIALOGUE's continuing editorial independence, to publish on time, to double the readership, to build a one-year reserve fund, and to do it all with a touch of class. We wanted everyone associated with DIALOGUE to be proud of it. It was clear from the outset that these goals were highly interdependent.

Lavina: How did you start?

Linda: With good fortune. Those who chose to serve with us are remarkably talented and diverse people. The entire Executive Committee — and most everyone else who started with us — has stayed together for five and a half years through this final issue under our editorship. And many other able people, like Kevin Jones and Linda Thatcher, have joined us along the way. I doubt that we will ever enjoy such esprit with a group again.

Lavina: How do you account for this camaraderie?

Linda: Editing DIALOGUE requires more knowledge and skill than any one or two people possess. We learned quickly to delegate and trust each other's judgment within the staff. And on the crucial editorial and policy decisions, we all learned to express ourselves forcefully and listen to each other carefully. Ten or twelve people participated in the biweekly staff meetings held in our living room on Tuesday evenings. We often debated furiously, but strong differences can bring people closer if genuine good will prevails. The members of our editorial group have profound respect for one another. Jack and I have often disagreed, too — I tend to be more intuitive, and Jack is more analytical. It became increasingly evident to us as we went along that these two perspectives complement each other, particularly when it comes to tough editorial decisions.

Lavina: Were the early months your hardest?

Linda: Moving the journal from Washington, D.C., and a snafu with our first typesetter meant that we were almost a year behind. Mary's last issue, Spring 1982, came out in the summer. We didn't get the summer and fall issues out until January 1983, but by then we were rolling. In the next twelve months we published five more issues. This year we reached our goal of mailing each issue on the first day of the quarter: the winter issue goes into the mail on 1 December. You are as responsible for that as anyone, Lavina. Our business manager, Fred Esplin, says, "You've got to have somebody who's a stickler for deadlines," and that's been you.

Lavina: I accept the compliment. But I think we need to give credit where it's due: to our group of volunteer editors, proofreaders, and typists. Their work is all-important, but it never shows when it's done right. Proofreading in particular has to be the ultimate invisible task. We proof everything five times

in manuscript, galleys, and page proofs, and errors still slip through. When they do, we feel embarrassed and try to do better next time. Jerilyn Wakefield, who teaches school in Tooele and who won one of our writing prizes for her essay about adopting her son as an unmarried woman, has been with us from the start — proofreading after J. L. is asleep at night, and occasionally adding "Grief!" in the margins of particularly outrageous sections.

Don Henriksen, our typesetter, is a phenomenon. He's a ballroom dancer six nights a week, divorced, in his fifties, with a dashing moustache. He started in the typesetting business as a boy when it was all hot lead. Today he still sets hot lead in a workshop in his basement. He's worked nights and weekends to inch us up on the schedule a few days at each issue. He says he can hear by the rhythm of the matrices of type falling whether he's hit the wrong key or not. He's amazingly accurate.

Susette Fletcher Green is another of the treasures who has been with us from the beginning. She responded to our questionnaire and said she'd like to volunteer. She'd spent the last thirteen years raising her four children — she added a fifth during the DIALOGUE years — and teaching in volunteer programs at school. She turned out to be a natural-born editor and has been co-associate editor for the last couple of years. She'll stay on the new team, and I feel immense confidence in turning the copy editing over to her.

Linda: Others have played a key role, too. Daniel Maryon, our assistant editor and office manager, makes sure everyone gets everything they are supposed to, including our subscribers — he sees that they get their issues and their renewal statements. Incidently, Dan is one of many Maryons who have worked for DIALOGUE over the past five years. He came to work in 1983, first as a part-time office person then full time when his sister Annie Maryon Brewer left DIALOGUE to begin a career as a social worker. His mother, Pat, two more of his sisters, and his wife, Dorothy, have all worked in the office from time to time. His father, Ed Maryon, provided the art for our Spring 1984 issue.

Lavina: Jack, how do you see DIALOGUE as a part of the larger stream of Mormon culture?

Jack: Since converting to the LDS church from Methodism twenty-five years ago, I have been both exhilarated and perplexed by my "chosen" religion. I have been exhilarated by the sense of community it engenders, the sense of purpose and hope it conveys to its adherents, and by the boldness of its claims and practices. It is a young religion, still energetic and sometimes brash. To me this is appealing. On the other hand, these same qualities have their negative sides. What members experience as community sometimes comes across as cliquishness to outsiders. Energetic and brash can read powerful and arrogant if you're not part of it. And our bold claims sometimes look silly to others. Some of our cultural practices are silly. It is easy for Mormons to see ourselves in the images we and our church promulgate. But it's particularly difficult for us to see ourselves as others do, because of our strong cohesiveness and, in Utah, our numerical dominance. One of DIALOGUE's greatest contributions over the last two decades has been to bring a measure of objectivity to our

perceptions of ourselves and our world. This, of course, is the stuff of serious scholarship everywhere.

Lavina: How objective do you think DIALOGUE has been under your editorship?

Jack: True objectivity is probably never realized in this world. It involves listening carefully to divergent views, seeking verifiable information, and treating alternative explanations of events, actions, and motivations seriously. It also means treating those who hold differing views with respect. This involves listening to them, weighing their evidence without bias, and responding to what they have actually said or actually believe rather than ascribing motives (always a risky and flawed endeavor) or exaggerating their position to make our response more credible. As editors of DIALOGUE, we may not always have been objective, but we have tried to put this philosophy into action — to be as objective as we can make ourselves.

Lavina: You and Linda have been criticized by some for failing to devote comparable space to more traditional interpretations of history and doctrine. Are these criticisms justified?

Jack: Some believe DIALOGUE is not true to its name unless the whole dialogue takes place *within* DIALOGUE. I don't see it that way. This journal makes dialogue possible by providing a forum for scholarship and responsible essays that could not be brought to the attention of serious-thinking Mormons through any other publication. Let me give an example. We recently published Harris Lenowitz's article "The Binding of Isaac: A View of Jewish Exegesis" (Summer 1987). This piece was originally presented to the B. H. Roberts Society in the spring of 1986. The other two speakers that night, BYU professors Kent Brown and Kent Jackson, defended a rather traditional Mormon view of scripture. Their papers were well-conceived and well-crafted, but in our judgment they presented material with which DIALOGUE readers and other well-informed Latter-day Saints are already familiar. Put differently, other publications and other occasions have provided and will offer Latter-day Saints access to Brown's and Jackson's perspectives. Thus, DIALOGUE made dialogue possible for our readers by providing a forum for another view — the Jewish view — of scripture. If I thoughtlessly laid my Bible on the floor in the past, I haven't done so since encountering Lenowitz's sobering description of his visit to the LDS Institute. His article also precipitated a number of conversations with friends about what *we* regard as appropriate respect for a sacred book. That's DIALOGUE making dialogue possible. It doesn't all have to happen *within* our pages, but it should happen *because* of what we publish.

Lavina: What has been your editorial philosophy? What values have governed your editorial decisions?

Jack: DIALOGUE should publish the finest scholarship and literature available in and around Mormonism today. Throughout history and across cultures, "official" literature and art are rarely distinguished. Great artists and great writers struggle to help us confront reality, to become aware of our facile

assumptions and to see the paradoxes in our comfortable conformity . . . or the irony in our self-righteous rebelliousness. It's like wearing a hair shirt, but every culture and every institution needs to look itself squarely in the eye and deal with uncomfortable questions from time to time. It's the only way we can stay healthy. If we lose the capacity to do this for ourselves, then only outsiders will be left to do it. But we never hear them well; we're too defensive. It's human nature.

Lavina: Do you see DIALOGUE, then, as an expression of the loyal opposition?

Jack: That's not a concept Mormons have entertained, but there is some merit in it. I like the notion because it implies no position on the ideological spectrum from liberal to conservative. It simply assumes the airing of other perspectives. DIALOGUE *does* have a liberal bias, however, if that means a preference for free and responsible thought. But we must remember that free and responsible thought sometimes finds in favor of traditional interpretations of history and even the wisdom of official proclamations.

Lavina: Then why does DIALOGUE seem to be feared by some LDS church leaders?

Jack: Among the leaders of the Church there are those who believe that free expression will breed error. There are other leaders, however, who see free expression as an essential creative influence or as a powerful corrective for the occasional inhumane implementation of a well-intended policy. That's fine. My views happen to correspond with the latter, but as long as both kinds of leaders are present — and their conflicting perspectives are aired in official circles — we have no reason for alarm. In any event, DIALOGUE does not exist to please officials. It does not exist to please anyone. It is here to be considered, not to be loved. Paradoxically, that's why some of us have loved it for twenty years!

Lavina: How do you blend the intellectual independence you love with the kind of institutional loyalty that is necessary to make the Church work?

Jack: I don't. Intellectual independence and institutional loyalty are contradictory terms. Our ultimate loyalties should be to *principles*, not to institutions or individuals. In the case of the Church, our loyalty must be to the *principles* of our religion. I'm talking about truthfulness, forgiveness, repentance, unconditional love, and mercy for those who hunger, or grieve, or bear heavy burdens. The Church is done a disservice (and is sometimes even done in) by those who substitute loyalty to the organization or to individuals within it for loyalty to its principles. So again we come to one of these paradoxes: intellectual independence *does* serve the institutional church by asking whether its means, its policies, and its practices are consistent with its highest ideals.

Lavina: How did you come to hold these views, Jack? Did you bring them into the Church with you as a convert, did they develop somewhere along the way, or have they emerged from your association with DIALOGUE?

Jack: I have a fairly optimistic view of human nature. I believe that, if trusted and respected, the vast majority of people will do the right thing on their own. Despite forty-eight years of knocks and bumps, I still believe this. I simply don't accept the old adage that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. This idea suggests that people are inherently devious and will do wrong unless we can find some way to stop them. Prison wardens may be excused for this assumption, but it is unbecoming to others, especially those in religious organizations. My beliefs about the interplay of individuals and institutions, and the relationship between church and religion, have their roots both in my home and in my education. As a graduate student, I was steeped in the history of the European Enlightenment and the American Revolution before I joined the Church. I was naturally attracted, therefore, by the Mormon doctrine of free agency. I believed then and I believe now that the purpose of religion is to hallow enduring, even redeeming, ideas and principles. Churches are created to teach these doctrines for the good of the individuals who embrace them and ultimately, we hope, for the benefit of society. Force and pressure and guilt have no place in religion. When the Church lapses into these tactics, it makes a mockery of our doctrines and of free agency. I suppose I have spoken and written more about this problem since we have edited DIALOGUE, but the concern goes way back in my history. Words are only words, however. The persistent task is to live by the principles we espouse.

Lavina: How has DIALOGUE affected your lives?

Linda: It has caused us to reflect deeply on what we believe, and it has certainly educated us in a lot of important ways. It has also kept us active in the Church. Since our marriage twenty-four years ago, we have been Southerners, Yankees, Midwesterners, and Westerners, having resided in five states other than Utah. In three of those places we lived in small branches, one in Appalachia with a membership so poor that some members came from homes with dirt floors and children came to church with no shoes. In every place we lived before moving to Utah in 1974, we watched people with diverse economic and educational backgrounds and from across the political spectrum work together in the Church. Everyone was needed, and differences were left outside the chapel door — allowing us all to serve in a single effort. That's not to say that everything went smoothly or that everyone always got along, but it was unthinkable that someone's religious commitment could be suspect because his or her political views were liberal or conservative.

But from Salt Lake came rumblings in the form of conference talks, statements from Church leaders, and rumors that implied that "good" members of the Church couldn't be Democrats, or believe in evolution or women's rights, or be curious about their history — never mind that they drove forty or a hundred miles round trip to Church twice a week and held down three or five callings. Without DIALOGUE it would have been easy to conclude that we were simply oddballs who didn't have a place in the Church. But the articles in the journal kept reminding us that we weren't alone and we weren't even that odd, and that commitment to the principles that hold the religion together has little

to do with one's political philosophy or scientific knowledge. Having edited DIALOGUE for these years, we're all the more convinced of the beneficial part the journal plays in the lives of thousands of other members.

Lavina: But isn't DIALOGUE detrimental to some?

Jack: Perhaps a few, but under ordinary circumstances, we should not shield people from new knowledge. After all, part of maturing as a person and as a Christian is learning to reconcile ourselves with imperfect institutions and an imperfect human race. Members who understand our tortured past may be much more understanding of our imperfect present. Perhaps this is the meaning of the phrase "we cannot be saved in ignorance." And DIALOGUE isn't designed to appeal to everyone. Those who think the journal might be harmful to their religious faith should not read it.

Linda: People choose to leave the Church for a variety of reasons. In the years we have edited the journal, we have had only one person write and say they were leaving the Church because of DIALOGUE. On the other hand, we get many letters from people who believe DIALOGUE has a positive effect on their religious life. Our reader's survey (Spring 1987) bears this out. Of course, we also hear from people who have become disillusioned because of a Church policy, the official or private pronouncements of Church leaders, or the behavior of a local leader.

Some readers questioned our wisdom in publishing Michael Quinn's article, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890–1904," on post-Manifesto polygamy (Spring 1985), because of the sensitive topic. Although no one responded to the article through a letter to the editor, the subject often came up in conversations. Many who are descendants of post-Manifesto polygamous marriages are immensely grateful to DIALOGUE for putting the issue in historical context. Others were relieved that their progenitors had acted in good faith within a non-public policy, rather than through apostasy. Some found the article helpful in writing family histories and in understanding the context of post-Manifesto marriages. A few felt that, although they had been personally enlightened by the piece, we should not have published it, either because "the brethren" would be inflamed or because it might shake *someone else's* faith (but, interestingly, not their own).

Lavina: Why is editorial independence an issue?

Jack: Independence is *always* an issue when scholarship, literature, and art are your purpose. Authentic scholarship can't exist without it. But editorial independence was an issue for us for two additional reasons. First, the journal was coming to Salt Lake City for the first time, and some feared that the Church would try to apply pressure here that it would not try elsewhere. Second, the journal's financial base was in the black but still tenuous. We didn't want it to be vulnerable to the influence of potential donors. By active fund-raising efforts and by increasing circulation, we hoped to build up the journal and insure its editorial integrity.

Lavina: Have your objectives in fund-raising and circulation been realized?

Linda: We now print 5,300 copies of each issue, an increase of 2,000 since 1982. The chief satisfaction here is not financial, although it has helped to balance the books. The real satisfaction, of course, is that more people are reading the journal and therefore considering the ideas of our authors and artists. Writing is the hardest work I know — so the greatest compliment authors enjoy is to have others consider the fruits of their labors.

Lavina: And the fund-raising?

Linda: We now have a modest reserve fund that protects us from the seasonal highs and lows of contributions and subscription renewals. But we are far from paying adequate wages to the three or four salaried staff members. The journal has a stronger circle of contributors — both major and minor — on whom it can depend; but dollars in the bank are never insurance for any journal or any individual. DIALOGUE's best insurance for the future is to continue to merit the support of its writers, readers, and contributors. Publishing on time, issue in and issue out, has been one of the achievements of this editorial team in which we take great satisfaction.

Lavina: Were the concerns about pressures from the Church warranted?

Linda: That depends on how you look at it. No Church official ever contacted us personally or tried directly to influence our editorial decisions. But there has been at least one indirect attempt. In 1983, about a year into our editorship, several General Authorities launched an effort to intimidate a few of our writers as well as some who wrote for *Sunstone.*

Dawn Tracy, a reporter for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, eventually interviewed fourteen writers in four states who had been called in and questioned by their stake presidents at the request of a General Authority. Neither Jack nor I was questioned, but the director of correlation at that time, Roy Doxey, did try to contact our bishop, who happened to be out of town. He talked instead with the first counselor. (Jack, by the way, was serving as the other counselor at the time which may be why they didn't feel a need to check on him.) I was in the Relief Society presidency, and the Sunday after he received the telephone call, the counselor sauntered up to me in the ward foyer with a huge grin. "All right, Linda, I want to know," he said.

"Want to know what?" I queried.

"I want to know which general board you are being called to?"

I laughed, "What in the world makes you think I'm being called to some general board?"

"Well," he said, "I got a call this week from church correlation, and he asked if the Linda Newell in my ward was the Linda Newell who was connected with DIALOGUE. I told him you sure were. He asked someone in the room for the file on you, then questioned me about your standing in the Church, and asked if you held a temple recommend. I gave him a good report."

My initial distress over such a telephone call immediately melted into appreciation for my ward and the people in it. We have lived in that ward

for ten years and, for me, it was enough to know of the confidence that counselor had in me and to feel the support and love from those who knew me best: my own ward members. This was something that I would experience in future difficult times.

Lavina: Are you referring to the action taken by Church leaders which prohibited you and Val Avery from speaking in church about your book, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*; and do you feel that that action had anything to do with your being co-editor of DIALOGUE?

Linda: Yes, to the first of your questions. I once more felt the quiet reassurance and supportive love from my neighbors and ward members during that period. As to the other question, I don't believe the ban (which was lifted ten months later) had anything to do with DIALOGUE, although I have been asked that question many times. But because it occurred during our editorship, it was natural that many subscribers sent words of encouragement and love during a time they knew was difficult for us.

Lavina: Returning to the previous question, what did you do when the writers were being called in?

Jack: We raised our voices in protest privately and publicly, as did Peggy Fletcher at *Sunstone* and a number of others — including many who were interviewed. I don't know for sure why the campaign ceased, although attempts to limit free expression in our society always backfire when they are exposed. More recently, the Church has tried to prohibit its employees from writing for independent Mormon publications.

Lavina: Does this prohibition affecting Church employees bother you?

Linda: Absolutely. For one thing it's difficult for DIALOGUE to achieve its desired balanced perspective when we don't receive manuscripts from these people. For another, it bespeaks distrust of open discussion which is unbecoming of any organization that professes to seek and love the truth.

Lavina: Have you noticed any changes over the last few years in official Church attitudes toward independent publications and meetings that deal with scholarship about the Mormon experience?

Jack: In the mid-1980s LDS leaders tried to silence some scholars — by interviewing writers and banning speakers. Their efforts had little effect except to splatter bad publicity all over the newspapers. Switching strategies, the Church has since cut researchers off from key sources by severely restricting access to the archives. They are also making it difficult for Church educators to participate in independent scholarly gatherings, like the Mormon History Association's annual convention or the Sunstone Symposium, by requiring the use of personal leave time and personal funds to do so. When BYU was up for reaccreditation a year or two ago, an internal study reported that no administrators could write for DIALOGUE or read a paper at the Sunstone Theological Symposium. Given the number of administrators there, that limits the aca-

demic freedom of a lot of scholars. Seminaries and institutes are no longer supposed to subscribe to independent publications, and their faculty members are counseled to keep personal copies where students can't see them. Also, no Church periodical can cite any article or quote any passage from unofficial Mormon scholarly publications. These are just examples, but you get the picture. As with the official nonrecognition that Leonard Arrington ever served as Church Historian, authorities would like to create the impression that certain things never happened or don't exist. This is what I call "malignant neglect."

Lavina: Why do you think church actions like the ones you have just mentioned occur?

Linda: I think that it results primarily from a misunderstanding of DIALOGUE's purpose and the reasons why people write for DIALOGUE. As the Church continues to expand its world-wide membership, Church leaders become increasingly burdened with problems ranging from the trivial to the monumental. More responsibility has to be delegated. As a result, middle-level bureaucracy has expanded to the point where Church leaders are more and more isolated. Being spared many duties and problems is certainly an advantage: but at the same time, the top leaders are deprived of the ideas, insights, concerns, scholarship, and inspiration of some of the best minds in the Church.

Many of our writers feel that DIALOGUE is a vehicle for expression that can reach some of the members and perhaps even the leaders — "surely," they say, "someone up there must read DIALOGUE." My hope is that somewhere among those someones, there are a few who recognize the creativity in the ideas, the genius in the insights, the sorrow in the concerns, the faith in the scholarship, the love in the feedback, the hurt in the anger, and the God-given right to the inspiration.

General Authorities, whose time is extremely limited, sometimes assign someone else to peruse various books and periodicals for them. One such person was employed in the Church Historical library throughout the seventies and into the eighties (but is no longer there). He often spoke of being on "special assignment" to do reading "for several of the brethren" and glibly showed off his work, which consisted of underlining controversial passages in DIALOGUE and other periodicals and books. I remember the sick turn of my stomach the time he showed me his marked pages. Clearly he was not focused on understanding concepts or information but on "exposing" scholars and writers, particularly historians. Passages of their work would then be read out of context by apostles, removing any real possibility for understanding.

Lavina: Have you felt pressure from anyone else?

Jack: We certainly have. We've received manuscripts for which different individuals or groups have campaigned very hard. At both ends of the spectrum, from apologists to apostates, there are a few who would use DIALOGUE for diatribe or character assassination. Fortunately, the people coming from these extremes nearly balance each other out. They all seem to think we should

publish their ideas because they believe so strongly in their positions. What matters to us, however, is the thoroughness of authors' research and the rigor of their logic — not how passionately they are committed to their point of view. Passion has its merits, but it doesn't make up for shoddy scholarship or poor writing.

Lavina: Is space a problem? How many publishable manuscripts have you turned down simply because there wasn't room to include them?

Jack: At the beginning of our tenure as editors, we budgeted for 128-page issues, but so many pieces worthy of publication came in that we continually published more pages than we had planned. As you know, there are about a hundred manuscripts on our logs at any given time. We are able to publish only 10 to 20 percent of these; some that we reject have real potential, so we understand why writers sometimes react in anger or frustration. But we expected this kind of heat. You simply try to develop a thick skin without letting it become an insensitive hide. This is one of the reasons the editorship should change hands every five years.

Lavina: What are some of your experiences in working with authors, Linda?

Linda: They really come in the good, the bad, and the ugly. Some authors, despite the numerous pleas to make all their changes before their work is typeset, still try to rewrite at the galley stage, causing costly delays. On the other hand, one author in Canada drove his galleys down to be sure we'd get them on time. Then there is Mike Quinn — he just won't quit. He kept refining his post-Manifesto polygamy article, not only at the editing stage and the galley stage but beyond. When we refused to make one last change, by jingo, he drove out to Don Henriksen's and paid him $100 to change the final type!

Jack: Few people know of or appreciate the thoughtful consideration and earnest debate devoted to each article they read in DIALOGUE. For example, David Buerger's two essays on the temple (the first was in the Spring 1983 issue and the second is in this issue) focus close to the core of the Mormon religious experience; consequently we felt an immense responsibility to assure a balanced tone and impeccable content. We were determined to be completely faithful to the documentary evidence, while avoiding unnecessary assaults on the sensitivities of temple-going Latter-day Saints. David has the ability to be reflective about his own work. He was cooperative, helpful, and resourceful throughout the long process of revising and editing. One of the hard decisions we made was to remove a passage-by-passage comparison of certain Masonic ceremonies with the published versions of the Mormon temple endowment. Our scholarly and intellectual training told us an author shouldn't claim parallels without demonstrating them, but our own commitments and respect for both Mormons and Masons — after all, their ceremony is private and sacred, too — meant that we couldn't leave some of the material in. This ethical dilemma precipitated earnest discussions among the staff that went on for months. In the end, we and David agreed to go with the documents as far as

we could without violating the privacy rights of the two groups whose liturgy the article compares.

Linda: Oddly enough, the greatest number of reader complaints has been about Levi Peterson's prize-winning spoof, "The Third Nephite" (Winter 1986). Members of the editorial board and staff all loved the gentle fun it poked at the folklore and occasional foolishness that have grown up around the story of the three Nephites. Well, it gravely offended a few readers, who felt it was nothing short of blasphemy.

Lavina: What has been your greatest frustration during these last five years?

Jack: Incessant rumors and speculation about the Church, its leaders, its programs, and its people. Editing DIALOGUE means you are constantly hearing stories, sometimes from anonymous sources, tipping you off about one thing or another. Most of these rumors concern fatuous trivia, some of them are mean-spirited or even ridiculous. We'll be glad to put some distance between us and this sort of thing. On the other hand, we'll miss what came to be the ceremonial conclusion to our regular staff meetings — Allen Roberts's gripping accounts of the unfolding Mark Hofmann investigation.

Lavina: Have you experienced unexpected rewards?

Linda: One of the most pleasing has been the flowering of serious art on our covers and in our pages. This has been a particular interest of mine since I was an art major at Utah State University. Having DIALOGUE in Salt Lake City has enabled us, with the expert help of our art director, Frank McEntire, to build ties with many painters, potters, photographers, and sculptors who have allowed us to feature their creations. Another satisfaction has been the occasional burst of high humor in the fiction we have published. We all need more of this in our lives. Even so, the greatest reward has been the opportunity to work day in and day out with gifted writers and committed people of all kinds. We began with the haunting nightmare that we would always be short of good manuscripts and dependable volunteers. We soon found these to be the least of our worries.

Lavina: As you leave, do you have any lingering wishes or unfulfilled dreams for DIALOGUE?

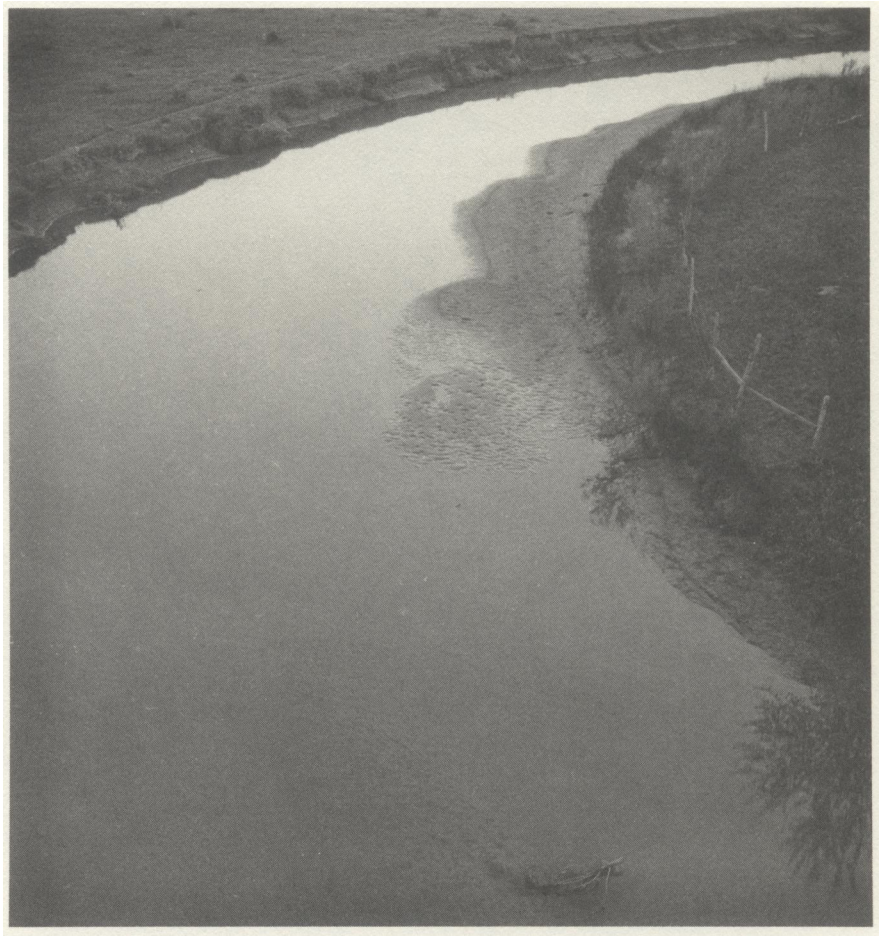
Jack: Those are probably implicit in what we have already said. DIALOGUE's writers have much to say to us all. We find their work insightful, inspiring, and stimulating. We wish the journal were read and discussed much more widely than it is.

Linda: Any way you look at it, DIALOGUE has made quite a mark in its first twenty years. Who knows what the next twenty will bring? We are confident that Kay and Ross Peterson will take the journal its next lap with style and courage. We wish them luck!

Lavina: Leaving DIALOGUE may be quite an adjustment for the two of you. What is next?

Linda: It *will* be an adjustment because we've loved this experience. But five years is long enough. I'm going to take a month off to relax, get my files organized, and set up my computer and writing hide-away at home. I've just about completed the research for my next book. It is the story of Muriel Hoopes Tu, an American Quaker woman who went to China in 1920 and lived there for sixty-seven years. She died last spring. I'll also continue as editor for the new Mormon Studies series of the University of Utah Press.

Jack: One thing leads to the next. I'll be continuing my professional career at the University of Utah, and I'm the new editor of the *Review of Higher Education*, the journal of my professional association. A colleague said to me the other day: "You are stepping down from the DIALOGUE editorship to take a bigger one." That's ridiculous. No professional journal publishes anything like the range of material that DIALOGUE does — scholarship, poetry, art, fiction — nor do they deal with issues and ideas that touch the very center of their readers' personal lives. Nor must their editors raise their entire budgets. No, DIALOGUE is a professional journal — and much, much more!



The Development of the Mormon Temple Endowment Ceremony

David John Buerger

Introduction

> Your *endowment* is, to receive all those ordinances in the House of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell.
>
> — Brigham Young (JD 2:31)

For faithful Latter-day Saints, the temple endowment ceremony is one of the most sacred and powerful ordinances received in mortality. One authoritative source called it the temporal stepping stone which all people must pass to achieve exaltation with God the Father and Jesus Christ (*Gospel Essentials* 1979, 247).

Since those who enter the temple agree, as part of the endowment experience, not to reveal certain key words or symbols that are part of the ceremony and since any discussion of the endowment takes place upon sacred ground, this essay will not discuss the theological significance, spiritual meanings, or symbolic dimensions of the endowment, important though they are in the lives of Latter-day Saints.

Each Latter-day Saint who participates in the endowment has a uniquely personal experience which, because of the sacred nature of the temple, is seldom discussed or shared with another in any detail. Sometimes this experience is a positive, peaceful, and healing experience. Others, from time to time, may experience the temple less positively. Such personal responses lie outside the

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limitations of this paper, though I acknowledge that each person's response to discussions of the temple is likely to be intense as a result. The temple also has a collective impact on the faithful members of the Church, which again, is seldom shared or discussed although its power is acknowledged.

However, the temple has maintained its central role in the lives of Latter-day Saints by being able to create a point of intersection between human desires for righteousness and the divine willingness to be bound by covenant. This point has remained constant, even though emphases in the Church have changed over time, also bringing change to the endowment ceremony itself. In this essay, I wish to enhance our understanding of the importance of the temple in the collective lives of the Saints by providing a history of the endowment: its introduction by Joseph Smith, its origins, changes made since its inception in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the effect of modern technology on the ritual, and some possible directions for the future that seem to be indicated by current trends.

Some people may feel that any discussion whatsoever of the temple may be inappropriate. My understanding of the temple ceremony is that certain names, signs, tokens, and penalties are guarded by vows of secrecy. I respect these limitations both as a Latter-day Saint and as a historian. However, it is not my understanding that these prohibitions extend to other areas of the temple ceremony, even though such reticence has become the custom among Latter-day Saints in general. I do not wish to offend any who may have a more restricted view than I about what is appropriate to discuss in relationship to the temple and its ceremonies and have worked toward an effective balance of scholarly objectivity, reverence for this sacred institution, regard for the scruples of others, and adequate documentation and development of the points to be discussed.

In 1912, one year after the First Presidency assigned James E. Talmage to write a book on temples, the Church published *The House of the Lord* (Bergera 1979, 60–61). In his chapter on temple ordinances, Talmage summarized the endowment's content as follows:

> *The Temple Endowment*, as administered in modern temples, comprises instruction relating to the significance and sequence of past dispensations, and the importance of the present as the greatest and grandest era in human history. This course of instruction includes a recital of the most prominent events of the creative period, the condition of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, their disobedience and consequent expulsion from that blissful abode, their condition in the lone and dreary world when doomed to live by labor and sweat, the plan of redemption by which the great transgression may be atoned, the period of the great apostasy, the restoration of the Gospel with all its ancient powers and privileges, the absolute and indispensable condition of personal purity and devotion to the right in present life, and a strict compliance with Gospel requirements.

Following this general overview, Talmage stated more specifically:

> The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and

material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the race; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King, — the Lord Jesus Christ. With the taking of each covenant and the assuming of each obligation a promised blessing is pronounced, contingent upon the faithful observance of the conditions (1912, 99–100).

I

The Formative Period: Kirtland, 1835–36

As early as October 1835, Joseph Smith told his apostles of an awaited "endowment" which would grant them "power from on high" (HC 2:287; Jessee 1984, 61). It has become customary for manuals, teachers, and speakers to equate this "endowment" with the temple endowment itself as we currently practice it; however, it seems apparent from contemporary Kirtland sources that the members then considered this endowment to have come by the spiritual blessings of God manifested through visions, prophesying, speaking in tongues, and feeling the Holy Ghost during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. All of these spiritual gifts were conferred *following* the special temple ordinances associated with the dedication: washing, anointing, blessings, partaking of the sacrament, "sealing" (a group ceremony involving the Hosanna Shout), washing of the feet, etc., but not an endowment as we would currently define the term (HC 2:380–83, 386–88, 392, 427–28, 430–33).[1]

This Kirtland pre-endowment ritual was a simple, staged ceremony clearly patterned after similar washings and anointings described in the Old and especially the New Testament (Lev. 8; Mark 6:13; Luke 4:18, 7:38, 44; John 13:1–16; 1 Tim. 5:10; James 5:14). According to the *History of the Church*'s official account, the first part of this ritual was given on 21 January 1836 when the First Presidency "retired to the attic story of the printing office, where we attended the ordinance of washing our bodies in pure water. We also perfumed our bodies and our heads, in the name of the Lord." After blessing and consecrating oil for this ceremony, the presidency laid their hands on each other's heads, progressing from oldest to youngest, blessing and anointing each other to their offices. Following several days of performing anointings to other priesthood bearers, Joseph Smith, on 6 February 1836, assembled these people together to "receive the seal of all their blessings." This sealing was performed as a group ceremony by Sidney Rigdon, after which the participants "were to shout with one accord a solemn hosanna to God and the Lamb, with an Amen, Amen and Amen" (2:379–82, 391–92; Jessee 1984, 145, 156).

A month and a half later at the temple dedication, Joseph gave instructions on the ordinance of washing of feet; two days later the presidency "proceeded to cleanse our faces and our feet, and then proceeded to wash one another's feet." Following this, all attendees "partook of the bread and wine." Finally, these recipients also received the ordinance of washing of feet (HC 2:410–28, 429–30; Jessee 1984, 145, 182). After administering these rites to about 300 male Church members, Joseph Smith declared that he "had now completed

[1] I am indebted to Lester Bush and Andrew F. Ehat for this insight.

the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ceremonies" (HC 2:430–33; Jessee 1984, 183–84).

II

INFLUENCES AND ORIGINS OF THE NAUVOO ENDOWMENT

Five years later in Nauvoo, on 19 January 1841, a new revelation (D&C 124:37–41) commanded the Saints to build "my most holy house . . . for the beginning of the revelations and foundation of Zion" wherein may be performed "your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies" (D&C 124:39). Thus, the Saints who had been previously anointed in Kirtland learned that those rituals were a precursor to new ceremonies.

As in Kirtland, Joseph elected to administer the revised ritual to selected Church members prior to the completion of the temple. The first administration of the endowment as we know it came on 4 and 5 May 1842 in the upper story of Joseph Smith's store in Nauvoo. Nine men — James Adams, Heber C. Kimball, William Law, William Marks, George Miller, Willard Richards, Hyrum Smith, Newel K. Whitney, and Brigham Young — were included in this ceremony, which was soon known for the first time as the endowment.[2] The endowed group was sometimes referred to as the "Holy Order," the "Quorum," the "Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood," or the "Quorum of the Anointed" (Quinn 1978, 85).

The Nauvoo endowment ritual was a significant expansion from the simple washings and anointings received in Kirtland and included new theological instruction and ritual. According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph "instruct[ed] them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days. . . . In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days" (5:1–2). Joseph and Hyrum Smith received their endowment the next day (HC 5:2–3).

Where did these ceremonies originate? The language of the account in the *History of the Church* clearly implies a divine origin with its references to "the principles and order of the Priesthood, . . . and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Mel-

[2] Although historian B. H. Roberts referred to this event as "the introduction of the Endowment Ceremonies in this dispensation" (HC 5:2, n1), the *History of the Church*'s reconstructed text of this account (discussed below) did not use the term "endowment." The phrase that was used, "the ancient order of things," was one which Joseph Smith was quoted as using on 6 January 1842 in speaking of the forthcoming temple rites (HC 4:492). The *History* did note, in its entry for 2 December 1843 that Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and Orson Spencer "received their endowments" in the upper story of Joseph Smith's red brick store (HC 6:98), so it can be assumed that the ceremony as we now know it came to be known as the endowment within a year and a half of its introduction.

chizedek Priesthood, . . . [and] the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days" (5:1–2). Saints who believed that the Aaronic Priesthood had been restored by John the Baptist and the Melchizedek Priesthood by Peter, James, and John readily believed that ancient knowledge, like ancient authority, had been lost from the earth and was being restored through their prophet. Contemporary Saints accept equally readily that the ceremony was restored by revelation to Joseph Smith (McGavin 1956, 41; Widtsoe 1960, 110–13).

But nowhere did Joseph leave a direct statement of how the endowment ceremony came to be. The *History of the Church* account of that first Nauvoo endowment quotes him as saying, "All these things referred to in this [Endowment] council are always governed by the principle of revelation" (5:2). This "quotation" actually was an anachronistic reconstruction[3] by Willard Richards composed between 14–18 April 1845, reportedly based on a very brief, incomplete entry from the Book of the Law of the Lord;[4] there is a gap in Joseph Smith's diary between October 1839 and December 1842. On so important and central an ordinance, it is striking that there is no revelatory document extant nor any known contemporary references to a revelation by either Joseph or his associates.

With respect to the issue of direct revelation, most of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants came about as a result of particular needs of the Church or individuals. Important doctrines (for example, the Word of Wisdom and the United Order) developed when outside forces and movements focused Joseph's attention upon a problem in a particular way. Thus, it seems reasonable to inquire about such influences on the temple ceremony as well.

Our inquiry begins with the framework of the temple ceremony which, as Talmage indicates, retells the plan of salvation — the creation, fall, and atonement. As a culmination of Joseph Smith's developing theology that human beings were not only the offspring of God but potential gods themselves, the temple provided a synthesis of Mormon beliefs in the origin and purpose of human beings and a sacred ritual that reunited them for a brief time with God as a life of righteousness and ordinances performed through proper authority would unite them forever in the afterlife. This instructional material is drawn quite directly from sacred scripture introduced by Joseph in his revision of the Bible, pertinent sections of which are now published in the book of Moses and the book of Abraham.

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[3] The story of this passage's reconstruction illustrates how much of the *History of the Church* was composed. According to Dean C. Jessee, Joseph Smith wrote very little of his diary and history. In fact, at the time of his death in 1844, his history was completed only through 1838. Eleven men composed the history by using over twenty different manuscript sources. Key participant George A. Smith recalled that this task "was an immense labor, requiring the deepest thought and the closest application, as there were mostly only two or three words (about half written) to a sentence" (Smith to Wilford Woodruff, 21 April 1856, cited in Jessee 1971, 472).

[4] Andrew F. Ehat comment on an early draft of this paper presented at the Sunstone Theological Symposium, Salt Lake City, 21 August 1986. Ehat apparently has had access to the Book of the Law of the Lord, which presently is restricted from scholars by the LDS Church's Historical Department Archives. See also Ehat 1982, 26–27.

Latter-day Saints who are familiar with the holy books of other religions and with religions in the ancient Middle Eastern and classical worlds have pointed out many motifs that seem to find echoes in the temple ceremony. For example, apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic literature (books written between the closing of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament but usually attributed to such important prophets of the past as Moses, Noah, and Enoch) commonly dealt with the existence of multiple gods, the creation of order out of chaos, the premortal existence of conscious beings, the creation of the earth, the creation of Adam and Eve, light versus darkness (as a symbol of the necessity of exercising free will to choose between opposites), opposites (free will, choices), Satan and his angels being cast out of heaven, the fall of Adam and Eve, the influence of good and evil angels in the world, the Savior's mission and atonement, his mission to the spirit prison, the resurrection, the millennial kingdom, the crucial role of prophets and patriarchs, and secret covenants and "mysteries" by which earnest seekers could reach the highest heaven.

Another example is the history of the mystery cults in the ancient world, particularly Nag Hammadi, Qumran, and Greece which again ring with such familiar motifs as preparatory purification through ritual bathing, special instruction in secret knowledge given only to initiates, use of sacred symbolic objects related to this secret knowledge, narration or dramatic enactment of a sacred story, and crowning initiates as full members of the secret brotherhood with a promise of immortality hereafter.

A number of Latter-day Saints have pointed out the similarities between these ancient rites and Mormon rituals and doctrines, usually suggesting that such ancient ceremonies are vestiges, reshaped and distorted by time and cultural change, of an original ceremony first explained to Adam and Eve (Brown and Griggs 1974, 68–73 and 1975, 6–11; Matthews 1974, 50–51; Nibley 1965, 1968–70, 1973, 1975, 1975–77, and 1979).

Although this long list of resemblances is most provocative, the details of the actual rites in which the themes are embedded are unsettling to those who wish to ascribe meanings significant to Mormons. For the most part, they are based on cosmological beliefs which had no anticipation of a Christian eschatology, much less a resurrection of the dead as now believed in by Latter-day Saints. As such, these beliefs clearly seem to be at odds with the theological understandings of the temple.[5] Even though we are accustomed to think of pagan "corruptions" of the truth, it would probably not be fruitful to try and reconstruct an ancient temple ceremony from these themes. Furthermore, at this date, it does not appear that Joseph had any working knowledge of mystery cultures and apocalyptic/mystery cults from which to have drawn temple ideas. In short, ancient sources probably could not be considered a direct influence on Joseph except as they were revealed to him from a time predating corruptions or except as they appear in the ancient scriptures that he brought forth. The influence of the creation accounts in the books of Moses and Abraham on

[5] I am indebted to Edward H. Ashment for this insight. See also Norman 1987.

the temple narrative are clear; but the only other scriptural reference directly linking ancient writings with the Mormon temple ceremony is found in Explanatory Note 8 to Facsimile 2 in the book of Abraham.

This facsimile shows a hypocephalus, an object placed by ancient Egyptians under the head of the deceased, the meaning of which is closely linked with Chapter 162 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead where instructions for its construction and use are given. Joseph Smith's explanation for this portion of Facsimile 2 was: "Contains writings that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God." This illustration was engraved by Reuben Hedlock under Joseph Smith's direction for inclusion with the book of Abraham's publication in February–March 1842. (This period just preceded Joseph's initiation into Freemasonry and the subsequent introduction of the Nauvoo endowment ceremony.) A literal translation of this section of the hypocephalus is: "O God of the Sleeping Ones from the time of the Creation. O Mighty God, Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Netherworld and his Great Waters, grant that the soul of the Osiris Sheshonk, may live" (Rhodes 1977, 265). It is difficult to see how this literal translation relates to the ceremony introduced by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo.

Although there is much to be said about ancient parallels, it seems more reasonable to explore a source much closer to Joseph Smith: Freemasonry.

The complex interplay of Masonic tradition on Mormon temple rites probably had its roots during the mid-1820s, given that Joseph Smith's brother Hyrum had joined the fraternity between 1825 and 1827.[6] By this time, Masonry's appeal, especially to young men in the northeastern United States, was at an all time high (Lipson 1977, 4, 143–44). One reason for this acceptance stemmed from Masonry's role as a surrogate religion for many initiates; teaching morality (separate from an institutional church) was its most important ideal, a tack which set well with those disenchanted with traditional churches. Furthermore, in the context of the influence of the Enlightenment during this period and the limited access of most to the truly educated, Masons' purported link between science and their mysteries made the secret ceremonies "powerfully attractive" (Lipson 1977, 117–21, 248–49). The lodge provided benefits of fraternal conviviality, Masonic charity, and associations with groups of people holding similar values when traveling. For many, Freemasonry also provided a form of recreation for its members (Lipson 1977, 9, 75; McWilliams 1973).

Freemasonry, which claims to have been created at the time of the construction of Solomon's temple by its master mason, Hiram Abiff, actually seems to have been a development of the craft guilds during the construction of the great European cathedrals during the tenth to seventeenth centuries. After the Middle Ages, lodges in Scotland and Great Britain began to accept honorary members and worked out rudimentary ceremonies, established mainly to dis-

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[6] The definitive examination of Mormonism and Freemasonry has yet to be written. For an introduction to this subject, see Durham 1974; Godfrey 1971; Goodwin 1938 and 1927; Hogan 1978 and 1980; Ivins 1934; McGavin 1956; and Roberts 1979.

tinguish members of trade organizations. In 1717, four fraternal lodges, perhaps actual masons' lodges, united as the Grand Lodge of England, considered to be the commencement of organized Freemasonry (also known as "speculative Masonry"). The order spread quickly to other countries and included such adherents as Mozart, Voltaire, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin. Some historians believe that a group of Masons staged the Boston Tea Party.

Some Latter-day Saints may feel that Masonry constitutes a biblical-times source of uncorrupted knowledge from which the temple ceremony could be drawn. Historians of Freemasonry, however, generally agree that the trigradal system of entered apprentice, fellow craft, and master Mason, as practiced in Nauvoo, cannot reliably be traced further back than the eighteenth century. According to Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, two twentieth-century historians,[7] it is "highly probable" that the system of Masonry practiced at the organization of the Grand Lodge in London "did not consist of three distinct degrees" and warn, "It would probably not be safe to fix a date earlier than 1723 or 1725 for the origin" of the trigradal system. "Accepted Masonry underwent gradual changes throughout a period of years stretching from well before 1717 to well after that date. . . . The earliest speculative phase of Freemasonry may be regarded as beginning about 1730. . . . Though some symbolism had doubtless crept into Masonry by that date, it would not appear to have reached its full development for another forty or fifty years" (1949, 274, 275, 321, 322).

After 1832, the Masons concentrated on social and fraternal activities and, by reaching beyond the limitations of any religious, political, or economic creed, have grown to more than 3.25 million in the United States alone by the early 1980s.

The fundamental ceremonies of modern York Rite and Scottish Rite Masonry occur on these three distinct levels: (1) entered apprentice, (2) fellow craft, and (3) master Mason. Each level contains instruction in morals and Masonic symbolism, coupled with secret signs, passwords, handshakes, and "penalties" for revealing them to a non-Mason. Advanced degrees exist for both orders; nevertheless, the three initial degrees constitute the principal ceremonies experienced by active Masons.

The exact involvement of Hyrum Smith on these levels is not known. Presumably, it was a positive experience for him and he related it as such to his brother. Any early enthusiasm, however, may have been temporarily checked by widespread anti-Mason feelings which pervaded upstate New York during

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[7] There is little question that Knoop and Jones have produced the most balanced scholarly historical studies of Freemasonry to date. Their publications by the Quatuor Coronati Lodge (the English Masonic research lodge) identify two schools of Masonic history dating from the 1870s: "verified" or institutional history, and "mythical" or philosophical speculations in Masonic symbols throughout its history. Their most valuable works include collections of early Masonic catechisms (1943) and pamphlets (1978), as well as an institutional history through the early eighteenth century (1940, 1949). Other important careful histories include Gould 1904, Haywood and Craig 1927, Heckethorn 1965, Horne 1972, MacKenzie 1967, and A. E. Waite 1923.

the late 1820s. This wave of public sentiment was precipitated by the announced publication of William Morgan's exposé on Masonic ceremonies and by his related mysterious disappearance and presumed murder in September 1826. A public outcry against Masons as a group who put themselves above the law followed. For a few years, American Masonic lodges were, for all practical purposes, inactive. Many lodges closed; Masons' renouncements of affiliation were widespread. A number of newspapers dedicated to exposing Masonry were established in New York and other states. The anti-Masonic movement led to the creation of an independent political party where its energies were ultimately diffused; it was disbanded in 1832 (McCarthy 1902; Vaughn 1983).

Some scholars (Brodie 1973, 65–66; Goodwin 1925, 9 and 1927, 3–29; O'Dea 1957, 23, 35; Ostler 1987, 73–76; Prince 1917) feel that such anti-Masonry may be seen in the Book of Mormon and interpret some passages (e.g. Alma 37:21–32; Hel. 6:21–22; Eth. 8:18–26) as apparently anti-Masonic. These passages condemn secret combinations, secret signs, and secret words in a manner which may be interpreted as reminiscent of anti-Masonic rhetoric prevalent during this period.

A few references from contemporary newspapers seem to confirm this idea. On 15 March 1831, the *Geauga Gazette* of Painesville, Ohio, stated that "the Mormon Bible is Anti-masonick," and that "every one of its followers . . . are anti-masons." Moreover, it quoted Martin Harris as saying the Book of Mormon was an "Anti-masonick Bible." A similar story appeared in *The Ohio Star* in Ravenna, Ohio, on 24 March 1831. Another Painesville paper, *The Telegraph*, ran an article on 22 March 1831 which challenged the 15 March story that the Book of Mormon was printed by a "Masonic press" in Palmyra, New York, and claimed that there is "a very striking resemblance between masonry and mormonism. Both systems pretend to have a very ancient origin, and to possess some wonderful secrets which the world cannot have without submitting to the prescribed ceremonies" (see also 24 March 1831). Interestingly, Mormon converts in northeastern Ohio were, for a time, identified by the press as possessing the same type of fanaticism shown by that region's anti-Masons (*The Wayne Sentinel* [Palmyra, N.Y.], 23 August 1831; *The Churchman* [N.Y.], 4 February 1832).[8] Notably, the first anti-Mormon book, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Howe 1834, 81, 89) also referred to ancient Nephites "as being Anti-masons." Despite the Book of Mormon passages and the cited press coverage, however, no further evidence exists to convincingly prove that most early converts paid serious attention to anti-Masonry (Bushman 1984, 131; Underwood 1985, 81–82).

Furthermore, and perhaps more decisively, Freemasonry had little or no discernible influence on the rites practiced in the Kirtland Temple, 1835–36. Reed C. Durham, Jr. has noted, however, that some Masonic influence can be seen in the Kirtland Temple's architectural patterns (1974). One *History of*

[8] These newspaper citations were taken from typescripts prepared by Dale Morgan, photocopies in my possession.

the Church quote records Joseph Smith condemning, in 1835, the "abominations" of some Protestants, praying "that it [i.e., his "well fitted" comments] may be like a nail in a sure place, driven by the master of assemblies" (2:347; Jessee 1984, 120). Joseph's obvious familiarity with and positive use of Masonic imagery indicated by this statement is almost paradoxical in light of his anti-secret society rhetoric during the Missouri period (HC 3:178–82, 303). Aside from this 1835 quotation, I am not familiar with any other documents which provide clear insights into Joseph Smith's thoughts on Masonry before Nauvoo.

A full examination of the complex history of the Church's transition to Nauvoo and its subsequent embrace of Freemasonry is beyond the scope of this essay. While Joseph Smith's involvement with Masonry is well documented, the events leading him to consider joining the fraternity and endorsing its practice in Nauvoo are not. His ever-present fear of enemies may have led him to believe that affiliation with an oath-bound fraternity dedicated to the teaching of morality would give some form of protection to Church members. Perhaps he saw an additional level of protection from internal enemies resulting from the secrecy demanded of all initiates, especially if the secrecy of the Masonic oaths reinforced the secrecy of the endowment oaths in the minds of those familiar with both.[9] It is also possible that amid the translation and publication activities of the book of Abraham in spring 1842, Joseph's preoccupation with ancient mysteries may have triggered an interest in tapping Masonic mysteries.

Furthermore, the influence of personal friends cannot be ignored. In 1838, for example, Joseph Smith stayed briefly in Far West, Missouri, with George and Lucinda Harris (HC 3:9), eventually becoming close friends with Lucinda (Newell and Avery 1984, 70). Lucinda had first been married to William Morgan in New York when he allegedly was abducted for threatening to publish Masonic secrets. She reportedly became one of Joseph Smith's first plural wives (Brodie 1973, 459–60). Other prominent Mormons — all of whom were Freemasons prior to joining the Church — included Deputy Grand Master of Illinois James Adams, Heber C. Kimball[10] (S. B. Kimball 1981, 12), Newel K. Whitney, George Miller, John C. Bennett, John Smith, and Brigham Young (Godfrey 1971, 81–82; Arrington 1985, 99; Tyler 1947, 8).

Of these associates, perhaps the most influential in accelerating Joseph Smith's interest and acceptance of Freemasonry was John C. Bennett (Flanders 1965, 247). Bennett has typically been characterized by Mormon apologists as an opportunistic scoundrel whose brief (eighteen-month) sojourn with the Saints at Nauvoo was, at best, unfortunate and embarrassing. Actually, how-

[9] Compare Heber C. Kimball's observation, 2 August 1857: "You have received your endowments. What is it for? To learn you to hold your tongues . . ." (JD 5:133) with (especially regarding the discussion which follows on the endowment's relationship to Freemasonry) Brigham Young's comment in 1860: "The mane part of Masonry is to keep a secret" (Woodruff 5:418). A classic discussion on the sociology of secrecy and secret societies is by Georg Simmel in Wolff 1950, 330–76.

[10] Kimball's daughter, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, later (1882) reminisced: "I remember once when but a young girl, of getting a glimpse of the outside of the Morgan's book, exposing Masonry, but which my father always kept locked up."

ever, Bennett was a powerful confidante to Joseph Smith and a key figure in Nauvoo. His accomplishments included: "Assistant President" of the Church, first mayor of Nauvoo, major general in Nauvoo Legion, and secretary of Nauvoo Masonic Lodge; he was also instrumental in gaining Illinois legislature's approval of the Nauvoo Charter, Nauvoo Legion, and the University of Nauvoo (Van Wagoner and Walker 1982, 10–14). Although his own status as a Mason in good standing prior to Nauvoo has been called into question (Hogan 1983), Bennett may have been the person who initially advised Joseph Smith to adopt Freemasonry as a means to end persecutions against the Church ("Joseph Smith and the Presidency," *The Saints' Herald* 68 [19 July 1921]: 675). Ebenezer Robinson, who was editor of the Church's paper, *Times and Seasons*, until February 1842, reminisced: "Heretofore the church had strenuously opposed secret societies such as Freemasons . . . not considering the 'Order of Enoch' and 'Danites' of that class; but after Dr. Bennett came into the Church a great change of sentiment seemed to take place" (*The Return* 2 [June 1890]: 287, cited in Flanders 1965, 249).

Joseph Smith's official experience in Freemasonry began five months before the first Nauvoo endowment when he petitioned for membership in the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge on 30 December 1841. The favorable results of the lodge's investigation of his petition were reported on 3 February 1842 (Hogan 1971, 8, 10). Joseph was formally initiated as an entered apprentice Mason on 15 March 1842 and received the fellow craft and master degrees the next day. Since the customary waiting period before receiving a new degree is thirty days, Joseph's elevation to the "sublime degree" (master Mason) performed without any prior participation in Freemasonry was highly unusual.[11] During the organization of the Female Relief Society one day later in the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge room, his founding address was filled with Masonic allusions: "Let this Presidency serve as a *constitution*" (RS, 17 March 1842; italics added); Joseph "proposed that the Society go into a close *examination* of every *candidate* . . . . that the Society should grow up by *degrees* . . . . he was going to make of this Society a *kingdom of priests* as in *Enoch's day*" (30 March 1842; italics added).[12] Kent L. Walgren concluded from reading other early Female Relief Society minutes that Joseph's aim in establishing the Society was to "institutionalize secrecy" (1982, 131). He cites an entry from the minutes where Emma Smith, probably during the organizational period, read an epistle signed by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and four others stating that "there may be some among you who are not sufficiently skill'd in Masonry to keep a secret. . . . Let this Epistle be had as a private matter in your Society, and we

[11] Joseph's accelerated advancement came at the hand of Abraham Jonas, Grandmaster of the Illinois Lodge. Given that Jonas was running for political office, it is possible that he thought his action would secure him the Mormon vote.

[12] Freemasons are enjoined to study their Book of Constitutions which contain fundamental Masonic principles; every man considering becoming a Mason is called a "candidate" and must pass a character examination before being approved for his initiation; new initiates progress in Masonry through a system of ceremonial degrees; and several officers in a lodge have different titles employing the word "Priest" (Cross 1824, 7, 15–19, 63, 65, 157; Morgan 1827, 16–18).

shall learn whether you are good Masons" (recorded after minutes for 28 Sept. 1842, in Walgren 1982, 132, and n49).

Over the next several weeks, Joseph participated in other lodge meetings, witnessing the entered apprentice degree five times, the fellow craft degree three times, and the master Mason degree five times — all prior to his own introduction of the endowment (Hogan 1971, 12–18). An important sermon on 1 May 1842 contained many references carrying Masonic overtones:

> The *keys* are certain *signs* and *words* . . . which cannot be revealed . . . till the Temple is completed — The rich can only get them in the Temple . . . . There are *signs* in heaven, earth, and hell, the Elders must *know them all* to be endowed with power.... The devil *knows many signs* but does not know the *sign of the Son of Man*, or Jesus. No one can truly say he knows God until he has handled something, and this can only be in the Holy of Holies (Ehat and Cook 1980, 119; D&C 129:4–9).[13]

Forty-nine days after his Masonic initiation, on 4 and 5 May as described, Joseph introduced the endowment ceremony to his trusted circle of friends in the upper story of his red brick store (HC 4:550–53, 570, 589, 594, 608; 5:1–2, 446; and 6:287).

The clearest evidence of Masonic influence on the Mormon temple ceremony would be a passage-by-passage comparison of the texts. However, both ceremonies are open only to members in good standing who have made personal covenants not to divulge the proceedings. Thus, published accounts of either ceremony come from disaffected members. Although such disaffection does not necessarily make the accounts unreliable, quoting sources which reveal exact ceremonial language presents an ethical dilemma to those who have themselves promised not to reveal that wording. What use could or should be made of documents from individuals who have chosen to ignore those covenants? For those who have personal reasons to share those scruples related to promises of secrecy, public comparisons and contrasts become problematic. Let me simply summarize what such a comparison might suggest and indicate additional sources of investigation for the interested reader.

Three elements of the Nauvoo temple endowment and its contemporary Masonic ritual resemble each other to a very marked degree and are sometimes identical. These are the tokens, signs, and penalties. Although there seem to be sufficient reasons for not quoting the parallel portions of the two ceremonies here, the two accounts which may be most useful for the purposes of comparison are those of Catherine Lewis and William Morgan. William Morgan's account is the 1827 book of the York Rite's Masonic ritual (the same rite introduced in Nauvoo — see esp. pp. 23–24, 53–54, 76–77, 84–85) which led to his disappearance and presumed murder. Catherine Lewis joined the Church in 1841 in Boston. After Joseph Smith's death in 1844, she moved to Nauvoo and was among those who received their endowment in the new temple. Lewis received the ordinance at the urging of Heber C. Kimball and

[13] Joseph Smith's stress on acquiring esoteric knowledge by means of special signs and words also is seen in the Freemasonic charge to master their own system of signs and key words. Before passing each degree, every candidate is thoroughly tested by presenting them to the presiding lodge officer (Cross 1824, 97; Morgan 1827, 18–27, 49–61, 70–89).

one of his wives. Apparently repulsed by his subsequent proposal of plural marriage, she left Nauvoo and published a book in 1848 which includes a description of the Nauvoo temple ceremony (Lewis 1848, 9–10; see also, *Warsaw Signal*, 15 April 1846, p. 2; Van Dusen 1847, 6, 9).

Other similarities with Masonic rites may include the prayer circle which required Masonic initiates to assemble around an altar, place their left arms over the person next to them, join hands, repeat the words of the Most Excellent Master, and give all the signs from initial ceremonial degrees (Bernard 1829, 116–17; Richardson 1860, 61, 66). Michael Quinn has pointed out that nineteenth-century American Protestant revivals also had prayer circles in which, "when the invitation was given, there was a general rush, the large 'prayer ring' was filled, and for at least two hours prayer ardent went up to God" (Rev. James Erwin, *Reminiscences of Early Circuit Life* [1884], p. 68, in Quinn 1978, 81–82). Two additional Masonic elements that may have temple echoes are that the initiates received a "new name" and donned a white apron as part of the rite. The original apron used in the Mormon endowment had a white background with green fig leaves sewn to it; this apron now is constructed of green fabric. Also, an explanatory lecture always follows the conferral of each Masonic degree ceremony, a practice not unlike the temple endowment's lecture at the veil.

This pattern of resemblances provides strong indications that Joseph Smith drew on the Masonic rites in shaping the temple endowment, and specifically borrowed the tokens, signs, and penalties. The creation and fall narrative, the content of the major covenants, and the washing and anointings have no parallel in Masonry. Thus, the temple ceremony cannot be explained as wholesale borrowing from Masonry; neither can it be explained as completely unrelated to Masonry.

An interesting question is the response of Joseph's associates to the temple ceremony, since many were also familiar with Masonry. How did they understand the resemblances? Although many modern Latter-day Saints are completely unfamiliar with Masonry, this was not the case in Nauvoo. As noted earlier, a significant number of Joseph's closest associates were long-time Masons, deeply involved with the establishment of the Nauvoo Lodge, and active workers in instituting its York Rites during the spring of 1842. One of the few contemporary commentaries comes from Heber C. Kimball who wrote in June 1842: "Thare is a similarity of preast Hood in Masonry. Br. Joseph Ses Masonry was taken from preasthood but has become degenerated. But menny things are perfect" (H. C. Kimball to Pratt 1842; S. B. Kimball 1975, 456–59). Later, as recorded in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young, Kimball said, "We have the true Masonry. The Masonry of today is received from the apostasy which took place in the days of Solomon, and David. They have now and then a thing that is correct, but we have the real thing" (13 Nov. 1858, 1085). Joseph Smith's close friend, Joseph Fielding, wrote in his journal in 1844: "Many have joined the Masonic Institution this seems to have been a Stepping Stone or Preparation for something else, the true Origin of Masonry" (in Ehat 1979, 145). Later, according to one of his wives,

Brigham Young "delight[ed] to speak of it [the endowment] as 'Celestial Masonry' " (Young 1876, 371).

These quotations suggest that Joseph Smith's contemporaries saw the temple ceremony as a purer form of ancient Israel's Masonic rites — something formerly lost but restored to its original pristine condition. Apostle Melvin J. Ballard (CR April 1913, 126; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Dec. 1919 in Goodwin 1938, 49–50) and E. Cecil McGavin (1956, 192) were among many Mormons who believed that Masonry's trigradal degree system of apprentice, fellow craft, and master Mason dates back to Solomon's Temple or even to the time of Adam. Nevertheless, as we have already seen, research by twentieth-century historians of Freemasonry locates the origins of trigradal Masonry much closer in time. In short, Masonry does not seem able to supply an ancient source for the endowment.

To summarize the Mormon participation in Freemasonry during the Nauvoo period, it is useful to note that in 1840, only 147 men in Illinois and 2,072 in the United States were Masons (Godfrey 1971, 83). By the time of the exodus to Utah, approximately 1,366 Mormon males in Nauvoo had been initiated into the Masonic order (Durham 1974). While it is uncertain exactly why Freemasonry was initially embraced, its activities undoubtedly provided fraternal benefits experienced by Masons in other parts of the country. Its ceremonies clearly provided part of the specific wording for the Nauvoo temple endowment, although most nineteenth-century Masonic rituals have no resemblance to those temple ceremonies. And it is significant that, following the conferral of endowment rites on most Nauvoo adults in the temple and their subsequent relocation to Utah, Masonry never regained the prominence among Mormons it once received in Nauvoo.

III

EXPANSION IN THE NAUVOO PERIOD

Two additional ceremonies were introduced about a year following the initial conferral of the endowment and later became associated with the sequence of temple ceremonies: celestial marriage for time and eternity, and the second anointing. "Celestial marriage" was applied to and equated with plural marriage in nineteenth-century Utah.[14] However, since Joseph Smith apparently never taught plural marriage in the Quorum of the Anointed (where endowments were given during his life), it seems safe to assume that no plural wives were sealed in the endowment group before his death (Ehat 1982, 59–62). The practice of performing celestial marriages in the temple began in the Nauvoo Temple. Marriages for time and eternity, or "temple marriages," continue this day to be performed following the endowment of the individuals involved.

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[14] After the Woodruff Manifesto in 1890, the association of celestial marriage with polygyny was discouraged; modern Mormons now perceive celestial marriage and plural marriage as two separate concepts.

The second anointing was a special ceremony consisting of two parts. First, an officiator anointed the heads of a husband and wife with oil, then conferred upon them the "fulness of the priesthood." The couple thereby received the confirmation of a promise given earlier in the endowment (and indirectly in the celestial marriage ceremony) of being anointed to become a priest and king to God, or a priestess and queen to the husband. The second part was a private ceremony between the couple in which the wife washed the feet of the husband so that she would have claim upon him in the resurrection of the dead (Buerger 1983, 26–27).

Although the *History of the Church* is rather general in referring to the "ancient order of things" which Joseph Smith established, it apparently included a complex of ritualistic signs, tokens, and penalties, since Brigham Young, in reminiscence, identified them as part of that initial ceremony. According to the diary account of L. John Nuttall, Brigham Young's secretary, Young recalled the specifics of receiving his endowment from Joseph:

> Prest Young was filled with the spirit of God & revelation & said when we got our washings and anointings under the hands of the Prophet Joseph at Nauvoo we had only one room to work in with the exception of a little side room or office were [sic] we were washed and anointed had our garments placed upon us and received our New Name. and after he had performed these ceremonies. he gave the Key Words signs, togkens [sic] and penalties. then after we went into the large room over the store in Nauvoo. Joseph divided up the room the best that he could hung up the veil, marked it gave us our instructions as we passed along from one department to another giving us signs. tokens. penalties with the Key words pertaining to those signs and after we had got through. Bro Joseph turned to me (Prest B. Young) and said Bro Brigham this is not arranged right but we have done the best we could under the circumstances in which we are placed, and I . . . wish you to take this matter in hand and organize and systematize all these ceremonies with the signs. tokens penalties and Key words I did so and each time I got something more so that when we went through the Temple at Nauvoo I understood and Knew how to place them there. we had our ceremonies pretty correct (7 Feb. 1877).

Young's last comment suggests that the Nauvoo Temple endowment's structure and order of material expanded into a more elaborate and detailed ceremony as it moved from the constricted quarters over Joseph Smith's store to the larger stage of the temple. However, no text of the 1842 ritual is available. The first description in any detail of the ceremony as carried out in the Nauvoo Temple occurs in 1845 and seems to suggest that the dramatic elements of the ceremony were added at that time. On 10 December 1845 when endowments were first administered in the temple, Heber C. Kimball's diary (which served as an official record of temple proceedings) also includes the roles of four personages: Elohim, Jehovah, Michael, and the Serpent (Satan). Two days later, the New Testament characters of Peter, James, and John were added and the narrative duties were assigned such that Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael created the world and planted the Garden of Eden. Eve was created and given to Adam. After the Fall, Peter, assisted by James and John, would conduct Adam and Eve to the veil where they would learn how to be readmitted into the Father's presence.

Kimball's diary reveals a wide difference in the amount of time a Nauvoo Temple endowment ceremony lasted. "Companies" or groups of participants typically averaged about a dozen members, with ceremonies lasting an hour to an hour and a half. Other recorded durations for such groups lasted up to four hours. One company of thirty-five had a ceremony of five hours and ten minutes. Kimball's diary does not comment on the reasons for this wide variation, but it is probably related to the size of the company, the experience of those officiating, the interjection of explanatory lectures, and the use of a single veil station.

As we reconstruct these 1845–46 sessions, it appears that initiates normally participated in a washing and anointing ceremony, had a brief recess, then participated in the main endowment. Sessions began with the ringing of a bell. A "lecture at the veil" was sometimes given (usually by Brigham Young or Heber C. Kimball) at the end of the endowment; but on at least two occasions, the lecture seems to have been postponed and delivered a few days later (Kimball, Journal, 7, 10–14 Dec. 1845, 7 Jan. 1846).

The earliest complete published account[15] of the Nauvoo Temple endowment ceremony indicates that initiatory washings may have followed a literal Old Testament model of actual bathing, for large tubs of water are specified in the separate men's and women's rooms. The anointing was performed by liberally pouring consecrated oil from a horn over the head and allowing it to run over the whole body. During this ritual, one participant said he was ordained to be a "King in time and eternity, and my wife to be Queen" (Van Dusen 1847, 4); Catherine Lewis (1848, 8) also noted that she was ordained "to be a Queen." [16]

Originally, everyone participating in the endowment took the roles of Adam and Eve collectively (Van Dusen 1847). Using temple workers to represent Adam, Eve, and the Christian minister began in the 1850s in Endowment House administrations in Utah. But in Nauvoo, several actors depicted ministers from different Christian churches. The first published indication of the ministers occurs in 1857 (Cook, 37–42). The first published account of a single minister appears in 1905 ("Mormon" 1905).

Early endowment administrations were primarily restricted to a man and his wife or wives (Ehat 1982, 97–98). A few men were endowed without their spouse's participation. Initially all participants were admitted through the veil by the same officiator. The first published account of married men conducting their wives through the veil occurs in 1857 (Hyde, 99).

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[15] In addition to specific citations in the text, see Buerger 1987, a collection of over one hundred "exposés" of the endowment ceremony by disaffected Mormons (copies in my possession). While the integrity of some accounts clearly is questionable, many demonstrate consistency in reciting dialogues and ritualistic details. Given the lack of official accounts, these published recitals are essential components in attempting to historically trace the ceremony's development.

[16] It is likely that both of these accounts omitted an additional detail: of a woman being ordained to be a queen *to her husband*, as women now are ordained in their initiatory washing and anointing ceremony. When Vilate Kimball received her second anointing in the Nauvoo Temple on 8 January 1846, she was anointed "a Queen & Priestess unto her Husband" (Book of Anointings, 4).

According to accounts published by disaffected Latter-day Saints between 1846 and 1851, these Nauvoo years also saw literal representations of several parts of the ceremony that were later omitted. All participants ate raisins (depicting eating the "forbidden fruit" that precipitated the "fall" in the Garden of Eden) and crouched behind living shrubbery (to hide from the Father and Son as they revisited the garden). An actor wielding a sword depicted guarding the Tree of Life. After they expelled Satan, the temple worker portraying Satan would crawl out of the room on his belly. All participants donned crowns after passing through the veil to symbolize their entrance into the celestial kingdom (*Warsaw Signal* 18 Feb. 1846 and 15 April 1846; Van Dusen 1847; Lewis 1848; Thomas 1849; White 1851). None of these accounts contain the detail of Utah publications. These later books describe a veil worn by women (Cook 1857, 38; Green 1858, 47) used to cover their faces while taking ceremonial oaths (Stenhouse 1890, 365; Young 1876, 368).

Almost 100 persons are known to have received the endowment prior to the Nauvoo Temple's dedication, approximately half of whom also received the second anointing (Ehat 1982, 97–98). Available records indicate that about 5,200 members received the endowment in the Nauvoo Temple, of whom approximately 600 persons had received the second anointing (Buerger 1983, 25 n48; Book of Anointings). Most of those receiving pre-Nauvoo Temple endowments and second anointings received these ordinances again after the temple was dedicated and opened for operation (Ehat 1982, 97–98). These figures alone indicate the importance of the temple to the Saints before the exodus west.

IV

Nineteenth-Century Utah Period: 1847–99

Following the exodus of Mormons from Nauvoo in 1846, endowment administrations entered a period of dormancy. Aside from a few prayer circles held on the open prairie during the trek west (Watson 1971, 556; Clayton 1921, 202–3; Quinn 1978, 79–105) and one known incident of an endowment administration performed on Ensign Peak in the Salt Lake Valley (CHC 3:386–87), Mormons apparently did very little temple work immediately following their resettlement.

On 7 July 1852, the endowment ordinances were recommenced in the Old Council House, the first permanent public building erected in Salt Lake City, which also housed the territorial legislature and the territorial public library. On 5 May 1855, a new building called the Endowment House was constructed in the northwest corner of Temple Square and dedicated to the sole use of administering endowments. A total of 54,170 endowments and 694 second anointings for the living were conducted there until 16 October 1884, when Church leaders, probably deciding to refocus attention and funds upon completion of the Salt Lake Temple where endowments would be more appropriately performed, ordered it razed. No endowments or second anointings for the dead were performed in the Endowment House (Jaussi and Chaston 1968,

366–67, cited in Tingen 1974, 14–15, 19–21; Cowan 1971, 29; Buerger 1983, 28–29).

Another interesting reference from the early Utah period is that Brigham Young, perhaps in an effort to renew interest in temple work, on 26 November 1857, approved a motion to publish "the Endowments or an outline of it telling the time when the Twelve Received their 2d Anointing" (Woodruff 5:124). This document apparently never appeared in print.

The Church teaches that endowments for the living and by proxy for the dead are a theological prerequisite for entering the highest degree of celestial kingdom. According to Brigham Young, the endowment consisted of "receiv[ing] all those ordinances . . . which are necessary . . . to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood" (JD 2:31–32; see also 2:315; 5:133; 6:63, 154–55; 8:339; 9:25–26, 91; 10:172; 11:27; 18:132; 19:250).

The concept of endowments for the dead was first introduced by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo (William Clayton Report, 8 April 1844, and Thomas Bullock Report, 8 April 1844, cited in Ehat and Cook 1980, 362–65; Woodruff 2:388–89). It received increased public discussion in Utah by Brigham Young (JD 16:185–89). According to St. George Temple president David H. Cannon, the first recorded endowments for the dead in the history of the Church were performed 11 January 1877, eleven days after that temple's dedication (Cannon to George F. Richards, 18 July 1922, in CRF). Young taught that it was necessary to restrict the conferral of these ceremonies to Utah temples, believing that to do otherwise would "destroy the object of the gathering" (Woodruff 6:307–8).[17] At that time, the only LDS temples were in Utah. The Nauvoo Temple had burned and Young had announced in 1858 that the Kirtland Temple had been "disowned by the Father and the Son" (JD 2:32).

Apparently, no written version of the ceremony had ever been made. Following the dedication of the lower portion of the St. George Temple on 1 January 1877, Brigham Young decided it was necessary to commit the endowment ceremony to written form. On 14 January 1877 he "requested Brigham jr & W Woodruff to write out the Ceremony of the Endowments from Beginning to End" (Woodruff 7:322), assisted by John D. T. McAllister and L. John Nuttall. Daily drafts were submitted to Young's review and approval. The project took approximately two months to complete. On 21 March 1877, Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal: "President Young has been laboring all winter to get up a perfect form of Endowments as far as possible. They having been perfected I read them to the Company today" (7:322–23, 325–27, 337, 340–41; entries Jan.–March 1877).

The St. George Temple endowment included a revised thirty-minute "lecture at the veil" which summarized important theological concepts taught in

[17] During this same meeting on 26 December 1866, Young outlined accepted procedures for administering second anointings, then said, "when Persons Came to get their Endowments [they] Should be Clean & pure. A man should not touch a woman for 10 days before getting their Endowments."

the endowment and also contained references to the Adam-God doctrine. For example, Brigham Young taught in this lecture that Adam "had begotten all the spirit[s] that was to come to this earth, and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world. . . . [They] consequently came to this earth and commenced the great work of forming tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in." [18] This teaching may have been included in the veil lecture as late as the turn of the century. It is uncertain whether the St. George Temple veil ceremony's Adam-God teaching was included in all temples.[19]

This probably was not the first time Adam-God had been mentioned in the endowment ceremony. Although official temple scripts do not exist prior to 1877, several unfriendly published accounts of the Endowment House ceremony contain cast listings and dialogues of different characters during the creation scene for Elohim, Jehovah, Jesus, and Michael (Hyde 1857, 92–93; Remy and Brenchley 1861, 2:67–68; Waite 1866, 246–49, 252; Beadle 1870, 486, 489–91; Young 1876, 357). Their recounting of the concomitant presence of Jehovah and Jesus provides further evidence of the use of the Adam-God doctrine in the temple ceremony (Kirkland 1984). Given that the origin of the Adam-God doctrine can most reliably be traced to Brigham Young in Utah, it seems highly unlikely that similar ideas were advanced in the Nauvoo Temple (Buerger 1982, 25–28).

Although this material was clearly an innovation, official documentation on the development of the endowment during the Utah period is sparse. John Hyde (a disaffected Mormon) wrote in 1857 that "the whole affair is being constantly amended and corrected, and [Heber C.] Kimball often says, 'We will get it perfect by-and-bye' " (1857, 100). One of the few known discussions on restructuring the endowment ceremony in the late 1800s came during a meeting of the reconvened School of the Prophets on 2 August 1883 in Salt Lake City. Church president John Taylor expressed serious misgivings about giving newly initiated people an endowment consisting of both the lower (Aaronic Priesthood) and higher (Melchizedek Priesthood) ceremonies, feeling that members should first receive the Aaronic portion of the endowment and prove their faithfulness prior to receiving the Melchizedek portion. Concurring associates included Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Franklin D. Richards (School 1883, 11–26; Weibye 9 July 1877, p. 60; David H. Cannon to George F. Richards, 18 July 1922, in CRF). Despite such high-level consensus, this position, previously advocated in public by Brigham Young

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[18] Nuttall Diary, 7 Feb. 1877; see also, Nuttall "Memoranda," 3 June 1892; Nuttall Diary, entries for 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 22, 25, 27 Jan., 1, 3, 10, 12, 13, 19, 21, 24, 27 Feb., 16, 17, 18, 20, 22 March, and 3 April 1877; St. George Historical Record minutes, 8 Nov., 13 Dec. 1890, 15, 22 May 1891, 11 June 1892; Walker, 11 June 1892, in 2:740–41; David H. Cannon to Joseph F. Smith and Counselors, 21 Oct. 1916, in CRF; Collier 1981, 113–16, 165–76; Buerger 1982; Kirkland 1984.

[19] Buerger 1982, 34, 53, n76; St. George Temple Minutes: K9368R, 5 March 1901, p. 129, and 19 Dec. 1902, p. 261; K9369, 15 Oct. 1906, p. 519; K9369R, 14 Dec. 1911, p. 93, in CRF.

on 11 June 1864 (JD 10:309), and later by George Q. Cannon on 14 January 1894 (in Newquist 1:227–28) was apparently never implemented.

In sum, the endowment ceremony seems to have undergone only minimal structural change from its Nauvoo introduction through the end of the nineteenth century (B. Smith 1903). However, an important change in emphasis occurred, resulting from a revelation announced by Wilford Woodruff in the April 1894 general conference (*Deseret Weekly* 48 [1894]: 541–44). Woodruff's action stopped the practice of sealing people to General Authorities and other Church members outside their family lineage and instead directed that they be sealed to their own parents. This change successfully accommodated a growing discomfort among Latter-day Saints with the former practice; consequently, the number of living and dead sealings to parents surged in the following year (Irving 1974, 313). In November 1894, the Church established the Genealogical Society of Utah and ultimately awakened a heightened interest in systematic work for dead lineal ancestors.

Shortly after the Salt Lake Temple's dedication, on 17 October 1893, President Woodruff met with the Council of the Twelve and the Church's four temple presidents, spending "three hours in harmanizing the Different M[odes?] of Ceremonies in giving Endowments" (Woodruff 9:267). This effort may have been a precursor of an extensive review which began a decade later.

A numerical recapitulation of endowments performed during this period shows a total of 38,317 for the living, and 486,198 for the dead in the St. George, Logan, Manti, and Salt Lake temples between 1877 and 1898. Moreover, 5,213 second anointings for the living, and 3,411 for the dead were performed during the same period (Table 1).

V

THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD: 1900–30

One of the most painful but also most consequential events in modern LDS Church history for the endowment was a series of hearings by a United States Senate subcommittee, 1904–06, to determine whether elected Utah senator and apostle Reed Smoot should be allowed to serve. Among many issues the committee heard testimony on were the "secret oaths" of the temple endowment ceremony. The subcommittee's concern was whether the Mormon covenant of obedience would conflict with a senator's oath of loyalty to the Constitution. In the course of the Smoot hearings, the "oath of vengeance" also attracted the subcommittee's sustained interest.

One witness, disaffected Mormon and recently resigned Brigham Young Academy professor Walter M. Wolfe, testified that this oath was worded: "You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will pray, and never cease to pray, Almighty God to avenge the blood of the prophets upon this nation, and that you will teach the same to your children and your children's children unto the third and fourth generations" (Smoot 4:6–7; see also 1:741–

43, 791–92; 2:77–79, 148–49, 151–53, 160–62, 181–83, 189–90, 759, 762–764, 779; 4:68–69, and 495–97).[20]

On 14 December 1904, the *Washington Times* and the *New York Herald* featured front-page photographs of a man in purported endowment clothing, depicting signs and penalties. Testimony during this hearing as well as other previously published unfriendly discussions of this oath indicate that, commencing by 1845 in the Nauvoo Temple ceremony as administered by Brigham Young, the oath of vengeance was routinely given to all initiates.[21]

Most Latter-day Saints today undoubtedly would be uncomfortable taking an oath of vengeance. Obviously, so was the general public's response to such testimony. In the context of early LDS Church history, however, it is not difficult to see how and why such an oath developed. Following the bitter persecutions sanctioned by the governor of Missouri, the newly resettled saints in Nauvoo were deeply suspicious of more attempts to limit their freedom. Mistrust of government officials was heightened when Joseph Smith failed to obtain redress for the Missouri losses from U.S. president Martin Van Buren in February 1840 (HC 4:80). Immediately following Joseph's and Hyrum Smith's murders in June 1844, hostile feelings by Mormons toward their persecutors was at a fever pitch. Encouraged, perhaps, by scriptural passages such as Revelation 6:9–11, many Latter-day Saints hoped for revenge of the deaths of their charismatic and beloved leaders. Allen Stout, a former Danite, recorded in his diary after he watched their bodies being returned to Nauvoo: "I stood there and then resolved in my mind that I would never let an opportunity slip unimproved of avenging their blood. . . . I knew not how to contain myself, and when I see one of the men who persuaded them to give up to be tried, I feel like cutting their throats yet" (28 June 1844, cited in Newell and Avery 1984, 196).

Such feelings were institutionalized in the Nauvoo Temple rites. On 21 December 1845, Heber C. Kimball recorded in his diary of "seven to twelve persons who have met together every day to pray ever since Joseph's death . . . and I have covenanted, and never will rest . . . until those men who killed Joseph & Hyrum have been wiped out of the earth." During an 1889 meeting of the First Presidency, George Q. Cannon reminisced about his experience there:

> He [Cannon] understood when he had his endowments in Nauvoo that he took an oath against the murderers of the Prophet Joseph as well as other prophets, and if he had ever met any of those who had taken a hand in that massacre he would undoubtedly have attempted to avenge the blood of the martyrs. The Prophet charged Stephen Markham to avenge his blood should he be slain: after the Prophet's death Bro. Markham attempted to tell this to an assembly of the Saints, but Willard Richards

[20] Although a similar oath exists in the 30th degree of Scottish Rite Masonry ("Knight of Kadosh"), it is unlikely that this had any influence on the Mormon oath of vengeance. See Richardson 1860, 188.

[21] Van Dusen 1847, 9; Lewis 1848, 9–10; Hall 1852, 49–50; Hyde 1857, 97; Remy and Brenchley 1861, 72; C. Waite 1866, 257–58; Beadle 1870, 496–97; Stenhouse 1890, 365; Young 1876, 368; Lee 1877, 160; "Mrs. G.H.R." and Wallis 1879; RLDS 1893, 453, 457–58; *Inside* 1903, 13, 17, 29, 33, 42, 44, 47–49, 52–53, 65–66; "Mormon" 1905, 170.

> pulled him down from the stand, as he feared the effect on the enraged people (A. Cannon 1889, 205).

Negative publicity from these hearings probably led to a deemphasis of this oath in the endowment. For example, while many early published accounts of the endowment (see n21) echo George Q. Cannon's statement that those endowed were personally charged with avenging Joseph and Hyrum Smith's deaths, in a 1912 meeting in the St. George Temple, David H. Cannon described the "law of retribution" as follows:

> To pray the Father to avenge the blood of the prophets and righteous men that has been shed, etc. In the endowment house this was given but as persons went there only once, it was not so strongly impressed upon their minds, but in the setting in order [of] the endowments for the dead it was given as it is written in 9 Chapter of Revelations and in that language we importune our Father, not that we may, but that He, our Father, will avenge the blood of martyrs shed for the testimony of Jesus (St. George Temple Minutes K9369R, 22 Feb. 1912, p. 110 in CRF).

This change in emphasis on the law of retribution evolved further as part of many procedural revisions made to the endowment ritual and temple clothing spearheaded by an apostolic committee organized in 1919, at the beginning of Heber J. Grant's administration, under the direction of Grant's counselor and Salt Lake Temple president, Anthon H. Lund (Alexander 1986, 300). Following Lund's death in 1921, leadership of this committee went to the new Salt Lake Temple president George F. Richards. From 1921 through 1927, Richards chaired the group which included David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Stephen L Richards, John A. Widtsoe, and later James E. Talmage. Under Richards's direction, the committee codified and simplified the temple ceremonies originally drafted in St. George in 1877, committing to paper for the first time those ceremonies informally known as the "unwritten portion": i.e., "the covenants and the instructions given in forming the [prayer] circle and [the lecture] at the veil" (G. F. Richards Journal, 12 July 1924; see also entries for 7, 8, 12 April, 10, 27, 28 Dec. 1921; 3, 7 June, 30, 31 Aug. 1922; 14, 16, 17, 19, 20 April 1923; 9, 16 Dec. 1926; 25, 27 Jan. 1927).

A major reason for this effort was to ensure that the ceremony was presented the same way in all temples. Because part of the ceremony had remained unwritten, the manner in which it was given tended to vary somewhat. The St. George ceremony was taken as a model since it was the oldest ceremony; there Brigham Young had committed most of the ritual to writing, trying to make the ceremony conform to the content introduced by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo. Since 1893, St. George Temple president David H. Cannon had maintained a certain degree of autonomy as the president of the oldest temple. In 1911, for example, he had stated: "We are not controlled by the Salt Lake Temple. . . . This temple has the original of these endowments which was given by President Brigham Young and we have not nor will we change anything thereof unless dictated by the President of the Church" (St. George Temple Minute Book K9369R, 14 Dec. 1911, p. 93, in CRF).

In 1924, Cannon apparently had refused to accept changes endorsed by the special committee and the First Presidency. In a meeting on 19 June 1924 in the St. George temple, Cannon recounted how George F. Richards had "criticized [him] very severely for not adhering to the unwritten part of the ceremonies as he had been instructed to do." He told the assembly of local Church leaders that Richards had instructed him to either burn the old rulings and instructions or send them to Salt Lake — "If we want any information, not contained in the 'President's Book' we will refer to the authorities of the Church for that information, but not refer to any of the old rulings." St. George Stake president Edward H. Snow (who became the temple president in 1926) then mentioned one of the recent changes, "in no longer praying that the blood of the prophets and righteous men, might be atoned for, because this prayer has been answered and [is] no longer necessary." As if to pass approval on this change, Cannon recalled comments by Anthony W. Ivins given at a conference in Enterprise, stating that Ivins "took exception to the way the Law of Retribution was worded, and said he [Ivins] thought the language was harsh and that the authorities [had] thought of changing that" (St. George Temple Minutes, 19 June 1924, in CRF). Perhaps in response to occasional continued references to this oath, a final letter in 1927 from Apostle Richards to all temple presidents directed that they "omit from the prayer circles all reference to avenging the blood of the Prophets. Omit from the ordinance and lecture all reference to retribution" (Richards to Pres. 1927).

In addition to eliminating the oath of vengeance during this period, other changes included:

- Accommodating more patrons by streamlining the ceremony. The length of the temple endowment ceremony was reduced (high-end estimates range from six to nine hours in total length; Alexander 1986, 300) to roughly three hours (including initiatory ordinances).
- A number of the endowment's graphic penalties, all of which closely followed Masonic penalties' wording, were moderated. For example, the penalties for revealing endowments included details of how they would be carried out (the tongue to be "torn out by its roots," etc.). Today's endowment only alludes to those earlier descriptions as various methods of taking life (Stead 1911, 113, 116–17; Martin 1920, 256, 259–60; Paden 1931, 18, 20; Smoot hearings testimony cited above; Tanner 1972, 468, 470–71;[22] Lambert 1950).
- After learning that garments and temple clothing were not originally designed solely by Joseph Smith, the committee dramatically altered the style of the temple garment. According to two accounts, the original temple garment was made of unbleached muslin with markings bound in turkey red, fashioned by Nauvoo seamstress Elizabeth Warren Allred under Joseph Smith's direction. Joseph's reported intention was to have a one-piece garment covering the arms, legs and torso, having "as few seams as possible" (Munson n.d.;

[22] Tanner (1972, 462–73) contains what purports to be a complete script of the modern endowment ceremony in 1969 when they first published it in *The Mormon Kingdom*, 1:123–34. More recent similar publications include Witte and Fraser, c1980, and Sackett 1982.

see also H. Kimball Diary, 21 Dec. 1845; Reid 1973, 169). Ceremonial markings on the garment were originally snipped into the cloth in the temple during an initiate's first visit. The committee made these changes: sleeves were raised from the wrist to the elbow, legs raised from the ankle to just below the knee, buttons used instead of strings, the collar eliminated, and the crotch closed (*Salt Lake Tribune* 4 June 1923; Grant, Penrose, and Ivins 1923; Alexander 1986, 301).

The introduction of this new-style garment caused considerable unrest among some members (Lyon 1975, 249–50). Nevertheless, the pre-1923 style garment was required in the temple ceremony until 1975 when its use became optional (Kimball, Tanner and Romney, 1975). Occasionally minor design changes have been implemented such as lowering the neckline and shortening the legs and sleeves. The most dramatic recent change was the two-piece garment in 1979. Garments are manufactured by the Church's Beehive Clothing Mills, which reportedly consults East Coast fashion designers for pattern considerations (Reid 1973, Priddis 1981). While members are not now permitted to make their own garments, they may make their own temple clothing provided it follows the approved design, although this is not openly encouraged. Upon approval of the stake or mission president, a handbook may be lent to worthy members who must make the clothing under the supervision or direction of the stake Relief Society president or mission president (Temple Clothing 1972, 1). One additional recent policy change allows guests at temple wedding ceremonies to attend in street clothes, provided they have donned white slippers.

- For the first time, adherence to the Word of Wisdom became an official requirement for admission to the temple. Apparently this had been encouraged prior to 1921, but exceptions had been made (Alexander 1981, 82).
- In 1920, the first night sessions started, beginning with one evening session per week and later expanded to three evening sessions per week (Alexander 1986, 299).
- Another element of literalism disappeared in 1927 when kissing over the altar during vicarious sealings for the dead was abolished (Richards to Pres. 1927).

One practice during the Depression years was to pay people to perform endowments for the dead. Usually these temple workers were members of the Church with few funds, frequently elderly. Members who did not have time to perform ordinances for deceased ancestors customarily paid 75 cents for men and 50 cents for women per ordinance. Typically money was left on deposit with clerks at the temple, who would disburse it as each vicarious endowment was performed. It is not clear when this practice ended, but it was probably difficult for temples to administer the collection and distribution of cash (Richards, Jr., 1973, 58; Myers 1976, 21–22; Smith, Lund, and Penrose 1915).

Probably the greatest twentieth-century catalyst to increase the number of vicarious endowments was Heber J. Grant's emphasis on temple work (CR April 1928, 8–9). Endowments performed per member during Grant's admin-

TABLE 1 — TEMPLE WORK FOR LIVING AND DEAD (AND OTHER VITAL STATISTICS), 1846–1985

Period Ending	Total Membership[1]	Net Increase	Operating Temples[2]	Endowments for Living[3]	Endowments for Dead	2nd Anointings—Living	2nd Anointings—Dead	Avg. Vic. End. per Mem. p/Yr.
1846	33,993	0	1.0	5,200[4]	0	591[5]	0	0.00
1884	158,242	124,249	1.1	54,170[3,6]	0	694[6]	0	0.00
1898	267,251	109,009	3.2	38,317[7]	486,198[7]	5,213[8]	3,411[8]	0.17
1912	417,555	150,304	4.0	56,752	536,309	6,367[8]	2,216[8]	0.11
1930	670,017	252,462	5.3	90,071	3,785,634	2,048[8]	601[8]	0.38
1940	862,664	192,647	7.0	67,479	4,716,556	8[8]	3[8]	0.62
1945	979,454	116,790	7.2	36,429	1,592,856	NA	NA	0.34
1950	1,111,314	131,860	8.0	60,457	1,927,806	NA	NA	0.37
1955	1,357,274	245,960	8.2	69,953	2,802,938	NA	NA	0.45
1960	1,693,180	335,906	11.2	88,408	4,681,781	NA	NA	0.60
1965	2,395,932	702,752	12.4	134,054	5,132,669	NA	NA	0.49
1970	2,930,810	534,878	13.0	141,778	7,557,458	NA	NA	0.56
1975	3,572,202	641,392	15.0	188,226	12,018,105	NA	NA	0.72
1980	4,644,768	1,072,566	16.4	244,682	18,568,811	NA	NA	0.89
1985	5,910,496	1,265,728	26.2	259,268	22,136,404	NA	NA	0.82
TOTALS:				1,535,244	85,943,525	14,921	6,231	0.43

[1] 1987 Church Almanac, pp. 252–55.

[2] Ibid., pp. 258–99, and Conference Reports; incl. Old Council House and Endowment House.

[3] Cowen 1971, 29; Conference Reports; and personal research.

[4] Buerger 1983, 25 n48.

[5] Book of Anointings, typescript, original in LDS Church Archives.

[6] Tingen 1974, 14–15. Excludes St. George Temple statistics.

[7] McAllister 1898. Includes St. George Temple statistics from 1877.

[8] Temple Ordinance Statistics, Books A, B, and C; Salt Lake Temple Ordinance Book; all in LDS Church Archives. Includes St. George Temple statistics from 1877.

TABLE 2

ANNUAL SECOND ANOINTING DATA FOR ALL TEMPLES, 1846–1941

Year	SECOND ANOINTINGS FOR THE LIVING: St. George	Logan	Manti	S.L.	Other	Total	SECOND ANOINTINGS FOR THE DEAD: St. George	Logan	Manti	S.L.	Other	Total
1846	—	—	—	—	591	591	—	—	—	—	—	—
1847–95	1,312	1,325	810	817	694	4,958	1,387	681	403	405	0	2,876
1896	9	76	152	190	0	427	15	30	75	104	0	224
1897	5	99	41	136	0	281	4	41	32	88	0	165
1898	16	30	16	179	0	241	19	15	16	96	0	146
1899	53	69	51	328	0	501	25	29	22	135	0	211
1900	104	274	141	632	0	1,151	28	51	63	181	0	323
1901	43	188	376	529	0	1,136	13	49	166	113	0	341
1902	24	58	161	309	0	552	19	29	64	114	0	226
1903	15	70	71	234	0	390	8	25	37	107	0	177
1904	15	62	29	209	0	315	6	30	23	90	0	149
1905	23	35	32	172	0	262	11	23	24	55	0	113
1906	16	26	25	172	0	239	5	22	14	48	0	89
1907	5	23	60	269	0	357	9	7	33	66	0	115
1908	14	96	41	258	0	409	5	25	22	70	0	122
1909	9	30	20	160	0	219	3	11	2	75	0	91
1910	6	73	56	162	0	297	7	17	12	35	0	71
1911	3	68	38	195	0	304	2	19	23	42	0	86
1912	12	49	30	144	0	235	1	18	26	57	0	102
1913	14	46	11	138	0	209	6	21	6	54	0	87
1914	1	27	35	157	0	220	8	14	15	58	0	95
1915	24	25	36	116	0	201	6	9	4	28	0	47

1916	20	48	58	115	0	241	2	21	10	32	0	65
1917	10	44	23	135	0	212	6	7	10	42	0	65
1918	5	13	20	117	0	155	2	13	7	21	0	43
1919	7	41	17	86	0	151	1	7	12	19	0	39
1920	8	43	7	96	0	154	4	9	3	23	0	39
1921	17	24	28	106	0	175	5	10	9	24	0	48
1922	13	28	6	52	0	99	3	3	0	38	0	44
1923	2	10	5	47	13	77	1	1	0	5	1	8
1924	5	35	2	19	0	61	0	3	0	1	0	4
1925	2	3	2	34	0	41	0	1	0	2	0	3
1926	3	0	0	18	0	21	1	1	0	1	0	3
1927	0	2	0	13	0	15	0	0	0	8	0	8
1928	2	0	0	4	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	1
1929	0	0	2	8	0	10	0	0	1	1	0	2
1930	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1931	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1
1932	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1933	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1934	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
1935	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1936	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1937	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
1938	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
1939	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1940	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1941	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS:	1,817	3,040	2,402	6,364	1,298	14,921	1,612	1,243	1,134	2,241	1	6,231

istration increased substantially. From 1898 to 1912, vicarious endowments averaged .11 endowments per member per year. From 1912 to 1930, the average increased to .38. The decade of 1930–40 saw the annual average again jump to .62. Perhaps partially resulting from the combination of World War II and Grant's lessening influence, due to his advanced age and death in 1945, this average dropped to .34 by 1945 and remained there through the end of 1950. Second anointings decreased dramatically during President Grant's administration, becoming practically nonexistent by 1930.

VI

MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND THE ENDOWMENT CEREMONY: 1931–87

Since its introduction, the endowment ceremony's presentation has been within a dramatic setting. The earliest known comment by the First Presidency regarding the use of motion pictures in the endowment ceremony came in 1927, when they affirmed that they had no intention then of using them (Grant, Ivins, and Nibley 1927). The next known discussion of this policy came in late 1953, when David O. McKay, then president of the Church, asked Gordon B. Hinckley to chair a committee to create a meaningful endowment presentation for the new one-room Swiss Temple.[23] Other committee members included Richard L. Evans, Edward O. Anderson, and Joseph Fielding Smith (David O. McKay Diary, 29 Oct. 1953, in Gibbons 1986, 329). The outgrowth was a 16mm film directed by Harold I. Hansen in the upper room of the Salt Lake Temple, shot over a period of one year. Due to inclement Utah weather, outside photography was done in Southern states, while scenes of lava flowing accompanying the creation portion were approximately 350 feet of film from *Fantasia*, used by permission of Walt Disney Studios (Evans Collection).

Different sets of temple workers — primarily composed of returned missionaries, native converts, and local nationals — were used for versions in English, German, French, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish. A year later, additional casts produced Samoan, Tahitian, Tongan, and Maori versions for use in the New Zealand Temple. According to one source, this film was not a professional staging: there was no real acting, no scenery, and no attempt at sophistication. The temple workers simply enacted a live endowment. This extremely conservative use of the technology was clearly not an effort to produce an art form but a means of efficiently allowing endowment ceremony sessions to take place in a single room in the new temples, rather than moving from one room to another (Palmer 1979; Wise 1980–81, 53).

The wide-screen concept introduced in early-1960s American movies influenced Church architect Harold Burton in designing the Oakland Temple's two endowment rooms. He planned huge projection areas that required the use of 35mm film, although curtains reduced the total screen size. After the

[23] Unless otherwise noted, information concerning the history of endowment movies is based on Wise, 1980–81 and 1983. Wise edited all endowment films.

temple was dedicated in 1964, 4″×5″ slide projectors were used to produce photo murals depicting room changes found in live endowment presentations.

The second film of the endowment ceremony was produced in 1966.[24] Due to space limitations in the Salt Lake Temple, the First Presidency authorized this version (known as Project #100) to be filmed in the BYU motion pictures studio (Evans Collection). A new studio stage constructed for this purpose was formally opened 24 April 1966 with a prayer by Gordon B. Hinckley. This film was used for several years in Oakland; 16mm reduction prints were prepared for English-speaking patrons in foreign temples.

In a successful effort to condense the presentation to about ninety minutes, a third motion picture was filmed at the BYU studio during October and November 1969. Like the second film, this professional effort (known as Project #134) was directed by Wetzel O. Whitaker. The cast included both professional and amateur actors,[25] as well as elaborate scenery. Most of the outdoor scenes were filmed on the West Coast. Actors and production staff had to have temple recommends and received prior worthiness clearance through their bishops before being asked to participate. The film was shot in one studio, usually between 10 p.m. and midnight to ensure privacy. Participants memorized their lines in a room just off set and used prompt cards. They could not take the script home for study (Palmer 1979). This film was completed by November 1971 when the Provo and Ogden temples opened. Due to its shorter playing time, it replaced the second film originally used in the Oakland Temple.

Primarily because of President Harold B. Lee's discomfort with the long hair and beards of a few of Project #134's participants (Wise 1980–81, 57 and Wise 1983, 16) a fourth endowment movie (Project #198) was produced at BYU during the early to middle 1970s. Again directed by Wetzel O. Whitaker, this film used largely new personnel.[26] A major goal for this pro-

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[24] The cast for this film was Adam: Max Mason Brown; Eve: Marielen Wadley Christensen; Lucifer: Lael Woodbury; Minister: Morris Clinger; Peter: Harold I. Hansen; James: Douglas Clawson; John: Max Golightly; Elohim: unknown; Elohim voice: Dan Keeler; Jehovah: unknown; Jehovah voice: Carl Pope; Narrator: Glen Shaw. The production crew was Camera: Robert Stum and Dalvin Williams; Lighting: Grant Williams and R. Steven Clawson; Casting: Keith Atkinson, David Jacobs and Judd Pierson; Sound: Kenneth Hansen and Sharrol Felt; Set Design: Douglas Johnson and Robert Stum; Research: Scott Whitaker and Douglas Johnson; Script Girl: Marilyn Finch; Editing: Frank S. Wise; Director: Wetzel O. Whitaker.

[25] The cast for this film was Adam: Hank Kester; Eve: Lena Tuluanen Rogers; Lucifer: Ron Fredrickson; Minister: Spencer Palmer; Peter: Gordon Jump; James: Charles Metten; John: R. LeRoi Nelson; Elohim: Jesse Stay; Elohim voice: Lael Woodbury; Jehovah: Bryce Chamberlain; Jehovah voice: Robert Peterson; Narrator: Glen Shaw. The production crew was Camera: Robert Stum; Lighting: Grant Williams; Casting: Keith Atkinson; Sound: Don Fisk and Sharrol Felt; Set Design: Douglas Johnson; Production Manager: Dalvin Williams; Editing: Frank S. Wise; Director: Wetzel O. Whitaker.

[26] The cast for this film was Adam: James Adamson; Eve: Laurel Pugmire; Lucifer: Sterling Van Wagenen; Minister: Keith Engar; Peter: Craig Costello; James: Ivan Crosland; John: Bruce Moffit; Elohim: Jesse Stay; Elohim voice: Lael Woodbury; Jehovah: Bryce Chamberlain; Jehovah voice: unknown; Narrator: Glen Shaw. The production crew was Camera: Robert Stum and Ted VanHorn; Lighting: Reed Smoot and Grant Williams; Casting: Peter Johnson; Sound: Don Fisk, Steve Aubrey and Kent Pendleton; Set Design:

duction was to create foreign sound tracks that did not look obviously dubbed. Since some languages such as Finnish and Japanese require substantially more time than the English equivalents, this aspect was extremely challenging. Moreover, theological concerns required that translations be literal, not merely approximate. This synchronization was partially accomplished through techniques such as speeded-up soundtrack playback and step-printing every third frame twice to expand film length. Production crews recorded the audio sequences using European nationals in the London Temple in June 1972 and using Pacific nationals in a secured sound room at the BYU-Hawaii campus in June 1973.

In early 1976, the Church's Temple Committee transferred all endowment film and sound operations from BYU to new facilities in the Salt Lake Temple basement. While film continues to be processed in a California lab, all sound tracks are now produced in this basement facility. Sound-track duplication facilities also exist in some other temples.

Probably because of recommendations made by Harold B. Lee, a member of the First Presidency after 1970, and a committee which included Apostle Howard W. Hunter (President of the Genealogical Society) working from 1968 to May 1972 to investigate endowment procedures in the temple, several phrases used in ceremony film scripts were subsequently dubbed out[27] in the mid-1970s (Christiansen 1975–76, 68; Fudge 1976, 71; Harold B. Lee, Diary, 31 Jan. 1971 and 6 Feb. 1971, in Goates 1985, 427–28; Palmer 1979). According to one participant in the third filmed version (Palmer 1979), the person portraying Satan was originally to have been dark; but, due to protests by several LDS Polynesians, a Caucasian filled the role. Although this film was intended to be an interim production, both the third and fourth films are still in use today. One person recalls that former Provo Temple president Harold G. Clark said the third film was not phased out because too many people preferred it over the fourth film (Palmer 1979). Film two was subsequently cut down to the same length as that of films three and four for possible reintroduction, mainly to provide more diversity for frequent temple-goers (Wise 1983).

Perhaps one of the most significant effects of modern technology on temple work has stemmed from the Church's widespread use of electronic data processing. In 1961, a growing shortage of names provided by members for vicarious ordinance work forced Church officials to decide between either closing temples, decreasing the number of sessions, or taking institutional responsibility for providing names. President David O. McKay opted to have the Genealogical Society take responsibility. Since the start of its name-extraction

Douglas Johnson; Script Girl: Francine (last name unknown); Editing: Frank S. Wise; Director: Wetzel O. Whitaker; Assistant Director: Dave Jacobs.

[27] For example, the preacher's reference to Satan having black skin was omitted in recent years; compare Witte and Fraser c1980, 23 with Sackett 1982, 38. Another omission during the late 1960s is the preacher leading the audience in a Protestant hymn. Singing by a "temple choir" stopped in 1921 when the choir was disbanded (G. F. Richards, Journal, 7–8 April 1921). Satan and the preacher no longer fix a specific salary to proselytize the audience for converts (Tanner 1972, 468–49; Witte and Fraser c1980, 21). Some of these changes probably resulted from the Harold B. Lee committee's recommendations in 1972.

program, the society has provided about 75 percent of all names for vicarious temple ordinances (Fudge 1976, 15–19).

On a related note, members of the Church's computer planning committee realized during the late 1950s and early 1960s that, given the estimated 70 billion people who had been born on the earth, all LDS adults working in temples eight hours a day, seven days a week wouldn't be able to keep up with world population growth, much less complete ordinance work for deceased ancestors. This concern apparently has not disappeared (*Church News*, 20 July 1986, p. 16). Accordingly, a number of procedural changes were suggested. Some initial opposition came from Elder Harold B. Lee due to what he perceived as "doctrinal tampering." However, an important change in the early 1960s permitted vicarious ordinances to be performed out of their traditional order, with new data processing systems collating the results. Thus, deceased persons could be sealed or endowed before they had been baptized, washed, anointed, or confirmed (Fudge 1976, 17–19; Carlson[28] 1980, 8–21).

Since the Genealogical Society initiated the computer-based name-extraction program in 1965, computers have been used to track the administration of both living and vicarious temple ordinances ranging from initiatory work to marriage sealings. Patrons now present their temple recommends — coated with magnetic identification strips — to receive and account for the name of a deceased person for proxy work. Computerization clearly has augmented efficiency in doing work for the dead (Allen 1983).

VII

Trends and Implications

In 1980, President Spencer W. Kimball stated: "We feel an urgency for this great work to be accomplished and wish to encourage the Saints to accept their responsibility of performing temple ordinances" (1980, 2). Many older temples have been renovated to accommodate the more efficient movie format. The number of operating temples has increased dramatically — from thirteen in 1970 to forty in 1986, with an additional six currently under planning or construction. An analysis of ordinance data, however, suggests that rates of temple work have remained relatively constant over the last fifteen years. Based on figures from this period, an average of one out of every three converts receives his or her own endowment. Since 1971, the difference between total live endowments and the number of new converts has steadily increased. This trend clearly began after World War II. New missionaries' endowments have constituted almost one-third of all live endowments, on the average, since 1971; thus, the actual percentage of new members receiving their own endowment is much smaller. Since the Church will not release geographic annual totals of new converts, it is not yet possible to determine sociological factors

[28] Carlson was on the Church Data Processing Committee and the board of directors of Management Systems Corporation — a Church-owned company which provided the Church with data processing services.

TABLE 3

ANNUAL ENDOWMENT DATA FROM 1971–1985

Year	Total Membership	Convert Baptisms	Operating Temples	Endowments for Living	Endowments for Dead	Living End. %T Converts	Vicarious End. per Mem. p/Yr.	Missionaries Set Apart	%T Live Endowments
1971	3,090,953	83,514	13	31,685	1,701,907	0.38	0.55	8,344	0.26
1972	3,218,908	91,237	15	35,003	2,275,192	0.38	0.71	7,874	0.22
1973	3,306,658	79,603	15	36,964	2,477,532	0.46	0.75	9,471	0.26
1974	3,409,987	69,018	16	37,432	2,535,518	0.54	0.74	9,811	0.26
1975	3,572,202	95,412	16	47,142	3,027,956	0.49	0.85	14,446	0.31
1976	3,742,749	133,959	16	43,645	3,421,793	0.33	0.91	13,928	0.32
1977	3,969,220	167,939	14	47,037	3,555,118	0.28	0.90	14,561	0.31
1978	4,166,854	152,000	16	50,400	3,756,600	0.33	0.90	15,860	0.31
1979	4,404,121	193,000	17	51,600	3,873,300	0.27	0.88	16,590	0.32
1980	4,644,768	211,000	19	52,000	3,962,000	0.25	0.85	16,600	0.32
1981	4,920,449	224,000	19	49,800	4,101,000	0.22	0.83	17,800	0.36
1982	5,162,619	207,000	19	48,800	4,418,000	0.24	0.86	18,260	0.37
1983	5,351,724	189,419	25	52,116	4,364,928	0.28	0.82	19,450	0.37
1984	5,641,054	192,983	31	53,998	4,395,424	0.28	0.78	19,720	0.37
1985	5,910,496	197,640	37	54,554	4,857,052	0.28	0.82	19,890	0.36
						0.33	0.81		0.32

FIGURE 1

AVG. NET MEMBER INCREASE VS. AVG. LIVE ENDOWMENTS: 1846–1985

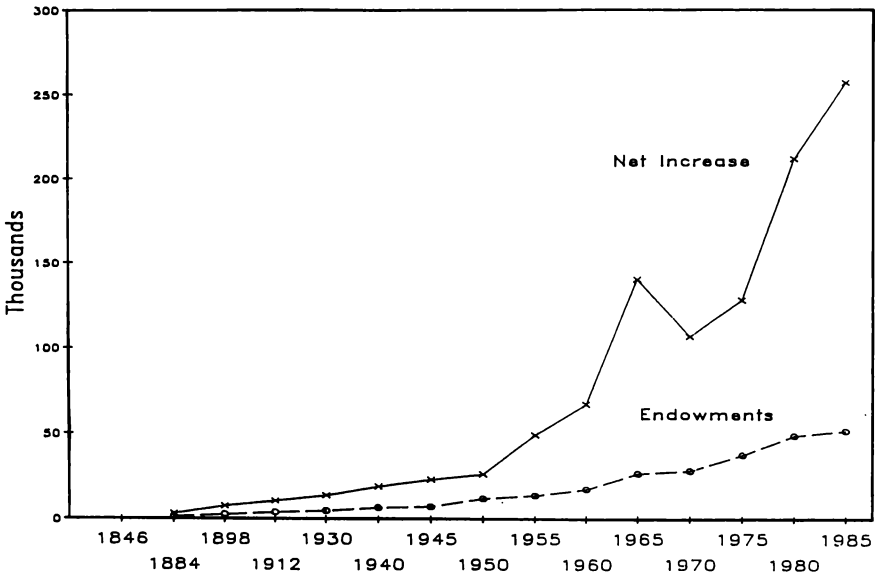
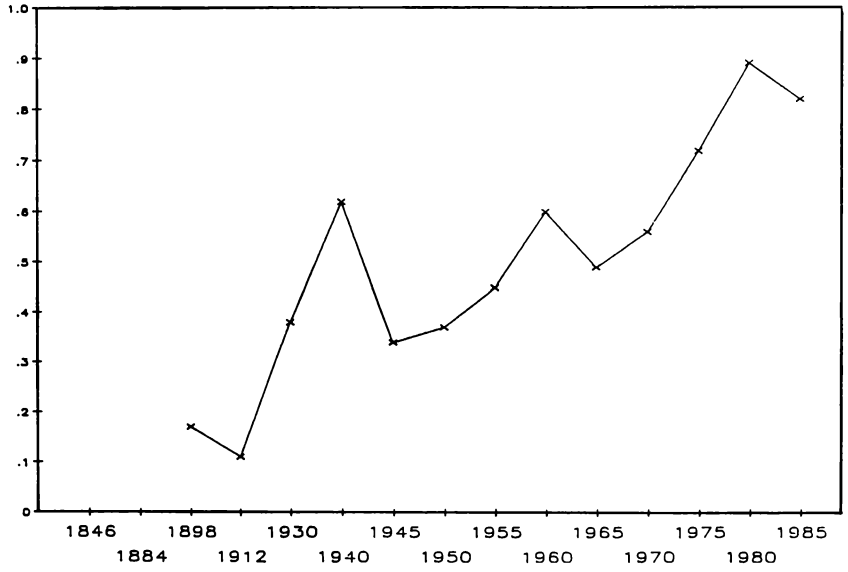


FIGURE 2

AVG. VICARIOUS ENDOWMENTS PER MEMBER PER YEAR: 1846–1985



which may account for the widening gap between total new converts and total live endowments. Since 1971, vicarious endowments have been performed at an average rate of .81 per member per year. These per-member levels have declined slightly during the past ten years despite the impressive number of new temple dedications.

It is not possible to give full confidence to these figures or their interpretation since Church administrators do not provide more detailed endowment data arranged by year.[29] Other unavailable data critical to a reliable statistical analysis include annual totals of temple recommend holders and parallel information on temple work in regions outside the United States. The only international statistics I have seen indicate that in 1985 at least 75 percent of all live and vicarious endowments were performed within United States temples (*Church Almanac* 1987, 304). U.S. membership in 1985 constituted about 52 percent of total membership. The disproportionate amount of U.S. endowments may indicate that the temple — or that vicarious work for the dead — has lower priority overseas, a condition that could change as a new generation abroad grows up with "our own" temple. It also could indicate that foreign converts may be so economically disadvantaged that they cannot often attend temples, even when they are relatively close. Only time will tell what affect the large number of new foreign temples will have on the amount of endowments performed.

There is no way to quantitatively evaluate the spiritual benefit of temple work for either the living or the dead. Certainly, no spiritual benefits can be realized without participation. The 1970s saw a renewed emphasis on temple work.[30] During the latter part of the decade, many stakes were issued endowment quotas by their temples. While less emphasis is now placed on quotas, expectations remain high. For example, active recommend holders living close to a temple usually are expected to average one endowment per month. Members of my own stake made 2,671 visits to the Oakland Temple in 1985, versus 3,340 visits in 1984 — a 20 percent drop in activity. Consequently, my stake presidency requested that all endowed temple recommend holders increase attendance by participating in events such as "stake temple days" and even take personal leave from work to "spend as much time in the Temple as possible" (Santa Clara 1986). Without comparing the policies of stakes in other temple districts, it is impossible to say how characteristic my stake might be.

These declining rates suggest that many Latter-day Saints apparently do not participate extensively in either vicarious or living endowments. The need

[29] A telling example of the increasing reticence to share operating statistics is that for the first time in thirty-one years, the official Conference Report (first appearing in *The Ensign*) has omitted all figures related to temple work, including number of operating temples, and number of live and vicarious endowments performed during the prior year (*The Ensign*, May 1987, 21).

[30] This may be necessary for other reasons as well: an analysis of the ratio of general conference talk references to temple work versus paragraph units in those talks from 1830 to 1979 indicates resulting scores ranging from .023 to .027 through 1919; since 1920 the scores have ranged from .001 to .011, a dramatic drop in salience (Shepherd and Shepherd 1984, 255).

for reevaluation can at least be discussed. As the history of the endowment shows, specific content and procedural alterations were made in 1845, 1877, 1883, 1893, 1919–27, the early 1960s, and 1968–72.

The Church is already addressing the economic problem of attending the temple by constructing numerous scaled-down temples strategically placed in areas of high member densities. Although temples have traditionally been separate structures with the sole function of temple work, it is not impossible to consider the option of adapting or creating special rooms in selected stake centers as endowment and sealing rooms. Such an option would further reduce temple construction and operating expenses, even though the "temple" would lose something of its "special" character by being associated with a multi-use building. Such options would go far toward making temples more convenient for members to reach and less costly to construct and maintain. In other words, the temple could become more accessible to greater numbers of members.

Another aspect to be considered involves the appeal of the ceremony to members. If it is true that new converts and/or maturing youth are less likely to seek their own endowments, the ordinance may be seen as less meaningful, or perhaps have a different meaning. Allen Roberts, tracing the decline of architectural symbolism in the Church, has suggested that current Saints are no longer comfortable with symbolism of any sort (1979, 28–29). An intensifying factor may be that the spheres of symbolism have progressively shrunk until symbolism is associated almost exclusively with the temple. As a result, discomfort with public displays of elements increasingly seen as uniquely sacred may have hastened the spiral of withdrawal. Perhaps all symbolism is now seen as somehow connected to the temple. A third reason may be that contemporary Saints understand much less about symbolism than they once did. They recognize, for instance, an all-seeing eye but have never seen it anywhere but the temple — unlike nineteenth-century Saints who saw it on doorknobs, carved on the lintels of doors, and printed on the letterheads of stationery and newspapers. Certainly Joseph Smith and his contemporaries would have understood certain symbols from the richness of at least two contexts — Masonry as well as Mormonism.

The feelings contemporary Saints have for the temple certainly merit a careful quantitative analysis by professional social scientists. I have heard a number of themes from people who feel discomfort in one degree or another with elements of the temple ceremony. Although such reports are anecdotal, I believe they represent areas to be explored in attempting to understand the place of the temple in the lives of modern Saints.

In addition to the feelings about symbolism already expressed, a fourth element that may influence feelings about the temple comes from the increasing impact of technology and rationalism on our culture as a whole. The idea of a "lodge" may itself have an old-fashioned ring to it. Probably in no other settings except college organizations, with their attendant associations of youthfulness and possibly immaturity, do most Mormons encounter "secret" ceremonies with code handshakes, clothing that has particular significance, and, perhaps most disturbing to some, the implied violence of the penalties. Various indi-

viduals have commented on their difficulty in seeing these elements as "religious" or "inspirational," originating in the desires of a loving Father for his children.

Fifth, in a day when Latter-day Saints are increasingly focusing on shared Christian values, some are also uncomfortable at the portrayal of a Christian minister as the hireling of Satan, a point that local citizens, clergy, fundamentalist Protestants, and professional anti-Mormons have not overlooked in the demonstrations against temple dedications in Dallas, Denver, and Chicago ("Dallas" 1982; "Temple" 1986).

Sixth, the endowment ceremony still depicts women as subservient to men, not as equals in relating to God. For example, women covenant to obey their husbands in righteousness, while he is the one who acts as intermediary to God; are promised ordination in future states as queens and priestesses to their husbands, and are required to veil their faces at one point in the ceremony; Eve does not speak in the narrative portion once they are expelled from the garden. Such inequitable elements seem at odds with other aspects of the gospel.

Seventh, some individuals find that the filmed presentations have a dulling effect on their response. The freshness of live-session interpretations brings new insights in even subtle details, according to some regular temple-goers. While some people enjoy the more rapid pace of the filmed versions, others worry about being "programmed" by repetition and find themselves unable to imagine other faces, other voices, and other interpretations than those being impressed upon them by repetition.

In short, at least some Saints perceive the temple as incongruent with other important elements of their religious life. Some find the temple irrelevant to the deeper currents of their Christian service and worship of God. Some admit to boredom. Others describe their motivations for continued and regular temple attendance as feelings of hope and patience — the faith that by continuing to participate they will develop more positive feelings and even the joy that others sometimes report. Often they feel unworthy or guilty because of these feelings since the temple is so unanimously presented as the pinnacle of spiritual experience for sincere Latter-day Saints.

To suggest that all Latter-day Saints are deeply troubled by such elements would certainly be incorrect. For many, the temple experience is one of selfless service, peaceful communion with God, a refreshing retreat from the world, and a promise of future union with departed loved ones. Reports of spiritual enlightenment, personal revelation, and grateful contact from those for whom the work is being done are not infrequent.

Certainly the social values of the temple have expanded and become more far-reaching as more and more people have access to temples and as more Latter-day Saints retire with the economic means and health to spend many years of service in the temple. Anthropologist Mark P. Leone has suggested that temple worship is a key institution by which Mormons resolve the conflict of being "in the world but not of it" and spiritually and psychologically reinforce their unique purpose in life (Leone 1978, 10–13). The value of the temple experience clearly manifests itself in a renewed individual commitment

to Christian values, and to furthering the goals of the Church. Given the strict requirements of worthiness one must adhere to for permission to attend the temple, it follows that Latter-day Saints receive added satisfaction belonging to a select group of devout members qualified to perform this sacred work.

Reviewing the historical development of any important institution in a community's life raises questions about its future. The endowment has changed a great deal in response to community needs over time. Obviously it has the capability of changing still further if the need arises. If one were to set aside the questions of spiritual, emotional, and social significance and examine the endowment strictly from a functional perspective, some suggestive conclusions emerge.

For instance, it is interesting that vicarious endowments remain the only portion of the total temple sequence (baptism, confirmation, washing and anointing, ordination of males, endowment, and marriage sealing) which has not been "batch processed" to increase efficiency. Through 1985, a cumulative total of over 1.5 million endowments for the living and almost 86 million endowments for the dead have been performed. From a strictly functional perspective, the amount of time required to complete a vicarious endowment seems excessive. If patrons do not need to hear baptismal and confirmation speeches prior to performing these proxy ordinances, or talks on how to have a good marriage before vicarious sealings (as all living people traditionally receive before their own ceremonies), it seems inconsistent to hear about events in the Garden of Eden or the lone and dreary world before vicariously receiving the signs, tokens, and key words which form the apparent essence of the endowment ceremony, although the repetition of the narratives no doubt benefits the individual patron. If increasing the number of endowments were the primary objective, these elements could be performed in a few minutes instead of two hours. Baptisms for the dead and sealings already occur with accelerated routines.

If the vicarious elements were detached from the endowment or performed in another sequence, then the balance of temple activities devoted to instructing members in theological matters and allowing time for meditation, inspiration, and worship might be done under a different, less mechanical setting. Refocusing attention on the temple's function as a house of prayer and a house of revelation might draw more individuals who genuinely wish for a worshipful experience in community and then quietly, alone. At the present time, most temples do not have the facilities for solitary meditation and actively discourage lingering in the celestial room after passing through the veil. A reversion to the live presentation might also augment attentiveness and rediscovery as participants review fundamental concepts.

Such strategies may suggest ways of meeting the Church's need for effectively and efficiently carrying out its mission of salvation for the dead while providing a holy setting for the spiritual healing of modern members bearing their diverse burdens. The richness and centrality of the endowment ceremony in the twentieth century, as in the nineteenth, roots Latter-day Saints in a tradition of spiritual power that promises equal abundance in the future.

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Culture, Charisma, and Change: Reflections on Mormon Temple Worship

Armand L. Mauss

UNDERSTANDABLY OUR CURIOSITY IS AROUSED whenever we hear of secret indoctrinations or rituals being practiced by unfamiliar religious groups within imposing buildings of unusual architecture. Such curiosity easily turns to suspicion, fear, or hostility once the group in question has acquired a deviant or negative image more generally in its surrounding society. Thus, especially against the troubled history of Mormon relations with the political and religious establishments of the United States and elsewhere, the temple and its ceremonies remain as one of the very few aspects of Mormonism still able to evoke suspicion about how "normal" Mormons really are.

When non-Mormons, and even Mormons who fail to qualify in some respect, are forbidden to attend the temple weddings of even their own children, suspicion will likely, for some, be accompanied by resentment as well. Nor is anyone likely to be mollified by the facile "explanation" so often heard that the temple ceremonies are "sacred, not secret," a semantic word play ignoring the fact that to Mormons the ceremonies are obviously *both*.

In actuality, however, as David Buerger has demonstrated, very little about what goes on in the temple is not available through public records like the Smoot hearings, through apostate exposés of varying reliability, or through extant diaries and other primary source materials.

For that matter, there is no real reason that even devout Church members could not talk more about the temple ceremonies than they do, with appropriate discretion about time and place, since the oaths of secrecy attach only to the new names, signs, tokens, and penalties. Indeed, more open talk about the temple would not only facilitate understanding among both Mormons and non-Mormons in certain historical and scholarly respects, but would also infinitely improve the preparedness of initiates, almost all of whom now enter

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This paper was originally presented as a commentary on that of David John Buerger at the 1986 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City. *ARMAND L. MAUSS, a member of the* DIALOGUE *Board of Editors, is professor of sociology at Washington State University.*

the temple with only the vaguest idea of what to expect or of the obligations they will be asked to assume.

Like other forms of religious participation, temple work means different things to different Mormons at different times in their lives. To some, it unquestionably provides that sense of connection and communion with Deity and the other world, with the ultimately sacred, which the Church officially says that it provides. To others, it is a time of retreat from the cares of the world, of spiritual renewal. To still others, it is a duty and obligation, either to ancestors or to priesthood leaders or to both. And then there are those we encounter from time to time for whom the temple experience, like sacrament meeting, may not be gratifying at any level but instead ranges from the boring to the offensive. Some Mormons have experienced all these feelings (and others) at different times in their lives, depending on their own spiritual, emotional, social, or intellectual condition at the time of a given temple visit. An interesting subject for future scholarly investigation would, in fact, be the different meanings of the temple experience to Mormons in different cultures, different geographic locations, different stages of life, and different stages of development as Church members.

Sociologists are inclined to look for the "functions" of religious institutions like the temple — the different purposes served by the temple, intended and unintended, in the religious community. One of the more obvious functions of the temple endowment, for instance, is that of a rite of passage, signifying to the whole church that the endowed individual has become a "spiritual adult" either by upbringing or by later conversion. This status carries with it certain assumptions about what responsibilities can reasonably be imposed on the member and what can be expected of him or her.

Closely related is a structural or organizational function — the creation of a spiritually or theologically advanced group, an "elite," if you will, toward which all Mormons might aspire and work. In an organization in which so many men (and even boys) hold the priesthood and in which there is so much rotating in and out of ecclesiastical office for both men and women, it is difficult to maintain an enduring or fundamental sense of status differential. This is all the more true in North America where so few other social distinctions exist among the homogeneously middle-class Mormon membership.

At any given point in time, however, endowed Mormons are likely to be a minority of the membership in a given ward or branch — indeed, rather a small minority outside the American Far West, and an even smaller minority if we specify regular temple-goers. If the Church ever reaches the point where a majority of the adult membership has been endowed (as may have been the case in the late nineteenth century), a sociologist would be inclined to predict a return to some kind of "second endowment" just to provide an additional elite category for the continued striving of the spiritually highly ranked among the faithful, lest they become complacent. For now, status distinctions among the endowed seem to be maintained partly by the *frequency* of temple-going and hence of the number of vicarious endowments performed, but mostly by

the existence of an informal elite consisting of "set-apart temple workers" who know the temple liturgy as both recipients and officiators.

Temple work also serves an occupational function for the elderly. Earlier in this century, when some temple workers were actually paid for their vicarious work by descendants of the deceased or by others, temple-going provided paid employment, however minimal and however limited, for at least a few. Now, it is an occupation in a less intentional or conspicuous but nevertheless important way: In a time when people are living longer and in a church that has always had relatively great average longevity, thousands of Church members are able to spend some portion of their retirement in work that is presumably not only meaningful for them but deeply fulfilling, as well. For some, it seems to offer the additional psychological function of preparing them emotionally and spiritually for their own departure to that spiritual realm to which they come to feel so close in the temple. This would seem to be a very constructive social function of temple work in a modern age which has virtually no useful work for most of its elderly. (The growing practice of sending retired couples on missions makes a similar social contribution.)

In a more theological context, Buerger's paper raises the question of the respective roles played by the social environment and revelation in both the form and the content of the temple endowment. The most emotional and controversial aspect of this issue, of course, involves possible borrowings from Masonry. Richard Bushman has warned us (1966, 1984), with persuasive examples, that we should be wary of facile assumptions about environmental borrowings, a position I fully share. Yet I see no reason to argue the opposite extreme typical of folk Mormonism — that revelation of the endowment (or of anything else) came spontaneously out of heaven, through a cultural and social vacuum, and into human minds somehow totally devoid of or unaffected by pre-existing conceptions or proclivities.

Mormonism, perhaps more than most religions, recognizes the human element in the revelatory process, whether in initiating that process (D&C 9) or in providing the conceptual categories and constraints within which a given revelation is understood. The Book of Mormon readily acknowledges "mistakes of men" in its preface, and the revelations of the Doctrine and Covenants came to the Lord's servants "in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding" despite their tendency to err (D&C 1:24–28). Why should it be different with the revelations on temple work?

Given the involvement of the Smith family and friends in the Masonic Order prior to 1842 and the similarities between portions of the Mormon and Masonic rituals after 1842, the question of some degree of Mormon borrowing from the Masons obviously arises. That the Masonic ceremony itself changed and evolved even in recent centuries does not necessarily invalidate Joseph Smith's claim that he was restoring, by revelation, an even more ancient temple ceremony to which the Masonic one bore certain resemblances. On the other hand, neither does that claim constitute a declaration of the total independence of the Mormon temple ceremony from any external cultural influences, includ-

ing Masonry. Frankly, I have some difficulty understanding why this should be such a big issue, except to those with a fairly limited understanding of how a prophet gets ideas. Since prophets and religions always arise and are nurtured within a given cultural context, itself evolving, it should not be difficult to understand why even the most original revelations have to be expressed in the idioms of the culture and biography of the revelator.

It seems to me that the most original, authentic, and enduring temple elements are its *doctrines* and the *covenants* transacted there. By *covenants* I mean the commitments made to certain standards and principles — not those associated with the signs and tokens, which seem to me to have only the most peripheral doctrinal significance. The basic temple doctrines with their associated covenants indeed call for a deeper understanding and a stronger commitment than a new member usually has at the time of baptism. It seems entirely appropriate to me that a member should take on those covenants in a sacred place and at a more mature stage of spiritual development.

These particular covenants and doctrines, however, take less than an hour of the endowment. The rest of the ceremony is best understood, I think, as a kind of liturgical medium for carrying and reinforcing the crucial covenants. Even *those* elements might be subject to some modification as revelation dictates, but the rest of the ceremony — the liturgical trappings — could be replaced altogether in accordance with the varied historical and cultural settings in which the LDS temples are found. We do not value fish more or less because they are found in fresh or salt water or because they are surrounded by this or that kind of marine geology or flora. Similarly, a great variety in environmental elements ought to be acceptable as the medium for the essential elements of the endowment.

To discover that our current medium contains Masonic elements should be no more disturbing than the Disney elements of its films; or the non-Mormon artistic traditions and motifs which appear in the murals of older temples (Seifrit 1986); or that the meeting rooms in the temples, like those in chapels, strongly resemble those found in many Protestant churches, with a pulpit or altar, seats or pews in rows, etc.; or that the hymns sung in LDS sacrament meetings are borrowed in form, if not always in content, from the Protestant tradition (as is, for that matter, most of the order of service); or that the youth program for males was adopted from the Boy Scouts of America; or that Christmas trees (and even Santa Claus) appear in Mormon churches at Christmas time; or that the Church bureaucracy has borrowed liberally from the corporate business world for its procedures and practices. The list could continue, for Mormonism always has been, and always will be, given expression primarily in forms and idioms familiar to its converts and adherents.

Of course, such expressions may be consciously and strategically chosen. Thus, just as the assimilationist policies of Church leaders in the twentieth century have modified the endowment and garment to make them seem more "normal," so in the nineteenth century, when Mormonism was trying to establish its uniqueness and distance from conventional Christianity, it is not surprising that its leaders would include in the endowment some elements that

were anathema to that Christianity, including Masonic elements. (A possible parallel is how some American blacks have rejected "white" Christianity for "alien" Islam.)

With such an understanding of the interaction of cultural, temporal, and revelatory elements in their religion, Mormons may better identify which elements are truly distinctive, inspired, and indispensable, while considering all the rest subject to modification or even elimination as cultural settings change. This principle operates in Mormonism as a whole, and there is no doctrinal reason that it could not apply to the temple as well. As time goes on, we may see variations in the endowment, not only from one generation to another but also from one country to another, as long as the essentials remain. It seems to me that the question of "Masonic borrowings" shrinks into insignificance with this more expansive perspective.

The changes in the endowment (and in the garment) traced in the Buerger paper can be understood as responses to the changing circumstances surrounding the Mormon religion more generally. Max Weber's disciple Ernst Troeltsch (1931) pointed to a recurring cycle in the history of new religions that by now has many empirical replications. Though religions and their new converts tend to be characterized at the beginning by many mystical and spiritual experiences, and by much "charismatic" fervor, they tend to be "tamed" with the passage of time, if they are to survive at all. A rapidly increasing membership brings with it many organizational imperatives, leading to increasing bureaucratization, standardization, and routinization. A hostile social environment will exert pressure on the new religion to give up or tone down its most deviant characteristics in exchange for the social respectability necessary for its survival and continued growth. The unique charismatic elements which nurtured the religion in its infancy are eventually "routinized" and brought under institutional control. This process can be seen as readily in the history of Mormonism as in the histories of countless other new religions. It has been thoroughly described and documented, most recently by Thomas Alexander (1986) in his history of the Church from 1890 to 1930.

As Alexander indicates, during the 1920s both the endowment and the garment underwent a great deal of modification, shortening, streamlining, and standardization as part of the assimilation process (1986, 291–303). Indeed, there is some reason to believe that the Twelve may have seriously considered even relinquishing altogether the use of the garment outside the temple (Boyd 1985). Buerger highlights the related point, made by Allen Roberts (1979), about the decline of unique Mormon symbolism in the temples and elsewhere in twentieth-century Mormon culture. This classical process of routinization and standardization, even in the temples, has continued down to the present time, when computers are used to reassemble on the records those segments of temple ordinances that have been pragmatically disassembled in the actual doing.

What Weber called the "routinization of charisma" can be seen even more clearly in the relation of the temple to the rest of the religion. The increase in temple activity during the first half of this century, documented both by

Buerger and by Alexander, has clearly been accompanied by a decline in the more spontaneous charismatic expressions of healings, visions, tongues, millennial anticipation, and accounts of the Three Nephites. Though I do not have systematic data on this decline, it is clearly implied by Gordon and Gary Shepherd's analysis of the changing content of general conference sermons (1984, 254) and by Thomas Alexander (1986, 294–98). Anyone who has lived as long as I have, furthermore, has seen the typical testimony meeting transformed from a sharing of personal spiritual experiences into a series of formula recitations about things to be thankful for. Alexander has made the astute observation in a personal conversation that a major if unintended function of increased emphasis on an increasingly standardized temple routine has been that the spontaneous and unregulated charismatic expressions of early Mormonism have been displaced by the controlled, channeled, and institutionalized expression of charisma in the temple. Insofar as the residual charisma of the temple experience continues to be eroded by batch processing and enhanced technology, we may have a partial explanation for the declining popular enthusiasm for temples implied by Buerger's figures on the flattening rates of recent temple activity.

Yet it would be premature to conclude from Buerger's tables and graphs that there has been a decline in temple activity more generally. Statistical relationships between conversion rates and rates of temple activity are complicated by both time and geography. There is always a time lag between high conversion rates in an area and the construction of a temple there. We would have to break down the data according to time and place to make meaningful inferences about relationships between conversion rates or Church growth and temple activity. This would be even truer for vicarious temple work, as distinguished from personal endowments and marriages. A further complication arises from defection rates which, in certain times and places around the world, have been phenomenal. Thus, high rates of church growth accompanied by low rates of temple work may say more about defection than about commitment to temple work in high-growth areas.

My final observation deals with the implications of the temple for dogma and popular belief. It is unavoidable that ritual, like other human transactions, not only reinforces beliefs but even generates them, sometimes intentionally and sometimes not. What may the Saints unintentionally be learning from the temple experience, especially if it is repeated often? At the popular level, for example, the "protection" promised of the garment has often been taken as literal protection against physical injury, a property never attributed to it officially or doctrinally, as far as I know, but nevertheless widely circulated in the folklore. Buerger reports that serious consideration was once given to casting a dark-skinned actor in the role of Lucifer in a temple film. If this had happened, the image would surely have been sacralized and, by implication, canonized, despite its origins in folklore, rather than in revealed doctrine.

What notions may unintentionally be "canonized" by consistently portraying Adam, Eve, and other biblical figures not only as European but as Nordic, even in the temples of Asia and the Pacific? This bias, serious enough in our

visitors' centers, may actually take on doctrinal implications in the temple, despite the routine injunction that the portrayal of events in Eden is to be understood figuratively. And what inadvertent teaching occurs through films that portray the Father and Son as white, not just in a celestial or spiritual sense but in a mortal, racial sense, with the stereotypic white beards of Catholic and Protestant art; or that show the dwelling place of the Father with the stereotypic golden throne and arches; or that portray Lucifer as a good-looking man with a black Van Dyke beard; or that present non-Mormon clergy as slow-witted dupes dependent on Satan for their livelihood, who spout medieval theological notions that have had no currency for generations; or that seem to say husband-wife relationships are in some spiritual sense egalitarian but temporally hierarchical, even in the temple?

Certainly the Saints are not so unimaginative that they always take everything literally, nor is it up to scholars to reconstruct the temple endowment to match their own notions of modernity and respectability. Yet in a Church which aspires to have universal appeal, it is incumbent upon all of us to attend to elements of cultural ethnocentrism which remain intertwined with our teachings, wherever they occur. One way to undermine both ethnocentrism and undue literalism in the temple is to permit the expression of the endowment in as great a variety of cultural idioms as possible, consistent with the integrity of the fundamental covenants and doctrines which must unite Latter-day Saints across all cultures. Should that begin to happen, we shall all see far greater change in the temple endowment than the relatively modest examples traced for us in David Buerger's careful and interesting paper!

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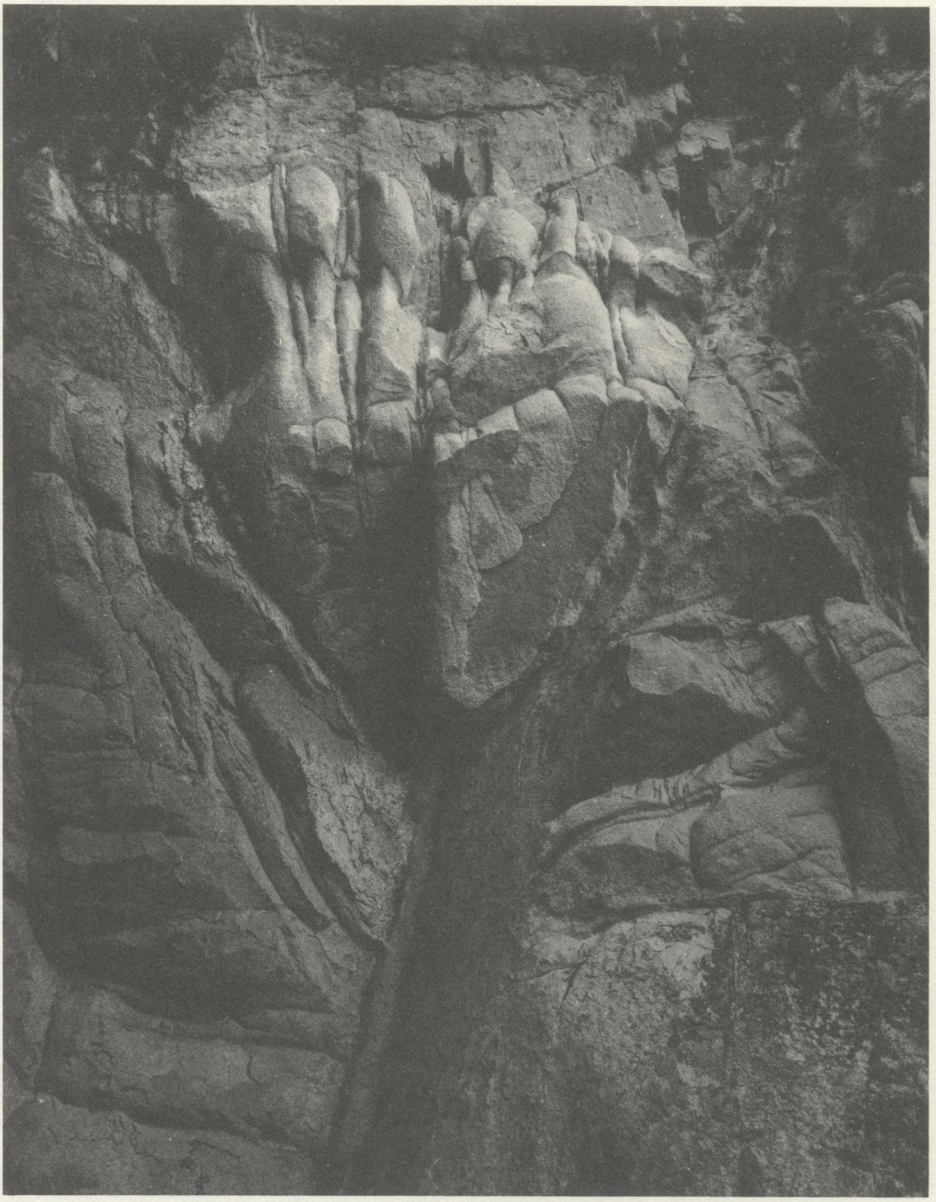
Our Way

Paris Anderson

we were young
and war was our way
we'd fight in class
or after school
we'd die on the way home
and after snacks
of fruit and milk
we'd fight again
in neighbors' yards
we'd have new weapons
that never ran dry
and force fields
that never failed
we'd climb on fences
and crawl along the top
(wooden slivers in our hands)
and when we saw the enemy
we'd point our sticks
and jump and
fire as we fell
complete surprise
in the enemy's eyes
he was hopelessly outnumbered

PARIS ANDERSON is a preschool teacher living in Provo, Utah. He is currently working on two novels.

one to one
but we were many
and I commanded all
we'd hit the ground
roll over once
and fire again
the enemy
would bleed and die
and we would gloat
shots from his dying hand
shots in our gut
(our only vulnerable spot)
we'd fall
"Medic!"
"I'm hit!"
the enemy's sister
angel of mercy
Kiss me better
Kiss the dead
we'd both recover
and fight again
we were young
and war was our way



"The Truth Is the Most Important Thing": The New Mormon History According to Mark Hofmann

Allen D. Roberts

On 23 January 1987, an unemotional Mark W. Hofmann entered the Utah State Prison after pleading guilty to two counts of murder and two counts of theft by deception before third District Judge Kenneth Rigtrup. The judge sentenced Hofmann to a single five-year-to-life term and three lesser one-to-fifteen year terms, bringing to a dramatic end the sensational career of Mormondom's most celebrated and controversial document dealer.

As part of his guilty plea, Hofmann admitted forging and fraudulently selling the famed 1830 Martin Harris to W. W. Phelps or white salamander letter, as well as selling the mysterious, probably nonexistent McLellin collection. With this confession, Hofmann partially answered a question that has burned in the minds of believers in and students of Mormonism: Are the Hofmann-discovered documents authentic historical finds or ingenious forgeries? The answer to this question has important ramifications for both nineteenth-century and recent Mormon history.

In exchange for a reduced sentence on one murder and concurrent rather than consecutive sentences, Hofmann agreed to disclose the details of his dark career, a promise the public viewed skeptically but awaited anxiously. When the 571-page transcript of the interviews was released 31 July 1987, it seemed to raise as many questions as it answered. To close observers, crucial parts of Hofmann's testimony appeared incomplete, evasive, inconsistent, or simply incredible.

In published interviews before the bombings and in numerous places in the transcript, Hofmann said he dealt documents solely for financial gain. However, since Hofmann has proven himself to be a master deceiver and skillful liar, we must weigh his words against his actions in this claim, as in all others.

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The question of whether Hofmann created history-challenging documents for financial gain or whether his agenda included the undermining of Mormonism through its historical Achilles heel deserves close scrutiny. This is especially true since the Hofmann documents have had great impact on how many perceive Mormonism and their own lives in relation to it.

It is the intent of this paper to explore the question of motive in the forgery of early Mormon holographs. At the onset, I want to make it clear that I accept Hofmann's confessions, together with the extensive forensic evidence presented in the preliminary hearing of April and May, 1986, along with the research that Linda Sillitoe and I have done, as documentation that all the key documents dealt by Hofmann, as well as numerous others, are forgeries.

Hofmann's forged Americana, including the "Oath of a Free Man," fit as neatly into American history as his early documents did into Mormon history (Interviews, Exhibit Q). None contained revisionist content, and many were highly profitable. Why, then, since Hofmann could make money from either testimonial or controversial Mormon documents, did he produce documents of a revisionistic nature — which were actually impossible to sell to some of his best customers?

In answering this question, I hope to shed light on several historical themes found in key Hofmann documents, upon their author and his intent, and then analyze both the man and his career in relation to Mormon history.

Mark Hofmann's documents influenced our perceptions of Church founder Joseph Smith in several ways. Most dramatic, perhaps, was the portrayal of Joseph as a professional money-digger. At least six Hofmann documents promote the old anti-Mormon accusation that Joseph Smith was heavily involved in money-digging or treasure-seeking, an activity thought by many to be inconsistent with his role as God's prophet.

1. The 1825 letter from Joseph Smith to Josiah Stowell describes treasure-seeking in Joseph's own words to a family friend, offering advice on divining with a hazel stick (Interviews, Exhibit E). Supposedly the earliest Joseph Smith holograph, written in his nineteenth year, this document shows Joseph to be not just a young dabbler, as suggested in Joseph's own history, but an experienced, professional treasure-seeker. The document's content was consistent with both friendly and hostile sources describing the Smiths' involvement in this activity.

2. The 1825 Money-Digging "Articles of Agreement" relates essentially the same treasure-seeking arrangement as the Stowell letter. The LDS Church obtained it from Steven F. Christensen through Gordon B. Hinckley in 1983, but it was not yet known in the historical community and remains unpublished. An early version of the contract had been published on 23 April 1880 in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Hofmann, evidently, had rediscovered the original document, which differed slightly from the earlier published version. Only a typescript of the document was sold to murder victim Christensen for $5,000 including "all literary and property rights" soon after he paid $40,000 for the salamander letter and began a research project to describe early Mormon origins.

The contract lent credibility to the salamander letter and later to the Stowell letter, both of unusual but parallel content. As we will see, this formula of using a forgery to substantiate or even authenticate another forgery was a hallmark ploy of Hofmann.

3. The 1838 Joseph Smith "Treasure revelation" to Hyrum Smith, dated 25 May 1838, is an eight-line, one-sentence revelation addressed to "Hyram" Smith. The Lord promises that if "Hyram . . . will come strateaway to Far West (Missouri) and inquire of his brother it shall be shown him how that he may be freed from de(b)t and obtain a grate treasure in the earth" (Jessee 1984, 358–59).

The document's significance rests on the interpretation of this promise, which seems to suggest a treasure-hunting venture to obtain financial gain. It has raised considerable comment among historians, who have used various contextual arguments to support divergent views. The revelation is believable for its subtlety. It underscores the nontraditional view that Joseph Smith's mind was occupied with treasure-seeking, even as a mature president-prophet. Historically, the letter is dated a few days after Joseph and others found Indian mounds which they believed contained ancient treasure.

4. The 1830 white salamander letter of Martin Harris to W. W. Phelps is the most fertile document to come from Hofmann's pen (Interviews, Exhibit 0). Each phrase contains undismissable implications for students of Mormon origins. The letter substantially affects historical understandings of Martin Harris, Joseph Smith, and the veracity of Mormon genesis. Perhaps more than any other influence in the 1980s to date, this document has been the catalyst for concentrated study of nineteenth-century folk religion, white magic, and money-digging. The document has placed Joseph Smith's character under extensive scrutiny, since Harris connects him with seerstones, enchantments, elusive tricksters, and repeated allusions to money, treasure, and gold. The overtones are clearly more secular than sacred.

Historians, scholars, and collectors took sides over the letter's authenticity and meaning. Mormon historians were surprisingly accommodating, perhaps because the "new" view of Joseph Smith had already been presented in Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* (1945), A. C. Lambert's files in the University of Utah's special collections, chapters of a recently published book by Dale Morgan (1986), and several nineteenth-century primary accounts. The letter came so close to E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unvailed* (1834) that Jerald Tanner suggested Howe as a source, a surmise which Hofmann has since confirmed.

Other possible sources for the letter are as varied as A. E. Hoffman's fantasy "The Golden Flower Pot" (1967) and research notes prepared by Hofmann's friends. The letter's intent seems to be to place Joseph Smith squarely in the shadowy milieu of money-digging.

5. Evidence recovered during the investigation suggests that Hofmann intended to create or was creating some of the lost 116 pages of the Book of Mormon. He discussed the pages frequently and did an extremely detailed study of the content and language of the Book of Mormon. His own forgeries

provided samples of Martin Harris's handwriting, and he procured a photograph of Emma Smith's handwriting, both of which would be needed to authenticate the pages penned by Joseph's two earliest scribes.

Hofmann pursued a set of 116 pages in Bakersfield, California, but later said that what he found was a forgery. He provided two pages of his notes to collector Brent Ashworth. He told another friend, Brent Metcalfe, about the Bakersfield forgery and referred to another set of pages that "might be real." He gave Metcalfe quotes from the "Book of Lehi" over the telephone. Metcalfe, who had shared his own ideas with Mark, found Hofmann's quotes remarkably consistent with a "theology of money-digging" that Metcalfe saw in the Book of Mormon.

One quote from page four of Hofmann's "Book of Lehi" notes reads, "He [God] should cause to be found certain treasures in the hole of the earth, and out of the earth the righteous shall prosper." On pages 5 and 6, salt mines, gold, silver and jewels are mentioned.

The present monetary worth of the 116 pages would have been inestimable, and several Church leaders actually expressed an interest in them. A journal entry written 28 June 1985 by Steven F. Christensen recounts how Elder Hugh Pinnock asked Hofmann to find the pages. Hofmann needed no invitation, however, since that discovery was a very early stated goal.

6. The 1829 letter by Lucy Mack Smith to Mary Pierce which surfaced in 1982 was welcomed enthusiastically by the Church (Interviews, Exhibit D). In it, the Prophet's mother offers a religious context for the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and describes her son's translation process. It even alludes to material from the lost 116 pages. Hofmann's testimonial letters from Martin Harris and David Whitmer to Walter Conrad also appeared in 1982 capping a three-year period during which Hofmann was pedestaled and honored as the discoverer of hallowed proofs of the validity of historical Mormon claims. The money-digging documents began to surface the following year.

The key Hofmann documents — real and unseen — after 1983 introduced several other themes at odds with traditional history. The salamander and Stowell letters portrayed Joseph Smith as a practitioner of folk religion, familiar with the occult. Indeed, USU Institute instructor Rhett James cryptically observed of the Hofmann document phenomenon that there arose a sort of evangelistic spirit among historians that may have overwhelmed their historical objectivity. It became fashionable to think in terms of folk magic.

Most disturbing, the salamander letter replaced the numinous personage Moroni with a pugnacious "white salamander in the bottom of the hole" that transfigures itself into a spirit, strikes Joseph three times, asks him to bring his brother Alvin, who is dead, and intones, "I tricked you," when he interferes with Joseph's ability to see in his "stone" as the "Old Spirit" directed (Interviews, Exhibit 0).

Yet LDS historians found contextual support for the salamander and money digging letters, and even spiritual connotations to explain the allusions to magic. Historian D. Michael Quinn has declared that God has, in every millennia, had his prophets employ what we call magic in manifesting God's

mysterious works. Despite the accommodation of the religio-occultic phenomenon by Mormon historians, members and Church leaders never became comfortable with the strange revelations in these letters.

Another "Hofmann document" in substance, though not in physical reality, deposed Joseph in favor of his brother Alvin. The Oliver Cowdery history, as reported in the *Salt Lake Tribune* 15 May 1985 and *Los Angeles Times* 13 June 1985, recorded that Alvin first found the gold plates and encountered a "taunting salamander" that prevented him from taking them from the hill. The history, supposedly dictated by Joseph Smith to Cowdery in 1830 or 31, was painstakingly described by Hofmann's friend and Christensen's former employee, Brent Metcalfe, as related to him by an "unidentified source."

Although no historian, archivist, or Church leader could confirm the existence of the history, neither could any definitively state it did not exist since Joseph Fielding Smith had once referred to similar records written in Cowdery's hand (Smith 1952, 1:106). The lack of deniability undoubtedly frustrated Church leaders who know neither the source nor the whereabouts of the volume. Their confusion had the appearance of a cover-up to Oliver Cowdery history well-wishers and seemed to enhance the possibility that the volume existed.

If authentic, the Cowdery history would have had a major revisionistic impact on the role of Joseph Smith, and therein lies a motive. The secret source told the *Los Angeles Times*, "The Cowdery history and the role it gives Alvin Smith lends further credibility to the documents disclosed earlier, which portray Joseph Smith's involvement in occult methods to find hidden treasure without any references to religious events so familiar to present-day Mormons." Religion writer John Dart added that "the source said he decided to be interviewed about the history because the Cowdery documents provide corroboration for the salamander references in the Harris letter, which some Mormons are claiming is a forgery."

The source for the news article was none other than Mark Hofmann, publicly bolstering his earlier forgeries from behind the scenes. In addition, Hofmann supported the occult and treasure-seeking implications of the salamander and Stowell letters, diminished Joseph Smith's role from founding father of Mormonism to a second-string prophet, eroded the veracity of the official Church history, (including Smith's 1838 account contained in the Pearl of Great Price), and gave credence to anti-Mormon charges, once dismissed by the Church because of obvious bias.

My emphasis on the above documents, which appeared between 1983 and 1985 following the Church-affirming 1982 finds, does not preclude revisionist content in early Hofmann forgeries. Hofmann sold the 1844 Joseph Smith III blessing to the Church in 1981 a year after the Anthon transcript appeared (Interviews, Exhibit B). The blessing from Joseph Smith to his son promises "even that the anointing of the progenitor shall be upon the head of my son, and his seed after him, from generation to generation."

Possible source documents for the blessing include an 1835 blessing given to Joseph Smith III by Joseph Smith, Sr., in Kirtland and recalled by Lucy

Mack Smith, and the testimony in the Temple Lot Suit of the 1890s, a document Hofmann is known to have studied. The blessing, penned in the handwriting of clerk Thomas Bullock, was supported by an 1865 letter from Bullock to Brigham Young, also a forgery. The letter includes the phrase "I will not surrender that blessing." It expresses concern for the safety of the blessing if it is given to Brigham Young and by implication confirms the appropriateness of father-to-son succession. Thus, the two Bullock documents imply that LDS prophets function without divine authority. The Church quietly received the Bullock letter from Hofmann after the Joseph Smith III blessing was traded to the RLDS Church. The letter has not been released to the public.

Hofmann documents began affecting the writing of historians in small but sometimes significant ways. For example, Hofmann's Joseph Smith III blessing caused authors Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery to omit from their book *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* (1984) a chapter on evidence that Joseph, indeed, blessed his son.

Another Hofmann forgery, Joseph's letter to Maria and Sarah Lawrence (Jessee 1984, 596–97) ripped at old wounds. In 1844, Joseph Smith wrote of a claim against him "for adultery on the testimony of William Law" (HC 6:403). Law claimed to have caught Joseph and Maria Lawrence in a compromising situation in October 1843 and again on 1 January 1844. Law was outraged because Joseph was legal guardian and part executor (with Law and Hyrum Smith) of the Lawrence sisters' estate, valued at more than $7,000. The Hofmann letter may have been intended to focus attention on this controversial episode.

Rumored Hofmann documents — those that Hofmann discussed but that have thus far not surfaced — point to various Church leaders as promiscuous and/or bigoted. These include letters purportedly by or about Joseph Smith and polygamy and one from Brigham Young to Charles C. Rich regarding an accusation that Apostle Rich had committed adultery with a black woman servant. In the letter, Young supposedly wrote, "What a man does with his own property is his own business," an apparent condoning of adultery, biracial sex, probable sexual exploitation, and bigotry.

The last Joseph Smith holograph forged by Hofmann was from the Prophet to General Jonathan Dunham of the Nauvoo Legion (Interviews, Exhibit G). This note written from Carthage Jail shows Joseph as desperate, rather than as a willing martyr who went "like a lamb to the slaughter." In it, Smith orders Dunham to "proceed without delay" to Carthage with the Nauvoo Legion to rescue Smith and his compatriots who are "in the hands of our sworn enemies."

Hofmann's first known forged document is the text, in letter form, of a second anointing blessing. Dated on the reverse side "c. 1912," this blessing provided the text of a highly confidential temple ritual reserved for the Mormon elite. In 1979 Hofmann brought this to A. J. Simmonds, director of Utah State University Special Collections, along with two photocopied pages from Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History*, stating that no text of a second anointing blessing was known to exist (1945, 280–81). Hofmann's copy was, obviously, one of a kind. Yet he sold it to Simmonds for only $60.

What's interesting is that in June 1978, a young man had brought it to the Utah Lighthouse Ministry and allowed Sandra Tanner to photocopy it. He said it was his grandfather's blessing. The fact that Hofmann forged the document very early and sold it months before he took the Anthon transcript to the Church is significant. So sensitive is the topic of second anointings that a recent article by David Buerger published in DIALOGUE (1983) contributed to Buerger's current expulsion from the Church archives.

My final example — though others exist — is the Amos Spaulding land deed, a contract dated 19 January 1822, which bears the signatures of both Solomon Spaulding and Sidney Rigdon. One of Hofmann's worst forgeries, technically speaking, the document filled a purpose in convincing Elder Hugh Pinnock that the McLellin collection — of which the land deed was supposedly a part — could be extremely damaging to the institutional Church. One of the earliest and most popular attempts to discredit the Book of Mormon was a claim that Joseph Smith plagiarized the book from a historical romance called "Manuscript Story" written in about 1812 by the Reverend Solomon Spaulding of Conneaut, Ohio (Spaulding 1885). Spaulding's volume was supposedly then altered and doctrinally enhanced by Sidney Rigdon. The Church replied that Spaulding and Rigdon never met. Bruce R. McConkie asserted that "Sidney Rigdon had nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the Book of Mormon and he never so much as saw Joseph Smith until after the publication of that book" (McConkie 1966, 749).

However, this land deed, signed by both men, works to disprove the traditional Mormon assertion that Rigdon and Spaulding were not acquainted. After Pinnock saw the document, book dealer Steve Barnett noticed the anachronistic date (Spaulding, who had died in 1816, couldn't have written in 1822) and bought the deed at a greatly reduced price for the Rigdon signature alone.

Both Pinnock and Christensen believed the McLellin collection contained other threatening documents, including an affidavit from Emma Smith that names Joseph's visit from Moroni as his first experience with the divine, thus omitting the First Vision. Both men played a role in helping Hofmann obtain a bank loan to purchase the collection and donate it to the Church.

The number and significance of these documents strongly suggests that Hofmann's motive in forging Mormon documents involved more than money. In assessing that motive, we must look at the man as well as his products. Once again, we must weigh his actions against his words.

Some associates of Hofmann believed he knew little about history. Yet with others he discussed a wealth of Mormon minutiae. Some believed he valued history, while others argued that if he did, he wouldn't sell to private collectors, including the Church. Yet he destroyed an authentic and valuable Egyptian papyrus, altered real documents, stole others, and created fakes. Many saw him as a believing, active Mormon, but his close circle of friends knew he was not a believer. More important, Hofmann's philosophy, as expressed to close friends, was based on what he called pragmatism, a fundamentally amoral, self-serving system of convenience.

Hofmann made no secret of his relationship with several Church leaders, most notably President Gordon B. Hinckley, at first Council of the Twelve advisor to the Historical Department and later a counselor in the First Presidency. He did keep secret his relationships with evangelical critics and scholars the Church would view as anti-Mormon — though he confided to them many secrets supposedly gleaned through his contacts at Church headquarters and his rumored access to the First Presidency's vault.

Those who saw his handwriting — or rather his block printing, for he rarely wrote in cursive — doubted he could forge the flowing script apparent in the letters he sold. Evidence and his testimony show that he had the technical knowledge, the equipment, the manual ability, and the careful schooling he needed to produce the documents. What's more, he knew how to research, how to profit from others' research and ideas, and how to cover his tracks.

Evidence in the preliminary hearing linked Mark Hofmann to several pseudonyms, most commonly "Mike Hansen." "Mike Hansen" ordered printing plates for documents Mark Hofmann sold, sometimes giving Hofmann's telephone number or paying with Hofmann's personal check. Shortly before Mark Hofmann killed two people, "Mike Hansen" also bought batteries and mercury switches like those used to make the pipe bombs that killed Steve Christensen and Kathy Sheets.

A survey of call slips in the book section of special collections at the University of Utah yielded some interesting finds. Beginning in 1976, the year Mark returned from his mission, Mark Hofmann or M. W. Hofmann filled out a number of call slips. Several, as early as 1979, were signed by "Mike Hansen." Document analyst George Throckmorton found that all the "Mike Hansen" signatures in evidence were written by the same person. Thus, by 1979, the year Mark Hofman married, the year he offered two forged documents, and the year before he discovered the Anthon transcript, he apparently had reason to sign a pseudonym when he checked out rare books on Mormon money and other topics.

Not only did Mark Hofmann "create" Mormon history manually and theoretically, he made it personally. Some Hofmann forgeries bolstered members' faith; others are said to have damaged faith. The tension long felt between the institutional Church and its history may be reinforced by the Hofmann forgeries, since Church leaders can now point to the negative consequences of examining history and questioning traditional views. Church leaders may reiterate the admonition to separate matters of faith from those of history, or justify, as Elder Dallin Oaks did, the institutionally conrolled "use of truth" (Oaks 1985).

However, while Hofmann's documents may be identified and dismissed, his longest-lasting impact may be that he opened a Pandora's box of renewed interest in Mormon history. Many are researching, writing, and questioning comfortable assumptions. Historians have found contextual support for Hofmann's documents, just as he believed they would. But they no longer have his own primary, holographic documents to legitimize their revisionist conclusions.

In recognizing the forgeries and forger, we say good-bye to a veritable "Hall of Fame" of superlative documents. They include:

1. The earliest Joseph Smith holograph
2. The very last Joseph Smith holograph
3. The earliest Lucy Mack Smith holograph
4. The earliest Martin Harris holograph, plus three other handwriting samples from a man who had previously left none
5. The earliest history in the Church (i.e., the Cowdery History)
6. The only document signed by Solomon Spaulding and Sidney Rigdon
7. The only second anointing holograph
8. The original Anthon transcript
9. Deseret currency, handwritten white notes (early Utah currency) and Spanish Fork co-op notes, unknown in Hofmann's types and denominations
10. The first document ever printed in America (and its twin)

It is easy now in retrospect to say, "No one could have really found all of those documents." But at the time, no one other than Hofmann knew the totality of this list; and, more importantly, Hofmann was in most circles highly trusted.

We say hello to an enigma. Mark Hofmann was raised in the Church, filled a mission, married in the temple, associated with Church authorities, maintained a current temple recommend, and fathered four children, one while he was a murder suspect. Many thought they knew him; few think so now.

As a college undergraduate, Mark wrote a theme in the form of a letter to his mother. In it, he protested what he saw as Church duplicity and secrecy, particularly surrounding its history. Writing with the arrogance and absolutism commonly associated with youth, he suggested an obviously felt chasm between what Church members really think and how they participate in the Church. He insisted that the Church could withstand the exposures of history, that honesty was best for individuals and organizations. It is telling that he did not express his own religious beliefs.

On 29 April 1979, the date on that letter, Mark Hofmann had already tried his hand at forging. He was familiar with both traditional and highly critical approaches to Mormon history. He had delved into many "mysteries" and, through his systematic reading in special collections, was delving into more. He wrote to his mother, "My conviction is that the truth is the most important thing. Our idea of reality should be consistent with it."

One of the great ironies is that through forging documents, which in Hofmann's mind filled the voids in Mormon history, he manipulated and distorted history. In the process he negated his own search for truth and complicated ours.

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The Successful Marketing of the Holy Grail

Linda Sillitoe

NOT LONG AGO AT A CONVENTION in Salt Lake City for police chiefs, a visiting law enforcer dubbed Utah a "white-collar crime capital." He was alluding to pyramid schemes and speculative investments initiated by unscrupulous LDS individuals preying upon the trust between people with cultural and religious bonds. Professional concern about involvement of LDS leaders in fraudulent businesses such as AFCO focused on these men's impact on rank and file member-investors, rather than upon the possibility of naiveté among the top Church elders. The participation of the victimized was at issue as well as the proclivities of the perpetrators.

Though no mention was made of old letters and early Mormon money, that market too involved speculative investments and high finance, as well as that most valuable currency — trust. For sale were many tangible bits of Mormon history. In Church offices, antique book departments, and conservative businesses, a fragmented community was involved in an increasingly inflated, highly competitive trade in Mormon documents. Information in media and scholarly publications soon reached an audience beyond that core of secretive document and book dealing. The salamander became a cultural folk creature that was soon relegated to myth following the Salt Lake bombings and the subsequent detection of forgery. These events raise questions not only for a court of law or a parole board, but for all of us who are part of a participating consciousness.

At a recent symposium at Brigham Young University, Robert Stott, lead prosecutor in the murder and forgery cases against Mark Hofmann, castigated Mormon historians and researchers for hindering the investigation by insisting upon the authenticity of the Hofmann documents and by being generally reluctant to cooperate with the investigation. My own familiarity with the

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history community and its attitudes, my impressions from hundreds of interviews regarding the bombings and forgeries, and my own mixed feelings have left me acutely aware of the chasm of suspicion and hostility between the history and law enforcement camps.

In acknowledging that the many kinds and degrees of denial prominent among historians and researchers did complicate the prosecution of Mark Hofmann, it is only fair to emphasize that the history community unconsciously reacted to the investigation as fraud victims typically react — by denying they are victims and by accusing the investigators of creating the problems. Those close to murder typically react quite differently, by seeking protection, disclosing potentially damaging information, and expressing outrage. These murders erupted within the framework of a complex, secrecy-laced scam, which ultimately robbed many people in tangible and intangible ways. Nothing about the forgeries or bombings case has been simple, including the response of a well-educated and law-abiding community within which the unthinkable happened.

When Mark Hofmann was injured by a bomb of his own making 16 October 1985, the day after he killed Steven F. Christensen and Kathleen W. Sheets with similar bombs, people interested in Mormon history knew him as an extraordinary document dealer. His success depended not only upon the skill with which he researched and forged, but also upon his manipulation of public and private perceptions. To understand how this occurred, we need to take a step back — for perspective — and look at assumptions common at the time.

By the time Mark Hofmann returned from his mission in January 1976, professional LDS historians had been officially writing Mormon history for several years. However, Church leaders were giving mixed reviews to the efforts of Leonard Arrington's History Division. The sesquecentennial sixteen-volume history of the Church, scheduled to begin appearing in 1980, was abandoned as a project, Arrington was released, and research historians were moved to BYU. Despite criticism, the energy to write a new Mormon history did not disappear, nor did the Church's mandate to collect and study history. These conflicting forces may have created a vacuum that historical documents and research, speculation, and testimonial declarations about them soon filled.

History is crucial in Mormonism and among Mormons. Why? First of all, the Mormon church is authoritative, and official accounts of its origin link the current prophet and president to divine guidance through Joseph Smith's first vision and subsequent revelations. The Book of Mormon, introduced by Joseph as an ancient record, adds another layer of history. Since the Church is young, scholarly debate and research have only begun, and the Mormon past is near and personal to many members. Finally, history is political. History is everyone's means to every end. For some, it reinforces testimony and policy; for others, history "proves" that the Church is true and investigators should join; at times history provides the precedent for change and the rejection of change; and history even attacks the Church's claims, which are based on canonized history.

Mark Hofmann knew what history meant to the orthodox collector, the high Church leader, the liberal scholar, and the outside critic. His tactics

between 1980–85 convinced historians and collectors in Mormon studies that primary, handwritten documents were abundantly discoverable. The documents of lesser importance than the few that made news stories gave his major discoveries credibility, and vice versa. His customers knew that they could lose out on something big if they didn't carefully maintain a relationship with Hofmann. During 1985, Hofmann's success in the national antiquities market bolstered his local reputation.

A few who dealt with Hofmann frequently had some idea how many documents flowed through his hands. But they rationalized his prolific sales, for they, too, had all in a fortunate moment found something interesting enough to carry a jolt of excitement. Hofmann, the story went, worked hard, had sufficient capital and time, developed original techniques, hired assistants, or had a spiritual gift to find Church documents. Repeatedly, scholars and collectors insisted that if they had Hofmann's time and money, they could find as much or more than Hofmann did.

Why did so many believe this illusion of plentiful, primary documents when very few handwritten documents penned by Church leaders before the railroad came to Utah have been found by anyone but Hofmann during the same years? For one thing, Hofmann's quiet demeanor, his reflection of the various Church-related values his associates held, and his suggestions of authentication procedures all inspired trust. In addition, the numbers of documents and Mormon currencies that were suddenly extant with no known link to Hofmann convinced many — including Church leaders, historians, and collectors — that the field of nineteenth-century documents was "white already to harvest." We apparently lived within a historical restoration of all things.

Hofmann says he began counterfeiting and forging literally as a child. In any case, he burst spectacularly into the Mormon history market in April 1980 at the age of twenty-five. The Church was celebrating its sesquecentennial despite the absence of the sixteen-volume history, and despite a ruckus in the national and Utah press regarding the Mormon effort in several states to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment and the excommunication of Sonia Johnson. So closely linked were these events, that President Gordon B. Hinckley, first counselor in the First Presidency, conducted an April 1980 conference session televised from the David Whitmer cabin on Sunday and appeared on a national morning talk show the next day to deny that the Church was busing Relief Society sisters to legislatures in Illinois and Missouri.

Approximately two weeks later, Mark Hofmann brought to the office of the First Presidency a transcript apparently copied by Joseph Smith from the gold plates. This young man claimed to have looked into a Bible, which evidently belonged once to the Smith family, and had found a treasure. Church leaders were very excited, particularly because this event occurred on the Church's anniversary. In-house authorities examined the document, and then the Church called a press conference. "Good press" abounded, and the rest is history.

By now the Sunstone Symposium and other gatherings were pumping energy through the independent sector of Mormon culture, which had an abiding interest in the Church's restrictions on historical research. Hofmann

reinforced the growing suspicion that Church leaders would "grab-and-stash" controversial historical documents and then deny possession of them. Events surrounding the Church procurement of the 1825 Joseph Smith letter to Josiah Stowell particularly substantiated a mysterious variety of stories supporting that feeling. Many of those stories can be traced to Hofmann.

President Gordon B. Hinckley purchased the Stowell letter from Hofmann on 11 January 1983 for $15,000. Only after the sale of the salamander letter in 1984 did the 1825 Stowell letter, also involving Joseph Smith in money-digging, become an open secret in the historical community. (A number of typed transcripts were mailed from New York in August 1984 to various people in the history community.) A showdown between the Church and scholars at the Mormon History Association meetings in May 1985 led to the release of the Stowell letter, very soon after the Church released the text of the salamander letter. The impact of the two letters on the general public was great. Despite the Church's openness about the Salamander letter, the "grab-and-stash" assumption was validated by the Stowell letter. That belief became increasingly exploitable as the Oliver Cowdery history and McLellin collection myths soon demonstrated.

In short, by the time of the Salt Lake bombings, readers of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Deseret News*, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, and other publications, and the historical community in general, believed that nineteenth-century primary documents were abundantly discoverable and highly valuable and that the Church would publicize or suppress those documents, depending on their content. Both impressions had an aspect of truth. Both were exaggerated, reinforced, and exploited by Mark Hofmann.

Hofmann's distortions were supported by specific techniques used to market his forgeries. These four, used repeatedly, I call: (1) the shared discovery; (2) the self-identifying document; (3) cultural myths; and (4) preliminary discussion. Three of the four techniques were used with the Anthon transcript, the document that made a very minor forger of $60 letters into a major Mormon document dealer.

Hofmann shared the discovery of the Anthon transcript with several people. First, his bride of a few months, Doralee, noticed that two Bible pages were stuck together. The Anthon transcript, the young couple discovered, was inside. The following day, Hofmann took the Bible and transcript to a friend, A. J. Simmonds, director of special collections at Utah State University where Hofmann was a student in his junior year. Simmonds excitedly helped Hofmann open the document and compare it with various texts. Immediately Hofmann took the transcript to LDS Institute instructor Danel Bachman, who then called LDS historian Dean Jessee, who, within days, said the Joseph Smith holograph on the reverse side was apparently authentic. A few days later, Hofmann, Bachman, and Church Historian Leonard Arrington showed the transcript to Elders Gordon B. Hinckley and Boyd K. Packer, and then to the First Presidency. Throughout the fuss that followed his discovery, Mark Hofmann appeared pleased, becomingly shy with Church leaders, and rather cautious. He let others make the claims.

The Anthon transcript introduced itself. Even when the young couple found the page folded in quarters and glued into the book, hieroglyphs and Joseph Smith's name were visible. Like the Bible itself, which included a handwritten portion signed by Samuel Smith, the transcript announced itself with the first glance. The more experts studied it, the more the Anthon transcript appeared to be authentic. The arrangement of hieroglyphs matched Charles Anthon's description. Smith had apparently described the process of copying the characters in a brief note on the reverse side; and the Bible had Smith family signatures.

Hofmann's story of the Anthon transcript echoed cultural myth. His discovery parallels that of the young Joseph Smith seeking guidance in the Bible and later finding the gold plates and founding the Church. But the Anthon Transcript story resonates further. Its discoverer is a worthy, poor young man, as shown by his status as a married pre-med student. He procures the Bible through good luck and friendship for only a few dollars, like a character in a Horatio Alger novel or a personal story in *The Ensign*. In some versions, Hofmann consecrates his find to the Church; in others, he receives a small compensation. (In fact, he received $20,000 in trade. He quit college the same quarter as his discovery and began his career as a document dealer.)

The technique of sharing the discovery varied with other documents, particularly as Hofmann's reputation grew. He began to attribute discovery or provenance or both to various colleagues, including antiquities author Charles Hamilton with the Josiah Stowell letter, and Hofmann's sometimes-partner, Lyn Jacobs, in the case of the salamander letter and several other documents.

According to court testimony, Hofmann gave Jacobs's name as the provenance for the salamander letter when he asked Kenneth Rendell to authenticate it in November 1983. As *discoverer*, Jacobs took the letter to President Hinckley in January 1984. Both Hofmann and Jacobs had a part in the sales contract with Steven Christensen, though Hofmann received the lion's share of the profit. Jacobs claimed ownership again in 1985 when the Church released the text. However, in court he testified that he had first heard of the salamander letter during a call from Hofmann in late 1983. He also testified that Hofmann paid Jacobs because he had played a role in leading him to the source of the letter.

Documents other than the Anthon transcript also identified themselves. The Joseph Smith III blessing, Hofmann's next major find, had a note, "Joseph Smith III" penned on the reverse side. The David Whitmer and Martin Harris testimonial notes (sold, respectively, to the Church and collector Brent Ashworth) were, reportedly, found in the same envelope. The Oath of a Freeman, reportedly the first printed document in colonial America, won over several national experts, who were charmed by sixteenth-century handwriting on the reverse side, identifying it.

One of the best-identified documents is the earliest forgery that investigators attribute to Hofmann — the supposed text of a second anointing sealing, first seen in 1978 and sold in 1979. This 5 inch by 7 inch letter identifies itself by a stamp in one corner reading SALT LAKE TEMPLE and a half-erased note in the

other: "Destroy this copy." The stamp was not used in the temple. The note to destroy the blessing defies logic, since there is no contextual reason for writing the blessing and giving a copy to someone who should then destroy it. Nevertheless, these "clues" hint of a sinister authenticity. Hofmann sold this document to Simmonds, a non-Mormon, for $60 a few months before he brought in the Anthon Transcript. (A young man allowed Sandra Tanner, in the Utah Lighthouse Ministry Bookstore, to photocopy the blessing in June 1978. Tanner now believes the man to have been Mark Hofmann.)

Many Hofmann documents entered the marketplace clothed in cultural myth. The Lucy Mack Smith letter, an obscure, unmailed cover letter (folded into a self-envelope) was hailed by the Church as "the most significant document outside the Book of Mormon" — a real-life Cinderella. The salamander letter and the Oath of a Freeman were reportedly plucked from heaps of documents by Mark Hofmann, soon to fool national experts like true Pygmalions. Also, rags-to-riches stories were common with Hofmann documents. Virtually every letter cost $25, then sold for $20,000, $40,000, or — almost — more than $1 million. Even when the documents Hofmann sold were purchased — not made — he apparently needed the myth. For example, the newspapers reported that Mark Hofmann had sold an Al Capone signature for $5,000 that supposedly cost him $25. In fact, Hofmann had bought the signature from Brent Ashworth for $2,000 and added the story himself.

Many document deals were preceded by discussions during which Hofmann discovered an interest for a particular document he might create and ascertained specific information in order to assure its fit into a historical context.

One major investor told Hofmann he would like a first edition of the Book of Mormon. Within weeks, Hofmann brought him one, inscribed by the buyer's wife's third great-grandfather. Steven Christensen and his employee Brent Metcalfe actually made up a list of areas of Mormon history in which Christensen would buy any documents Hofmann might find, according to Metcalfe. When Brent Ashworth saw letters Joseph Smith wrote from Carthage Jail, housed in the RLDS archives, he asked Mark to watch for such an item. They frequently discussed the possibility of Mark finding another Carthage letter. When one finally appeared, from Joseph Smith to General Jonathan Dunham, Hofmann sold it to another collector. Ashworth was incensed. A few months before the bombings, Hofmann took a substantial loss on the convoluted repurchase and resale of that letter to Ashworth for $90,000. Ashworth, probably Hofmann's hardest hit major financial victim, may take some comfort in knowing that it was the Dunham letter, and its dissimilarities to the RLDS Carthage letters written the same day, that raised forensic document analyst George Throckmorton's suspicions sufficiently to call the county attorney's office about six weeks after the bombings. The subsequent investigation then broke the stalemated circumstantial murder case.

Evidently, orders were placed more obliquely as well. When Hofmann asked a friend what he should look for if he was ever in the First Presidency's vault, the friend consulted with Jerald and Sandra Tanner of the Utah Light-

house Ministry and then suggested the Oliver Cowdery history. Brent Metcalfe, another friend of Hofmann's, asked him specifically if he had ever seen the history in the vault. Hofmann said no.

Sometime later, however, Hofmann told Metcalfe that the history did exist and the Church had it. In 1985, Hofmann described the history and a page or two of its contents in detail to Metcalfe and later to *Los Angeles Times* religion writer, John Dart. Metcalfe, whose order had been surprisingly well filled, then was interviewed by Dawn Tracy at the *Salt Lake Tribune.*

History-oriented Church leaders also "placed orders," asking Hofmann and other document finders if they had leads on the lost 116 pages. Evidence taken from Hofmann's home suggests that he was out in front in that search as well.

Preliminary discussions in which Hofmann described a document he had a lead on and/or the client expressed an interest in a particular item preceded many a sale. Individually these do not seem unusual. At the time, they seemed ordinary. Now they fit a pattern that mocks our credulity. My first example is of the physical preparation for a document sale; the second example involves psychological preparation for a document's acceptance.

Hofmann extensively researched some documents, though others were hastily prepared and sold. He created a provenance for some, including the Oath of a Freeman, which he expected to sell for more than $1 million in the east. Using the pseudonym "Mike Harris" on 8 March 1985, Hofmann ordered a printing plate for a poem deliberately mistitled "The Oath of a Freeman" from Debouzek Engraving in Salt Lake City. On March 11, Mark Hofmann visited Argosy Bookstore in New York City. After browsing a bit, Hofmann bought a poem entitled "The Oath of a Freeman" and paid twenty-five dollars. His sales slip became a provenance.

On March 25, Mike Hansen — a name tied to Hofmann through telephone numbers, personal checks, items found in Hofmann's home, and a fingerprint — ordered a printing plate for the "Oath of a Freeman" with the text published by colonial printer Stephen Daye. That document and a second copy became crucial in Hofmann's escalating scams in 1985, which ultimately led to murder. Both Oath 1 and 2, demonstrably products of the printing negatives that investigators seized, were hotly defended by their investors.

Sometimes Hofmann paid attention to psychological preparation for a document. One example is the 1830 Martin Harris or salamander letter, which he read to friends in November 1983. One brainstorming session concerned not the literal sale of the letter, but the acceptance of the letter by the public, the Church, and the Mormon history community. The letter's controversial nature is due, in part, to the close relationship its author, Martin Harris, had with the prophet. Hofmann suggested that positive links be emphasized, such as the Anthon Transcript, which Harris had carried to Anthon; the E. B. Grandin contract to print the Book of Mormon, which Harris had signed; and a testimonial note, evidently dictated and signed by Harris. All these documents are Hofmann originals. The conversation also identified one element as crucial to the salamander letter's success, which eventually proved prophetic — the support of Mormon historians.

Like the historians he hired to research the salamander letter, Steven Christensen had plenty of reason to believe it was authentic when he donated the letter to the Church. At the time of his death, Steve Christensen was intent on closing the McLellin transaction. He had locked up a papyrus fragment purported to be Facsimile 2 in order to keep Hofmann from selling it separately. He pressured Hofmann relentlessly to come through with the collection and repay an overdue bank loan arranged by a general authority. He rearranged a pressured business schedule in order to keep in touch with Hofmann, Church leaders, and the designated buyer. Christensen indicated both his desire to save the Church embarrassment and his interest to add to the known history of the Church, as he had with the study of the salamander letter. Close friends say "he was living and breathing that document deal."

Kathleen Sheets knew virtually nothing about Mormon documents. And yet, on one wall of her spacious home she had hung an ancestral mission call signed by Brigham Young, alongside a portrait of Young, a ram's head, and some dried flowers. History was simply part of her culture.

Kathy Sheets, a lively mother and grandmother, a bishop's wife distinguished by wit and compassion, died as a decoy, to disguise through her husband's troubled investment firm the motive for Steven Christensen's murder.

The Hofmann documents and the stories that surround them reach deep into our culture. Thus, even as the context of the Hofmann scam broadens to the national market and national investors, collectors and victims, the epicenter will remain in Utah. We may look less naive as we gain company, but we will be no less involved. These documents and their faith-promoting tales and horror stories fit our conscious and unconscious assumptions. Gradually, reality was distorted until many within the Church, the press, the market, and the historical community worked to further one man's scheme.

This murder mystery that has captured our attention for two years, a paper chase extraordinaire, therefore includes all of us in varying ways and degrees. As a community we need to gain a sense of proportion; the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Commit Murder" precedes those forbidding lying, stealing, and bearing false witness. The denial that complicated the investigation has also been hurtful to some who lost loved ones. Healing follows the acknowledgement of pain, and the trauma of lost lives exceeds other damages.

Also, as these stories unravel and the documents are understood in a different light, there is the temptation to belittle those who "should have been" smarter, better trained, more inspired. In that way we may continue the damage that has been done personally, professionally, spiritually, or financially. Or as we undo the stories, we can search for our own reflections in their shiny surfaces. We can reach for understanding with an accuracy that recognizes courage and integrity, sees clearly human deception, cowardice, and rage, and accepts the vulnerability that makes all of us human.

Methods and Motives: Joseph Smith III's Opposition to Polygamy, 1860–90

Roger D. Launius

WHEN JOSEPH SMITH III PREACHED HIS FIRST SERMON as leader of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at Amboy, Illinois, on 6 April 1860, he expressed his unqualified aversion to the Mormon doctrine of plural marriage: "There is but one principle by the leaders of any faction of this people that I hold in utter abhorrence; that is a principle taught by Brigham Young and those believing in him." The doctrine was, of course, polygamy. But Smith also declared that his father, Joseph Smith, Jr., had never been involved in the practice. "I have been told that my father taught such doctrines. I have never believed it and never can believe it." He added, "If such things were done, then I believe they never were done by divine authority. I believe my father was a good man, and a good man never could have promulgated such doctrines" ("Mormon" 1860, 103).

No issue infuriated or drew his attention as did plural marriage — and especially charges of his father's role in its origination. Indeed, opposition to the practice became something of a *cause célèbre* for Smith and, by extension, for the Reorganized Church during the nineteenth century (Blair 1973, 215–30). Recent historical investigation has demonstrated that, by the last decade of the century, the Reorganized Church as an institution had rejected the previously well-accepted idea that Joseph Smith, Jr., had begun the practice (Blair 1985, 20–22). During the 1970s and 1980s, however, numerous historians, among them Reorganized Church historian Richard P. Howard, probed deeper into the origins of plural marriage, demonstrating beyond reasonable doubt the Mormon prophet's central role in developing the doctrine during the Nauvoo experience and offering frameworks for understanding it (Howard 1983; Blair 1985; Bitton 1977; Foster 1981; Bachman 1975; Hill 1977; Van Wagoner 1985; Newell and Avery 1984).

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These compelling historical arguments raise a central question: How could Joseph Smith III flatly deny his father's role in beginning Mormon polygamy while confronted with substantial evidence to the contrary? Additionally, what role did Smith play in the antipolygamy crusade of the latter nineteenth century? These questions inform the analysis presented in this essay.

Essentially, Joseph Smith III approached his father's involvement in plural marriage from an already fixed viewpoint. His admission that he could never believe his father might have been involved in polygamy seems to have guaranteed his perspective in spite of countervailing evidence. Smith subscribed to a postulate as immovable as a geometric theorem: (1) Joseph Smith, Jr., had been a good man. (2) Good men do not practice polygamy. (3) Therefore, Joseph Smith, Jr., could not have been involved in Mormon plural marriage. All his actions and thought processes concerning the practice rested upon this central postulate.

Throughout the remainder of Smith's career, his position on plural marriage never wavered. For instance, in 1866 Smith wrote in the *True Latter Day Saints' Herald*, "Joseph Smith was *not* a POLYGAMIST in 1843 and 1844, as I have every reason to believe, from every proof I have been able to gather" ("Reply" 1866, 63). He also wrote to Caleb Parker in Lanark, Idaho, 14 August 1895: "Father had *no wife* but my mother, Emma Hale, to the knowledge of either my mother or myself, and I was twelve years old nearly when he was killed. *Not a child* was born to father, except by my mother, *not one*" (Letterbook 6). Finally, in more reasoned tones, Smith wrote in his memoirs: "To admit that my father was the author of such false theories as were being taught, or that he practiced them in any form, was not only repulsive in itself to my feelings and strongly condemned by my judgment, but was contrary to my knowledge of, and belief in him." [1]

With a belief system that required his father's innocence, Joseph Smith III could not sit by quietly while others charged his father with responsibility for beginning the practice.[2] Feeling it his duty as a son, he desperately sought to clear Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, name. "Is it manly or unmanly for a son to defend

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[1] J. Smith 1934–37, 82 (2 April 1935): 432. Additional examples of this viewpoint are in Joseph Smith III's (1) published articles: 1870, 1880, 1882, and 1889; and (2) letters: to Cousin John, 28 Dec. 1876, Letterbook 4; to E. C. Brand, 26 Jan. 1884, Letterbook 4; to L. O. Littlefield, 14 Aug. 1883, Letterbook 4; to John Henry Smith, 6 Jan. 1886, Letterbook 4; to Deseret News Col, 21 March 1896, Letterbook 6; to Hon. J. C. Barrows, 3 Jan. 1880, Letterbook 2; to Hon. G. F. Edmunds, 4 March 1886, Letterbook 4; and to Zenos H. Gurley, 5 March 1886, Letterbook 4. See also Samuel H. B. Smith to George A. Smith, 10 July 1860, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; "A Lusty War Cry," 1882.

[2] Even the prophet's brother, David H. Smith, expressed his misgivings about their father's innocence in an 1872 letter:

> I know my mother believes just as we do in faith repentance, baptism, and all the saving doctrines, in the books of the church and all, but I do not wish to ask her in regard to polygamy, for dear brother God forgive me if I am wrong. . . . I believe there was something wrong. I don't know it, but I believe it, the testimony is too great for me to deny (D. Smith 1879).

See also Robinson, April, June, Sept., Oct. 1890, April 1891; McLellin 1872; Smith, 2 Apr. 1879.

his father's good name according to his convictions of honor and truth?" Smith asked only somewhat rhetorically on 6 May 1896 in a letter to the *Deseret News* (Letterbook 6). He frankly admitted to E. L. Kelley, a member of the Reorganized Church's Presiding Bishopric during much of the latter nineteenth century, "I have been ambitious of but one thing, so far as human ambition is concerned, and that was to prove by the logic of conduct that my father was not a bad man" (10 July 1883, Kelley). Maintaining family honor was a common concern of the period (Kern 1975; Greenacre 1963). Joseph Smith III believed that the Smith family legacy was most important in the overall development of the Reorganized Church ("Card" 1860, 170; J. Smith to Charles Strang, 22 July 1882, Letterbook 3A). He may also have been concerned that he would have to answer to his father at some future time. As he told E. D. Smith on 22 July 1896:

> Your father is like mine, ever on the other shore; both of us are rapidly going thitherward; the work of our fathers was clear to them; both earnestly engaged in it as the way of life; we shall meet them, and I am going to try to so live that when I may meet them, it will be safe for them to say, "Joseph, you fought bravely, and though at times the battle seemed to go against you, you rallied well, and we are glad to meet you" (Letterbook 7).

Joseph Smith III was also greatly concerned about the welfare and viability of the Reorganized Church. This concern motivated his every decision. And he believed that proving his father's innocence of polygamy would enhance the church's uniqueness and reason for being. "To me the gospel plan as taught by Joseph Smith," he wrote to Zenos H. Gurley, Jr., 24 July 1879, "is not so defensible from the ground that he did preach, teach, and practice polygamy, as upon the basis that he was not its author" (Letterbook 2).

Giving all credit to Joseph Smith III's essential honesty, I believe that his concerns with proving his father's innocence and his commitment to divorcing the Reorganized Church from plural marriage rendered him unable to honestly investigate Mormon polygamy's origins. Without question, he was convinced he had three tasks: (1) To clear his father of any involvement in the practice of plural marriage, and thereby redeem the family honor; (2) To build a place for the Reorganization somewhere between the radical Mormonism of the Great Basin — where plural marriage most recognizably separated those Mormons from the rest of American religion — and the mainstream of American Protestantism (Vlahos 1980, 176–77); and (3) To end the practice of plural marriage among the Mormons, on the grounds that it was immoral and a blot upon the religion his father had instituted.

With these goals in mind, as well as his desire to maintain harmony within his own organization, Joseph Smith III was very cautious about insisting as an article of faith that his father had *not* been the author of the plural marriage doctrine, especially in his early years as president. Because many church members had weathered the movement's splintering following his father's death and had some knowledge of doctrinal practices in Nauvoo, Smith allowed for other opinions. For instance, he always explained that the Reorganization opposed

polygamy without referring to his father's involvement. He responded to an inquiry from Texan J. L. Traughber on 13 February 1877, "So far as polygamy or spiritual wifery is concerned, the Reorganization denies its correctness without reference to whether he [Joseph Smith, Jr.] did or did not practice it" (Letterbook 1A). On 5 March 1886, he wrote to Zenos H. Gurley, Jr., an apostle who was a gadfly to Smith on the question of polygamy's origins as well as other issues, "You know that while I believe father was not the author of Utah polygamy I have not and am not now making the battle against the Utah church on that ground but upon the ground that plural marriage is not of God no matter whoever the revelation, so called, came through or who taught or practiced it" (Letterbook 4). Smith also suggested that his father had not been perfect and that if it turned out he had been responsible for polygamy's establishment, he would be punished. He told a J. J. Barbour of Dart Town, Georgia, on 15 May 1878, "While I fully believe that Joseph did not receive the revelation referred to, yet, if he did, it is so directly opposed to the laws already received, that I must [admit] it to have been either of *man* or of the Devil" (Letterbook 1).

Joseph Smith III also took, at least at first, a moderate position within the official quorums of his own church. For example, a joint meeting of the First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve on 2 May 1865 discussed the origins of Mormon polygamy. The minutes of that meeting noted:

> The question arose as to whether Joseph the Martyr taught the doctrine of polygamy. President [William] Marks said Brother Hyrum [Smith] came to his place once and told him he did not believe in it and he was going to see Joseph about it and if he had a revelation on the subject he would believe it. And after that Hyrum read a revelation on it in the High Council and he Marks felt that it was not true but he saw the High Council received it.

Joseph Smith III did not accept this testimony, but in the interest of church unity and welfare, he did not press his position. Instead, he was satisfied that the body adjourned without issuing a binding policy to the church upon the origins of polygamy (Council, 11).

Two years later another joint meeting of the Apostles and the First Presidency reconsidered the subject. After considerable discussion, Smith supported tabling a resolution stating that Joseph Smith, Jr., had not been the originator of plural marriage "because of the almost universal opinion among the Saints that Joseph was in some way connected with it." He commented, "Passage of the resolution would do more injury than good" (Council, 9 April 1867, 34).

Even when Joseph III sought to discover the truth about his father's involvement, he was hamstrung by a certain benevolent prejudice that prompted him to buttress what he already believed rather than alter it in any substantial way. He dismissed plural marriage evidence that contradicted his preconceived notions using several sophisticated rationales.

There is no doubt that the Reorganization leader was deeply troubled by the plural marriage issue. He often said that he had no knowledge of his father's guilt in implementing the doctrine, but was that true? Whatever inci-

dents he may have witnessed in 1843 and 1844 as a young boy he may have repressed. Certainly some of his early writings suggest submerged pain (Smith, Jan., Feb. 1845). His papers contain copies of correspondence defending his father and his church, but we have no way of knowing if he failed to include letters that he did not or could not refute concerning the plural marriage issue. Admittedly, much of this is supposition, but it should be raised as a possible explanation.

Smith also seemed to have employed clinical denial — refusing to believe or allow awareness of an unpleasant or threatening aspect of reality. His flat denials of his father's role in plural marriage have some substantiation, to be sure, but they were in large measure faith statements that ignore overwhelming information to the contrary. His 1860 comment, "I have never believed in and never can believe it," is an example of such an *a priori* decision to reject all but what he wished to believe.[3]

Without question, Smith also rationalized away evidence which incriminated his father. Although Smith responded differently to shifting situations and divergent sets of evidence, complicating an explanation of his behavior, it appears that his approach toward polygamy was to accept what supported his position and reject countervailing evidence. It is easier to substantiate how Smith's preconceptions and mental processes shaped his explanations of polygamy's origins. Smith "read law" during his pre-presidency years between 1854 and 1856 under two different western Illinois attorneys. Although he was never admitted to the bar, he learned how to ask questions that gave the answers he sought (Smith to James Whitehead, 8 Sept., 1884, Letterbook 1A; Launius 1982, 124–27). When interviewing those with firsthand knowledge of plural marriage in Nauvoo, Smith typically framed his questions to reflect his preconceived notions. "Was my father married to more than one woman and did they live together as husband and wife?" Perhaps a witness could answer yes to the first part of the question, but a truthful witness would be forced to answer no to the second part, as plural marriage practices in Nauvoo were clandestine.

Early in his career Smith rejected all but what he considered eyewitness commentary and urged his associates to do the same. He told J. F. Minton, for instance, "Don't make statements of which you have not the proof at hand, or know first what it is."[4] Hearsay evidence *is* often unreliable, but a significant amount of the information Smith rejected was not, apparently, second or thirdhand but was provided by people who learned about plural marriage from some of Nauvoo's high Church officials — the Twelve, the Bishopric, and High Council — that Joseph Smith, Jr., had instituted the practice of plural mar-

[3] Emma Smith apparently exhibited this denial defense mechanism concerning her memories of polygamy as well. See Newell and Avery 1984, 95–105, 297–304; Newell 1984, 12–13; Beecher, Newell, and Avery 1980, 51–62.

[4] J. Smith to J. F. Minton, 13 March 1891, Papers; J. Smith to Zenos H. Gurley, 24 July and 20 Aug. 1879, Letterbook 1. Smith's mother had also taken this approach. Emma wrote to Thomas Gregg in 1846, "Everything that has not come within my immediate observation remains doubtful in my mind until some circumstance occurs to prove reports either true or false" (quoted in Newell and Avery 1984, 366).

riage. These people were close to the source of the teaching in both time and space. Nonetheless, Smith rejected their testimony if it was not eyewitness information.

An 1885 interview in Utah with Solon Foster makes this clear. Foster had lived in Nauvoo in 1844 and 1845, part of that time in the Nauvoo Mansion where he was the Prophet's coachman and where he and young Joseph III had become friends. He had learned of plural marriage while in Nauvoo; and if he had not been taught the practice by Joseph Smith, Jr., he was intimately acquainted with those who expanded the practice near the time of the Prophet's death. Joseph Smith interviewed Foster about his father's involvement and recorded the following exchange in his memoirs:

> "Brother Solon, were you ever present at a marriage ceremony of any kind which occurred between my father and any other woman other than my mother, Emma Hale?"
>
> "No; I was not even present at their marriage."
>
> "When you were an inmate of my father's house at occasional stated periods, as you have said, did you ever see any woman there whom you knew to be a wife to my father, other than my mother?"
>
> "No, sir."
>
> "Did you ever meet, in social gatherings anywhere in the city of Nauvoo at any time in company with my father, introduced by him or others as his wife, other than my mother Emma?"
>
> "No, sir."

The interview continued for some time after this exchange, Smith pressing harder with each question, but using very specific questions rather than inviting Foster to tell him what he knew. Smith finally exploded: "I discover that, like others, you know nothing at all, personally, that would convict and condemn him, for you say he never taught you the doctrine; you say you never saw him married to any woman other than my mother" (Memoirs 83 [24 March 1936]: 369). Foster's recollection of this conversation is much different. As related by John R. Young in 1931, Foster told Joseph that his father had been intimately involved in polygamy, citing as one example the famous confrontation between Emma Smith and Eliza Snow. Foster presumably remarked, "The night your Mother turned Eliza R. Snow outdoors in her night clothes and you, and all the children stood out in the street crying, I led you back into the house and took you to bed with me, and you said 'I wish Mother wouldn't be so cruel to Aunt Eliza.' " Admittedly, this was Young's recollection of a speech by Foster given years earlier, but it points up the problems inherent in trying to pin down evidence (Young 1931).

Smith considered all of his interviews as strong evidence acquitting his father of all charges, but seemed willing to stretch or misconstrue evidence to support his position when, in fact, the evidence was not particularly impressive to those without his unique mindset. A conversation with Melissa Lott Willis, who had lived in Nauvoo during the 1840s, is a case in point. Smith visited her while on a missionary trip to Utah in 1885 and recorded this exchange in his memoirs:

> "Now, Melissa, I have been told that there were women, other than my mother, who were married to my father and lived with him as his wife, and that my mother knew it. How about it?"

> She answered rather tremulously, "If there was anything of that kind going on you may be sure that your mother knew about it" (83 [28 April 1936]: 530).

This could not be construed as a particularly firm denial of Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, involvement in plural marriage. At best it was a "non-denial denial," to use a phrase made famous by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward during their Watergate investigations with the *Washington Post*. But Joseph Smith used this testimony and others like it to buttress his belief in his father's innocence.

There were those both within and without the Reorganized Church who regularly told Joseph Smith III that his father had taught plural marriage. George A. Smith and other Utah relatives regularly tried to explain to him Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, role in the development of plural marriage. Joseph F. Smith began to collect affidavits and other evidence in the 1870s to prove that Joseph Smith, Jr., had originated the practice. Older Reorganized Church members who had been in a position to learn about the practice in the 1840s also described for Joseph III plural marriage developments.

Smith reacted to these efforts in several different ways. Most often, as with Solon Foster, he discounted statements because they were not eyewitness accounts. At other times he would try to impeach the testimonies of his witnesses. It was virtually a foregone conclusion that Utah church leaders, whose testimonies he believed were biased by their immoral character in perpetuating polygamy, would be discredited in this way (G. A. Smith 1869; Smith 1934–37, 82 [8 Jan. 1935]: 47–49, 82 [1 Oct. 1935]: 1264–66).

A more difficult problem arose in dealing with members of the Reorganized Church. For example, prickly apostle Zenos H. Gurley, Jr., frequently told Smith that his father had been a polygamist (Vlahos 1971; Gurley 1873, 1874, 1879). At first, Smith may have claimed that Gurley had no firsthand knowlelge of the situation in Nauvoo, which was true. But in 1888 when Gurley wrote an autobiography in a history of Decatur County, Iowa, he inserted an affidavit by his father-in-law, Ebenezer Robinson, who had joined the Mormon church in 1835, which said that Joseph Smith had taught him the doctrine in Nauvoo (Gurley 1887, 543–44; Turner 1985, 378–84). Attempting to throw a shadow over the affidavit, Smith wrote in his memoirs that he and a local Methodist minister were discussing the new county history not long after its publication and the question of the affidavit came up. "Yes, I have seen it, Brother Smith, that article can do you no harm," the Methodist minister said. "The writers are too well known, and the effect will be quite contrary to what they anticipate" (1934–37, 83 [11 Feb. 1936]: 176). This conclusion does not seem to be warranted, however, as Zenos Gurley was a popular politician in Decatur County throughout much of the 1890s (Blair 1970).

If one of the other approaches to discredit evidence did not seem appropriate, Smith was likely to ignore the issue entirely. He reacted this way to testimonies of some of his Utah relatives and fellow Reorganized Church members all too often. He was silent in the face of challenges from Isaac Sheen, William Marks, James Whitehead, George A. Smith, and others (Marks 1865; McLellin 1872). W. W. Blair, an apostle and later counselor in the First Presidency of the Reorganized Church, met with James Whitehead in April 1874 to

ask him about plural marriage in Nauvoo. Blair's diary is revealing: "J[oseph] did te[ach] p[olygamy] and pr[actice] too. That E[mma] knos it too that she put [the] hand — of wives [in] Jos. hand. W[hitehead] says Alex H. Smith asked him . . . if J[oseph] did P[ractice] and tea[ch] P[olygamy] and he, W[hitehead] told him he did." Blair apparently confronted both Joseph and Alexander Smith with this information, but they seem to have made no response at any time to it (W. W. Blair, 13, 17 June 1874).

Many called Smith stubborn for refusing to admit that his father had initiated plural marriage. Zenos Gurley chastised him: "You absolutely refuse to believe the evidence that would convict [your father]" (Gurley, 6 Apr. 1879). When challenged in this way he typically responded, as he did to J. J. Barbour on 15 May 1878: "I am not positive nor sure that he was innocent" (Letterbook 1). When pressed further, Smith was known to have reacted more forcefully on occasion. For instance, Gurley questioned Smith's integrity and Joseph Smith III responded, "I tell you, brother, I have been cut to the quick, when brethren have affirmed that I did know that my father was guilty of practicing polygamy; and denied it because I was obstinate, and sinned against light and knowledge in so denying" (24 July 1879, Letterbook 2). This placed Gurley on the defensive and prompted him to seek a reconciliation (Gurley 1879). Gurley's reconciliation was only temporary, however; eventually he was dropped from his position as an apostle and, in 1886, withdrew from the movement, in part over the issue of plural marriage (Vlahos 1971).

Joseph Smith III admitted insufficient information concerning the origins of polygamy both less frequently and less candidly as his years in the presidency passed. Alma R. Blair (1985) suggests that as his opponents became fewer he could afford to be more persistent. By the mid-1880s, virtually no other opinion could be expressed in the Reorganized Church. Apostles Jason Briggs and Zenos Gurley, who tried, were harshly dealt with by the church (Vlahos 1971; Blair 1980).

While Smith was generally tolerant of other positions throughout his career, on this issue he would accept no compromises. He was even willing to violate his basic integrity by sanctioning outright, fully understood untruths on at least one occasion. A letter on 11 March 1882 from Joseph Smith III to his uncle, William B. Smith, then writing a book about his career in Mormonism (1883), warns:

> I have long been engaged in removing from Father's memory and from the early church, the stigma and blame thrown upon him because of Polygamy; and have at last lived to see the cloud rapidly lifting. And I would not consent to see further blame attached, by a blunder now. Therefore, Uncle, bear in mind our standing today before the world as defenders of Mormonism from Polygamy, and go ahead with your personal recollections. . . . If you are the wise man I think you to be, you will fail to remember anything [but] referring lofty standard of character at which we esteem these good men. You can do the cause great good; you can injure it by vicious sayings (Letterbook 3; See also J. Smith to William Smith, 12 July 1879, Letterbook 2).

William Smith acceded to his nephew's wishes both in his public statements and private letters, clearing his brother of any involvement with plural marriage even though William had once been involved himself (Smith, 26 Oct. 1893; Bates 1983, 16–18; Edwards 1985; Lyon 1973, 203; Hutchins 1977, 76–77).

This is an understandable though rather astonishing document. In the early years of his denials, Joseph Smith III was seeking to defend his family name and create a viable new church. By 1882 after more than twenty years of public proclamations, Smith's personal honor was at stake in proving his father's noninvolvement in plural marriage. If William Smith, a member of the ruling family in a position to know beyond all doubt what Joseph Smith, Jr., had taught in Nauvoo, had publicly countered Joseph III's position, the result could have been critical both to the Smith family and the Reorganization. At the least it would have severely damaged Joseph Smith III's credibility. Fortunately for him, William Smith was old, ill, financially dependent and therefore accepting of his nephew's direction (Howard 1978, 24–28).

Joseph Smith III's perceptions about the origins of plural marriage greatly affected the Reorganized Church's perspective in the national antipolygamy crusade of the latter nineteenth century. While Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, role in the introduction of plural marriage in Nauvoo remained officially unresolved throughout the 1860s, the issue became increasingly important after the Reorganized Church opened its mission to Utah in 1863 and became critical when the Smith sons began work there in 1866 and were exposed to first hand Mormon polygamy (Shipley 1969). Rivalry between the Reorganized Church and the Utah Mormons intensified during the 1870s.

Joseph Smith III made four missionary trips to Utah before 1890. Each time, he denounced polygamy and tried to improve his father's reputation. Defending Joseph Smith, Jr., became the style and aim of the Reorganization's antipolygamy stance. Smith won favor and support from those outside of Mormondom who opposed polygamy and the Utah Church and gained respect for the Reorganization. The fact that the Reorganized Church rejected polygamy while the Utah Latter-day Saints embraced it created an easy-to-remember dichotomy for outside observers. Joseph Smith III used this dichotomy to carry out a two-phased policy toward the Utah Saints. First, he executed a vigorous missionary program to "rescue" Latter-day Saints enmeshed in the "evil practice" of plural marriage. Smith's missionaries to Utah preached essentially a threefold message: (1) The true successor to Joseph Smith, Jr., his eldest son, had taken his rightful place in the presidency of the church; (2) Brigham Young was a usurper of authority and a dictator; (3) Plural marriage was a false doctrine whereby Young held his followers in a bondage as evil as Southern slavery (Blair 1973; Howard 1983, 17–19).

The second phase of Smith's policy involved working closely with political leaders and non-Mormon reformers to destroy the political power of the Mormon church and to end plural marriage. Smith thus involved the church with many individuals with differing goals but all intent on destroying polygamy among the Great Basin Mormons. Smith provided information on the "Mor-

mon Question" to political leaders at least as early as 1863 and as late as 1890. His circle of political contacts during this period included Congressmen William H. Ashley of Ohio and William F. Hepburn of Michigan; Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and James A. Garfield; Senator George F. Edmunds of Vermont, Governor Eli H. Murray of Utah Territory, and several politicians of lesser note. In demand as an antipolygamy speaker and writer, Smith helped mobilize popular support for eliminating plural marriage. In all instances, he argued that his father had never been involved in plural marriage (Launius 1982, 304–19).

Joseph Smith III's first real involvement in the political antipolygamy crusade came in May 1866 when, as Joseph Smith, Jr.'s son and because of his church's other activities, Congressman James M. Ashley asked him to come to the Capitol to confer about the "Utah Question" with members of the House Committee on Territories. The committee was most concerned about the Mormon Church's apparent disregard of federal authority and was framing legislation to bring the territory more in line with other western jurisdictions. Ashley hoped, in addition, to persuade Congress to pass legislation that would put teeth in the almost unenforceable Morrill Antibigamy Act of 1862 (Ashley 1866; Poll 1958, 113). Smith had long wanted to talk about the Morrill Act. Consequently, he and Elijah Banta, a huge amiable church official, left for Washington on 30 May 1866 (J. Smith and Smith 3:349; activities reported in J. Smith 1934–37, 82 [16 July 1935]: 912–13).

On 6 June 1866 Smith met with Ashley in his boarding house to discuss plural marriage in detail before the committee's formal hearings. After discussing the issue for some time, Ashley pointedly asked the young Reorganization leader what he would recommend doing to deal with the situation in Utah. Smith offered several suggestions immediately, impressing Ashley with his grasp of the problems in the territory. Consequently, the Congressman asked Smith to write a report to aid the committee in its planning. After several informal meetings with Ashley and other members of the Committee on Territories, Smith gave Ashley his report. In it he summarized the history of the Mormon church from 1830 to 1846 and affirmed that it had obeyed the laws of the land until his father's death.

Smith also asserted that since the split in the church, the Utah-based faction had constantly sidestepped the law and had not been forced back into line, "and that such failure and neglect of duty on the part of the executive officers of the various States and the Nation have given rise to a conviction upon the part of some of the [Utah] church members that there was no disposition to so enforce the laws of the land." Smith argued that the Mormons had been allowed to rule themselves for so long that they honestly believed they should hold this power forever, even if their practices ran counter to the laws of the United States. He added that it was time for government officials to assert their legitimate authority over Utah Territory. Smith concluded though that no further laws establishing federal jurisdiction were needed: "The Constitution was very plain about where final secular power rested, and no legislation need extend their basic right."

Ashley had specifically asked Smith to comment on the polygamy issue, knowing his strong opposition to the practice. He asked if Smith thought Congress should pass further antipolygamy legislation, and if so what forms these bills should take. Ashley cautioned Smith, however, to remember that the Constitution expressly forbade the proscription of religious freedom, and wanted to determine the legality of the practice in Mormon theology and tradition. Was polygamy a religious tenet, he asked, and thereby inviolate under the law? Smith's written response was cautious and tactful. While acknowledging the right of every citizen to worship as conscience dictated, Smith asserted that plural marriage was neither substantiated in scriptures nor in Christian history and indeed contradicted everything for which Jesus Christ had stood. The original Mormon faith, Smith insisted, as a part of Christianity could never have adopted such a tenet, and he produced carefully selected evidence to suggest that it had been virtually unknown during his father's lifetime. He urged the proper enforcement of legislation designed to end the practice of plural marriage.

Smith left Washington on 11 June 1866 satisfied that he had presented his viewpoint on the polygamy issue rationally and had convinced Ashley and his committee that his approach to political control of the Mormons was the most logical and likely to succeed. He was, however, skeptical of success because of the slow and circuitous nature of government. When asked to comment on his accomplishments in Washington, Smith described the many meetings with committee members and restated his views but added that little would probably result from the episode ("Pleasant Chat," 1866, 177–78; J. Smith to Charles Derry, 29 June 1866, Papers). This appraisal proved correct. For months Congress debated the necessity of new antipolygamy legislation but passed nothing. Eventually they decided, almost by default, to enforce the laws already on the books until a sufficiently strong coalition arose to pass additional antipolygamy laws (Poll 1958, 113–18).

In part because of this stalemate in Congress, a pressing concern of governmental policymakers of the 1870s became the appointment of territorial officers to Utah who could carry out already existing laws. Utah Mormons had experienced virtually endless trouble with federal authorities since the Utah Territory was created in 1850, and at the center of the government's difficulties was invariably the territorial governor. A move arose in the 1870s to appoint Joseph Smith III to that position partly because of his reputation among non-Mormons, partly because of the Reorganization's solid support of the civil government in all matters affecting the question of church and state, and partly because of its opposition to plural marriage. When J. Wilson Shaffer died in October 1870, several of Smith's supporters petitioned President Ulysses S. Grant to appoint Smith as his successor (D. Smith 1870). An Illinois newspaper summed up the matter: "If the government would make Joseph Smith governor of that territory, it would wipe out at once polygamy and fair Utah would take her place among the states, with no blot upon her face" (*Weekly Argus*, 21 June 1879).

Although President Grant appointed a career Republican politician instead of Smith, the prophet's friends continued their efforts for the next several years.

On 19 October 1879, for instance, Edward W. Tullidge, the iconoclastic Mormon historian who had joined with the Reorganized Church a few months earlier, wrote to President Rutherford B. Hayes urging Joseph Smith's appointment to the Utah governorship. He claimed that Smith would be able to destroy the "polygamic theocracy" in the Great Basin and predicted that with Smith as governor and with some 200 projected Reorganized Church missionaries working in the territory, 20,000 to 50,000 Utah Mormons would soon join the crusade to abolish plural marriage (Tullidge 1879).

As late as 10 September 1881 the editor of the *Weekly Argus*, published in Sandwich, Illinois, not far from the church headquarters at Plano, issued a lengthy statement supporting Joseph Smith III's governorship of Utah:

> *The Argus* had frequently pointed out a remedy [to the Mormon question], which is on the frontiersman's principle of a backfire. Opposed to these [objectionable] religious practices, while holding the general principles of the Mormon faith, is the "Reorganized Church" with Elder Joseph Smith at its head; a body of eminent, able men, already making inroads on the Brighamites, and to aid them in promulgating the new faith in Utah should be the aim of the general government.
>
> In the end it would be wise to appoint Elder Joseph Smith — who had the character and the ability for the position — as governor of that territory, an appointment which would receive the approval of his own branch fully, and largely of the other, and would divide the power of the Brighamites as to enable this branch successfully to combat the crime at its central point. Mr. Smith is a true, loyal citizen, a practical Christian, a temperance man, an able leader, and bitterly opposed to the "peculiar institution."

There is no evidence that these proposals were seriously considered either by Washington officials or Joseph Smith III. That his name arose as a possible candidate, however, indicates his and the Reorganized Church's stature among the opponents of polygamy.

Smith did, however, maintain an active connection with various politicians interested in the antipolygamy question. In June 1880 Smith wrote to Republican presidential candidate James A. Garfield about his movement's hatred of polygamy and asked his assistance in ending the practice. In his 1881 inaugural address Garfield demanded that Congress eliminate polygamy within the United States (J. Smith to James A. Garfield, 18 June 1880, Letterbook 3). At about the same time Smith corresponded with Vermont Senator George F. Edmunds about legislation that eventually passed in 1882 as the Edmunds Act, which provided for the easier arrest and prosecution of those engaging in "unlawful cohabitation" (J. Smith to Robert Warnock, 20 March 1882, Letterbook 2). Still later Smith met and discussed the enforcement of this legislation with Governor Eli H. Murray of Utah Territory who promised a tough but fair enforcement policy which, with a few exceptions, he delivered (Smith 1934–37, 83 [3 March 1936]: 274; J. Smith to Bro. George, 20 June 1883; Miscellaneous Letters and Papers).

Smith also recognized that not all Mormons were polygamists or disloyal to the United States and should not be persecuted. When Edmunds proposed a bill in 1886 stiffening antipolygamy laws and destroying the political identity of the Mormon Church, Smith asked that Congress temper the bill so that no

person's freedom of worship was violated. "Unwise legislation in the present crisis can not fail to be productive of evil," he warned Representative William F. Hepburn of Michigan in a letter on 9 February 1886. "Solid work for the benefit of the people governed and the maintaining of the supremacy of the institutions and laws of the Country ought to [be] sought after." Smith also pointed out to Hepburn that a proposed oath which would require all Mormons to disavow any connection with their temple beliefs and forsake other religious commitments as a prerequisite for suffrage, stood very close to a violation of freedom of religion. He pleaded with Hepburn to make Congress understand that it must "be wisely discriminant between acts of disloyalty and that which is belief preparatory to the life beyond." The polygamy question aside for the moment, Smith discussed the legality of the bill forcing Mormons to denounce their religion: "I acknowledge the right of the government to define largely what the rights may be to control my civil actions [as it does regarding plural marriage]; but certainly deny the right to impose oaths upon me that ask me to renounce my allegiance to God in any sense; as this oath by Senator Edmunds may be construed to do" (Letterbook 4; see also J. Smith to William H. Kelley, 14 Jan. 1886).

On 4 March 1886 Smith wrote Edmunds that he favored moderation in dealing with non-polygamist Mormons, allowing them all the rights and privileges of full United States citizenship. He remained as steadfastly opposed to plural marriage as ever but did not want to persecute innocent people for their fellow church members' actions. Regarding polygamists, however, Smith told Edmunds, "The hand of Government has too long been clothed in silk; those who had attempted legislation have feared to hurt; this made the leaders of the polygamists bold and aggressive, and they presume upon the old time plea of 'persecution, oppression, religious intolerance, the rights of conscience,' &c." If Edmunds restricted his activity to antipolygamy legislation, Smith counseled, there would be little trouble with non-polygamist opposition to the bill. If he persisted in attacking the Mormon Church as a whole, however, Congress could find itself with a Mormon war on its hands that would be expensive, certainly, in property, dollars, and, quite probably, human life. Ill feelings would persist for generations (Letterbook 4).

Joseph Smith III looked upon the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act in February 1887 with mixed emotions. The law, as Smith had hoped, was directed at polygamists. It provided for stricter enforcement and stiffer prison sentences, loosened the confines of legality under which Federal marshals worked, and permitted certain types of circumstantial evidence to be admitted in court cases dealing with plural marriage. These results pleased Smith. But he seriously questioned some of its other sections. The act disincorporated the Mormon church and provided for the seizure of all Church property in excess of $25,000. It called for a test oath of allegiance to the United States government before any Utahn could serve in public office or vote. Smith had already protested the oath's inclusion to Senator Edmunds, and he accepted some of the remaining provisions of the act only with reservation. Once it was enacted, however, Smith supported its enforcement, concluding that while it was not

the best tool to resolve the Mormon issue, it was the only one available and therefore had the potential of ending the half-century long practice of polygamy.

From this perspective, then, it should not be surprising that Joseph Smith III was overjoyed when Wilford Woodruff announced, in 1890 after a complex set of compromises, that he was advising Latter-day Saints to contract no marriages forbidden by law. For Smith, plural marriage's elimination vindicated his position that his father had not been its author. It signified, furthermore, that his efforts were indeed reforming the Mormon Church; and although the Reorganization actually had little to do with the Utah Mormon decision to end plural marriage, Smith believed that he could take a fair measure of credit for the action. He summarized this belief in a letter to Utah Congressman Moses Thatcher on 18 December 1896 when the state entered the Union. "I have watched the course of the events as it has appeared to the public," he wrote, "and have been anxious to see the right vindicated" (Letterbook 7; Newell and Avery 1984, 302–9).

With the passing of plural marriage, Smith was convinced justice had triumphed, truth had prevailed, and one branch of his father's church had been cleansed of its most prevalent blemish.

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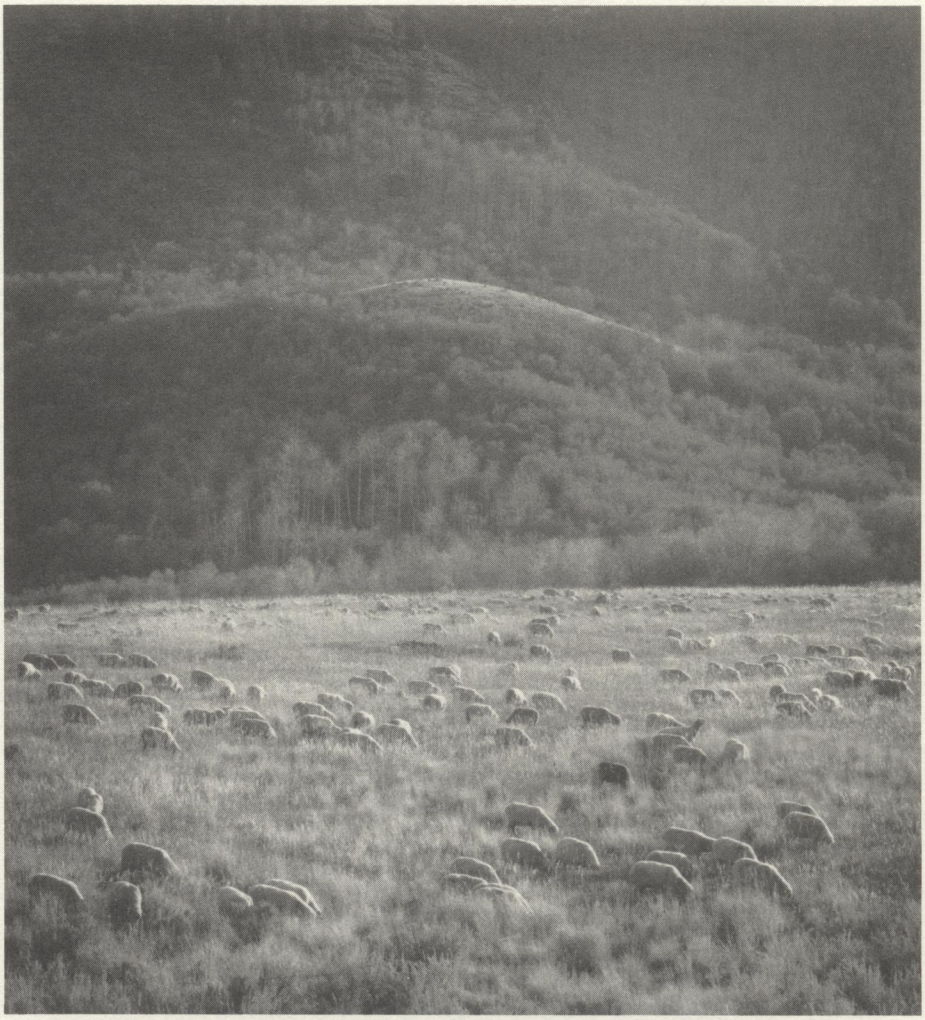

In Defense of a Mormon Erotica

Levi S. Peterson

DESPITE MY TITLE, I do not intend to defend pornography, Mormon or otherwise. But I do intend to discuss Mormon attitudes toward erotica and suggest that a dearth of sexuality in Mormon literature may be a kind of obverse pornography — and also to suggest that expressions of sexuality and other human functions are not intrinsically offensive to God.

In defining pornography I would like to cite that apostle of the erotic, D. H. Lawrence, an English writer much respected for his realistic study of the Oedipus complex in one novel, *Sons and Lovers* (1913), and much deprecated for his graphic treatment of adultery in another, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). Although by today's standards it is not a sensational book, Lawrence was forced to publish *Lady Chatterley's Lover* privately in Florence. In 1932, two years after his death, his publisher put forth an expurgated version. As late as 1957, when Grove Press published the unexpurgated version in the United States, the Post Office banned the work from the mails. Following a successful suit by the publisher, the work has circulated without hindrance. Utterly sincere as a prophet of the liberated sexual instinct, Lawrence responded to critics who called *Lady Chatterley's Lover* pornographic by writing a pugnacious essay entitled "Pornography and Obscenity." I personally find his definition of pornography persuasive:

> It isn't sex appeal or sex stimulus in art. It isn't even a deliberate intention on the part of the artist to arouse or excite sexual feelings. There's nothing wrong with sexual feelings in themselves, so long as they are straightforward and not sneaking or sly. . . . Pornography is the attempt to insult sex, to do dirt on it (1956, 37).

I will apply Lawrence's definition to a hypothetical magazine which I will have to buy at a truck stop on the Interstate outside of Utah — say, in Idaho or Wyoming. The magazine has little text. It consists rather of numerous

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color photographs of human genitalia and of nude adults engaged in many sorts of benign sexual intercourse. *Benign* means that these participants appear to be mutually consenting — not necessarily in love with one another but at least not distressed by their activity. In my opinion, these photographs "do dirt" on sex, to repeat Lawrence's term. The unrelieved accumulation of genitalia, the incessant scenes of intercourse are distressing, inordinate, unseemly. But surely they constitute a mild rather than an egregious pornography. There is no reason to ban the magazine utterly from the universe. If travelers on the Interstate want to buy it, let them.

What is egregious pornography? I find, in another hypothetical magazine which I buy in an adult bookstore in Las Vegas, photographs of a terrified nude woman chained to a stake, of a man inflicting sodomy upon an anguished girl, of a female torso with bloody, half-severed breasts — there are worse, but I'll not describe them. Sexual depictions associated with violence, brutality, and humiliation unquestionably do dirt on sex and worse. In fact, I consider the depiction of violence unrelated to sex far more pornographic than the nonviolent depiction of sexual parts and acts. Ironically, millions of readers and TV watchers who pride themselves upon their militancy against sexual display calmly ingest graphic shootings, stabbings, decapitations, and disembowelments. A movie replete with violence can easily be rated PG; a single scene of nudity makes it an R.

The Committee on Pornography established by the Attorney General of the United States recently issued a two-volume report showing a link between pornography and crimes of violence. I find myself strongly agreeing with a witness before the committee who testified, as reported in *Time*, that the link is the violent content of pornography rather than the sexual:

> Edward Donnerstein, a University of Wisconsin psychologist who has studied the effects of sexually violent material, was billed as one of the committee's star witnesses. But in his testimony he refused to make a direct causal link between pornography and violence. Although he does not repudiate the report, he suggests that the crucial variable is not explicit sex but graphic violence. Violent films without sex, like *Rambo*, he suggests, cause the same changes in attitude as sexually violent ones. "If you take out the sex and leave the violence, you get the increased violent behavior. . . . If you take out the violence and leave the sex, nothing happens" ("Sex Busters," 1986, 15).

I contemplate the morally self-satisfied ingesters of violence with alarm and irritation, finding their inconsistent behavior unworthy of the reasoning species to which they belong. I also respond irascibly to those fervent, punctilious Mormons who flee all mention of sex. Several years ago in my American novel class at Weber State College, I included John Updike's *Couples* among the assigned works. When it came time to read that novel, three Latter-day Saint students, a young man and two young women, demurred. Though I exhorted and cajoled and though they were apologetic and distressed, they maintained their position: they preferred not to read a book about spouse swapping. I therefore negotiated a substitute novel for the three, and my class went forward in a dichotomous fashion. A year later, when I had replaced *Couples* with

Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying*, four students demurred, all young Mormon women. Already defeated, I allowed them to make an exchange with scarcely a breath of expostulation.

I accepted their scruples, but I didn't admire them. I was ashamed of these young adults for their illiberal understanding of human nature and their cloistered virtue. In particular, I regretted their inability to test their character in the vicarious arena of literature. They will go on assuming that vice is unconquerable, that flight is the only weapon the righteous have against evil. Though they do not commit a sin of lust, they commit an obverse sin of prudery. Prudery forces the sexual impulse underground, banishes it to the territory of the abnormal and forbidden. Ironically, prudery reinforces pornography.

Perhaps I am attempting to corrupt model young Latter-day Saints. Perhaps I should admit that I am perverse, that I am one of those unvaliant spirits who do not fare well in the probation of mortality and are fated to spend eternity on the lower rungs of glory. I remember a winter night when, five or six years old, I knelt behind the glowing wood stove in obedience to my mother's orders to say my evening prayer. I was angry about something, perhaps simply about having to go to bed. Instead of whispering my usual prayer, I muttered a four-letter word over and over. Was that a sign of my innate depravity? Perhaps Joseph Smith should not have revised the venerable Puritan doctrine of infant damnation.

Truly, what might God think of my obscene prayer? Does he despise me for defecating and urinating? Has he a lesser tolerance for these vital body functions than my gastroenterologist? Is he indignant over the angry, scornful four-letter words by which I sometimes name these functions and their products? I for one think obscenity is a human, not a divine, issue. I can't conceive of Almighty God, creator and sustainer of galaxies, occupying himself with my four-letter words. Obscenity is a matter of taste and discretion, not of morality and sin. Had she heard me, my mother would have thought the less of me for muttering obscenities instead of pieties behind the stove on that winter night, but I believe God only laughed. Surely he was not so petty as to be angry over my pettiness.

Although I am overawed in argument by those who have the Holy Ghost as their immediate second, I have some faith in my intuitions about God's attitude toward human sexuality. On the basis of those intuitions I accept that fidelity is better than infidelity, that committed sex is better than promiscuity, that marital sex is better than extramarital sex. I believe the Church properly assumes the role of inculcating sexual mores and standards and of defining sexual sin. However, I believe that on the whole Mormons overreact to sexual sin, that they make far too much of it. I do not believe the Church should excommunicate or even disfellowship for sexual sin. I believe it can achieve its purposes of teaching propriety and order without such punitive measures, which indeed seem startlingly contrary to the Church's mission of saving rather than damning sinners.

I have difficulty believing that God has infused the human psyche with the powerful sexual impulse merely to sift the obedient from the disobedient, the self-controlled from the self-indulgent, the ascetic from the sensuous. I do

not believe that God admires chastity for its own sake nor that he ordains celibacy and a denial of appetite. I do not believe that God frets over the lush practices and heights of passion between me and my wife, so long as they please both of us. Our manner of making love is our affair, not his. Nor will he be astonished if I sin. I do not blame God for my contrary personality, but neither do I believe that he blames me. It is our mutual problem. I will trust in his tolerance for my errant experimentations with life. He gave me a Savior because he knew I would need one.

I can hear the rustling of pages in the Bible and the Book of Mormon as knowing persons search for scriptural passages proving me wrong. Isn't it true that all the holy prophets have been sexually reticent and clean of speech and that they have declared God's pleasure with such qualities among his children? I remember that David and Solomon had concubines; that by God's command Hosea married a whore; that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young and my grandfather took plural wives; that even Jesus himself when he denounced the scribes and Pharisees with angry, insulting names, calling them hypocrites, fools, and vipers, came close to obscenity. I think it would not be at all impossible to develop a Mormon theology more tolerant of sexuality and bold speech. I hope some gifted scholar of the scriptures will step forward to do it.

If God's people are sexual creatures and if they are sometimes angry and scornful, and if their anger and scorn sometimes well up into obscenities, the literature which expresses God's people should reflect those facts. Literature should reflect life. Ultimately it should reflect all of life. Nothing that people feel, nothing that they do, should be denied a place in literature.

Then how shall I distinguish between an acceptable expression of sexuality and pornography? It is a matter of proportion. Proportion is fundamental in any theory of art. It suggests a variety of elements standing in harmonious relationship with one another, none without due representation, each fitted to each, each shaped by the shape of the whole.

Proportion applies to morality as well as to art. The Golden Mean, the point of balance between opposite excesses, is a matter of proportion. Body and spirit, obedience and initiative, action and contemplation, altruism and self-centeredness, appetite and conscience are to be reconciled and harmonized, to be made proportionate to one another. If we respect proportion, we can dispense with foolish discussions in our Priesthood and Relief Society lessons about whether we would jump off a cliff if the prophet ordered us to. Obedience carried to an excess is a sin.

It is gross disproportion that creates pornography. Neither sexual images nor obscene words nor even depictions of violence in themselves make literature pornographic. If they are amassed, concentrated, enormously emphasized — if they become the single end and purpose of the writing — they are pornographic. But if they are intermittent in an action, if they mingle with other images and deeds, balancing proportionately, appearing as a part rather than the whole of life, then they are not pornographic.

Writers are not obliged to create sexual images or attribute obscenities to their characters if they have no instinct for that kind of writing. It is easy to

name numerous great works of literature devoid of such qualities. Yet I for one find it sad and, yes, even eerie to contemplate the acres of shelf space occupied in local libraries by Mormon novels and to realize that there may not be a half dozen satisfying obscenities nor a single good orgasm among the lot. Writers who eschew entirely the sexual and the obscene fail to exploit an immense reservoir of energy, vigor, and sensory experience. It is as if they are piloting a twin-engined airplane but insist by reason of their scruples to operate only one engine. Timid authors fall into the error of incompleteness. Sexuality is a part of living. There is health in treating the broad range of experience in literature, in viewing clearly the full spectrum of human act and emotion, thereby helping to domesticate disorderly impulses and to disarm an unfounded fear of those that only seem disorderly.

I have said this in a different way in my short story, "Night Soil," published in *Utah Holiday*, December 1985. "Night Soil" is about an aging man in a Utah village who yearns for redemption but compulsively resists righteousness. Named Pickett, he is, I suppose, a kind of grotesque. He has only one leg, the other having been amputated and, by his insistence, given a formal burial. As the story opens on a Sunday morning, he is lurching along with the assistance of an artificial leg to pay a visit to the grave of the amputated leg. Despite his vow to respect the Sabbath by staying out of the poolhall, he quickly finds himself there, where in the course of events he maligns the local bishop by telling his cronies the following tale:

> "I had me a dream about Delbert," Pickett said. "One night in vision I saw me and him in the Celestial Kingdom."
>
> "I imagine you did, all right," Jorley said.
>
> "No fooling. There I was in the Celestial Kingdom and it was time to go to the bathroom and all they had was an old-fashioned privy. I went in and peered down the hole and who did I see bogged down in that privy pit but Delbert himself? I backed out and looked up the Angel Moroni, and I says, Brother Moroni, I can't go to the bathroom in that privy because a feller I knew in mortality, Delbert Wheatley, is in there mired up to his neck; did you know that? Sure, I knew he was in there, Moroni says; now you just go ahead and relieve yourself according to custom. Oh, no, I couldn't do that, I says. You bet you could, Moroni says; all your life he done it on you and now it's your turn to give a little back" (p. 79).

It is an obscenity on Pickett's part to tell this story. But I testify that I came by the story, with different locale and characters and more forceful diction, directly from the mouth of a real Mormon villager. It would have been a crime of high order if, in the name of a timid morality, I had let this energetic tale, this Chaucerian fabliau from northern Arizona, sink into oblivion.

Pickett hobbles on toward the cemetery, carrying a burlap bag filled with bottles of beer he has won playing pool. He hopes to proceed safely past the house of a temptress named Pansy. Pansy, however, engages his sense of duty by telling him that her outdoor toilet has been demolished during a quarrel with her half-witted brother Wendell. After Pickett has helped reassemble the shattered privy, Pansy invites him into the house to eat a meal. Shortly she entices him to make love:

> "You ain't had a bath in a while," Pansy said, wrinkling her nose.
>
> "No'm, I ain't, that's true."

She put a washpan of water on a burner. "Strip off and I'll wash you."

She brought him a pillowcase to cradle his crotch like a diaper because he was too modest to have her see his privates. He dropped his coveralls, unstrapped his leg, and stood clutching the pillowcase with one hand and gripping a chairback with the other, his gullied face morose, his scarlet stump pulsing. She soaped his back and belly and armpits and wiped off the lather with a washcloth. "Time for your dainties," she said, laying the soap and cloth on the table within his reach. "My back is turned. I won't peek, I promise."

When he was through she said, "Look at me, Pickett!" She had pudgy knees, dimpled thighs, billowing buttocks, narrow shoulders, bulbous breasts. "Am I pretty?"

"Oh, lord, just like a sunrise," he said.

After they had made love they lounged against the headboard of the bed, each with an arm around the other, drinking beer slowly, coughing and belching and gazing at the motes adrift in the afternoon sunlight. Pickett peered into his empty bottle. He saw foamy bubbles stretching like cobwebs between slick glass walls, he saw an amber glow like a moon about to rise over the horizon. "Don't begrudge the back side of things," he said.

"Oh, I never do," she said hastily.

"For example, take your privy pit, which is foul with stink. I'm lying here thinking, Ain't Pansy and Wendell ate many a fine meal; ain't they been hungry to eat and they ate? You laughed many a time, had many a fine thing happen. And you left a bit of all that pleasure in that privy, didn't you? It ain't a pit full of mire and mess. It's a picture album, it's a museum, it's your grandmother's trunk full of wonderful old things out of the past."

"Gosh, Pickett, are you crazy?"

"No," he said, "don't begrudge poor things" (p. 81–82).

That isn't the end of the story, for Pickett lurches on toward the cemetery; but he has expressed, perhaps with a clumsy directness, a minor theme. I tried to suggest that human taboos are not necessarily God's taboos, that the human repugnance for defecation and urination and scandalous words is not shared by God. Compared to God's perfection, perhaps every living ounce of the human body, the heart and brain as well as the emunctories, is no better than night soil. Yet in the light of his redemption, can any particle or shred of the human creature be less than eternal gold?

So I will close with a summary exhortation to Mormon writers — and to those Mormon readers who finally dictate the tone and tenor of what those authors write. Don't be paralyzed by prudery. Don't fall into the opposite excess of pornography. If you are bold enough to write and read about characters eating a meal, be bold enough to write and read about characters making love or going to the bathroom or uttering angry, scatalogical expressions. There is a vitality in sexual imagery and obscenities. Shaped proportionately, they do not corrupt and vitiate a work of literature. Like a tributary river, they add to the swelling current of ideas, images, and emotions that makes the reading of a good book a consummate experience.

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Groping the Mormon Eros

B. W. Jorgensen

WHEN LEVI AND I PRESENTED EARLIER VERSIONS of these papers at the 1986 Sunstone Symposium, the moment had already acquired an appropriately symptomatic quality by being given two titles: Levi's too-brave or even brazen "In Defense of a Mormon Pornography" (which he didn't entirely intend and which the present title does not improve much) and the organizers' coy or downright misleading "In Defense of Mormon Profanity." Maybe that was not an intentional emendation but, as one couldn't help suggesting, a Freudian slip — just a little gremlin of the superego editing the program and not the mind of Sunstone Symposium Correlation averting the mere mention of the unmentionable.

Either way, it might have prompted a D. H. Lawrence to suppose that the Mormon culture, too, was and is very much a part of the "diseased . . . body politic" (1936, 177) he castigated so shrilly in his famous essay on "Pornography and Obscenity": we too, it might appear, perhaps as a rightful if lamentable heritage from American Puritanism and Victorian gentility, "tickl[e] the dirty little secret" while "rolling the eyes to heaven" (1936, 181). Whatever my misgivings about Lawrence as novelistic "apostle of the erotic," I cannot help but be struck with the supposition that we Mormons, as a culture and as separate persons, might be thickly involved with "the sentimental lie of purity and the dirty little secret" (1936, 185). Not a nice thing to suppose. But that, after all, was the point.

It was a mild disappointment that Levi did not "intend to defend real pornography"; we might have found less agreement and more argument. The most threatening defense I know is Susan Sontag's "The Pornographic Imagination" in her *Styles of Radical Will* (1970). That essay in part responds to two earlier attacks: George Steiner's "Night Words" in his *Language and Silence* (1970), and George P. Elliott's "Against Pornography" in his *Conversions* (1971). Any thoughtful Mormon *literary* discussion of the topic

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would, I think, have to confront these as well as Lawrence (whose definition none of these three totally accepts). It would especially have to meet Sontag's position, which she argues from premises that some of us may find persuasive because of our training in literature or humanities: that, like other forms of art, literature is "a form of consciousness" (1970, 44) and that it offers us the chance of "a wider scale of experience" (1970, 72). I don't attempt that confrontation here, though all of these essays lie behind much of what I can say. Informed discussion ought also to take into account a broad spectrum of feminist writing on the issue; my acquaintance with it is still peripheral. What I can do is respond in passing to Levi's paper as I make my own general and particular observations on Mormons and the erotic.

Levi's references to "Mormon attitudes" and the "dearth of sexuality in Mormon literature" do deserve more discussion. The "dearth" or "conspiracy of silence" does suggest that, as Lawrence would put it, we have "driven sex to the underworld, and nudity to the w.c." (1970, 175). I want first to examine two unhelpful kinds of Mormon talk about pornography; then, by way of some scriptural texts, to rethink such habits of talk; and last, to look at two Mormon literary instances that seem to display a prevalent attitude.

We are frequently, duly, and properly warned, over the pulpit in general conference, against the evil of pornography — an attitude Levi and I share, though we both also value and wish to allow a place for the erotic. But all too often, that evil is referred to in terms of poison, disease, or wounds. I will call this the fallacy of overextended or overcredited metaphor. Yes, pornography is dangerous, as are poison, disease, and wounds. But right where we most need clarity for any genuinely moral discussion of the problem, the metaphors cloud the issue. Yes, reading a Silhouette Special Edition romance or watching bare bodies simulate copulation on a screen is a kind of taking-in, but it is not the same thing as ingesting botulism toxin from a can of vegetables or catching a cold by a kiss or breaking skin on sharp glass. Each of these events begins a biochemical or physiological process that, unless decisively interfered with by other such processes, will proceed inexorably to its end: illness, bodily damage, death. But reading is an act of consciousness, a work of the spirit, a free act of a free agent; its consequences are not deterministically predictable, as far as my experience has shown. I may "ingest," by reading, a false analogy like the ones I am talking about; I may "eat" error. Yet I do not necessarily become erroneous; I can analyze and judge and even use the error to get nearer to the truth.

This line of thinking might help explain Jesus' startling declaration that "there is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him" (Mark 7:15). The occasion was a Pharisaic criticism of the disciples for eating without washing their hands; but this statement to "all the people" (v. 14) is categorical, a universal negative — "there is nothing." And for the puzzled disciples, Jesus' explanation does not stay in the ritual or physiological domain but shifts emphatically into the moral (vv. 17–23). His point seems to be that because we are free agents, nothing can defile us but what comes "from within, out of the heart" (v. 21).

Mormon talk on this topic (and I don't pretend to an exhaustive survey) seems to me to have reached a high point of moral clarity and wisdom with Elder Marvin J. Ashton's October 1977 conference talk, "Rated A." Elder Ashton seems to me to keep agency in mind and at least some of his language moral by talking about "choosing . . . habits" (p. 71) and by recommending knowledge of the good, of "things that are lovely, wholesome, and praiseworthy" (p. 73), as the best defense against evil. I sometimes amplify this idea for my students in this way: If we are free, and if, because of that, what comes out of us defiles us, then we must watch what we choose, and watch the rewards our choices bring us. If I choose to read *Lady Chatterley's Lover* for sexual titillation, my choice corrupts me, and my reading will reward that choice in a way that will begin to confirm a habit of such choices. I am obliged to try to know my motives and to choose my actions carefully. I cannot blame a book for what happens to me if I choose to read it for prurient reasons. What corrupts me comes out of my heart.

Not moral talk but metaphorical, porn-as-poison talk may lie behind the attitudes of those students Levi describes whose "cloistered virtue" will not allow them to "test their character in the vicarious arena of literature" and who he fears "will go on assuming that vice is unconquerable, that flight is the only weapon the righteous have against evil." Certainly, if they believe words about the erotic are poison, they must believe avoidance is their only chance: they cannot tell the moral difference between Joseph in Potiphar's house and themselves in a literature class. But having said that, I will say, too, that I think young Mormon students should evercise their right not to read, on the good and fairly clear moral ground that they may not be prepared to make the judgments that will help them avoid porn-reading habits. What looks to Levi or to me (or even to Milton) like "fugitive and cloistered virtue" may well represent quite valid self-knowledge.

Besides unhelpfully metaphorical talk about porn, our culture sometimes employs inadequate, inaccurate, or incomplete definitions. Both Levi and I risk this. But consider a definition proposed some years ago by a colleague of mine: that pornographic writing is any verbal representation of sexual parts or intercourse. What do we mean by "representation," and in what context, with what intent, what tone, what degree of "explicitness"? Nothing tests a definition like examples; so consider a series from the Bible. I know: the oldest "liberal" ploy in the book. But I mean to do it a bit more seriously than I've ever seen it done.

1. Genesis 4:1: "And Adam knew Eve his wife . . . ." Does this "represent" sexual activity? Surely, for us who know how to read, it does denote it. And if, as I believe and would even insist, this does invite us to imagine an act of sexual intercourse, must we call it pornography? By the proposed definition, "*any* verbal representation," yes. But I will say no and will explain why later.

2. Genesis 19:30–36: Lot's daughters conspire to "lie with" Lot. This does look more "explicit" in its denotation of sexual acts, or at least intentions. What is more, those acts are illicit, even forbidden because incestuous . Does that make this episode pornographic? Again, no.

3. Genesis 29:23: Jacob "went in unto" Leah. Depending on how we read the phrase — and how we read, as you see, is all-important — this may seem either less or more "explicit" than the previous instance. It also surely "represents," or invites us to imagine, a sexual act; yet again I will not call it pornographic.

4. I could go on with Joseph and Potiphar's wife, David and Bathsheba, and others, but I skip to the text my children in seminary have been advised not to read: The Song of Songs which is Solomon's (esp. 1:13; 2:16–17; 4:1–7). Without needing to quote, since the pages are familiar to most of us from our teens, I must say that here, though it is often veiled in metaphor or obscured in translation, we have so much more "explicitness" that for centuries Christians have piously taken this as "allegorical," a representation of the relationship between Christ and the Church rather than a celebration of human sexual love. It may well be both. Again, I'm reluctant to call it pornographic, though it is keenly erotic and often does seem intended to arouse positive feelings about sex. (Not always; compare 3:1–5 with 5:2–7.)

5. Ezekiel 23:1–49: a chapter of evidence that at least one of the holy prophets, as Levi surely knows, was not at all "sexually reticent." In this chapter we must find "the word of the Lord" (v. 1) itself obscene, indeed, almost literally "pornographic" in the root sense, since it describes in gross bodily detail the whoredoms of the sisters Aholah and Aholibah, which represent the spiritual whoredoms of Samaria and Jerusalem. Must we at last accuse God himself of inspiring pornography? On the definition proposed, yes. But not quite, I would say, because of the tone and intent. Here, one of the most explicit biblical references to sex seems clearly intended to arouse not lust, nor any positive feeling toward sex, but disgust, utter and enraged revulsion against the spiritual promiscuity of those wayward sisters. The chapter divinely "does dirt on" faithlessness by using lewdness as its metaphor.

It should be clear by now that as a definition of "pornography," a phrase like "any verbal representation of sexual parts or intercourse" won't do. I suggest that any "pornographic event" may involve three elements: a porn author, a porn text, and a porn reader. In fact, it seems to me that the porn event seldom requires all three, though it always requires one: just a porn reader. Porn author and porn text make the event more likely but do not inevitably guarantee it.

Now some definitions, keeping in mind the root sense of "pornography": writing about whores; descriptions of their parts or activities, usually intended to attract customers.

A porn author is one who verbally represents sexual activity intending sexual arousal in readers, usually as an inducement to buy something (a whore's services, more porn, a deodorant).

A porn reader is one who reads for sexual arousal or titillation. Some read the Bible this way — a home teaching companion told me he had seen a missionary's Bible with red underlining every passage that could possibly be construed with sexual meaning, though it's possible this represented a research interest. But perverse reading is not an argument for banning or burning that or any other book. What comes out of the heart defiles us.

A porn text is any text which represents people engaged in sexual activity in such a way that they become mere outlines, collections of the names of body parts and secretions and functions, become nothing more than words about sex, totally or largely abstracted from the full dimensions and mystery of human personality and connection. All literary characters, of course, are collections of words and sentences; but the people that porn "characters" invite us to imagine "have sex" rather than "make love." They do things *to* one another's parts, take pleasure *from* one another, but do not make anything *with* or *for* one another except nervous excitement, vasocongestion, tumescence and detumescence endlessly.

As far as I can tell, this definition accords with Sontag's views that porn "is mainly populated by creatures . . . endowed with neither will nor intelligence nor even, apparently, memory" (1970, 53); "What pornographic literature does is precisely to drive a wedge between one's existence as a full human being and one's existence as a sexual being" (1970, 58); and that "the universe proposed by the pornographic imagination" reduces "everything into the one negotiable currency of the erotic imperative" (1970, 66; cf. 39–40). Like Elliott and Steiner, I cannot take Sontag's attitude toward this terribly reductive universe.

This definition will also explain why I cannot find Levi's story of Pickett and Pansy pornographic: Their creator does not compel me to watch in detail the privacies of their lovemaking; and even as rather comic caricatures — "grotesque" as Levi admits — they're too human for porn, so I'm glad for them and guilty with them, amused and delighted by their affection and their quirky delicacy about bathing and about Pickett's "dainties."

Now to tease out some implications.

A porn text necessarily implies an antecedent porn author. (Innocent accidents do happen in words or sentences, as every freshman English teacher knows; but the result is usually laughter, not arousal.) And a porn text will tend to create a porn reader. When I read such a text (with any other than an unimaginably pure, disinterested, analytic or documentary eye), I risk becoming, while I am reading, at least in part the only kind of reader pornography normally defines for itself.

Certain dangers follow from this: (1) I may form a habit, get hooked on the stuff, find that I want more and more of it; (2) worse, I may begin to believe that my own body and others' bodies, to say nothing of our several complicated strange selves, are little more than excitable parts watched over by detached, spectatorial minds; (3) worse still, I may seek, act in, and experience sexual relations as if these things were true, which is to make them true for me, and thus to substitute tumescence/detumescence for the problematic joy of knowing another, by reducing myself and someone else, in my mind, to nonpersons all too like the noncharacters in porn texts.

These three consequences are simply my elaboration of Elder Ashton's remarks about the "habit" of porn. They are also, again, fairly consistent with Sontag's analysis of serious porn, though for her "the transcendence of personality" (1970, 55; cf. 42, 44, 70) is not reduction but the expansion of

consciousness that porn offers which makes it a valid literary experience. One response to this argument is Elliott's: "In respect of pornography and nihilism, my consciousness has expanded enough. There are things I want not to know" (1971, 171).

Because we are free agents, none of these things is a *necessary* consequence of porn reading or of porn texts, but it would be hard to deny that such things can and do happen. Further, to recur again to Mark 7, it should be clear that intending to porn-read is itself something "from within, out of the heart," that defiles us. Prior encounters with porn texts may have established an appetite and formed a habit, but the intent is a matter of our choice, and the intent needs no more than curiosity to fuel it. The intent itself corrupts; the act rewards the intent and thus works to confirm it as a habit, breakable but dangerous.

From all of this it may begin to be clearer, too, why I find the poison or disease or scarring metaphors not only misleading but dangerous themselves: they all reduce us, in a way disturbingly like the way porn reduces us, to less than the fully personal, free, and moral agents that we are. Porn is a moral problem, and only moral language can begin to deal with it.

It should also be clearer now why I am unwilling to call any but perhaps the last of my biblical examples pornographic: none of them, not even the "explicit" Song of Songs, reduces its characters to body parts and functions, though the Lord in Ezekiel portrays Samaria and Jerusalem as sisters whose whoredoms tend that way. For us as readers, to know their erotic actions is to know these characters, these verbal representations of moral agents or persons in relation, more fully, not less.

Perhaps the richest example is the first: "Adam knew Eve his wife" (Gen. 4:1). We seriously distort this if we take *knew* as a translation of some sort of Hebraic euphemism. Further, if we try to make it more explicit, we reduce or vaporize its meaning. Adam "lay with" Eve? Adam "had intercourse with" Eve? Yes, but more than that. Adam "made love with" Eve? Yes, better, if we take that phrase seriously and not as just an English euphemism; but still more than that. Adam "had carnal knowledge of" Eve? Hopeless: the legalese derived from biblical usage hits even wider of the mark than four-letter words would. "Adam knew Eve": each knew the other as that single self God had blessed with body and breath; perhaps knew in a holy and holistic way quite beyond any additive account of physical attributes, character traits, thoughts, feelings, whatever; knew reciprocally and unboundedly in ways possible only to whole persons intimately joined.

It is a stunning paradox to find a word that seems *not* to say so much, actually *saying more* than could any word that seems to say what this word does not. There may be instruction here for writers: too much erotic naming, too much enumeration of parts and motions and functions will say too little; for me, Levi's moral-theological fabliau about Pickett is a positive demonstration of this principle. Maybe in writing of the erotic the minimalist slogan applies: less is more.

Because porn-texts and porn-reading may tend to preclude our having the experience suggested in "Adam knew Eve," porn is, as George Steiner says for

a somewhat different reason, "a massive onslaught . . . on the delicate processes by which we seek to become our own singular selves, to hear the echo of our specific being" (1970, 76). It is a severe threat to our deepest humanity and selfhood, which literature normally seeks to nourish and enrich, and to that godlikeness that scripture and modern revelation call us to.

As a teacher of literature and of writing, sometimes a writer of poems and stories and chapters toward novels, I see porn-texts and porn-reading as enemies of literature. And I also see literature — including the erotic as Levi urges, from the lyric to the farcical — and literate reading as our best personal and cultural defense. My advice, if anyone is asking, is simple:

1. Don't bother to read, much less buy, what is clearly packaged and sold as porn.

2. When you encounter porn in a book not so packaged and sold, decide carefully whether or not the book merits your continued and sustained attention. If you find yourself skimming, looking for the next bit of porn, better stop — you're out of control and defiling yourself.

3. Above all, don't read pornographically. The best way to take this advice is to put it in positive form (again as Elder Ashton did): learn to read literately; learn by reading literary classics and the scriptures attentively, deeply, repeatedly.

To read literately is difficult in any time and place. It is especially difficult in a culture (American and Mormon) which pays lip service to literacy but does not take it all that seriously. And literately to read the erotic is even more difficult in a culture nervously clinging to "the sentimental lie of purity and the dirty little secret," as ours (American and Mormon) seems to be.

But there is an unsentimental truth of purity, and there is in sex a holy "great mystery" (Eph. 5:32). As man is not without woman nor woman without man in the Lord (1 Cor. 11:11), nor spirit without element in the fulness of joy (D&C 93:33), we ought to take care what we put asunder. Two Mormon literary instances may suggest the struggle it is to hold things together.

Carol Hofeling Morris's novel *The Broken Covenant* (1985) looked as if it might be a landmark in the history of in-house fiction, as indeed it must have been. For one thing, it was easily twice as thick as the average cotton-candy LDS romance or "Mormon mushie." For another, its subject had several times the usual specific gravity. It is a novel of Mormon adultery; or, now the genre has been surveyed by Judith Armstrong (1976) and brilliantly illuminated by Tony Tanner (1979), a Mormon "novel of adultery." Imagine Deseret Book publishing a novel that admits Mormons do commit adultery, and for what seem at the moment good and sufficient reasons, however swift and murderous the reflex of guilt. The admission was softened somewhat by the offender being a woman rather than a priesthood holder, and her partner in sin a somewhat artsy gentile. Still, there was that husband, a single-minded authoritarian goal-setting executive, as deadly dull a male chauvinist as the most rabid antimasculist might contrive. And there was, even during the nearly fatal attack of guilt, the woman's terrific anger against all patriarchs up to and including God the Father. I'm still not sure Deseret Book knows what it has let loose on

the Mormon world. Yes, Kathy repents, though in a way not quite credible, depending on a fairly rusty old *deus ex machina.* But I suspect what stays with most readers is her anger and the gray negation of life that urged her to desperate, self-deceiving passion and nearly consuming hatred and depression.

Maybe this is all rather beside the point of examining a case of the "dearth of sexuality" in Mormon literature; and admittedly I am looking too narrowly at a novel that, however flawed in conception and style, was seriously meant and merits more literate reading. I meant to say just this: Deseret Book kept it clean. In this book in which sexuality, marital and extramarital, is the central issue, no one ever makes love. Or ever made it. It is as if that textual fact drove Kathy to her panicked one-night stand, the central moral and physical fact of which her bishop must name for her: she "had sexual intercourse" (p. 85) with someone not her husband. This book, or its editors, can't allow anybody to be sensual or sexual; can't allow anybody to be *any body* — except poor Kathy in near-suicidal depression, dragging her load of guilty, self-loathed flesh. Kathy and her passionless husband have had, in about two decades of marriage, "intimacy" or some sort of "physical relationship" (p. 159); and finally, on the verge of reuniting, Kathy wonders if they will yet "enjoy a moment of physical intimacy" (p. 278). I watched this language carefully. In this text, for sex to be pure — for it to be at all — it must occur only in abstraction: in the bishop's kindly supplied but dry and (yes, appropriately) searing objective legalism of "sexual intercourse," and in that remote adjective and blurry noun which do attain a sublimated conjunction in "physical intimacy."

It might be ludicrous except it looks mortal. God does appear to "admire chastity for its own sake" (or so Jacob 2:28 seems to say). But here there is something trying to look like purity, and there is sex as sin or sex as contraceptive abstraction. The great mystery that has been shriveled into a dirty little secret is that we are sexual bodies. Lawrence would say that this sundering, this dualism, this hypocrisy, is what generates pornography, which in turn "do[es] dirt on" sex and on life itself (1936, 175–78), on the "man alive and live woman" (1936, 538) which he held holy above all. We ought not to have needed him to apprise us of that. We ought not to need a voice like his to warn us of the sickness in our own body ecclesiastic, which is signalled by statistics or anecdotes we don't talk much about in public and have a hard time confirming in private: child sexual abuse, incest, levels of marital distress leading to adultery and sometimes to homosexuality — all suggesting that to make something unmentionable is not to overcome it at all but to give it the eruptive force of a water polo ball held three feet under.

My second instance (maybe redundant but I know it more closely) rather strictly confirms the implications of *The Broken Covenant.* In October 1978 my story "Three In the Morning — A Song for One Still Voice" won the All-Church Fiction Contest and before being published in the *Ensign* was bowdlerized, prudishly stripped of direct references to the bodies and skin of the husband and wife who are its main characters. The textual evidence is there for anyone to read in the March 1979 *Ensign* and compare with the more

nearly original version in *Greening Wheat* (Jorgensen 1983). At the end of the first paragraph, the *Ensign* text says that the wife "needs this placidity that he senses in every part. She lies still as water without a breath of air moving on it" (p. 57).

In my original text, the last two lines of the paragraph read: "this placidity that he senses with his whole body. Touched, her skin would lie still as water without a breath of air moving on it" (1983, 1). I wonder if the editors realized how risky the slightly archaic compromise (one of three I offered) in the phrase "in every part" might be, even as it labors to diffuse the husband's "whole body" awareness of his wife. The most damaging change, though, was the deletion of the husband's thought of touching his wife, which dulled the small but sharp conflict I had meant to establish here between his desire and his solicitude. I had meant to put a finer edge on that conflict by beginning the second paragraph with "But" (1983, 1) rather than the not at all oppositional "So" (1979, 57).

A larger hole was torn in the fabric of the story's imagery and plot in the penultimate paragraph of the *Ensign* version, where the husband's self-renunciatory act is repeated as a kind of ante-climax to his awestruck moment of private grace. There at least he was allowed to "kiss [her] on her temple" (p. 58), though it could no longer be "warm, pulsing" (p. 5), as one spot where her bodily life is most tenderly evident. He was permitted to smell "the faint odor of the vinegar she rinsed her hair with last night" (p. 58), but not to have it remind him "how she came from the shower, blossoming from sharp spray" (p. 5), and thus connect her with all the drenched and blossoming world that graces him with joy. Nor was he allowed to think the apparently heretical (and grammatically reckless though logically impeccable) paradox, "There is no loneliness like the body, nor any delight" (p. 5).

Once again, something has been sundered: a married couple of course love one another. But purely. Which is to say that (at least in approved fiction) they do not think of or delight in one another's bodies, or in the one body that in love they may graciously make. That secret must not be let out lest it corrupt the young, or those whose deficient reading skills might put their moral inclinations at the risk of erotic imagination. One accepts the editorial policies of an official church magazine as those of any magazine. So I compromised, partly because I knew the story was so permeated with bodily, sensory joy that little short of total erasure could make it invisible, impalpable.

Yet doing so taught me something about myself. Though I may compromise, I cannot consent to be less conscious than I now am: conscious of language, of how fiction may work, of how it is, sometimes, by the grace of God and nature both, to be live man with woman alive. Denial of that secret, refusal to speak or write or hear or read it, or to let it be spoken or written or heard or read, may "do dirt on" a mystery that our theology suggests lies near the core of our being. And suppression may let it rage in its dirtied and demonic versions.

All of which should serve to declare again my general, though sometimes qualified agreement with Levi's position: Eros has a place, many places, in

Mormon writing. Which is not at all to say, or even to suppose, that erotic writing might cure our sickness. There seems to be as little evidence of that as of its opposite.

I don't know; I suppose and I fear. As is appropriate before the taboos that guard either the vile or the holy.

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On Fidelity, Polygamy, and Celestial Marriage

Eugene England

THIS IS AN ESSAY IN SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY. In it I explore an idea — the general Mormon expectation of future polygamy — that has important religious and moral implications but about which there is little definite scriptural direction and no clear official doctrine. I attempt here, in the spirit of a venerable tradition in Mormon thought from Joseph Smith's King Follett Discourse and Orson Pratt's *The Seer* to the sermons and writings of Hugh B. Brown and Lowell Bennion, to make a reconsideration, unauthoritative but serious. I suggest some new, possibly beneficial ways we might think and feel about celestial marriage — both as it is and as it might be. My essay is not a critique of official Mormon practice or doctrine but an invitation to reexamine some unofficial ideas and expectations which persist among most Mormons because of a past practice — a practice I believe was divinely inspired but also divinely, and permanently, rescinded.

Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* contains a crucial scene after Brutus has decided to join the conspiracy and kill Caesar. Brutus is reflecting on that decision in his orchard in the early morning, when his wife Portia joins him. Awakened when he left her side and further alarmed by the voices and cloaked figures of the departing conspirators, she worries that all this may be related to his "musing and sighing" at dinner the evening before and the "ungentle looks" and "impatience" with which he waved her aside. Even now Brutus claims he is merely "not well in health" and tells her to "go to bed." But Portia will not be dismissed and speaks straight to the heart of his real illness:

> You have some sick offense within your mind,
> Which, by the right and virtue of my place,

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I ought to know of. . . . .
I [ask] you, by my once commended beauty,
By all your vows of love, and that great vow
Which did incorporate and make us one,
That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,
Why you are heavy. . . .
Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
Is it [there stated] I should know no secrets
That appertain to you? Am I yourself
But, as it were, in sort or limitation,
[That is, am I one with you in only a limited way?]
To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,
And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,
Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife. (2.1.268–75; 280–87)

Portia then reminds Brutus of the qualities of lineage and character that first drew him to her and, as further proof of her firmness and courage to bear his painful and intimate secrets, reveals that she had wounded herself in the thigh but had suffered patiently all night without troubling him. Brutus exclaims, "O ye gods. Render me worthy of this noble wife!" But then he does nothing to achieve that worthiness. A knock at the door signals an additional conspirator to be won over, and Brutus readily allows this crucial opportunity with his wife to be interrupted. Although he promises Portia that "by and by thy bosom shall partake/The secrets of my heart," he never keeps that promise. Had he shared his deepest self with his other half, his wife, and been advised by her better perspective, this man, whom Marc Anthony later calls "the noblest Roman of them all," might have been deterred from bringing greater evil on Rome than the evil he sought to cure. Instead, he also destroys the life of the intrepid Portia, who kills herself by swallowing hot coals after she learns what he has done and sees his fate. And Brutus finally takes his own life after Octavius and Anthony defeat his armies at Philippi.

Shakespeare thus shows how well he understood the importance of *fidelity*, the complete faithfulness, loyalty, and sharing that is possible only when a man and a woman join their full lives — physical, mental, and spiritual — in what he called "the marriage of true minds" (Sonnet 116). He saw fidelity as central to married love, which he portrayed as the supreme form of human happiness and wholeness at the end of each of his comedies and the violation or interruption of which lies at the heart of most of the tragedies and late romances.

I believe Shakespeare is right. Marital fidelity is central to mortal joy and eternal life, even godhood, and great catastrophes are already resulting from our current neglect of it, in society generally and in too many Mormon marriages. It is the key to our concepts of sexual morality before and after marriage. And there is, I believe, a serious danger to the ideal of fidelity — and thus both to our sexual morality and to our concepts of ourselves as eternal men and women — in the expectation, shared I fear by many Mormons, that

the highest form of marriage in the celestial realm is what is technically called polygyny, plural wives for a single husband.

I believe official Mormon polygyny, as it was practiced in the nineteenth century, was inspired by God through his prophets. I am the descendant of polygynists. I honor those literal ancestors and my many spiritual ancestors who lived that law — faithfully, morally, and at enormous costs to themselves and the Church. Those costs included alienation from American culture and from their own moral training, martyrdom for a few, and very nearly the total destruction of their Church and culture by the United States government, which was willing to use brutal and unconstitutional means to force Mormon conformity. I believe that the good achieved by polygyny outweighed those costs and made possible the establishment and success of the restored kingdom of God on earth during its beginning period. And when that practice had achieved its purposes, limited to a specific historical period and place, God took it away.

I believe God removed polygyny by direct inspiration to his prophets and did it because polygyny was no longer worth the costs it exacted. He did not remove it because our ancestors lacked the courage or ability to continue to pay those costs or merely wanted to accommodate themselves to mainstream American values. I believe that any persons who thoroughly and honestly examine the evidence will conclude that there were terrible difficulties and mistakes, embarrassing vacillations and equivocations, even transgressions and deceptions (by both leaders and lay members of the Church), that accompanied both the beginning and the end of polygyny. But if such persons also tender some faith in the restored gospel and its prophetic leadership and exercise some human empathy and compassion, they will find that the terrible problems that came with plural marriage did *not* come, as some have alleged or implied, because Joseph Smith was uninspired or merely lustful or because Brigham Young and John Taylor persisted in a mistake against God's will. As I read their letters, journals, and sermons and the accounts and testimony of those who knew them best, I find ample evidence, despite the serious mistakes and problems, that Joseph Smith had great self-control and that all three prophets were deeply inspired leaders, who would not persist in a form of marriage — the supreme sacrament of Mormon theology — that was contrary to God's will.

The anguish, mistakes, and problems that instituting polygyny brought to the Mormons came precisely because most of the people involved were trying heroically both to be moral (that is, true to God's laws given in the past) and also to respond to what they believed was undeniable new revelation — revelation that directly countered their own moral inclinations and Christian training. And I believe that in that clash of the old moral code with new revelation lies the best answer to the question of *why*. Why would God require such a strange practice, one counter to standard Christian morality and inherited rationality, one that even contradicted sensible and God-given moral laws — and thus could be practiced only at enormous cost?

I believe the answer is similar to the answers to some similarly difficult questions, such as: Why would God command his faithful prophet Abraham

to kill his son Isaac, when God himself condemned human sacrifice as immoral? or, Why would God allow his prophets to deny priesthood blessings to blacks, counter to his own teachings about universal equality? Polygyny was indeed (as the Lord himself tells us in Doctrine and Covenants 132 by explicitly comparing Abraham's taking of a second wife to his offering of Isaac) what can be called an "Abrahamic" test, that is, a command by God to violate an earlier commandment:

> God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to wife. . . . Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? . . . Nay; for I, the Lord, commanded it. Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac; nevertheless, it was written: Thou shalt not kill. Abraham, however, did not refuse, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness (v. 35; see vv. 34–37).

God apparently uses such a unique and uniquely troubling test because it is the only way to teach us something paradoxical but true and very important about the universe — that trust in our personal experiences with divinity must sometimes outweigh our rational morality. Obedience to the divine commands that come directly to us must sometimes supersede our understanding of earlier commands if we are ever to transcend the human limitations of even our best inherited culture and religion. We must learn, sometimes very painfully, to be open to continuous revelation. We must learn such a lesson partly because truth and history are too complex to be reduced to simple, irrevocable commandments — even from past prophets — like "Thou shalt not kill" or "Thou shalt always have only one spouse." Truth is ultimately "rational," but it is not always or immediately clear to our present reason.

Our ancestors' painful obedience, then, to the new and "contradictory" revelation of polygyny both tested and confirmed them as saints, worthy to build God's kingdom. They learned, as Shakespeare also knew, that "Sweet are the uses of adversity" (*As You Like It* 2.1.12). And they learned that lesson from the most wrenching human adversity — when opposites are posed by God himself. But precisely because it was an Abrahamic test, and thus a means to reveal and develop qualities necessary in one particular and unusual historical setting, polygyny is not a practice to project into the eternities as the basis for a celestial order. Heaven is, by definition, a place where the cultural limitations and historical peculiarities of earth-life no longer prevail. Abrahamic tests and other special historical requirements, such as "lower" laws like the Levitical priesthood and tithing, teach us much about God's flexible dealing with human limitations and historical conditions but little or nothing about a supernatural celestial order, beyond such temporary mortal conditions.[1]

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[1] Joseph F. Smith, in a discourse in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, 7 July 1878, suggested both the danger of polygyny, a powerful principle "that savors of life unto life, or of death unto death," if it were misunderstood or misused and that he understood it was applicable "when commanded and not otherwise" and was "particularly adapted to the conditions and necessities . . . the circumstances, responsibilities, and personal, as well as vicarious duties of the people of God in this age of the world" (JD 20:26).

What, then, is such an order like? What should be our model of celestial marriage? Though we are given very little direct description of that highest heaven, the scriptures clearly stress fidelity and union of opposed equals:

> Neither is the man without the woman nor the woman without the man, in the Lord (1 Cor. 11:11).
>
> And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Gen. 2:23–24).
>
> For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things (2 Ne. 2:11).
>
> Black and white, bond and free, male and female . . . all are alike unto God (2 Ne. 26:33).
>
> Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you. And because of the strictness of the word of God, which cometh down against you, many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds (Jacob 2:35).

These and other scriptures, together with the teachings of modern prophets and the temple marriage sealing ordinance, support a theology of absolute and equal fidelity between a man and a woman as the basis for sexual morality, marital happiness, eternal increase, and, in its fullest implications, for godhood itself, the creative power that makes all existence possible. This theology of marriage is unique to Mormonism and is to me the most attractive and impressive part of the gospel — after the atonement of Christ. And just as the atonement is the key to our salvation from sin and death in this life, so celestial marriage is the key to exaltation, our eternal progression in the life to come.

The Mormon theology of marriage has two main characteristics. First, it implies that complementary oppositions lie at the very heart of physical, moral, and social existence. The most fundamental of these is the male-female polarity. That fundamental opposition, when it is tamed and matured into physical and spiritual unity, makes possible the creation and proper nurture both of mortal children and of spirit children to populate new universes. Female-male unity (which God has powerfully imaged in the concept of becoming "one flesh") ideally involves complete sharing — with a separate, co-eternal individual and without loss of our own individuality — of all our singularity, vulnerability, trust, hopes, and potentialities.

Since celestial marriage is the crucial requirement for exaltation to godhood, Mormon theology suggests that the maturity essential to discovery and exaltation of the self is ultimately possible only in a fully equal, bi-polar but thus complementary, individual-to-individual synthesis. The supreme figure for this ideal, powerfully reinforced each time faithful Mormons attend temple endowment or sealing ceremonies, is that of the earth's first lovers and parents: We are each invited to become, figuratively, an Adam or an Eve. We are thus imaginatively united in that perfect one-to-one unity established in the beginning by God, because "it is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18). Hebrew "alone" means incomplete, unfulfilled, rather than lonely (Whittaker 1980, 36). We are united that we might "know" each other, meaning in Hebrew to fully comprehend and share our being (Whittaker

1980, 36). The highest model for marriage, then, established in the garden and reinforced in the most sacred LDS ceremonies, is monogamous and centered in full one-to-one fidelity.

The image of becoming one flesh is realized most literally, of course, in conception, when our bodies actually unite to make new life. The sexual relationship perfectly represents spiritual union within polarity, that one-to-one sharing that ultimately makes possible the creativity of godhood. We can violate that creative union of two opposites, in various ways — by immature haste or promiscuity, by self-gratification or lust (either outside marriage or within it, if sex is used selfishly), by lying to each other, by not sharing fully and often our deepest feelings and hopes, by refusing to be vulnerable and thus walling off parts of ourselves, by not working constantly to justify and build complete trust.

The second main idea about marriage in Mormon theology is that since the highest form of love in the universe is the fully sexual and exclusive love of a man and a woman eternally committed to each other, it is the key to our highest joys and exaltations — and our greatest pains and failures. It is the love that ultimately, whatever the accidents of mortal life which may prevent children now, is able to continue the work and glory of Godhood through eternal increase and creation. Therefore heterosexual married love is the ideal held out for all and made available to all.

Mortal probation continues for a long time after death to provide equal opportunities to all, and our theology promises that any genetic, developmental, or cultural problems or physical accidents that prevent marriage or children in this life will be resolved and that opportunities for such marriages and children will be provided in the next life.

But Mormon theology also promises dire results if we willfully oppose or neglect that ideal, even the piercing of our hearts with deep wounds. There are absolute prohibitions against homosexual activity and extramarital intercourse and very strong discouragements of lust — of promiscuous, selfish, or obsessive eroticism — even within marriage. The only rational explanation, it seems to me, for such warnings and prohibitions is that by their very nature certain practices tend to center on self rather than relationship and to deny the creative integrity of sexual intercourse — that is, its unique capability, at least in potential, to produce new life — or to violate the perfect trust and fidelity that the vulnerability and creative power of male-female union both nurture and need.

What, then, about polygyny? It, of course, does not fit the model of one-to-one fidelity I have described. First, we must consider the possibility that polygyny really does not violate fidelity, that if people are good enough they can have trust and sexual wholeness with more than one person. This could well have been true of our polygynous ancestors. Might it be even more likely in the celestial realms where the conditions and our capabilities will be much better than what we know now? I have found that this is the hope and assumption of many, perhaps most, Latter-day Saints who have seriously considered the possibility they might eventually be required to live in plural marriage.

I find two serious problems with such a hope. First, it is based on a dangerous notion: that simply getting more of a good thing is always better — that a great love for one person is even better if extended into great love for many persons. Consider, however, the differences between the elements that make up truly complete love. They include charity or unconditional, Christ-like love — but also friendship and erotic love, love that makes choices, love that is based on differential desires. The unconditional, *redemptive* love God has for all his children and commands us all to learn is certainly capable of being multiplied. But such unconditional love is only a *part* of married love. And the other elements of a complete, married love, including restrictive obligations, covenants of complete and exclusive sharing, and the creative sexual love that makes new children and universes possible, are not improved by multiplication. In fact, they are usually destroyed or at least weakened by it. Romantic, married love is, I believe, strengthened by being *exclusive*, even for the gods.

Eternal marriage uniquely includes all the elements of love: the exclusive as well as the inclusive and unconditional. Although it can expand to include sacrificial love for populous worlds of spirit children, it will nevertheless be injured by forces that weaken by division the powerful bonds of filial obligation and sexual fidelity. In other words, celestial married love differs from mortal love not because it includes a larger group of individuals but because it includes more *kinds* of love than any other relationship — sexual love and quite idiosyncratic "liking" as well as charity or Christ-like love. But those unique and exclusive extra qualities, which give married love the greatest potential of any relationship, require the fully mutual fidelity only possible between one whole woman and one whole man.

Such fidelity, I believe, moves us beyond polygyny or polyandry, beyond patriarchy or matriarchy, even beyond priesthood in its usual functions and meaning. It seems to me that those are all lower laws, serving their inspired purposes — but only during certain mortal times with their cultural limitations. The ideal celestial order of marriage — of power, of creation, and of administration — will be the one the temple marriage sealing ceremony invites us to look forward to if we are faithful: a full and equal complementarity of a queen and a king, a priestess and a priest. It will be what President Ezra Taft Benson has called, after giving the term his own unusual definition, the "patriarchal order." In "What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children About the Temple," President Benson lists three priesthood orders, the Aaronic, Melchizedek, and "patriarchal," pointing out that the third is "described in modern revelation as an order of family government where a man and woman enter into a covenant with God — just as did Adam and Eve — to be sealed for eternity, to have posterity, and to do the will and work of God throughout their mortality" (1985, 8).[2]

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[2] Joseph Smith preached on 27 August 1843 regarding three priesthoods:

> The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right from the eternal God, and not by descent from father and mother; and that priesthood is as eternal as God Himself, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.

Just as the lower Aaronic (or Levitical) priesthood is superseded by the Melchizedek when historical conditions or individual maturity warrant, so I believe the Melchizedek priesthood is a preparatory order to some extent superseded by the fully equal order that men and women receive when sealed in the temple. And though we are apparently not yet mature enough for God to inspire us to implement that order fully and administratively on earth, we should, it seems to me, try to imagine it for the future, at least in the celestial kingdom, and prepare ourselves for it by living it as fully as possible now.

And that brings me to a second problem with the dubious argument that celestial marriage will be polygynous because we will be morally superior there, more able to love inclusively. Such an expectation can tempt us to love inclusively and superficially — even promiscuously — in this life. Mormons sometimes joke about looking forward to polygamy — because it will be more sexually diversified for men or less sexually demanding or psychologically intense for women (or simply allow a division of labor in a household to the advantage of women). The serious edge under these jokes sometimes emerges in open longing for something "better" than we have known in monogamy, perhaps a wider circle of easy friendships, unfettered by the full demands and resultant exclusions of being one flesh.

The trouble with these jokes and serious hopes is their projected flight from the full responsibilities of married love, which include loving unconditionally — but also include being a special, intimate friend, having children, sharing one's deepest self, and being fully vulnerable. In Michael Novak's words, "Seeing myself through the unblinking eyes of an intimate, intelligent other, an honest spouse, is humiliating beyond anticipation" (1976, 41). And we are tempted to avoid that humiliation, however redemptive it is. Having comparatively shallow, friendly, intellectual, artistic relations with a group of people, even having merely sexual adventures with a variety, is not as difficult as developing a full relationship of fidelity with one person. And I fear that many Mormon men and women let the expectation of polygyny as the ideal future order

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> The 2nd Priesthood is Patriarchal authority. Go to and finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this priesthood.
>
> The 3rd is what is called the Levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is by an oath and covenant.

This version, which appears in Joseph Fielding Smith, ed., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 14th printing (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1964), p. 323, is, in turn, quoted from Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols., 2nd ed. rev. (1949; rpt. ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1951), 5:555. This sermon was reconstructed from Joseph Smith's diary for that date, kept by Willard Richards. The original text reads:

> [The Melchizedek priesthood is] a priesthood which holds the priesthood by right from the Eternal Gods. — and not b[y] descent from father and mother
>
> 2d Priesthood, patriarchal authority finish that temple and god will fill it with power.
>
> 3rd Priesthood. Levitical.
>
> Priests made without an oath, but the Priesthood of Melchisedek is by oath and covenant (Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds. *The Words of Joseph Smith* [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1980], pp. 244–45).

justify their inclination to be vaguely promiscuous or superficial in sexual relationships, to flirt or share their identity with a number of people, or simply to withdraw from the struggle into blessed singularity — and there, too often, to be satisfied with some version of love of self. In short, some Mormons, assuming future polygyny, practice for it now by diverting their affections and loyalties away from the arduous task of achieving full spiritual and physical unity with the one person they would otherwise inescapably have to face, an imperfect spouse.

The nineteenth-century Mormon experience shows that such temptations are related to the very nature of polygyny. Those who lived it best, most devotedly and successfully, apparently found they could do so only by making the relationships more superficial — that is, less romantic, less emotionally intense and focused. Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs Smith Young, wife of three men, including Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and one of the strongest public advocates of polygamy, was quoted in the *New York World*, 19 November 1869, as saying, "A successful polygamous wife must regard her husband with indifference, and with no other feeling than that of reverence, for love we regard as a false sentiment: a feeling which should have no existence in polygamy" (in Van Wagoner 1986, 102). Vilate Kimball, first wife of Heber C., counselled an unhappy plural wife that "her comfort must be wholly in her children; that she must lay aside wholly all interest or thought in what her husband was doing while he was away from her" (Van Wagoner 1986, 102–3).

Diaries, letters, and reminiscences of polygynous wives and children reveal that regular down-playing of the romantic dimension of married love was indeed one of the costs of polygyny, whatever its compensating values. Even the best relationships appear to be bittersweet. But I fear that such a flight from the complete love that includes romance may actually appeal both to overly idealistic unmarried Mormons and to Mormons who are not completely happy in their marriages now. If so, it is an unfortunate compromise, one without genuine compensating values and one to be repented of rather than rationalized by the hope that eternal marriage will be polygynous. One of the horrifying results of this idea, conveyed by some teachers of LDS youth, that polygyny is a "purer" love since it is a more inclusive and less selfish love and thus the celestial form of marriage, is that they thus help prepare some young Mormon women to be seduced by the argument of fundamentalists that they can engage in that "higher" order right now! Such thinking also tends to encourage promiscuity in the young married, who may therefore share their deepest feelings, even sexual interests, too broadly; it encourages passivity in the middle-aged, who may thus neglect the constant struggle for full fidelity, which includes romance and friendship as well as charity; and it encourages irresponsibility in the old, who may finally retreat from their life-long task of building a deep and full celestial love into bored tolerance or silent alienation.

Now let me turn to a consideration of why, in addition to the serious danger to fidelity, I believe polygyny, though it was once an inspired practice, is not an eternal principle. I have five main reasons.

1. A requirement so central and important to our eternal salvation should be firmly grounded in the scriptures, but it is not. In fact, the clearest scriptures state that polygyny is only an occasional requirement, otherwise extremely dangerous. In the Book of Mormon, the prophet Jacob reports the Lord's insistence that David's and Solomon's polygyny was "abominable," apparently, as the Lord suggests to Joseph Smith in Doctrine and Covenants 132:37–38, because they went beyond what he commanded them. The Lord tells the Nephite men categorically to have one wife only and no concubines — no divided fidelity of any kind (Jacob 2:27). In this general exhortation to chastity and monogamy, God offers only one exception: "For if I will . . . raise up seed unto me, I will command my people" (Jacob 2:30). The only such exception that we know about since that time is documented in Doctrine and Covenants 132, where the Lord commands his young Church to practice polygyny, and we must assume that commandment was given for the fundamental purpose stated in the Book of Mormon — to raise up seed unto him.

I think the operative words in the Lord's statement of his one exception are "unto me." Polygyny, historical evidence indicates, did not produce a larger number of children; it was more likely instituted because of the Abrahamic test which it provided parents and because it concentrated children in well-organized and elite families. My sense is that it produced a more devout and religiously well-trained progeny, seed unto God. That is certainly what some leaders, such as Brigham Young (JD 3: 264) and Erastus Snow (JD 24: 165), believed was a central purpose and effect of polygyny. My chief evidence that they were right is the subjective one that well into the 1950s and 60s, when the surge in converts began, I was present at a number of meetings where standing count indicated that a huge majority of active Mormons, especially leaders, were descendants of polygynists, a much larger percentage than the percentage of Mormons who actually practiced polygyny.

At any rate, Doctrine and Covenants 132 does not say or imply that polygyny is anything more than an exception, commanded for a specific purpose relevant to a specific historical circumstance and, by implication, to be rescinded when those circumstances changed or when the costs began to outweigh the benefits.

All of the passages in section 132 about eternal conditions and promises relate to "the new and everlasting covenant," to what will happen "if a man marry a wife . . . and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise" (v. 19), that is, to eternal marriage, not to plural marriage. The language concerning plural marriage, it seems to me, simply grants permission to engage in this unusual practice then required of some Mormons, with precise conditions designed to make certain that such an extremely difficult and dangerous requirement be controlled within the moral and religious bounds of the priesthood and the temple: "If any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another [by the law of the priesthood], and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second . . . then is he justified" (v. 61).

Only two verses of Section 132 could be read as support for *eternal* polygyny. Verse 39 declares that David will not inherit his wives "out of this

world" because of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba, possibly implying that had he not sinned he would inherit those wives in the next life. And verse 63 states that plural wives are given to a man "to multiply and replenish the earth . . . and to fulfill the promise which was given by my Father before the foundation of the world, and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified." This latter verse is ambiguous. It could mean simply that obedience to God's command of polygyny on earth, by those so commanded, makes possible their exaltation and thus the continued bearing of spirit children in their eternal marriages, of one woman and one man, in the celestial kingdom. Or it could mean that *some* polygyny is eternal: that for those who are sealed into it in this life, polygyny in heaven is necessary for their exaltation, since it makes it possible for the wives involved to "bear the souls of men" in the celestial kingdom.

If verse 39 means that David could have inherited his plural wives and the second interpretation of verse 63 is correct, at most these verses suggest that polygyny will continue for those sealed into it here on earth, not that it will be required of others. Yet that second interpretation of verse 63 seems to me completely unacceptable because it requires that we see the purpose of plural wives as simply, or mainly, to bear more spirit children. Such a notion strikes directly at the heart of our concept of men and women as coeternal and equal partners in the celestial realms. It is based on one of the popular rationales for eternal polygyny but the one which is perhaps most repugnant to an increasing number of faithful Mormons — that since women take nine months to bear mortal children and presumably will take that long to bear spirit children as well, each man must have many wives, keeping them all pregnant most of the time, to produce those billions of spirit children for "the eternal worlds" referred to in Doctrine and Covenants 132:63. That argument seems to me so obviously wrong I am tempted to simply dismiss it, but I have found that enough influential Mormons and teachers of religion espouse such an argument that I must respond.

Suppose it would take a woman, bearing a child each nine months, 60 billion years to produce the spirit children for an earth like ours (the 80 billion or so people demographers compute will have lived on earth by 2000 A.D.). It does not seem reasonable to me that God would require polygyny, with all its attendant problems, simply to reduce that time to twenty or even ten billion years by giving each man four or six wives. If humans can already produce test-tube babies and clones, God has certainly found more efficient ways to produce spirit children than by turning celestial partners into mere birth machines. To anticipate such a limited, unequal role for women in eternity insults and devalues them.

My basic point is that the scriptures are at most ambiguous about the place of polygyny in celestial marriage. I find no scriptural evidence that polygyny is required either for all of us or for those who are to be the most exalted. The silence of the scriptures concerning something so important and

fundamental cannot be an oversight: "Surely, the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

Yet a number of nineteenth-century Mormon apostles and prophets, in their defense of polygyny, claimed it *was* the celestial order of marriage, including Brigham Young (JD 11:269, 271; 16:166) and Joseph F. Smith (JD 20:28). However, in the same sermons where they declared polygyny to be the celestial order, these leaders also asserted or implied, with the same conviction, one or more of the following: that the wives of those who do not practice polygamy will be, in the next life, given to those who do (JD 16:166); that the more wives and children one has, the greater one's future glory (JD 1:61; 20:29–31); that if Utah did not receive statehood before polygamy was abolished, it never would (JD 11:269); and that the practice of polygyny by the Church would *never* be taken away (especially John Taylor, see Van Wagoner 1986, 128). Since we no longer believe — or accept as inspired — those other claims, the associated claim, that celestial marriage is polygynous, is at least called into question.

I can understand that it might have been necessary for nineteenth-century Mormons and their leaders, who invested so much in the practice of polygamy and paid such terrible individual and group costs for it, to justify their commitment in part by the belief that it was more than an inspired but temporary practice. However, that does not make their belief true — or at least does not universalize eternal polygyny. The situation is similar to that of denial of priesthood to blacks. Some apostles and prophets until fairly recent times have stated that the denial was more than an inspired Church practice — that it was rooted in pre-existent choices and the eternal nature of blacks or their ancestors (JD 11:272; First Presidency Statement 1949; McConkie 1958, 102). But in the same sermons or writings they also recorded their equally firm beliefs that interracial mixing with blacks should bring death (JD 10:110) or that the Civil War would not free the slaves (JD 10:250) or that blacks would never receive the priesthood in this life until all whites had (JD 11:272; 7:291; First Presidency, 1949; McConkie 1958, 476). All of those claims have been proven false, one by direct revelation from God, and that fact, I believe, at the very least leaves us free to question the associated claim that dark skin or black ancestry is a sign of a mistake in the pre-existence.

Because God spoke in the 1978 revelation to end the practice of priesthood denial to blacks we should seriously question the rationale that well-meaning Church members developed to explain that practice: the racist and unscriptural doctrine still persisted in by some that blacks were not "valiant" in the premortal world. And because God spoke in 1890 to end the practice of polygyny, we should also question the rationale that well-meaning Church members had developed to justify it: the sexist and unscriptural doctrine of post-mortal plural marriage.

We should all aspire to the courage of Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who after the 1978 revelation had flatly contradicted his earlier teachings that blacks would never receive the priesthood on earth, apparently recognized he must

also discard some associated teachings: "Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or President George Q. Cannon or whomsoever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with a limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that now has come into the world [about how 'all are alike unto God . . . black and white' (2 Ne. 26:33)]" (1983, 153).

We now have additional light and knowledge, because of the 1890 revelation and subsequent Church teachings and practices, on what that same Book of Mormon passage means in claiming "all are alike unto God . . . male and female." Certainly analogies do not provide proof by themselves, but this one should encourage us to reassess past teachings which were linked to teachings we now know to be false and that are contrary to our post-Manifesto understanding of marriage.

I realize this is a troubling, perhaps dangerous, position: If we start questioning some statements of Church leaders, why not all? If they were wrong about some of their rationales for polygyny and priesthood denial, why are they not wrong about God's involvement in first instituting those practices — or anything else in the Restoration? Though I sympathize with—even share—this anxiety, the assertion that revelation is either totally true or totally untrue is still a false dichotomy: We simply do not believe, as Mormons, that we must accept all scripture and prophetic teaching as equally inspired, and we have no doctrine of prophetic infallibility. The scriptures and our modern Church leaders themselves have made this point again and again and have given us some guidelines for distinguishing binding truth and direction from good advice and both of these from "the mistakes of men" ("Preface" to the Book of Mormon; see also D&C 1:24–27).

In the particular case of polygyny a reasonable guideline can be formulated: If a Church practice which served valuable historical purposes is rescinded, thus proving false some statements which were made in the process of defending it as permanent because it is based in some eternal doctrine, then all such statements are called in question and can be thoughtfully and prayerfully assessed in relation to other fundamental scriptures and doctrines (as I am trying to do here) without opening the Pandora's box of complete skepticism. I can (and do) believe that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were divinely called prophets who received direct revelation across a remarkable range of important practices and doctrines. I am not thereby constrained to believe (and do not) that they never made a mistake or never suffered from human limitations of understanding that plague us all. Modern prophets themselves have explicitly renounced specific practices and teachings of both those earlier prophets (the Adam-God theory, for instance), sometimes even supplying rational arguments to help us understand how such mistakes or changes could occur, without thereby calling into question those prophets' general inspiration or prophetic authority.

2. My second reason for questioning eternal polygyny, in addition to the lack of scriptural support for such a doctrine, is that if polygyny were the highest order of marriage, surely the Lord would want us to practice it when-

ever and wherever we could on earth. But he does not. I feel certain, and those I have consulted who are trained in the law agree, that a serious effort by the Church to strike down the anti-polygamy laws as unconstitutional would succeed. But the Church not only does not make such an effort; I understand it takes action against those who seriously advocate doing so. We do not even allow our members to continue practicing polygyny in countries where it is legal. Thus, one of the strangest paradoxes of Mormon history is that the Reorganized Church, which claims the Lord never revealed polygyny, allows members to practice it in India and Africa, while the Utah-based LDS Church, which claims the Lord did reveal it, does not allow *anyone* to practice it.

3. There is a general Mormon assumption that the plural wives who were sealed to polygynists (or are sealed to widowers) are bound in eternal sealings that cannot be broken and so at least *those* marriages must be plural in eternity. But this assumption has been essentially refuted by the modern Church practice, initiated by President David O. McKay, of sometimes sealing a woman to *more than one man.* Of course, this form of plural marriage (polyandry) usually occurs only in temple work done for a dead woman who was married to more than one man during life. She is now sealed to all her husbands without our presuming to make a choice for her — and, of course, her choice in the spirit world of one eternal companion must then invalidate the other sealings and leave those men free to find eternal companions. Sealings thus seem to guarantee bonds only when they are subsequently agreed upon but do not forcibly bind anyone. But if this is so in such polyandrous sealings, then it might just as well be the case in polygynous ones. The man involved could have the opportunity to work out a one-to-one relationship as the basis for celestial marriage from among the women to whom he was sealed, and the other sealings must then be invalidated by mutual consent, thus freeing those women to form one-to-one celestial marriages with others.

Who would those others be? Possibly the "extra" husbands of widows similarly released by *their* choice of one eternal companion, or, of course, the many single men who have lived on earth, but also, it has been half-seriously suggested, the surplus of male babies who die and inherit celestial glory. Being required to make such a choice may sound like harsh doctrine for those women who in good faith look forward to being with the one man they have known and loved, even if he has other wives. But that doctrine is no harsher than the same doctrine for the man married to one woman whom he loves deeply, even though she has been married to others, perhaps sealed to one of them and now, under President McKay's change, sealed to all. All but one of these men must find new companions. Obviously we must trust in the great and almost unique Mormon principle of continued life and development after death but before judgment, when opportunity will abound for single men and women, as well as unmatched spouses, to find their eternal companions.

4. That semi-serious aside about surplus male babies leads to my fourth argument: Another popular rationale for polygyny is that there are and will be more righteous women than men. This rather patronizing and certainly unprovable sentiment cloaks a sexist assumption, demeaning to both men and

women. And a fine satire on the question, "In the Heavens Are Parents Single? Report No. 1," by the "Committee on Celestial Demographics," published in the Spring 1984 DIALOGUE, makes a plausible case that there will actually be *many more men than women* in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. We know that 104 males are born for every 100 females and 47 percent of males born into the world have died before age eight, as opposed to only 44 percent of females. If we accept the usual interpretation of Doctrine and Covenants 137 — that all children who die under eight are exalted — then already, from the over 70 billion who have come to earth, nearly 17 billion males and 15 billion females are destined for the highest degree of the celestial kingdom on the basis of premature death alone, a surplus of nearly 2 billion males (1984, 85–86). Even if women were naturally more righteous, it would take a huge disproportion in that righteousness to merely equalize those numbers, to say nothing of creating a situation that required plural wives.

Of course, that "Report" is extremely speculative and fundamentally wrong-headed, as good satire always is. I believe it is more likely and certainly more consistent with free agency that children who die and are thus, in the words of Doctrine and Covenants 137:7, "heirs of the celestial kingdom," are not thus guaranteed exaltation but only guaranteed an *opportunity* for exaltation — and that the number of males and females in the celestial kingdom is essentially equal.

Actually, I believe those numbers are exactly equal. Since celestial marriage itself is a prior requirement for the highest degree of the celestial kingdom, then it would seem that we arrive there, not as different numbers of men or women who then must pair off — or pluralize off — into marriages, but only after having achieved, as part of our righteousness, a celestial marriage. We arrive partnered. In other words, arguments about relative numbers of righteous men and women are irrelevant; the highest degree of the celestial kingdom will be, by definition, a place made up entirely of eternal male-female couples.

5. My fifth reason for believing celestial marriage is not polygynous — and my main reason for thinking that we must not simply say, "We can't possibly imagine what it will be like in heaven and so shouldn't worry about it" — is that it seems to me, from reflection and from talking with Mormon women, that the devaluation of women inherent in the expectation of polygyny is destructive of their sense of identity and worth *now*. For instance, the argument considered above, that there must be polygyny because there are more celestial women than men, sounds on the face of it complimentary to women. But if we reflect a bit, it is simply a way of saying that one good man is in some sense the equivalent of more women than one, however "righteous" those women are compared to the average man. Can one man emotionally and sexually satisfy more than one woman? Or is he capable of being "equally yoked" to more than one woman — spiritually or intellectually or managerially or whatever? In either case, the implications seem to diminish women, reducing them, in some essential way, to less than full equivalence with men.

If we believed that the celestial order would be truly polygamous, allowing either polygyny or polyandry because somehow we would all — men and

women — be capable of a "higher," more inclusive love than could accommodate various groupings, the case would at least be rational and nonsexist. However, both the historical order Mormons once practiced and the celestial order many Mormons anticipate are purely polygynous. They accept in the eternal marriage unit only plural wives, not plural husbands. Since there is no good reason to believe that polygyny will be needed to accommodate an excess of women in the celestial kingdom, then the expectation that there will be plural wives but not plural husbands cannot help but imply fundamental inequalities between men and women that have to do with their most central qualities and feelings, those involving sexual and spiritual identity and relationships (such as the insulting concept discussed above, that women are needed chiefly as birth machines for spirit children).

I believe we can remove that vague implication of inferiority without becoming alienated either from nineteenth-century Mormonism or from our present faith in the gospel and the Church. It is possible and spiritually healing, I believe, to affirm our polygynous ancestors for their obedient sacrifices and courageous achievements, which made the foundations of the restored church secure — and yet to reject the expectation of future polygyny. For too many of us, that expectation undermines the foundations of our present identities as women and men and diverts us from the difficult struggle for complete fidelity in our marriages that the gospel standard of morality and the expectation of celestial marriage as the basis of godhood require.

I do not presume to speak for others. My intent is simply to help free us, as Mormon men and women, to think about our marriages and the future with more openness, less bound to the expectation of future polygyny. Let us not be limited to our past understanding. In the speech I referred to earlier, Elder McConkie observed, "Since the Lord gave this revelation on the priesthood, our understanding of many [scriptures] has expanded. Many of us never imagined or supposed that they had the extensive and broad meaning that they do have" (1982, 152). And though he then discussed only how our understanding of how black and white are "alike unto God" had expanded, I suggest that we also need to consider that our understanding of how men and women are alike and equal unto God may still be narrow, in need of further expansion. Men who have suffered from an unhealthy sense of superiority and women who have felt degraded by the assumption of future polygyny should feel free to seek the inspiration that may help unburden them.

Certainly none of us can presume an exact knowledge of the celestial order and what we will be capable of there, but our whole religion is built on the assumption that this life is, in its essentials, very much like that future life and a direct preparation for it. We have been clearly commanded to try to develop perfect one-to-one fidelity in our marriages here, and in the temple marriage sealing ceremony we have been given, I believe, a clear vision of what the highest future order of marriage will be: It will be a full and equal, one-to-one partnership of a king and a queen, a priestess and a priest, a perfectly balanced and yet dynamic bi-polar union that makes possible "a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever" (D&C 132:19).

Difficult as complete married fidelity and unity is to achieve, there is nothing sweeter on earth than our approximations of it. And we have been given no clear evidence that it will not continue to be the sweetest thing in heaven, the foundation of godhood and a blessing available to all who, freed from this world's limitations, really want it.

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Feliz Navidad

C. L. Christensen

No room at the inn,
For them, anyway.
It didn't take ESP to read the situation.
Just avoiding unpleasantness later.
He had enough on his mind just then.

How had the trip been for Mary?
Days on the road,
On the back of an ass.
Nine months pregnant.
"I know your back hurts, Mary.
I'm sorry. But we have to keep up with the company.
You have to get off? Already?
I'd better tell the company to go on without us.
We should get there tonight anyway."

Travail.
That of a mother.
Labor. Was it twelve hours, sixteen.
Hard or easy.
Did Jewish women still travail on the stools?

Blood.
There must have been blood
Soaking into the straw,
Hopefully clean.
It wasn't sanitary, white,
Scrubbed. But hopefully, new straw.
Joseph could at least have spread new straw.
Or was he too busy searching for a midwife, water . . .
(Why always water, hot water?)
The swaddling clothes.

Joseph.
Did he tie the cord?
Was the cord even tied,

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Or was it left until it rotted off?
Was Joseph even allowed to be there, unclean, unclean
(Banished to a stable, then from the stable
While his wife screamed.)
Or could he hold her hand,
Wipe the sweat from her brow

From the pain.
Or did she feel pain?
Was she absolved from pain as by the touch of a wand,
Or by the spirit, or by Pavlovian methods we're now learning
To unlearn fear?

Fear.
She was only a girl.
Fifteen, sixteen?
Her first child.
Away from home —
Alone.

Or was she alone?
Was her mother there,
Superintending everything.
More clothes, hot water —
You men go away.
Yes, men. A family reunion.
Everybody was there.
All of the house of David.
Cousins, uncles, aunts, grandmothers, nephews.
The Mother dictating to the aunts,
Scolding the uncles, by her chatter frightening
Rather than helping the becoming mother.
Or perhaps they really were alone.
The aunts counting the months
From the wedding, and not — how do you say —
Wanting the trash in their houses.
Or "putting her away privily,"
In the stable instead of the guest room.
Or, slowed by her aching back and incessant stops . . .

Alone, then.
It's much more romantic.
But how did she feel when her water broke?
Had her mother told her? Did she know?
When the water, tinted with blood to a rich pink,
Flooded. Did she feel fear?
Or was she comforted?

Was it even a big deal?
Did she, hardy girl, whelp easily, naturally.
Alone, in charge,
Like a squaw with the tribe on the move.
(Can't hold up the tribe for just one squaw, you know.)

It was probably more than that,
They did lose a goodly percentage back then.
Of course, she probably had a better chance
Delivering outside of their crowded hovels.
But not an Ur-mother, with gaping womb,
Giving birth in a riot of fecundity.
A youthful virgin, unworldly-wise
Straining to birth one child,
One perfect product of God's love.

Anyway, she probably wasn't kneeling,
Bowing gracefully to her infant Lord
When the shepherds came.
With the burly, bawling baby at her breast,
She lay resting and hurting.

Joseph would have knelt, holding her hand,
Reverencing the giving of life.

Burden or Pleasure? A Profile of LDS Polygamous Husbands

Jessie L. Embry

WHILE A NUMBER OF STUDIES DEALING WITH POLYGAMY have examined the experiences of wives and children, very few have looked at men's views. Two exceptions are articles by J. E. Hulett (1943) and Kimball Young (1942), both more than forty years old. Young contends that while plural marriage gave men "certain insecurities" because polygamy was contrary to their monogamous traditions, it also "offered men . . . ego security" because of the possibility of having additional sexual partners, and "higher status" because of the prestige in Mormon society of having more than one wife (1942, 307).

However, after studying interviews conducted by Hulett and Young in the 1930s, and the Redd Center's conducted in the 1970s and 1980s with husbands, wives, and children of Mormon polygamous households, then comparing them with Mormon monogamous families, I have found evidence to suggest other male views of polygamy (Embry 1987). Rather than seeing polygamy as a "burden or pleasure" or a system full of "ego security" with some "insecurities," I found that most men practiced polygamy because of their religious beliefs; their marital experiences were similar to the experiences of both their LDS and non-LDS American monogamous counterparts. Mormons, both monogamous and polygamous, seem simply to have adapted the Victorian ideology evident throughout nineteenth-century America to their new lifestyles.

Of course, since polygamy was practiced for such a short time, these adaptations varied from family to family, making it impossible to describe the typical Mormon polygamous family. There was no "typical" family. As I see it, understanding the diverse experience of individual families will help us avoid oversimplified conclusions and stereotypes.

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Hulett and Young's interviews were conducted with thirteen husbands, fifty wives, five husbands and wives interviewed jointly, and eighty-three children of polygamous families. Hulett, a research assistant for Young, used the interviews in writing his dissertation, and Young used them in his book, *Isn't One Wife Enough?* (1954). Young's book has been the only major study on life in polygamous families. The title suggests a negative view of the Mormon practice of polygamy, but Young identified most of the families that he studied as "successful." Based on five categories, he found half of 110 family cases were "highly successful, marked by unusual harmony" or "reasonably successful"; a quarter were "moderately successful with some conflict but on the whole fair adjustment"; the rest had "considerable conflict and marital difficulty or severe conflict, including, in some instances, separation and/or divorce" (Young 1954, 56). Without the advantages of recording devices, Hulett and Young had to depend on their note-taking ability to remember what their informants told them. Because of this, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether we are reading the opinion of the interviewee or the interviewer. Moreover, to protect identities, Young used pseudonyms throughout his book and has no footnotes, so scholars have been unable to determine his sources. Perhaps the most serious flaw, though, is that the examples Young cites in his study are not representative of even his own sources. After reading his book and the sources, it appears he took the most interesting and most dramatic cases and then drew generalizations from them as "typical" examples.

Between 1976 and 1982, the Charles Redd Center at Brigham Young University sponsored a major interview study of polygamous families. Ten trained oral historians, including me, interviewed 250 children of Church-sanctioned polygamous marriages in which the parents were married before 1904. Because of the sensitive nature of the topic and the Church's policy not to encourage the current practice of polygamy, almost half of those contacted first refused to be interviewed. However, as the project progressed, that number dropped to fewer than 25 percent. Those interviewed suggested brothers and sisters — both full and half — and others they knew who had been raised in polygamous families. The interview questions were developed from the topics discussed in Kimball Young's book, not by design, but because Young's study was all that was available for preliminary research at the time.

In 1982, the project was expanded to interview 150 children from monogamous families who grew up during the same time period as a comparison group to the children of polygamy studied earlier. Again, we selected those whose parents had been married before 1904. The parents' marriage date was used, rather than the age of either parents or children, because many of the polygamous children were born as late as the 1920s. A press release inviting interviewees for the project was issued by BYU Public Communications and was published in many newspapers in Utah as well as in newspapers published for LDS audiences in Arizona and California. A large number of people responded, so interviewees were chosen according to location and availability. Some effort was made to interview people who grew up in towns where there

were polygamists. Again, interviews were developed from topics discussed in Kimball Young's book.

The Redd Center interviews, like Hulett's and Young's, also have limitations. All of the interviews record adults' memories of their childhoods, and memories tend to be more favorable than actual experiences. In addition, children have only a limited knowledge of their parents' activities. Especially in the nineteenth century, children were not told about their parents' sexual activities, and they were probably not aware of all the economic and religious activities of their families. In the case of plural marriage, they would probably not have been told all the reasons why their parents chose to marry in polygamy. Despite these limitations, however, the interviews are a valuable source — in some cases the only source — of information about how plural families were set up. The children could at least report on their relationships with their own parents and with their fathers' other wives, as well as the ways their particular families operated.

The Redd Center oral history interviews and the Kimball Young Collection at the BYU Library provided the bulk of information for my study. I also used diaries, autobiographies, and other interviews available in the LDS Church Archives and the BYU Manuscript Collections. In total, I scrutinized lives of approximately 200 plural husbands, 400 plural wives (mostly living in polygamy during its later period), and 150 monogamous husbands and wives.

If the study had been done a generation earlier, I could have captured the memories of those who lived in polygamy between 1852 and 1880 before opposition became formal and intense. As it is, the reminiscences of the following generation reflect the problems encountered by those who lived "the principle" during its last sanctioned days.

When asked, nearly all the Mormon participants said that they practiced polygamy for religious reasons. For example, William B. Ashworth wrote, "I loved my wife and felt that I had in her all I desired as a companion, but with the faith I had in the authorities, I felt it was my imperative duty to obey their counsel." He added that he had heard church leaders say, "If the brethren do not embrace the doctrine, and their wives are willing that they should, they (the men), are in danger of their wives being given to husbands who would exalt them in the highest glory" (n.d., 15–16). Andrew Jonus Hansen wrote in his autobiography, "Celestial and Plural Marriage is a law of Heaven and at that time in force among God's people on earth, sanctioned and approved by Him" (n.d., 141).

While most Mormon men, according to this study, would not have considered polygamy if they had not believed it to be a commandment, a minority of the children of polygamous homes said that having the option of polygamy might have changed the way men viewed other women and their own wives. Because other wives were a possibility, men might have allowed their eyes to roam more, viewing other women as possible mates. Also, with the chance of marrying more wives, a man might not divorce a wife he grew tired of, instead essentially ignoring her while offering affection to another wife who seemed more desirable at the time. For example, E. W. Wright, the eighth son of

Amos Russell Wright's first wife, Catharine Roberts, said that his father believed strongly in the principle of plural marriage and undoubtedly married for religious purposes. Yet knowing he could marry younger women made his first wife less attractive to him and he did not treat her as well (1937, 5). J. W. Wilson, a monogamist on the Juarez Stake high council in Mexico, wrote, "Polygamy is a true principle . . . but men did not live as they should have done. . . . I talked to a man who had been married to a number of wives. . . . He said . . . that all of his marriages were due to inspiration. . . . I asked him that now as he grew older and his desires were dying if he had inspirations to marry and he said no, that he had no more inspirations. That was the reason polygamy could not be lived, men believed it because of their lustful desires" (1935, 2–3). While this might have been true in some cases, there are few, if any, records indicating that sexual motives played a major role in the men's decisions to marry more than one wife.

The modern perception of men and women marrying for love was rarely mentioned in nineteenth-century marriage manuals. Historian John Gordon quotes one manual, "True love is founded on esteem, and esteem is the result of intimate acquaintance and confidential intercourse," and then adds, "A married couple should feel love for each other, but the love should grow out of the relationship rather than being the cause of it" (1980, 153). Instead of romantic love, men and women were encouraged to look for religious devotion, good character, which included avoiding "idleness, use of intoxicating drinks, smoking, chewing, snuffing tobacco, the taking of opium, licentiousness in every form, gambling, swearing, and the keeping of late hours at night," and "beauty, health, and intellect" in a marriage partner to ensure the best children (Gordon 1980, 150–52).

Plural husbands reflected this Victorian attitude about love. In general, they believed that learning to work together for common goals (including the ultimate reward, eternal life) was more important than physical attraction. After telling of his love for each of his three wives as long as they were faithful to him, Joel Hill Johnson concluded:

> Should each prove True
> Their work to do
> Like true and faithful wives
> Then all shall share
> My love and care
> With crown of endless lives (n.d., 52–53).

Another Victorian ideal perpetuated by polygamous as well as monogamous households in nineteenth-century America was the concept of differentiated male and female roles within marriage. While "nineteenth-century society gave . . . most of the substance of power to the male, within the family the relationship was, in the end, between two people [and] who predominated [in a marriage] depended as much on what each was as on the public definition of the institution" (Degler 1980, 43). Nineteenth-century men and women generally had separate spheres of responsibilities which kept them apart most of

the time. Barbara Welter, a historian of nineteenth-century women's culture, wrote, "The nineteenth-century American man was a busy builder of bridges and railroads, at work long hours in a materialistic society" (1978, 313). Thus, a husband was expected to provide for his family, and home was where the wife provided a refuge from the world of work. Because of this division of labor, "American society was characterized in large part by rigid gender role differentiation within the family and within society as a whole, leading to the emotional segregation of women and men" (Smith-Rosenberg 1978, 339).

This pattern was true in both LDS monogamous and polygamous families; evidently the number of wives was not the deciding factor in determining division of labor. According to my study of 185 polygamous husbands and 118 monogamous husbands, 58 percent of the polygamists and 62 percent of the monogamists were involved in farming or ranching, manufacturing, merchandising, and freighting. Over half of that group — 57 percent of the plural husbands and 59 percent of the monogamous — were farmers or ranchers. Even when farming was not the major source of income, most families raised nearly all of their food and produced nearly everything they used, the men and women each having specific assignments. The men usually worked in the fields or in businesses outside of the home while women worked inside the home, in the garden, and with domestic animals.

Of course, there were some unique problems with polygamy since a plural husband had to provide not only physical but emotional support for more than one wife. However, my study showed that many husbands saw all of their wives regularly. Of 156 families, 47 percent had a regular daily or weekly visiting schedule, 8 percent had no routine, and 20 percent stayed mainly with one wife. The remaining 24 percent visited either once every three days, rotated once a month, or visited at General Conference or harvest time, depending on family circumstances. With regular visits, husbands were most likely aware of their wives' needs. Since 60 percent of the wives in my study lived in the same community as their husbands and co-wives, if there were special problems such as illness, most husbands could usually be reached quickly and could help the family in need.

Apparently most husbands tried to divide not only their time, but also their resources and affections equally between all of their wives. Mary E. Croshaw Farrell, the fourth wife of George Farrell, said that financial matters caused most domestic disagreements in polygamous families (1937, 9). To avoid financial problems, in 65 percent of forty-nine families who mentioned the subject, the husband divided the supplies between the families. In about 60 percent of the thirty-two examples, each wife received equal provisions. Other husbands provided an allowance for each wife. Whatever way the financial resources were divided, the husband "would have to be really considerate of both wives," as one son put it. "I'm sure under the circumstances eyes would be open if one wife had more than the other. Jealousy crept in. I think that applied to polygamy in general with the exception of a few of the families. A husband living in polygamy should have the same for one wife that he does for another" (Jackson 1978, 25).

Most polygamous husbands also tried to prevent jealousy over affection. Thomas E. Taylor, in a letter to his plural wife Brighaminia (Minnie), explained, "When a man has a number of families he has to be very circumspect and careful in both actions and words." He went on to explain, "I may do things . . . for you that others would feel bad about. On other times, something for others might give you pain but I am going to try and do my best in my imperfect way" (Taylor, 17 July 1893). Edith Smith Bushman said, "Father was very wise. He never carried the stories from one family to another and he never made a comparison" (1979, 5).

There were times, however, when one wife was clearly the favorite, a situation which, of course, led to bad feelings. Lawrence Leavitt reported, "I think he [my father] cared a lot for my mother" but then implied that she was not the favorite wife (1980, 9). Catherine Scott Brown began, "My father was rather partial," but then stopped and concluded, "I will just say this. My mother wasn't the favored wife. I won't say anything more about it" (1976, 12). But of course favoritism is a highly subjective perception; even children of the same mother occasionally viewed their favoritism differently. Jesse, the son of the second wife, Sarah Eliza Fenn Barney, said that he felt his father favored the first wife, his mother's sister Annie, "because she was the first wife, the first love" (1982, 33). His full brother Orin, however, said, "We couldn't see that Dad treated anyone any different than anyone else" (1982, 7).

Men in polygamy, according to the interviews, usually hoped that their wives would also love each other and avoid arguments. Thomas E. Taylor wrote to Minnie about his first wife, "I would like Emma to be frank with you and you with her and each learn the lesson of humility. I am your husband as well as hers." In one instance when his wives were apparently not communicating, Thomas sent a letter to Minnie and asked her to mail it or take it from Gunnison to Emma in Salt Lake City. He added, "I hope you can see your way to do this in the spirit of meekness and love, not only for your husband's sake but for your own and all your family." Charles E. Rich wrote to his wives from a mission in 1861, "I am glad and thankful so far as I know that there is a kind and friendly feeling amongst you. I hope and pray that this spirit and feeling may increase among you till you will be one, as the church of God is one."

As in monogamous marriages, though, individual personalities dictated how well the husbands and wives got along. As Ida Walser Jackson explained, "Not all the [plural] families got along. It was the people though and not the institution. It was the way the man handled it a lot and not the way the women themselves accepted it. . . . There was jealousy among some, but many of them just got along beautifully" (1976, 18). David Candland did not always get along with one of his wives, Hannah, but had a system for dealing with disagreement: "I absent myself sometimes for weeks then she craves forgiveness" (n.d., 51). Christopher Layton recalled his love for his third wife, "Death came to the relief of my wife Sarah M. on October 25, 1864. This was a great blow to us all, for in her we lost our best advisor and peacemaker, a true wife and loving mother" (n.d., 35–36). Monogamous marriages seemed

no different, however. Elbert Hans Anderson, for example, said of his monogamous parents, "I think at times that Mother felt that Father didn't take enough time to spend with her" (1983, 9).

Nineteenth-century American families displayed the Victorian influence not only in their attitudes toward love and the marital roles they followed, but also in their methods of child-rearing. Because husbands and fathers in American and Mormon families were often gone, wives cared for the home as well as the children. As one scholar explained, "From every available source, it is clearly evident that girls and boys were raised by mothers who were faithful to the standards of motherhood. . . . Men lived a masculine existence 'out there' which from decade to decade seemed more isolated from the feminized home life of 'in here' " (Dubbert 1979, 21).

Like other nineteenth-century American children, most monogamous and polygamous children felt a special closeness to their mothers. Ada S. Howlett, a child of a monogamous family, explained, "My mother was my mainstay I guess. Father was quite busy, and he had a big family" (1982, 7). But many felt little closeness, especially with their fathers. Elsie Jane Hubbard spoke of her monogamous parents, "In those pioneer days they had to work pretty much all the time. We worked with our parents. We helped along. But as far as spending any time in my life much, no" (1983, 11). Marjorie Cannon Pingree said, "I was not neglected, but it seemed to me that I grew up with very little regulating because my father had another family that he lived with a part of the time. He supervised us as best he could, but I couldn't remember that I was ever forced to study or guided in my assignments" (1983, 2).

One might suppose from such evidence that children of monogamous families were closer to their fathers than those of polygamous families. Of sixty-three polygamous families whose children talked about their relationships with their fathers, 13 percent reported receiving no attention from their fathers, 52 percent had little interaction with their fathers, and 33 percent were close to their fathers. In contrast, 84 percent of the children from forty-one monogamous families reported that they were close to their fathers. At first, these figures seem overwhelmingly to support the theory that not only did most polygamous children feel a special closeness to their mothers, but they also lacked a closeness with their fathers. However, such a conclusion may be based more on what was not reported than on what was. Of the more than 200 polygamous and 150 monogamous families that I studied, only 63 and 41 children, respectively, mentioned specifically their relationship with their fathers, although the interviewees were asked to describe their fathers as well as their mothers. However, rather than talking about specific relationships, the children usually talked about their fathers' occupations and their Church positions, just as they did when discussing their mothers. It would be fairer to conclude that, given the Victorian ideal, children in polygamous families, much like children in monogamous families, expected to be closer to their mothers than to their fathers since their fathers were earning the living and did not spend as much time in the home.

But although they were not always present, the polygamous fathers in my study generally expressed love for their families. Teaching religious values was considered to be especially important, as the children recall, and polygamous families as well as monogamous LDS families nearly always had a family prayer. Of seventy-nine polygamous families (a husband and his wives counted as one family) and seventy-six monogamous LDS families, 90 percent of the polygamous and 85 percent of the monogamous had daily family prayers. These family prayers apparently continued in both monogamous and polygamous families whether the father was there or not. Some men, like Martin B. Bushman, "made it a practice to live with each family the same that I might help them with their children and have prayers with them. I tried to set a good example before my children by having prayer night and morning" (n.d., n.p.).

Polygamy, then, did not completely change the nineteenth-century Victorian ideal of family relationships for the families who practiced it. Husbands and fathers were often gone in plural families just as they were in monogamous ones; polygamy only meant that men had to divide up their family time even more. But for the most part, plural husbands and fathers maintained good relationships with all of their families. Charles Rich's letter to his plural wives written on 11 January 1863 while he was on a mission summarizes the hopes of many plural husbands:

> Now my dear wives how is it with you? How do you enjoy yourselves? Do you enjoy the Holy Spirit? Do you pray? Do you teach our children to pray and do you see that no unholy principle that will destroy them is suffered to grow in their minds? Do you attend meetings faithfully? Do you cultivate love for each other? Do you love and remember an absent husband? I trust that you remember all these things and many more.

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Maggie Smith Shoots On Over

Clifton H. Jolley

ON THE MORNING THE CHALLENGER SPACE SHUTTLE EXPLODED, Maggie shot on over.

I've been thinking about both events as though they were connected, even though I know they aren't. They were separated not merely by worlds, but by lifetimes. Maggie was off-road Missouri, small-town Utah, through and through. Maggie was the past.

Still, I replay that evening news in my mind — the bright burning of half-a-million gallons of liquid oxygen and hydrogen flaming in a single moment — and I think of Maggie.

I received a call early Tuesday morning from Martha Jenkins, the youngest daughter Maggie called Marthy. "Hello, Mr. Jolley," Marthy said. "I have a message for you from Mama. She's shot on over."

Marthy knew I would understand. They were the words Maggie had used two years before to tell me of the death of her husband, J. Franklin, whom she called "Grandpa."

Maggie Smith had her own word for just about everything. She called herself "Margaret Masters" during her many years on KSL-TV. She called her daughters "The Sunshine Girls," and because of Maggie, they were. She even had a word for death. It was a quick word, an easy word. You didn't "linger" or "suffer" or even "pass away." You "shot" . . . on over.

I can only remember bits and pieces of what Maggie told me about her life — growing up "off road" on an upstate Missouri farm; moving with J. Franklin to "the city" (St. Joseph) in Missouri, and later to Utah; working first in radio, then on TV — in the early days, before "personality" meant nothing more than a deep voice.

Maggie had been a midwife, "burying and birthing," and told me once that for more than forty years she never went anywhere without clean sheets in her kit, just in case.

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And she had been in love, with J. Franklin, whom I never knew before he'd gone senile — a fact Maggie informed me of on our first meeting. "This is Grandpa," she said, affectionately introducing him. "He's senile."

She enjoyed telling people that. Not, I think, because it made them uncomfortable (although surprising people with unexpected information was one of Maggie's favorite sports), but because "senile" seemed to her to be such a good word — short, sensible, to the point. Besides, Maggie didn't attach the negatives most of us associate with the word. Senility was merely one more place to visit, one more stop to make, one more experience before you shot on over.

Marthy was sleeping with Maggie when she died. Marthy tells me Maggie took five short breaths and was gone.

When Maggie slept on her back, she didn't snore, but she did puff — a slight noise, almost a sigh, that she made when exhaling. Marthy would listen to that puffing until it became an annoyance, and then she'd nudge Maggie. Maggie would come immediately awake and ask, "Oh, my! Was I making noise? Guess I'd better turn to the trees," remembering her home in off-road Missouri where one side of the bed faced the trees, the other the road. In Maggie's bed, you could sleep on your back, or you could face the road or the trees. Those were the options, the positions of grace.

When Marthy heard those five quick breaths, she said, "Oh Mama, turn to the trees." And then she reached over to Maggie who quietly, easily, was gone.

On the day of Maggie's death, I met with her family at Larkin Mortuary. It was an open, sweetly sad, paradoxically happy, and reminiscent gathering, much as I imagine Missouri wakes to be. Maggie was laid out at one end of the room — somehow seeming a little larger and grander even than she seemed in life, her hair as white and feathery against the pillow as I remember it from the last time I saw her several months before. We all sat in a semi-circle in front of her, telling Maggie Smith/Margaret Masters/Rosie stories, remembering the many names with which she faced the world and the singular love that was her face to us.

I told about the first time I met Maggie. She called and said, "Mr. Jolley, this is Maggie Smith. I want to learn to write. How much do you charge to teach someone?" I began to tell this elderly woman, whose name I didn't recognize, that I don't teach writing anymore, that I'm too busy. I can't remember now what stopped me from saying no — an impression, perhaps; something she said; more likely the way she said it. I remember that remarkable voice and the eccentric clarity of her words. What stopped me from stopping her was the phenomenon of Maggie Smith.

The Romantics believed in something they called the "natural genius" — not so much a brilliance of intellect but a quality of soul so remarkable that its virtue and insights permeate every action and can only be diminished by the disciplines of education. I don't know what might have happened to Maggie if I had ever actually taught her to write; I suspect the effect would not have been good. Maggie Smith already had plenty of contrivances by which to

communicate; and if her written prose was a bit unmannerly, it was also unmannered, and splendid for what it understood.

I told Maggie I'd teach her to write if she'd let me talk to her, let me listen to her, let the up-state Missouri rhythms of her speaking settle in me like the throbbing of a cricket on an off-road summer night. I told Maggie I'd teach her to write. It was the only lie between us. From the beginning, I knew there would be neither time nor reason for me to teach Maggie Smith anything. I would learn from her or try to learn from her. I was a cut-purse, picking through the many pockets of a wealthy woman's shawl, finding in each of the public and secret places of Maggie's mind and soul the rich textures of language that reveal experience, the remarkable moments of experience remarkable people like Maggie recognize and memorialize in themselves and in their art.

I should probably say something about picking berries. Maggie talked a lot about that — picking berries in the Missouri woods. Harvesting what no one had planted. Picking berries, wild.

Since Maggie died, I've been trying to remember if she ever said what kind of berries they were. There are so many possibilities: *aggregates*, such as raspberries and blackberries; *multiples*, like mulberries; *accessories*, like the strawberry. But these names are words from a book, the remnants of some class I took. Maggie found her words in the woods, wild. She found them, or they grew out of her — she was the soil for both language and experience.

My descriptions won't help you to understand Maggie anymore than you can taste the sweetness of a wild berry from an academic word. To understand the magical life her language gave experience, you'd have to hear Maggie tell about her cousin who was allergic to her own husband. She had to live in town and her husband out on the farm, since whenever they came together, the woman took to sneezing. ("The miracle," Maggie told me, "was that they parented three children. Just how boggles the mind.") You'd have had to receive from Maggie instruction on the best way to harvest the seeds from a pomegranate. ("Get yourself naked in the bathtub with a knife, and have at it!") You'd have had to hear about the man Maggie went to bury, only to discover he had stopped breathing because he'd swallowed his dentures. ("Once I'd reached in and pulled them out, he came back around and lived another five years, mean as ever before.") To understand the revelation of the world in Maggie's words, you have to know: J. Franklin did not become a doctor.

"You see, when Grandpa was a boy, he had his heart set on becoming a doctor. So, he and a friend caught a train on down to the medical college to inquire after the opportunity.

"Well, so's to help the boys understand the medical profession, they were given a tour of the college, including the place where the human body was studied by cutting up corpses.

"Now, you need to understand, Grandpa was a delicate boy . . . . Well, needless to say, that was the end of Grandpa's medical career."

What J. Franklin did become — late in life — was a painter. Maggie encouraged him, praising his primitive canvases, extolling the virtues of his

"uncluttered style." And in his senility, when J. Franklin returned to his youth, he painted the scene he remembered best from his brief medical career: a college laboratory, white corpses laid in rows.

I don't think the lives of people like Maggie Smith are more abundant or eccentric than our own. I believe people like Maggie Smith make them so, discover them to be so by their examination and wonder. Maggie once told me she might have made something with her life if she and J. Franklin hadn't been always playing. Nothing was more important than pushing back the table and chairs in the kitchen and dancing. Nothing was more important than . . . living. For Maggie, life wasn't to be used for some*thing*; life was *the thing.* She discovered all life's permutations — age, senility, even disease — to be wonderful, amazing opportunities for the grace of God and the dignity of human beings to find place and purpose.

In all her living, she missed only one moment she had hoped for — her own senility. She used to tell me she looked forward to that, because it enlarged the enjoyment of life. J. Franklin, she said, saw things and believed things she could not. And she figured that if they were senile together, he could paint and she could write about that richer world; she hoped that through their separate talents they could again dance together.

Perhaps that hope was merely another of Maggie's faces — comfort she gave J. Franklin, the excuse she made for herself. Regardless, Maggie didn't need senility so much as she pretended. The world opened before the slight lunacy of her eccentricity like water parting before a prophet.

The only lie that existed between us was this: I was supposed to teach her to write; instead, she taught me to live.

When I got home from Larkin Mortuary, my wife Marcia and I talked about Maggie, about the many loaves of bread she had baked for us. Some of those loaves were perfectly golden, some slightly burned. The place Maggie baked was the same place she danced, and sometimes one occupation distracted her from the other. But whatever the condition of the loaves, Maggie gave them to us without apology. Bread was bread to Maggie; she judged it no more harshly than she judged people. You might not be perfect, but Maggie knew that however you had been ignored, however you might be damaged around the crust, at the center you were still good. She took people whole, not resenting the parts others criticized, not criticizing souls she found essentially amazing.

"I hope it's like she believed," Marcia said to me. "I hope you do shoot on over, just like Maggie said. I hope it's quick and easy."

For Maggie death was merely one permutation of the life she loved. And of all the possibilities of life, she believed death to be the briefest. Perhaps that is one of the reasons she gave much of her life to midwifery and caring for the dead — to prolong the moment of death, to enjoy it more. Not to resent it; certainly not to fear it; but to dance it — a quick and joyful dance.

And because death would be so quick, Maggie tried to prepare for the moment. She kept a burial box under her bed full of instructions and clothing — a box she always intended to "get organized."

When the box was opened the day after she died, it contained only a holey pair of garments and a white ruffle for her neck. Everything else she had given away to friends — not while they lived, but in death — dressing them one by one in bits and pieces from her burial box.

Only the two articles of clothing and a long list of comments and instructions recorded and dated over the years were left for her own burial.

Still alive as of May 17, 1983. Ha ha!

Still alive as of January 31, 1984. Ha ha!

Each time she took out the box — supposedly to "organize" it, inevitably to diminish it for the funeral of a friend — she wrote a note proclaiming her joy in living, her triumph.

"Someone once told me I have a Pollyanna view of life," she protested to me once. "But that isn't true. I've known more than my share of suffering and hard times," she said. "I was a midwife for forty years, and I've buried as many as I've birthed. I see the world for what it is. It's just I see it more clearly than other folks."

You know what to do with this pretty fluff when the time comes. Remember the day we bought it? ($8. What fun!) Still alive February 12, 1983. Ha ha!

12/28/1985 Clean stringy white rags to be washed; to be cleaned — my long-sleeved pink dress, my long-sleeved black and white, and my light table cloth with printed flowers. Some burial instructions: I want to be buried in these garments. I'm sentimental about them, having used them a lot in the Salt Lake Temple for forty years. Don't wash them. I want to lie in them knowing I've worn them and they've still got that earthy smell. I have plenty of excellent long white slips that I prefer for burial. Look around in the closet and drawers. The best cleaners is on 9th West and they are excellent. Send the robe, veil and sash to them to be cleaned. These are the shoes I want to wear for burial, with knee-high stockings (not panty hose.) Marthy Anne will get the contents of this container in order next time she comes. Harambee.

Harambee was one of Maggie's words. Not invented. African. She said it meant, "Let's pull together." On a paper sack stuck in her burial box she had written: *Still alive as of November 21, 1985. A bit shakey.*

The shoes were not in the box, nor the burial robes she instructed to be cleaned. All had been given away. And when Maggie's daughter closed Maggie's bank account a few days after her death, she had sixty cents left.

Until now I've been unable to disconnect the memory of Maggie from the space shuttle tragedy — from a time and mechanism totally foreign to Maggie, from a bright moment high against a cold, clear sky, when people together with their technology were suddenly gone. Quickly. Easily. As though death had become precisely what Maggie has always said it is.

When Maggie and I stood at J. Franklin's casket two years ago, she took my hand and laid it on his. "You see?" she said of his hands that had been palsied in the last months of his life. "They're quiet now; he'll paint again."

And now Maggie has turned to the trees a final time — shot on over to be with J. Franklin and all those she has loved and lost and dressed in the scant

treasure of her burial box and the more abundant wealth of her love and language, her vision and her gift for life.

For the last several years, the only time I felt real peace was when I visited with Maggie. Now I feel only lonely when I think of her, which is not as often as I should, because there has been no time for picking berries this season.

But on this rainy day — after I have thought about her, and written about her, and missed her — I am finally able to disconnect the memory of her from the events her life ultimately transcends. The images of Maggie's world, not mine, define this day. Maggie, once again, is sleeping late and listening to the music of the rain on the roof. And if there is a kitchen handy, she'll bake bread; and while it's baking, she'll push back the chairs, have a dance with J. Franklin, and not bother if all the loaves burn.

Which is why, although I do not know their names, I shall try not to forget the wild berries in the bush next spring, and the joy of picking them, and the pleasure she took in us that we may yet take in one another.

Of Politics and Poplars

Darlene M. Phillips

THE LOMBARDY POPLARS ARE ALMOST GONE NOW. This shouldn't nag at me, but it does. They used to be everywhere in Utah, lining the edges of farms, marking a town's boundaries, or marching down long lanes toward old two-story homes whose polygamous owners preferred not to live in a house at the side of the road. The trees were most noticeable on what we called "town turns" — those bold attempts to strait-lace even the topography into an orderly Mormon corset.

I remember those unexpected right angles from the days before freeways, when all roads were obligated to pass through the center of the closest town. My father would be driving the Willys south down Highway 89, the preferred scenic route, and the road would suddenly veer right around some farmer's field, pointing us in a new direction toward a cluster of green.

"Town turn," my father would announce as the tires squealed westward. And then another town turn, this time to go south. Not generally south, or mostly south, but directly south. Pioneer towns were laid out as square and true as the people who built them. The idea of cul-de-sacs, winding drives, and dead-end streets was as foreign to these people as the notion of a highway purposely built to avoid a city.

Once poplars were the hallmark of every Mormon village. I rather liked the way they stood then, lined up at attention on either side of the main thoroughfare as we passed by. And I remember their bars of narrow shade upon my face whenever my father stopped to chat with gas station attendants at the round-headed pumps. He had owned a gas station once, and so conversations about octane readings and new pumps were as mandatory as town turns.

The poplars are dying now. Most of them were taken down as public hazards when Utah's streets began to need sidewalks. The trees were in the way. Still, I do see a long line of them from time to time. Half dead, their

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skeletal branches stretching grayly above a faint gasp of green, they are still willing to guard some farmer's field.

My husband and I argue sometimes about why they are dying, though we both know the poplar is short-lived, botanically speaking. The old ones die, and no one plants new ones. I have heard that there are some towns where it is even against the law to plant a poplar. They grow too tall, tangle overhead wires, have shallow roots, are subject to windfall. Mortal sins, all.

Still, on long drives, my husband and I enjoy fantasizing about the retreat of the pioneer trees. "They are allergic to asphalt," he speculates on one trip. I counter that the freeway is strangling them. "No," he says, "they are addicted to carbon monoxide. They are perishing from withdrawal since the traffic has deserted them for other realms." That brings me to mourn the loss of irrigation ditches, since I am old enough to remember when the gutters on either side of Main Street in Salt Lake City were channels for farming water. Today, most cities, following the state capitol's example, have diverted their irrigation water into underground culverts.

Pity then, the poor Lombardy. A form of willow, it perishes without a steady source of moisture. The mystery to me is that when it dies, it is seldom replaced, even by another shade tree. This devaluation of shade in such a hot climate is a perpetual sorrow to me. The pioneer, who came here from leafier climes, planted trees almost before he unpacked his wagon. I think he would puzzle at his descendants as much as I do. Their homes bake in the westward glance of the sun, the swamp coolers whirring double time in the absence of any shade on their roofs.

"Trees shed pollen and seed pods and leaves that have to be raked in the fall," my neighbor says.

"Humus for the garden," the pioneer in me answers.

She responds, "Trees break in the wind, ruin sidewalks, roofs, and houses. They don't last."

"Neither do mortals," I reply.

"Trees with surface roots spoil the lawns," the suburbanite reminds me.

And the farmer in me echoes, "Man does not live by neat lawns alone." And so the argument goes. The tree-haters of the West have lost sight of their history. Time and progress have left me behind.

After all, what can you say to Utahns who accept the California gull as their state bird and the Colorado blue spruce as their state tree? Only the state flower, the sego lily, seems truly to belong here.

And like the Lombardy poplar, it is almost extinct. Suddenly, I understand why. Most Mormon of all trees, the poplar does not thrive alone. It does best in a crowd. It needs to stand with its fellows in long windrows to the north of farm homes, or in parallel lines on either side of a lane. Rows of such trees are at their best when they can stand with roots entwined along some ditch-bank, trunk to trunk, so to speak, their heart-shaped leaves whispering secrets back and forth in the night wind.

It is loneliness which kills the poplar. The solitary oak stretching its limbs wide over a field is a handsome sight, a refuge for cattle and horses, for girls

with tree-climbing instincts, and for boys with sling shots. A poplar in the same position looks sad. It hugs its limbs to its trunk, hunching them as if being jostled by a crowd. Only there is no crowd. The tree that looks like a guardian of moral rectitude when bolstered by its fellows is revealed for what it is.

It is a timid tree, unable to breathe free, unstamped by individuality, unable to bend. And yet, in a state dominated by one religion, one political party, one frame of mind, the poplar is vanishing. The pioneers who planted poplars were not at all like them, or they would never have come here. They were some of the most radical nonconformists ever born. And for that I respect them, though I have come to fear the woody sentinels they left behind.

It is as if the spirit of the poplar has not been given over to death after all, but has seeped from its tangled roots into the irrigation ditches that run along the fields and water the crops in Utah. Stalks of winter wheat suck the leached essence into their roots, revive it, and learn to bend together, as they have seen the Lombardies do. The farmer who sets the plow, the boy chasing seagulls behind him, the wife who grinds the wheat, the young girl kneading bread; all seem to learn the ways of the poplar by osmosis. They nod in unison, raise their hands with one opinion, crimp the edges of my life like a pie crust circled in one pan.

It is for them that even history has been recast, seizing by the throat those rugged men and women of the 1840s, poplar planters all. Sculpting their ordinary lives to statuesque proportions for the sake of one perfect story. And so, when I see a row of Lombardies still standing, however feebly, I cannot help myself. I offer my salute.

They have been victorious, after all.

Mother Goes to Cambridge: A Modern Lament

Suzzanne Bigelow

I SAT THERE ON THE BENCH IN LECTURE BLOCK C at Cambridge University with a very real ache in my brain where my classical education should have been. It was a rare warm day in the summer of '85, and since we seven, housewives and mothers with the University of Utah Study Abroad Program for six weeks in England, had either talked or read most of the night, I was appalled to find myself drifting off under the august nose of Professor Allen. Surely I had not journeyed this far to sleep through my twentieth century poetry class on the very day we were discussing *The Waste Land.* Just being here amid the venerable colleges beside the River Cam, not to mention actually taking classwork, was a life-time ambition realized.

Professor Allen was masterful as he unraveled the first part of "The Burial of the Dead," reading Eliot's profundities in an arresting voice. "April is the cruellest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land . . ." (1963, 63). High British that voice, that accent. No matter how well educated, an American never sounds like that. The poem positively rang with clarity, and my mind throbbed with white-hot flashes of understanding. I'd be willing to bet that every female within the sound of Professor Allen's voice had fantasized over the chance possibility of being stranded with him in some pleached bower.

Professor Allen's sonorous voice rolled on in cadence slow, and I thought to myself, Suzzanne, you're pathetic. A sometime-English graduate student and mother of seven, several of whom are graduate students themselves, why are you such a push-over for that English accent? Whatever happened to objective criticism? My eagerness scarcely befit a woman of extensive travels and experience.

What I had seen and felt at Cambridge, free of husband at home and children no doubt overjoyed at being largely on their own for six summer

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weeks, was something unique. It was a rare return to the possibilities of youth combined with the middle-aged knowledge of which possibilities to value. Inner doors of awareness opened, defining and expanding a different me. Glimpses of intuitive light came from being here, with the surety Alexander Pope was talking about when he said, "All are but parts of one stupendous whole" (1962, 769). It was positively exhilarating to be part of the Cambridge stupendous whole.

From other trips abroad and from reading, I had known the British to be smug on occasion, too comfortable, even stuffy at times — a nation of imperialists looking for a way back to the glory days. However, most of the English I have encountered are friendly, quiet folk, detached, often witty, disenchanted with their government, just as some of us are with our own, and immersed in hopeless contradictions represented by their history and faded greatness. It is sobering to find them complacent and accepting of their fallen world position, they, the heirs of Churchill, seemingly apathetic, clinging to vestiges of a way of life that is no more and ineffectively dealing with the ambiguities of the present. Would Churchill, that aggressive, gutsy, spirited bulldog of a man, have liked the way today's Englishman is content to move over and let the Americans carry the greater load for the free world?

But Cambridge itself is a different matter. Her ancient cobblestones and blackened walls whispered her spell to me, and I fell smack in love with the history and traditions, the great men, the architecture, the woods and meadows and gardens, the endless green fields, the cooling mists, the strawberry teas, the death-defying bicycles that took us everywere, the English style of speaking, and most especially with the great bastian of higher learning itself, the university.

I joined with Wordsworth in *The Prelude* when he went up to Cambridge for the first time as a school boy:

> I could not print
> Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps
> Of generations of illustrious men,
> Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass
> Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept,
> Wake where they waked, range that inclosure old,
> That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.
> Place also by the side of this dark sense
> Of nobler feeling, that those spiritual men,
> Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,
> Seemed humbled in these precincts, thence to be
> The more endeared . . . (1965, 223)

I was in awe not only of those who had studied here — Newton, Darwin, Milton, Byron, Spenser, Marlowe, Thomas Gray, William Harvey, not to mention Francis Bacon, Tennyson, Thackeray, Dryden, and Coleridge and so many more — but also of the method of study. Weekly essays are prepared for each tutorial session with one-on-one critiques and guidance; individualized learn-

ing and progress are emphasized throughout an intense three-year period. No part-time employment is allowed for undergraduates. The bachelor's degree is equivalent to a master's degree from any other institution, with the possible exception of "the other place" (Oxford), the mother school from which scholars repaired after disturbances between the university and townspeople broke out back in 1209 and whose name Cambridge people eschew.

I was reflecting on all this and admiring the thick blonde braid snaking down the back of the girl in front of me, when Professor Allen secured my attention with these lines from *The Waste Land*:

> That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
> Has it begun to sprout?
> Will it bloom this year? (1963, 65)

I had begun to sprout. Enough to respond to how he maximized each word. Dr. Allen was not only an artful teacher, he was a consummate performer. I'm sure he knew it too, but then, why shouldn't he? I would have given up my electrical adapter, my clotted cream, and my McVitties Tea Bisquits rather than miss one of his morning lectures. And here he was, doing it again.

"You probably don't know this either," he said, referring to a famous line from *The Aeneid.* I did know it and resented his patronizing preface aimed at the non-Europeans in the class. This had happened before. He often implied that we Americans were poorly prepared, explaining the most obvious literary terms or introducing Thomas Hardy's poetry as though we had never heard of anything but his prose. Probably true in some cases, but who needed to hear it? I had learned the classical subjects that are considered basic knowledge for every civilized person — poetry, art, philosophy, and languages — reading away the hours after school while my mother worked. The demands at Cambridge weighed this prior education of mine in the balance, and like God appraising Belshazzar, found it wanting.

Cambridge has made me realize that my education lacks historic perspective. I suffer from great disjointed islands of learning punctuated by spots of little or nothing. I feel no unseen umbilical cord tying me to the treasures of a poetic, literary, or artistic heritage. The English in the nineteenth century, after most of the great poets had died, had already an existing poetic vocabulary that had evolved for hundreds of years. Poetry reading was part of the national culture, a popular pastime for thousands of people. The poets of the twentieth century took this for granted and built upon it.

Professor Allen wasn't about to leave out any historical background. "In the Golden Age Pericles actually changed the way men thought about themselves." The ancient Greeks and their works have dominated every age of man since the fourth century B.C. Well, I knew that, Professor Allen. The inspiration of those old Greeks had reached all the way to Utah. He went on to say that being able to read the ancient languages, not having to depend on a translation, was the mark of a truly educated person. "T.S. Eliot was a brilliant student, not only of history and philosophy but also languages," Professor

Allen said. Standing before us on the lecture stage in his finely tailored camel's hair jacket (definitely his best color), he eloquently described what man can do when he believed in his world and himself as did those amazing Greeks. "Great souls sired by Homer," was the lovely way he put it, his small blue eyes boring a place in our minds.

I liked the way he used language. Having come forth from the womb with a love of words, believing that human language dignifies and magnifies us, puts a shape on things, I have ears receptive to a nicely turned phrase or an unusual expression. So I listened around town to the spirited speech of the English. "Randy after antique" instead of simply lusting after the old was said about visitors to Knebworth who loved the atmosphere of that ancient country manor. I remembered a woman in the pastry shop in Bath ordering up a "lardy slice," which to us would have been a sweet roll. And what American would ever call a friend a "smashing chap," even if he thought it? There is a gentle good-naturedness among the English. With typical understatement, a fight is either a "spot of a skirmish" or a "punch up." An Englishman can be as "drunk as a sack," "have quite a good read," or buy something "a bit pricey." You can take a "march about," drive across a "fly-over" which is an over-pass, or "mind the gap," a warning issued by a sepulchral voice at the tube station. Healthy people go to the pub and eat cheese baps, tasty sandwiches with cheese and cress on a coarse whole-wheat bun. And you can be "keen mad" or "not give a toss," depending on your mood.

The English have contributed to the continuity of the written word far beyond their numbers. Their poets, or "makers" as Chaucer preferred calling himself, are the heirs of all times and all places. That great store of historic and literary allusion of which metaphor is made seems somehow more accessible coming to us as it has through great English writers.

Professor Allen moved down from the stage and leaned against the first row of benches, moving the discussion back to World War I and the influence of Ezra Pound who had inspired a generation of writers, both English and American. "Young men in their twenties were slaughtered like animals, and for what?" Professor Allen asked. "Uncle Ezra expressed the futility of the men in the trenches, their outrage, all of the stupidity of it, when he bitterly described the culture of Europe as some old books and an ancient bitch gone in the teeth." As direct as a Bruce Springsteen lyric.

I had not heard of Gallipoli, the particular battle mentioned in the poem Professor Allen started to read, until the film *Gallipoli* came out a few years ago and broke my heart. Had I studied more history, I would have been prepared for the war poems of Wilfred Owen and Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas. I would have understood better the tenacity of Winston Churchill in World War II had I known more about World War I. But in high school I had not been required to take one class in world history. The sign I had seen posted in Churchill's war rooms at Whitehall had originally come from Queen Victoria, but it made the point: "*PLEASE UNDERSTAND THERE IS NO DEPRESSION IN THIS HOUSE AND WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITIES OF DEFEAT. THEY DO NOT EXIST.*"

Sounds like the British stiff upper lip and all that. I think that ability to endure has something to do with being packed off to boarding school at a young age. This system permits parents to remember their child fondly as a human being rather than a teenager. Schoolmasters bear the burden. English children learn to take it early on and keep their feelings to themselves. Churchill quite possibly developed some of his strength in adversity having survived this system. He suffered immensely as a lad at school but, in the end, came out all right. He not only retained respect and love for his socially prominent parents who neglected him shamefully but managed to remain fiercely loyal and came close to idolizing both of them. I like the English national inclination to do things the hard way.

Professor Allen was explaining how great poets allow the language to speak through them — a process that the English language was created for. And then he started reading some Yeats, "Down by the Salley Gardens," (1979, 20) to be exact, and pointing out that Yeats was just such a poet. When compared to the wild beauty of that poem, and "The Stolen Child" which he read next, Eliot and *The Waste Land* seemed mechanical. Or was it Professor Allen's wonderfully expressive voice?

While he talked about Yeat's aspirations for Ireland, moments came to mind of the past several weeks when I had felt as though my whole soul was being activated in some grand way. Being older than a school girl had a lot to do with it. I had sat in King's College Chapel while the organ raged, surveying a ceiling that couldn't possibly have been carved by human hands, no matter what they say, and had actually taken the time to worship. I had sat overwhelmed and humbled while the light streaming through stained glass windows washed me in holiness. And as if that weren't enough to wring prayers from a stone, a most ineffably exquisite painting by Rubens of Mary and the baby Jesus, all rosy and luminous, shone from the altar.

I thought of being behind King's College on the Backs, a spacious meadow edged by oak trees right in the heart of town. I like the great white cows, sociable creatures that could have ambled out of a Constable painting. They crowded close, seemingly eager to exchange pleasantries with us two-legged beasts, chewing serenely over their good fortune at being in such a rarified spot. Witness the chorus line of twenty or more black and white Guernseys wedged against the fence when our group visited Denny Abbey, an ancient building standing not far from Cambridge. So happy were those cows to see us that their mooings and bawlings completely drowned out Mac Dowdy, our great country homes expert, a most entertaining lecturer and raconteur, resembling an aging Errol Flynn. I found my senses heightened, realizing where I was and the company I was in. Cows seemed particularly lovely because they were a natural part of the scene, creatures of the earth, not unlike myself, expressed in differing form.

"Of course you should have read all of Shakespeare, both the plays and the sonnets, as well as *The Iliad*, *Paradise Lost*, and the *Bible*, in order to study English literature seriously. And *The Book of Common Prayer*. Have you all read them?" Professor Allen asked. I thought back. So little had been re-

quired of me. No planned course of study designed to enlarge and expand the mind. I was blessed with a mother who urged me to read, but my education had really just happened without any particular continuity. As a school girl I had never been encouraged to dive into myself and confront what was there. Nothing had equipped me to cherish my humanity while making my way in an awesome world.

Too often we rush "distracted from distractions by distraction," as Eliot said (1943, 192), earphones insulating us against the sounds of our natural world. No bird sings, only a cassette. We arrive at the threshhold of our universities scarcely literate, having watched an average of fifty-four hours of television per week, having read few books, not knowing how to concentrate, nervous strangers in our own environment, and ignorant of the lessons to be learned from the past.

Professor Allen was saying it. "We need more things that move the spirit. That inspiration that causes the heart to leap up at sight of the daffodils. We need to roam over open fields and beside lakes with a volume of Wordsworth . . . no, Yeats would do better these days." He sighed, perhaps a bit too dramatically. I wondered how he would like to come back to Salt Lake City with us and do his thing on PBS Friday nights opposite "Dallas."

Professor Allen had built up to Keats and what he had done for English poetry in his short life. "Go out to his house at Hampstead Heath. He died there, and you'll be able to read his letters which are almost as fine as his poems. And while you are considering Keats, don't dismiss Shelley. He had one of the most creative and original minds of his time." I had no intention of dismissing Shelley if for no other reason than Keats loved him and I loved Keats. It was Shelley who had been called "a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain" (Arnold 1927, 225). What other nation had produced such a wealth of literary giants, poets of purer insight or more absolute imaginative sense?

I like the tradition of literary excellence at Cambridge. I don't remember being taught to love the language when I went to school. I find myself making little effort to be precise. I know young people who cannot utter a sentence without the word "cool" being somewhere present. And there is "bad" which translates "very good" and "gnarley" which is even better. But adults are as lax. Where can you go in the United States today and not run into the ubiquitous "you know"? It has insinuated its meaningless way into the beginning, middle, or end of the most simple sentence. If you are not convinced, listen to a television talk show.

Professor Allen graced us with one of his proper chuckles. "Did you know that Britain was once a nation of poets and is now a nation of shopkeepers, and a nation fast becoming the world's largest living museum? But then," he was proud in spite of himself, "have you ever seen anything to compare with Blenheim Palace, or Chatsworth?" There is nothing like those grand piles in our country — Wimpole Hall, Harlaxton, Belvoir, or Hatfield House, to name a few that we toured near Cambridge. It was at Hatfield House, the historic seat of the powerful Cecil family, where Elizabeth I was reared with her

brother Edward (not at her own choosing, of course) while she waited to learn which way the winds of intrigue would blow her fortunes. These magnificent homes are an incredible statement of the aristocracy of a rather small and rainy island unique in world history.

Professor Allen had moved on to a few anecdotes about his days at St. Catharine's College. Actually I was disappointed — I had figured him for a Trinity man. But I wasn't really listening. I was thinking of T. S. Eliot's words in *The Waste Land* about the giving, the surrendering, and never being the same. Implicit in the surrendering of ourselves is the recovering of yet a different self. This had happened to me at Cambridge, and I had seized the day. *Carpe diem.* Yes, I know the Latin, Professor Allen, in spite of my spotty high-school education.

I had also felt my own inadequacies and mourned, but not too long. I didn't want to miss anything. I was having fun making my own decisions outside of my domestic slot — no one's wife or mother, a unique suspension of one reality for six irreplaceable weeks. I had come as a pilgrim to an academic mecca and feasted. Much of the joy was in the freedom, to be sure. No cleaning house or worrying about what was growing in the refrigerator, no fixing dinner. Not a word of complaint from me about the dullness of English cuisine; it was enough not to have to be cooking it. I wanted to tell all the University of Utah students we were with to be sure and appreciate what was happening to them, just in case their youth got in the way.

During our time in England we ignored Wordsworth's sonnet and did our share of "getting and spending," and we grew close to each other. The seven women in the Utah group who were my friends and neighbors at the outset became in that rarified clime dearest companions, grappled to my soul "with hoops of steel," as Shakespeare put it (in Wright 1936, 739), he knowing full well how Cambridge would work on us. Cambridge was our mid-life awakening, a recognition of the primacy of the spiritual and the intellectual life that at home may have passed us by.

And it was fun. Once, running up to the roof of Cripps in our nighties on the first night of the Cambridge Festival, we watched fireworks ablaze in the sky. It wasn't easy to figure out the best place for a panoramic view. After seeing to the fire door so that we wouldn't be locked out, running back for sweaters against the chill starless night, and finally arranging tenuous seats on the air vents, we settled back and stopped talking long enough to discover the show was over.

And the talks, past midnight — time to get down to what really mattered. Glimpses into another heart never to be forgotten or betrayed. The growth at Cambridge had been part of the examined life Socrates had urged, and the adventure had been full of that passion for living reminiscent of the Romantics. Not on their grand scale, perhaps, but passion nonetheless. I thought of Byron sitting in stony splendor on his pedestal in the Wren Library at Trinity. Was he contemplating eternity and lost chances?

Professor Allen noticed the time and put down his book. "Jolly difficult ending this, but you'll have plenty of time for a good read back home," he said,

smiling in his most charming Mr. Chips manner. Right you are, Professor Allen. What remains of a lifetime.

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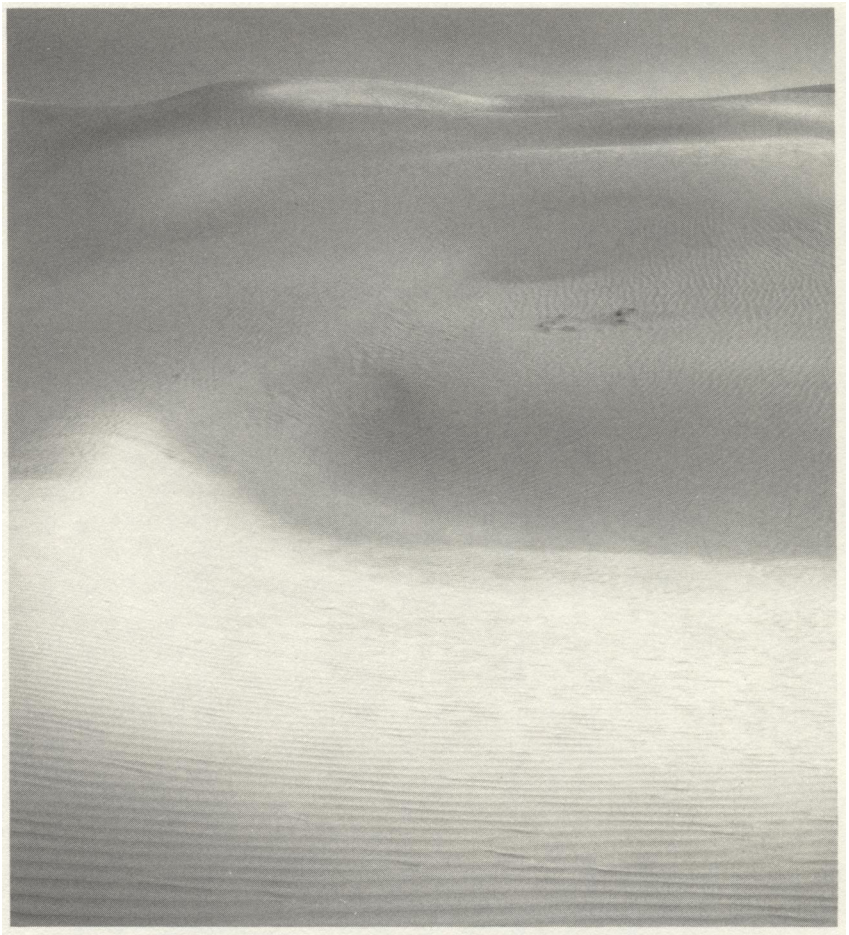

The Whip: A Mormon Folktale

Phyllis Barber

HEADED WEST, BROTHER AND SISTER GUSTAVSON pushed their handcart for many miles singing, "Some must push and some must pull" before their miracle happened. They inherited a wagon — all in the moment a hand could turn from side to side. It was a conestoga.

The former owner, a woman who had left her husband for God and Zion, had lost her only child in a drowning pond. A few minutes after the accident, she decided to follow this child into heaven. "Children are undefiled," she said. "Pure candidates for the celestial kingdom. I'll hold onto her hand."

So, there was a wagon and two oxen where there had only been a squeaky handcart. And, best of all, at least in the eyes of Karl Gustavson, was the braided whip left on the wagon seat. There it was. All curled up like a sunning snake on that high shelf of a wooden seat.

Those who knew Karl when he was a boy knew he liked to play with whips, to crack them, to use them to lasso bottles on fence posts. Just when he mastered the art of fly-swatting with his whip, however, his mother decided enough was enough. "It's that cracking sound I love," he told his mother, but she meant enough was enough when she said so.

So, while Hilma Gustavson loaded her loose assortment of dishes into a small cupboard left in a corner, pretending the wagon was her first real home in America, Karl practiced. He remembered everything, almost as if his whip had been taken away only an hour before. Hilma heard the cracking and snapping and whirring in the air just outside the wagon, but nothing mattered to her except this small box of a home. She folded her blankets over her alfalfa and corn seed, tied her looking glass to a wagon brace, and then sat on the high wooden seat with her hands folded.

PHYLLIS BARBER won second place in the 1986 Utah Fine Arts Literary competition with "The Whip: A Mormon Folk Tale." She has recently completed her first novel, which will be published soon. She has also served for several years as president of the Board of Directors of the Writers at Work Conference.

"Let's go, dear," she said, sitting like a priestess of the highest kingdom of glory, settling a pillow around her ample hips. "Zion is awaiting us." Brother and Sister Gustavson said good-bye to their handcart and joined in prayer for continued safe journeying. Karl whipped the oxen politely, and they were off for Utah once again.

Before Karl and Hilma went to sleep that night, he found every fly in the vicinity that might bother them while they slept. With a flick of the whip he snapped every fly into oblivion. Before long he got so he could lash the winged creatures out of mid-air before Hilma could say, "Karl, why must we have flies to plague us on top of everything else? Is there no rest?" After a few weeks, Karl began to coil the whip under his pillow, touching it every time he turned onto his stomach.

At first Hilma rejoiced in Karl's unusual ability. She laughed at his quickness and told him he was the best protector in all the world. After all, with his whip he could move the oxen, even when they didn't want to lift a hoof. He kept flies and their sticky feet out of their dinner — there was much too little to share. And he prevented the moths from gumming up their lantern. Many things were good about Karl's new skill.

About this time, however, he started taking the whip to square dances on Saturday night where he showed everyone how he could flick a fly from the nose of a sleeping dog. At first Hilma thought this was unique and allowed herself a little boasting. But when he took the whip to Sunday meetings and told the brethren he would protect them from any insects that buzzed them while they were revealing God's word, Hilma began to fold her blankets twenty-six times a day, count her alfalfa and corn seeds, and polish the glass on the dish cupboard even though it already shone, all as an excuse to stay out of sight.

"My dear husband, how about a new pastime?"

"Look at me, Hilma. Look how I can make this whip fill with humps!" He lashed the whip and made it ripple like the skin of a running horse.

"But," Hilma insisted, "you've mastered everything there is to master with this whip. It belongs to you enough. Find something else to do."

Long pauses entered into their conversations. Hilma could not keep from the subject of the whip and how Karl should lay it to rest. Karl could not keep from surveying his immediate territory for any kind of flying object, even floating cottonwood seeds and specks of dust. He could barely finish a sentence. His eyes and mind wandered from every conversation.

Hilma thought of hiding the whip, but the wagon was small, and nothing could stay hidden for long. She thought of burying it at the edge of the wagon trail, but because Karl had become rather unpopular with the other pioneers, he was always at her side.

Hilma started to pray at night. "Dear God. The whip. It is not good. All of thy little creatures are unsafe. I promise I'll never complain about flies again if thou will aid me in a solution. Karl is forgetting about thee. His mind must be single to thy glory. Amen."

She never knew quite how it all happened, but one afternoon when she was dicing a potato that had traveled many miles with them and was about

to be engulfed by a nest of its own white roots, she saw Karl's whip curled neatly on the axle of the wagon wheel. He had gone to priesthood meeting without his whip. Surely God had heard her prayers. She didn't even think about her actions. She swore later that divine intercession had moved her. She laid the whip across the cutting board balanced on her knees, and she diced, hacked, chopped, and sawed. One-half inch at a time, she chopped the whip into pieces resembling jerked meat — a luxury. They hadn't had any in so long. As she shortened the whip, she herself almost believed the bits and hunks were succulent morsels.

She peered into the water boiling over the fire and felt the steam rise in her face. Steam and smoke from the fire. She felt like a witch over a cauldron but knew she was doing God's will as she scraped the diced whip into the boiling water. And it boiled and boiled until the whip was limp and soft and edible.

"Your dinner." Hilma handed a steaming bowl of soup to her husband.

"Where did you find the beef, my resourceful Hilma?" He chewed slowly, his teeth unaccustomed to anything but root vegetables and bread. "I'm a blessed man."

Hilma smiled without showing her teeth. "God provides."

"Amen." He chewed with his eyes closed, remembering far away times when he had herring, rye bread, chopped onions, and capers on his table. "You are so good to me." But then he stopped chewing abruptly. "A fly, Hilma! Quick, my whip."

"I'm sure you have it with you, Karl."

"I don't see it anywhere." He looked inside the wagon, inside the dish cupboard, under the blankets, under the wagon. He checked the oxen. He looked in the cookpots. His lip quivered like it had when his mother took his childhood whip away. "Hilma. My whip. It's gone!"

Hilma pulled Karl to her side, put her large arm around him, and covered his knees with her woolen shawl. "You've mastered everything about that whip, so you don't need to hold it in your hand ever again. It's yours completely."

Karl thought about that for a minute. "No one can take it away from me?"

"No one," said Hilma. She patted his knuckles.

Karl hunched over to contemplate and finally shrugged. "If it had to happen, I'm glad it was on a day when we had a real supper. May I have another bowl of soup?"

As Hilma ladled the soup with meat into his clay bowl, Karl complimented himself for choosing Hilma as his eternal wife. "God knew what I needed and sent you, Hilma. The wagon, too."

She smiled quietly, rocked on her soft buttocks, and tried to keep her teeth from showing. "God is good," she said.

On Seeing Part of a Cast Iron Stove, Rusting Behind a Shed

Dixie Partridge

We didn't know they were hard times,
even though that winter they had to borrow our hoard:
seven dollars from me and five from my sister.
Our days were the usual homemade loaves,
peaches we'd bottled, our own half-beef in the locker,
the rest to needy relatives and to pay
for freezing and wrapping.
Mother waxed the linoleum with Simonize every Friday.
To shine it, we slid across at high speeds
on old flannel shirts. My face scalded
with embarrassment that we were characters
in the Drama-in-Real-Life she wrote and asked me
to proofread. She was sending it to *Readers Digest*,
and I, a sixth grader, tried to talk her out of that.
I have to do something, she said, *for money.*

It *was* a long winter. The woodshed grew hollow
before signs of thaw. By March,
Dad was pitching scant throws of hay
onto snow for hungry cattle.
That was the year he got down his old skis,
their wood grain worn and unpolished.
Pulled behind the runners of his hayrick on Saturday,
we fell off again and again before we reached the stack,
waited for him to pitch the bed full.
He was silent through each wait
for us to catch up, our snowpants and dark coats
frosted thick from the snow where we fell,
our fingers stiff and slow to retie rope
where ski straps had worn thin.
Drying out near the woodbox, we grinned and shivered
while Mother carefully fed the cast iron stove.
Dad's platform chair rocked,
rocked, in the silence.

Nocturne, October

Dixie Partridge

The chapel dark, organ pipes glow
moon-silver. Silence
is filled: after-ripples,
the aura of living tones,
Bach, Handel.

Late, toward home,
I see only the street lamp,
its light descending like fine rain
on one blessed spot, a brief halo,
then darkness.

A breath of wind moves my hair.
The night listens . . . listens . . .
feathers of birds in their places of sleep
stir. Behind me, a leaf
strokes the pavement.

Night touches the braille of all it contains:
each point of grass downhill from the church,
the rise and fall of desert, softly
dynamic beyond town, the ebony stream
of the river's resonant moving.

Balance and Faith

The Latter-day Saints: A Contemporary History of the Church of Jesus Christ by William E. Berrett (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1986), 421 pp., $12.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth W. Godfrey, Church Education System Area Director, Logan, Utah.

THOUSANDS OF Latter-day Saints were first introduced to William E. Berrett and the Church's history when they were assigned in seminary to read his book *The Restored Church* (1940). Initially written in the late 1930s, this volume followed the historical tradition of B. H. Roberts and attempted to provide a balanced treatment of Latter-day Saint history.

One story, perhaps, will help to illustrate this balance as well as the tact and sensitivity that Berrett brought to his writing. Early one morning upon arriving at his office, he was told by the Commissioner of Church Education that a very angry apostle wanted to see him at once. The previous day, President Berrett, as he was called by all except his closest friends who referred to him as Ed, had given the apostle (who was on the reading committee for *The Restored Church*) the chapter about the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith entitled, "The Price of Greatness." Now as he walked to the apostle's office, he wondered what he had written to cause such wrath. As President Berrett entered the office the apostle jumped up from his chair and shouted, "Did you write this? Did you write this?"

Trembling, Berrett replied, "Did I write what?"

The apostle, pointing to the manuscript, his voice still loud enough to be heard by a partly deaf saint on the back row of the Tabernacle, asked again, "Did you write, 'A man of high position, Governor Ford was nevertheless weak and vacillating, anxious to please all parties and factions?'" (p. 265).

"I guess I did," Berrett, somewhat "weak and vacillating" himself, replied.

The Church leader then said, "Well, he was an S.O.B. [only he said the words], and you must say so!"

Much calmer now and suppressing a grin, President Berrett took out his pencil and said, "Fine, Elder So-and-So. Will you just write those words into the text?"

The apostle began to write, then stopped, looked up, and said, "I guess it's better the way you wrote it," and dismissed him.

William E. Berrett's writing was indeed better than most, balanced and delicate, displaying both a knowledge and an understanding of those forces that were causing conflict between the Latter-day Saints and their non-Mormon neighbors.

Notice I have described Berrett's history as balanced, not objective. William E. Berrett has always been convinced that God's directing hand is clearly evidenced in the records believing historians consult before writing their books. Thus, while those seminary students who studied his volume learned that not all Mormons were perfect and that not all non-Mormons were "mobocrats," they were also taught that Joseph Smith saw God, conversed with angels, translated golden plates by the gift

and power of God, and received divine authority under the hands of Peter, James and John. (Not "allegedly," or "perhaps," or "the Prophet believed that.") Moreover, there was never any doubt in his mind that Joseph and his successors were God's prophets and that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was true.

More mature college students, at least those who attended Brigham Young University, used his three-volume *Readings in L.D.S. History* compiled with Alma P. Burton (1958) as their textbook. In those books, graduate students were introduced to many of the documents from which historians write their history. They discovered that every piece of evidence does not vibrate with the divine calling of Joseph nor the truth of the Church. Those thoughtful academicians came to know that often a writer finds God in his or her own life before finding him in Church history. Historians frequently draw meaning from sources that have no significance in and of themselves.

Thus, some students found that those who do not believe in Joseph Smith can document support for their lack of faith, while those who do believe can footnote the reasons for their convictions. Generally a religious testimony comes from sources other than pen, ink, and paper. Many scholars of Latter-day Saint history and doctrine are indebted to William E. Berrett for at least the beginnings of their knowledge of Mormon history.

Now in the waning years of his distinguished life, President Berrett has written another one-volume history of the Church that attempts to chronicle the vitality of Mormonism as well as answering such questions as: How did it all begin? What is the source of the Church's power? How is it financed? Why do so many contribute time and talent without thought of pay? Berrett begins with the account of the boy Joseph's first vision and summarizes the forces that led people to forsake the true gospel taught and established by the Savior. He next discusses events just prior to Joseph Smith's activities that made the fields ripe and ready to harvest. Then follow the familiar appearance of Moroni, the Book of Mormon translation, the organization of the Church, the subsequent moves to Kirtland, Missouri, Nauvoo, and the Carthage jail murders. The remaining chapters focus on the move west, colonization, the revelation on priesthood given to President Spencer W. Kimball, developments in genealogy and temple work, and modern efforts to proclaim the gospel and perfect the Saints.

An effective argument could be made that *The Latter-day Saints* tells us as much about William E. Berrett as it does about Mormon history. His own faith is sprinkled liberally on almost every page. For example, unlike Wallace Stegner (1964), Richard Bennett (1984), and Reed Durham (1981), who have written about the bleak exodus from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters, the disorganization, and disrespect for authority, and the suffering, President Berrett devotes nearly two pages to the bright side of the trek. Time and time again, he highlights the brass band, the dancing, the effective organization, and the Saints' loyalty to Brigham Young. In fact, the entire book is so upbeat and positive that it seems that the Saints' faith enabled them to transcend every obstacle, difficulty, and supposed tragedy. We are in reality provided with a journey deep into the Berrett heart, and we learn that for him the gospel has provided beauty, hope, and faith enough to overshadow any temporary setback. We see what this true believer has gained from his knowledge of certain aspects of Mormon history and doctrine.

While he is aware of the New Mormon History, Berrett chose to ignore the controversies, problems, and challenges to the faith unearthed by a bevy of writers. This book, as a result, is much like those histories written by faithful Latter-day Saints before the late 1960s. Nothing in Church history, according to Berrett, was left to chance. Instead, the hand of God quietly led the prophets and their followers

toward that rendezvous with the Second Coming. This volume represents in many ways the kind of history that President Ezra Taft Benson and Elder Boyd K. Packer have encouraged historians to write. Berrett's deliberate decision not to deal with much of the new information regarding Latter-day Saint history will cause many serious students of Mormonism to disregard this book. However, those who both love and admire William E. Berrett for his past scholarship and for his commitment to the Church will find him lovingly revealed in this book through his lofty prose, his clear and concise sentences, and his sometimes inspiring interpretations.

Now in his eighties, still serving as a stake patriarch, caring for his invalid wife, and completing an important volume on the history of the Church Education System, William E. Berrett is one of the fine men and devoted scholars of the Church. He has both influenced and encouraged thousands of seminary and institute teachers to become students as well as Saints, has spoken plainly in defense of academic freedom while at the same time encouraging kindness, moderation, and faith.

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The photographs in this issue were taken by Craig J. Law, associate professor of art, who is teaching photography at Utah State University in Logan, Utah. A major portion of his photography deals with Mormon themes or related subjects. His documentary photographs of "Contemporary Mormon Life" were recently on display at the LDS Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City. *Chesterfield, Mormon Outpost in Idaho* (Bancroft, Idaho: Chesterfield Foundation, Inc., 1982) included his photographic essay of the pioneer settlement. Photographs in this issue are primarily from a current series of western landscapes.

He comments, "I photograph subjects which I've been around all my life, intending to lead the viewer to a new perception of a common reality. I often compare manmade and natural landscapes — sometimes they are harmonious, sometimes discordant. At times, I am simply thinking how beautiful something is. I'm concerned about the viewer's experience and use the tools I have in photography to hopefully make visible what it is I'm seeing and thinking. In making these images I sometimes manipulate the tonal scale and alter space perception by using the inherent characteristics of camera vision. Even as words can be used to move people to new understandings, so can photographs."

The photographs in this issue, all taken in 1987, are black and white silver prints.

Front Cover: Old Gravel Yard, Logan
Back Cover: Johnson Reservoir
p. 31, Sevier River
p. 32, Oaks in Fair Oaks
p. 86, Rock Figures
p. 121, Sheep near Sardine Canyon
p. 167, Tree Stump
p. 173, Beaver Dam near Gunlock
p. 184, Little Sahara Sand Dunes