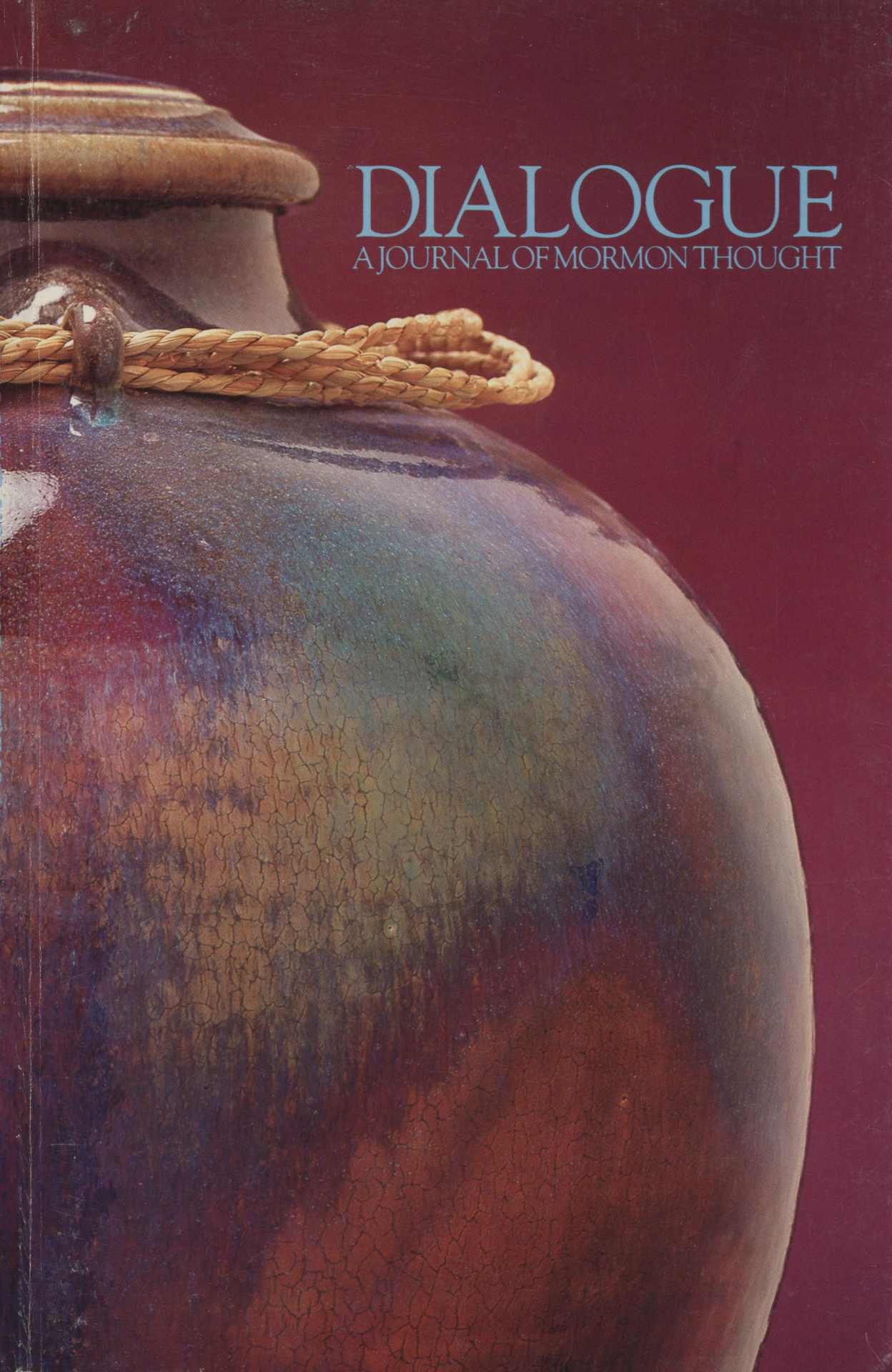
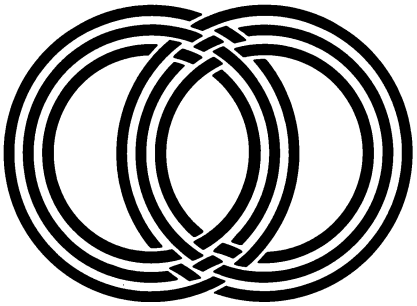


# DIALOGUE

## A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



# DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

*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 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or of the editors.*

DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT, Vol. 22, No. 1, Spring 1989

# CONTENTS

REVIEWS



ART CREDITS

Lee Dillon is a talented ceramic artist who, in his own words, "loves the process of creating artwork more than the finished product." He finds continual excitement and challenge working in ceramics and has taught in secondary schools, colleges, and public art centers in the Salt Lake City area since receiving an M.F.A. degree in ceramic design from Brigham Young University in 1978. Lee is represented in a number of private and public collections in Utah, and has exhibited works regularly since 1979.

*Cover*: stoneware jar, 16″ high, rutile saturated glaze over crackle slip with copper, iron, and wood ash overspray.

p. 29: stoneware teapot, 6″ high, surface texture applied with white slip on bisque ware.

p. 79: stoneware jar and small bowl — textured, 20″ high, reduction fired, texture applied with white slip on bisque ware.

pp. 67, 97, 98, 105, 113, 127: various stoneware jars, reduction fired.

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DIALOGUE welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, selections for Notes and Comments, letters to the editor, and art. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* including double-spacing all block quotations and notes. Use the author-date citation style as described in the thirteenth edition. An IBM-PC compatible floppy diskette may also be submitted with the manuscript, using WordPerfect or other ASCII format software. Send submissions to DIALOGUE, P.O. Box 658, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110-0658. Artists wishing consideration of their artwork should send inquiries to the Art Editor at the same address.

## *IN THIS ISSUE*

Each issue develops a personality as it takes shape. This spring DIALOGUE takes a critical look at Mormon culture and individuals within that culture. It is always difficult to assess who we are and what we are doing as part of a larger scheme. The authors confront these questions in personal ways that widen our perspectives.

We open the issue with Levi Peterson's poignant response to writing the biography of Juanita Brooks, well known for her groundbreaking historical works on pioneers in southern Utah and a role model to many historians of Mormon country. Peterson's book won the 1987 David W. and Beatrice C. Evans Biography Award.

Armand Mauss, who has dedicated his sociological career to understanding religions, discusses the difficulty of assimilating our unique Mormon culture into mainstream American life. Utilizing a series of surveys and impressions of Mormon culture, Mauss traces signs of assimilation and resulting retrenchment efforts that have moved us toward fundamentalism.

In the past, few scholars have given detailed attention to LDS conference talks, but a number of communications students are now analyzing how speakers use the language and what messages are being heard. Dorice Williams Elliott explores the "unsaid" in a general conference address to women.

In an analysis of Bruce Jorgensen's "A Song for One Still Voice," Susan H. Miller shows us that literary criticism reveals more than just the details of a particular story. Sharing the poetic fervor of the original story, Miller reminds us as Latter-day Saints to celebrate the spirituality of physical experience.

Growing older is something we all must deal with. Nell Folkman's essay analyzes the problems facing the elderly and their families, then quotes extensively from the journals of several middle-aged caretakers. In our Personal Voices section, Gay and Sam Taylor role-play about God and Satan from the perspective of seven decades of experience. Paris Anderson creates a different setting as he discusses his relationship with an eccentric grandfather. Completing this section, Dian Saderup's beautiful essay describes her unexpected moments of epiphany in Canterbury Cathedral.

Using southern Utah as a setting, Edward Geary writes with warmth and humor about "Jack-Mormons." In "Notes and Comments" Robert McCue provides an interesting contrast between LDS and RLDS activity and growth in British Columbia.

Our poetry section features the work of Sherwin Howard (whose poems won first place in the 1987 DIALOGUE writing contest), Karen Moloney, and Linda Sillitoe. Well-known to Mormon audiences, Sillitoe is DIALOGUE's new poetry editor. We express thanks to Michael Collings who has ably filled that job for the past six years.

# LETTERS

## *No Way to Build Bridges*

In response to Gerald Bradford's "The Case for the New Mormon History" (Winter 1988), I refuse to enter into a discussion with Bradford on this question for a number of reasons. First, I have no interest in further defending myself or my colleagues either from the assertion or the assumption that the New Mormon History or the way it is written affects — presumably undermining — "the faith of believers" (p. 143). In this connection, I am unwilling to discuss the matter with anyone who assumes that the New Mormon Historians deny the sacred character of authentic religious experiences. I would characterize my feelings as profoundly disappointed rather than "mad as hell" (p. 143) over this, and although I cannot stop Bradford and the "gang of four" (p. 146) from continuing to operate on such assumptions, I do not have to participate in such a demeaning discussion.

Second, in order to enter into a discussion of historical methodology, a participant needs to show that he or she understands the literature of the historiography that underpins a particular point of view. Bradford's essay makes it abundantly clear that he has little understanding of modern historiography.

Third, a discussant needs to show an understanding of the clear use of terms. Contrary to Bradford's assertions, Gilbert Ryle gives four examples of category mistakes that all result from an unfamiliarity with the subject matter. In each example, Ryle shows how the uninitiated observer is unable to relate the concrete constituent part to the abstract concept that characterizes the whole: for example, colleges, libraries, museums, etc. to a *university*; battalions, batteries, squadrons to a *division*; bowlers, batsmen, and fielders to *team-spirit*; and "the connections between the Church of England, the Home Office and the [abstract concept of the] British Constitution" (*The Concept of Mind.* New York: Barnes and Noble, 1949, pp. 16–18). (These are, incidentally, the pages I cited in my essay. Unfortunately, a typographical error placed a quotation mark at the end of the last sentence which was, in fact, intended to generalize over Ryle's examples. The other phrases are quoted from Ryle.)

I suppose that the bottom line is that no self-respecting human being can build bridges with critics who continually formulate their arguments in terms like: "When are you going to stop beating your wife?"

Thomas G. Alexander
Provo, Utah

## *Don't Label Me*

While I generally admire Marvin Hill's scholarship, I do not believe his recent DIALOGUE article, "The 'New Mormon History' Reassessed in Light of Recent Books on Joseph Smith and Mormon Origins" (Fall 1988), accurately describes the present state of Mormon historiography. Moreover, his attempt to place various historical works into one of three categories — conservative, moderate, and liberal — tends to oversimplify and distort the real situation. This tendency is particularly noticeable in Hill's treatment of works from the left. His inability to distinguish the varying motives and contributions of those on the left be-

comes evident in his treatment of my 1986 *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon.*

Hill defines the conservative right as those who defend Mormonism "against any negative views expressed by non-Mormons, . . . proclaim empirical proofs for Mormonism, and generally ignore contrary scholarly opinion," while those on the left concentrate "exclusively on the truth or untruth of Mormon religious claims" (pp. 116, 117). Those in the center or "middle ground," those who produce the so-called "New Mormon History," according to Hill, are existentialists who believe "Mormonism can be neither proved nor *disproved* by historical means" (p. 125). Thus Hill attempts to disassociate the New Mormon History from the concerns of both the right and the left.

While I do not consider my work part of the New Mormon History, it also does not deal with the truth claims of the Mormon religion and therefore does not fit Hill's "far left" category. Moreover, my purpose was not, as Hill asserts, to trace "the actual historical background of the Book of Mormon" (p. 124). Rather, I explored the possible ways the first readers perceived the Book of Mormon, specifically how it seemed to solve many of the theological problems dealing with Indian origins in the New World which troubled them but no longer concern us. My book concerns the nineteenth-century world view and how that world view changed. I explicitly stated at the outset the modest goals of my work:

> In my own study of the Book of Mormon I have not been primarily concerned with discovering the "sources" of Joseph Smith's thought. Nor have I been interested in tracing links between Joseph Smith and those books he may have read or been exposed to. Rather I have chosen to shift the emphasis of the discussion somewhat, to outline the broad contours of public discussion about the ancient inhabitants of America which had taken place or was taking place by 1830 when the Book of Mormon first appeared. What was the focus and thrust of that discussion? What complex of questions and problems motivated and concerned Joseph Smith's contemporaries? What kinds of responses were displayed by the books and articles written at the time? Finally, I have tried to determine the extent to which the Book of Mormon may have been part of that discussion (1986, 5).

Hill should have thus distinguished my work from that of earlier researchers such as Fawn Brodie. Wayne Ham, for one, noted the distinction in his review of the book in the May 1987 *Saints' Herald.*

Only in the conclusion do I explore the possible implications of my research on the historicity of the Book of Mormon. While I agree with the New Mormon Historians that the metaphysical aspects of religion cannot be tested by historical means, artifacts, such as books, and events are completely different matters. But even when discussing the historicity issue, I separated the question of the book's historicity from truth claims of the Mormon religion, pointing out that "for various reasons an increasing number of faithful Mormons are suggesting that it may be possible to question the Book of Mormon's historicity and yet maintain a belief in its sacred and inspired nature" (1986, 71). Thus to question the Book of Mormon's historicity is not necessarily an attack on the Mormon religion. But, again, the Book of Mormon's historicity was not the major focus of my work. Hill is therefore incorrect to place my work in a category which focuses on the "truth and untruth of Mormon religious claims."

Hill also attempts to link my work with the "far left" by asserting that at "key points" I tend to "depend heavily" on the work of the Reverend Wesley P. Walters, a well-known opponent of Mormonism (p. 124). Hill's guilt by association argument is not only fallacious but also greatly exaggerated. Walters' work is referred to in my book only in footnotes, and then only secondarily (pp. 77–78, 84, 99). Thus, a year before D. Michael Quinn's *Early Mor-*

*monism and the Magic World View*, I referred readers to Walters' work not as an "impeachable source to tell us what happened" but for "a discussion of the *documentation* on the 1826 trial" (p. 78, emphasis added) — trusting that my readers could glean important insights from Walters' discussion of the documents while not necessarily agreeing with all his interpretations and conclusions. I might have also referred to Hill's own treatment of the subject (1972), but Walters' is far more detailed and analytical. Hill does not mention that I also refer to the work of such "conservatives" as Richard L. Anderson, Lyndon W. Cook, Dean Jessee, Francis W. Kirkham, Hugh Nibley, Sidney B. Sperry, Larry C. Porter, and B. H. Roberts (pp. 75–102). While I do not necessarily agree with the interpretations of either a Milton V. Backman or a Wesley P. Walters, I try to glean what I can from their research and fairly assess their contributions to Mormon historiography. Thus, I believe, Hill unfairly labels my book by taking advantage of the existing prejudice in many Mormon minds towards their evangelical opponents.

Hill's statement that I "tend at times to be dogmatic, a characteristic of many of the far left opponents of Mormonism" (p. 124) might leave DIALOGUE readers with the impression that my work is an unreasoned, bombastic anti-Mormon attack. However, Wayne Ham found the book written "dispassionately, without rancor or stridency, and in an even-handed manner" (1987, 24), while Robert Mesle of the RLDS's Graceland College said that the subject matter of the book is presented "so calmly and undemandingly that neither conservative nor liberal readers are likely to feel that they are reading 'evidence' in a debate." Concerning particularly money-digging and the 1826 trial, Mesle notes that the subject is treated "directly but not judgmentally" (1987, 74). Thus, I believe, Hill unfairly tries to give my work a "far left" or "anti-Mormon" label. *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon* is not an anti-Mormon tract but a serious study of one aspect of Mormon origins.

While some New Mormon Historians have attempted to move Mormon historiography more to the middle, I wonder if Hill has not retained the old belief that everyone to the left of himself is an enemy of Mormonism seeking to destroy the faith. Perhaps the distortion is due to Hill's desire to assure those on the right that the New Mormon Historians are not in league with anti-Mormons or secretly trying to undermine the faith that causes him to misrepresent the left by piling them all into one indistinguishable heap. He also seems to share with the right the attitude that nothing of value can come from the left. Thus he praises the "number of solid works which have come from the right and center . . . [as] a monument to a people seeking truth about their past and facing that past with courage and with faith" (p. 124). Despite Hill's failure to recognize the various distinctive views of those on the left, there are others, perhaps just left of center, who are similarly trying to face the past with courage and with faith.

Perhaps Hill did not understand the approach my book takes because it is neither typically anti-Mormon nor New Mormon History. While I do not view the present state of Mormon historiography as Hill does, under his own definitions he should have placed my work in the middle or perhaps just left of middle since it does not deal with truth claims of the Mormon religion. However, since Hill admits that distinctions between the right and the center "blur at times" (p. 121), he should have allowed the same latitude for those on the left. Moreover, just as the New Mormon Historians wish to distinguish their work from the conservative defenders of Mormonism, I would like to have my work distinguished from the far left opponents of Mormonism.

I believe Hill has unnecessarily politicized the situation and further entrenched the various parties. I suggest that we discard the party labels and learn to fairly

assess the contributions of various scholars and researchers regardless of their "pro" or "anti" bias.

Dan Vogel
Westminster, California

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## *Only Wishful Thinking*

Melodie Charles's plea for a new Mormon heaven (Fall 1988) was so chock-full of personal opinions and typical feminist attitudes that I found it insulting as a scholarly treatise.

Her ridicule of the prophets is inexcusable. For her to assert that "Joseph Smith's desires rather than God's inspiration prompted the only unambiguous scriptural promises of kingdoms" (p. 76) is heretical to those who believe Joseph to be a true prophet. She relegates the source of Brigham Young's teaching of polygamy to the "sexist and patriarchal" nineteenth-century American culture (p. 80), hereby spurning the keystone doctrine of latter-day revelation; such an indictment brands the polygamous prophets as adulterers. Her protest to today's General Authorities for teaching "stay-at-home mothering" exposes an untenable mockery of contemporary seers and revelators.

Her concerns for the relative status of Mother in Heaven are without base. Certainly, there are endless concepts and notions of heaven about which we know nothing because nothing has been revealed. Ascribing the scriptures or any Church doctrines to the "prejudices" or "needs" of the prophets is irreverant, irresponsible, and near-blasphemous. Such arguments for a new heaven are reminiscent of the Councils of Trent and Nicea when mere mortals attempted to actually invent the nature and character of God.

The sum total of Charles's wishful thinking will not alter even one whit the reality of Mormon heaven.

D. Gordon Wilson
Gresham, Oregon

## *A Clear View*

I want to express my thanks for Melodie Moench Charles's "The Need for a New Mormon Heaven" (Fall 1988). She has given voice and form to the questions and problems I am dealing with as I seriously contemplate going to the temple for the first time.

As Charles herself acknowledges, she hasn't given an authoritative answer to any of my questions. However, her clear view of the limits our theology places on women (which, as I understand it, are manifest in the temple ceremony) helps me forge on with my own ponderings. I have often found that I can analyze these problem areas just so much, and then I have to take a plunge on faith. However, I *can't* take the matter on faith until I have thoroughly studied and examined it. Thank you, Sister Charles, for aiding me in that process.

May I offer also this tribute to your fine journal: I couldn't have made it through the last twenty-one years without DIALOGUE on my reading list! Long may you live!

Leona Mattoni
Beverly Hills, California

## *Teaching About "It"*

I have been reading your journal off and on when my studies have permitted me the luxury. However, a friend and colleague loaned me his copy of your twentieth anniversary issue (Winter 1987). I read it cover to cover and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

As a psychologist, I find some of the prevailing Mormon attitudes toward human sexuality disturbing. Imagine my delight with B. W. Jorgensen's article "Groping the Mormon Eros." A "flannel nightgown" approach to sex seems to be all too pervasive in Mormonism; it seems we cannot even say the word "sex" without blushing. My wife once attended a Relief Society lesson in Provo, when we were BYU students, entitled "How to Teach Your Children about Sex." However, the lesson should have been entitled "How to Teach Your Children about 'It.'" The instructor said over and over again, "'It' is very special" and "'It' is very sacred." My wife finally asked, "What's 'It'?"

I remember as a missionary trying to explain to a young Italian the law of chastity as the discussions at that time explained it. "We shouldn't touch ourselves in an unnatural or experimental manner," I told him, using numerous other vague and euphemistic concepts. He looked at me as if I had taught him in a foreign language. At that point I felt it necessary to alter the official discussions and added some straightforward language which explained clearly that the Lord is not pleased when we masturbate. My companion was shocked to hear me use the "M" word, but my task as a missionary was to teach, not to confuse.

In learning to see ourselves as sexual creatures, we must form correct views about sex and sexuality, views that are congruent with both biology and sociology. We cannot afford to retain a self-flagellating ideology, which we then pass on to our youth. We too often teach them, directly or indirectly, to be ashamed of their sexual urges, when we should teach them instead that passions need to be "bridled, that [they] may be filled with love" (Alma 38:12), as taught by a wise father, Alma, who had been there before.

Darren S. Bush
Rochester, New York

## *A Remarkable Woman*

I wept when I read Mary Bradford's tribute to Margaret Rampton Munk as she reviewed Margaret's poetry in the Summer 1988 issue of DIALOGUE. I did not know Margaret, though I know her parents well, and now that I have "heard her voice" through her writing in DIALOGUE and have read Bradford's thoughtful appraisal of her work, I feel a sense of acquaintance with this remarkable woman. She was stunningly beautiful — an individual whose sensitive spirituality was tempered by high intellect. I wish that I had come to know her personally.

Thank you, DIALOGUE, for publishing her work and Bradford's review.

Alice Chase
Logan, Utah

## *Confessions of an Unscholar*

I must confess: At times when I read DIALOGUE I feel as though someone has scattered the tiny pieces of a jigsaw puzzle across my mind. As I struggle to sort and connect ideas to make them part of the undeveloped structure of my intellect, I ask myself, "Why do I enjoy reading this journal?" As one who graduated from college twelve years ago and has been busy since with the tasks of motherhood, I don't fit my own mental image of a DIALOGUE reader.

Perhaps I read the journal because I like the idea of feeling like a scholar. But I could get that same feeling just seeing it on my nightstand. Could it be that I would

really like to increase my scholarship? I doubt it — otherwise I would read it with dictionary in hand to look up at least a few of the many words I usually skip over.

If I am not a scholar, then perhaps I am a skeptic. Aren't DIALOGUE readers supposed to be liberal and rebellious, after all? Again I don't qualify, for since my conversion to the Church I have felt basically at ease with what was expected of me. Occasionally something may cause me to bristle, but I haven't experienced the kind of frustrations that would lead me to seek out a publication because of its reputation for skepticism. So why do I enjoy a journal that I thought required either scholarship or skepticism from its readers? Is there a place for me in the DIALOGUE audience?

Although I may be missing a lot, I am willing to suffer the exhaustion of reading above my level to experience an exchange of ideas. I don't always understand or agree with what I read, but I find the exchange stimulating. I feel like the groundling watching a performance of *Hamlet*. Sometimes I am inclined to throw a tomato in your direction, but often I want to stand and shout, "Bravo!" at the soliloquies of writers like Eugene England. I approach each issue searching for truth that speaks to me. I am a scavenger of thought, searching for the pieces of a puzzle that will enlarge my understanding of myself and God.

When I joined the Church I learned the value of something that I think transcends scholarship or skepticism but has much to do with being a saint. It is what I think our Dialogue-ing is all about — meeting the challenge to "prove all things *and* hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21; emphasis added).

As an investigator, I was exhilarated by the challenge to "prove all things." I delighted in the divergence of thought spawned by the expanding Mormon doctrines. Had my only requirement for a testimony been to feel good about certain doctrines, mine would have been an easily won faith. The challenge came in realizing that it wasn't enough to feel wonderful about certain aspects of the gospel. In order to hold fast to that which is good, I had to accept the Church and gospel in its entirety. By choosing to be baptized I set into place the corners of a puzzle with many pieces that seemed strange and foreign to me. It was those pieces that required an investment of faith and ultimately provided me with the kind of witness that comes only "after a trial of one's faith" (Ether 12:6) — a witness sufficient to base the rest of my life on.

Each of us faces different trials, and the witness may come in different ways, depending on whether we are more a creature of the mind or heart. I see DIALOGUE as a place to examine the nature of these trials and witnesses — an opportunity to "prove all things" and by so doing, render us all more capable of "holding fast to that which is good."

Of course there are risks for both the scholar and unscholar. DIALOGUE sometimes makes these risks more obvious. Scholars may lose faith, becoming so intrigued with their elaborate pieces of spiritual truth that they lose interest in the picture. In their desire to "prove all things" they may forget to hold fast to that which is good. Unscholars risk frustration in proving the faith and may become afraid or suspicious of evidence that does not fit our picture of truth. We may find that the only thing we are holding fast to is our own ignorance. In either case, neither scholar nor unscholar will experience the richness of testimony that comes from exploring the complex spiritual whole or the deep faith in realizing that it may take a long time to place many pieces of the puzzle.

Sometimes DIALOGUE exposes me to an idea that I struggle to fit with my basic beliefs. But in the very act of examining its different angles, I often find a place for other ideas that didn't previously seem to fit. As Obi-Wan Kenobi tells Luke Skywalker in *The Return of the Jedi*, "We may find that some of the truths that we

so desperately cling to are dependent on our point of view." The Church's point of view has changed through past dispensations and I believe will continue to change. And with these changes our perceptions of many truths are modified. But the principles — the foundations for our behavior and our relationship to God — remain the same.

There are risks for both the scholar and unscholar and lessons we can learn from each other. If the scholar helps us understand how the pieces fit together, perhaps the unscholar's leaps of ignorance and faith help us envision the final picture we shall never have the time or genius to complete. For me the purpose of DIALOGUE is to reconcile not only the scholar, skeptic, and saint within the Church, but the saint, skeptic, and scholar within each of us. I hope that as DIALOGUE continues to question and prove, it will always maintain this desire to reconcile our doubts with our faith, the truth with the facts, and scholars to unscholars through patience and love. By so doing, I believe the final picture revealed to us will be of a people who not only rejoice in their association with one another but with the one who paid the price that we might ultimately all be reconciled to him.

Bianca Palmieri Lisonbee
Orem, Utah

## *A Word of Caution*

As a Roman Catholic with a developing interest in the LDS religion, I enjoyed John Quiring's essay on Mormon Christianity from a "Christian pluralist" perspective (Fall 1988).

I would caution the Saints, however, against any undue eagerness to humble their theology "into coherence with the sciences, ecology, logic, critical world history, women's experience, and the experience of primal, Third World, and underclass peoples" (p. 155). While all of these concerns may have their place, the enthusiasm for them, or for the appearance of them, in mainline Protestantism and in some segments of the American Catholic Church has led to a *de facto* embrace of the very "irreligion and decadence" which Quiring so rightly deplores.

Tom Riley
Lockport, New York

## *No More Naps*

Tell Levi Peterson to take heart! No more boring speakers, no more sleep-inducing sacrament meetings on high council Sundays. He can take DIALOGUE with him to church as we have done for years!

In the last line of "A Tribute to DIALOGUE" (Summer 1988), Levi offers his greatest tribute to your journal: "I can read DIALOGUE without falling asleep." He missed the greatest tribute of all, however: Now we all can, with DIALOGUE in hand, sit through sacrament meeting without falling asleep!

Thanks, DIALOGUE!

Karen Sowby Mittleman
Downey, California

## *Remembering Mr. Harvey*

I was most interested in "The Trial of the French Mission" by Kahlile Mehr in the Fall 1988 issue of DIALOGUE. Thirty years ago I was a missionary in Texas when I first heard news of this apostasy. I was surprised that Mehr's article verified many of the rumors I remember hearing at that time. Curiously, though the French Mission incident was in many ways a great disaster, I found Mehr's article uplifting. Perhaps that was because many of those excommunicated or disillusioned found their way back into the Church. I was especially impressed with the love shown by Apostle Hugh B. Brown and thought of I Corinthians 13:2: "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though

I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

My wife had a high school friend who served in the French Mission during this period. When he wrote home asking his parents to send him old-style garments because his companion said that is what he should be wearing, his parents wrote back that he was not following the General Authorities, who had approved a more modern style of garment. This instruction from his parents changed his thinking and in a sense saved him.

About 1964, I took a French reading course at the University of Utah and learned that my instructor, Mr. Harvey, had been one of the missionaries sent home from the French Mission. I was too shy at the time to find out anything more, and weeks later he told me how excited he was to be going to Hawaii to teach French. I assume this is the same Loftin Harvey in your article and wish him well in whatever he is now doing. I enjoyed his class twenty-five years ago and still remember his kind spirit.

J. Taylor Hollist
Oneonta, New York

## *One Offer of Hope*

I silently wept as I read Lee Copeland's sensitive "From Calcutta to Kaysville: Is Righteousness Color-coded?" (Fall 1988). I admired his presentation on antiquated Mormon beliefs and his plea that we abandon our prejudices and delight in our human diversities. By assigning people to lower social orders because of their place of birth, parental circumstances, or skin color, we justify poverty and misfortune. This is utter nonsense.

I do not know why in this world some have so much and others so little. I do know that millions of our beleaguered brothers and sisters need love, comfort, and compassion translated into hope.

I've spent a considerable part of my professional life in the Bengal region of the Indian subcontinent struggling with humanitarian up-lift activities: designing malaria eradication efforts, implementing population control and family planning programs and village aid projects, and organizing and managing small-scale irrigation endeavors. If there is a hell on earth, it is the Bengal region — a place of abject poverty, where millions of people daily suffer hunger and disease.

Apparently, the Copeland family has rescued one small soul from this cauldron of human tragedy. If only more Latter-day Saint families could do the same, just maybe the gospel would have true universal meaning.

Garth N. Jones
Anchorage, Alaska

## *The Ultimate Authority*

In his "Plea for Help" (Fall 1988), David Brighton Timmins is clearly putting us on! How can he admit to real struggle after putting his finger smack on *the* institutional issue — that the ultimate authority can only ever be the still small voice within. Is he really responding to not-so-subtle suggestions to the contrary from some of the Brethren (including the Prophet Joseph)? Or is he reinterpreting our friend Eugene England's institutional apologetics by inferring a sophist idolatry called "celestial guidance"?

I couldn't help thinking of Boris Pasternak, who wrote in *Doctor Zhivago*:

> If the beast who sleeps in man could be held down by threats — any kind of threat, whether of jail or of retribution after death — then the highest emblem of humanity would be the lion tamer in the circus with his whip, not the prophet who sacrificed himself. But don't you see, this is just the point — what has for centuries raised man above the beast is not the cudgel but an inward music: the irresistible power of unarmed truth, the powerful attraction of its example.

Or Arnold Toynbee, who said in his 1967 University of Utah commencement address in Salt Lake City:

> If one supports one's country [or anything or anyone else] "right or wrong" one is making one's country into one's God Number One, and is demoting to the rank of God Number Two the God who commands us to do what is right and not to do what is wrong in any circumstances whatsoever. . . . The commandment itself is universal and is absolute. Dare you disobey it?

Or a Samuel-the-Lamanite-like poet, Aryol Littet, who wrote at Mt. Herman in 1965:

> The ultimate decision for individual action rests only with the individual, never with an institution or some other individual. A lack of respect for this principle has been central whenever there have been contentions among humankind, whether individuals or nations.

Or my Catholic friend, Gil Bailie, who said recently:

> If we define religion as membership in an institution which membership we maintain by following its rules, then read the New Testament and see what Jesus said about that. . . . While institutional religion has a very important place, it is beyond question that Jesus reserved his harshest condemnation for the institutional religionist, the maintenance men, who came to regard their religious tradition as an end instead of a means.

No, I must have misunderstood Timmins about England and the Brethren. I'd better go back and read them all again. I have no quarrel with Jack Newell.

Eugene Kovalenko
Long Beach, California

## *Kicking Against the Pricks*

While rereading Mark S. Gustavson's skillfully argued essay "Scriptural Horror and the Divine Will" (Spring 1988), particularly where he defined the relation between the ethical content of scripture and our concept of God, I was overcome by the terrible realization that I was — like Paul — "kicking against the pricks" and while perhaps fighting valiantly, I was definitely fighting foolishly. Gustavson's list of "guides in developing a holistic theory of ethical beliefs and behavior from which we may then fashion a complementary theology" (p. 81) has imbedded in it the revolutionary suggestion that group ethics define God. I'd always assumed it to be the other way around, but I recognized the truth of what Gustavson was saying immediately and powerfully. I agonized over this recognition for days because it created a crisis for me.

I have been anxiously engaged in trying to expose the ethical questions implied by the acceptance of the doctrine of temporal and eternal polygamy. I consider polygamy to be morally reprehensible because it institutionalizes and puts God's stamp of approval on the reification and accompanying marginalization of women now and forever. But now, recognizing the truthfulness of Gustavson's assertion, I fear that the approach I have been taking is not the approach most likely to succeed.

The great majority of Mormon women that I know or have come in contact with in my radical state strongly disapprove of my trench warfare against polygamy and against its corollary — the secondary, or auxiliary, status of women now and forever. Two of my more eloquent female critics urged me to stop dredging up material from the last century because, for all practical purposes, it had been overcome and was no longer relevant to a woman's current experience in the Church. I tried to rebut that D&C 132 is from that period and still perplexes and dismays almost everyone who first encounters it. I believe many converts feel, at least temporarily, that they've been "had" when, after baptism, sooner or later they attend a Sunday School class where someone says we still believe this section to be the word of God. But my powerful insights notwithstanding, these two women reinforced their message to me: D&C 132's polygamy provisions

have nothing to do with the daily experience of Mormonism among most of the faithful. They are able to ignore it and bury it, and carping about it only makes putting it behind us more difficult. Other critics are fond of pointing out that I am not a woman and assorted other basic truths that add up to: "butt out."

In my turn I have had little regard for the women who wrote books and articles praising the Church and defending its sexist practices against feminist critics. I was aghast that some of them promulgated the doctrinally unsound but bold assertion that Mother in Heaven was also God, and that this Goddess was a role model for the daughters of God on earth. Some even suggested Mother could be addressed in prayer.

But Gustavson's insight, that the way to change the definition of God, or the theology that describes God, is to change the ethical outlook of the community of believers, showed me that these pious women are the true revolutionaries, and I'm just getting in their way. Their strategy seems to be to appear to uphold current power structures, thereby ensuring their support and endorsement. With that support and endorsement, their writings are made widely available to and are accepted by the community of believers. In turn, that community of believers learns the appealing doctrines of female spiritual equality in this life and deification to Godhood, with a capital "G," in the next. Now that I've read Gustavson I see that as soon as a majority of the community begins to actively believe in this liberating doctrine, the theology will change to reflect this belief, and my going around saying "No ma'm, that's *not* Mormon doctrine" is counterproductive, to say the least.

I am in a quandary. Unlike Paul, I haven't the power within me to turn myself around. Come to think of it, I've always had an unreasoned admiration for Don Quixote, not for Paul. I seem to recall a vision of myself alone on a vast, empty plain, clinging to a ragged saddle strapped precariously to an unsteady steed in full gallop, muttering to myself while pointing threateningly over the horizon: "Hold still, you cowardly windmill, your fate is sealed! . . . Charge!" But I forget now whose vision that was. Perhaps the windmill's?

Abraham Van Luik
Chantilly, Virginia

## *Cruel Evolution*

In the Summer 1988 issue of DIALOGUE, David Bailey challenged the scientific validity of creationism; in particular, he mentioned our scientific research institute, the Institute for Creation Research. I would like to point out that some of his information is incorrect; more important, however, his conclusions regarding scientific creationism need to be challenged.

First, not all creationists are fundamentalist Christians. Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and many Christians who do not call themselves fundamentalists embrace creationism. Bailey also suggests that creationists are anti-Mormon (p. 69). Speaking for ICR, I know of no books or tapes produced by ICR that even hint of anti-Mormon sentiment. Indeed, many letters of support come to ICR from members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Many Church members have toured our Creation Museum in San Diego.

It should also be noted that ICR is not a division of Christian Heritage College but has been a separate organization since 1980. Furthermore, I, for one, did not have to sign a statement of belief when I joined ICR, although I acknowledge that ICR knew of my commitment to the historical and scientific accuracy of the Bible, especially Genesis.

Bailey declared that we have no biologists or geologists on our staff. His source of information must be outdated; although not a large institute (eight Ph.D. scientists and support staff), ICR has had on its staff

for many years biologist Kenneth Cumming (Ph.D., Harvard University) and two geologists, John Morris (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma) and Steven A. Austin (Ph.D., Penn State University).

Bailey also stated that creation scientists have not produced "valid scientific studies" (p. 70). I suggest that most of the great scientists over the past five centuries have been Bible-believing Christians, and almost all of them have been creationists. The names Newton, Maxwell, Mendel, Pasteur, and Kelvin quickly come to mind. Today, creation scientists are the minority, but thousands of them are engaged in serious research in major universities and institutes around the world.

Bailey takes exception to our use of the second law of thermodynamics to defend the creationist position. Briefly stated, this law of science declares that the order and complexity within an isolated system can never increase; a system, therefore, must inexorably move from order to disorder. If this is true the universe could not have created itself. Bailey argues that the second law does not apply because the earth is not an isolated system but is open to the sun's energy. But the universal natural tendency towards increasing disorder applies to all systems, open or isolated. To overcome the tendency towards disorder, certain conditions must exist. The system must contain a mechanism to convert destructive energy into something that can be used by the system; in other words, there must be a system to operate and control the machinery.

Bailey says that snowflakes, which are highly ordered structures, contradict our view of the second law; but snowflakes are already "programmed" to be ordered, and they do not have the type of complexity associated with biological molecules. And what happens when the sun — the source of energy (according to the evolutionist) which made the origin of life possible billions of years ago — strikes the snowflake? It melts, of course, going from order to disorder. The raw energy from the sun "would have been no more capable of generating complex systems on the earth than a bull in a china shop," to quote Duane Gish (Ph.D., Berkeley) of ICR.

I would invite readers of DIALOGUE to find out for themselves which is the better scientific model of origins — creation or evolution. Creationists simply ask for a fair hearing in an educational establishment heavily influenced by evolutionary dogma. As a former evolutionist, I can state unequivocally that the scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports the idea that God created the heavens and the earth, and that he did not have to use the cruel and wasteful process of evolution to bring about high forms of life. The research conducted by ICR has caused many like myself to abandon entirely the bankrupt theory of evolution.

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# Juanita Brooks, My Subject, My Sister

*Levi S. Peterson*

I HAVE RECENTLY FINISHED WRITING A BIOGRAPHY of Juanita Brooks. The fame of this Mormon housewife and teacher from Utah's Dixie resides in the definitive books she authored about the Mountain Meadows massacre and its best known participant, John D. Lee. Born in 1898, Juanita lies today in a coma in a St. George nursing home. Her present debility is sad, especially for her family, but it does not diminish her achievement. Few persons outside the central hierarchy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have had a more significant influence upon Mormon society than Juanita. The details of that influence, I hope, will be evident in my book. In this essay I would like to extend my discussion to Juanita's influence upon her biographer. Through understanding her life I came to understand a good deal about my own.

I was oblivious to Juanita's history of the massacre when it appeared in the fall of 1950. Turning seventeen that fall, I went to sleep at night listening to Patti Page sing "Tennessee Waltz" on the radio. I first learned of the massacre in a Church history class at BYU in 1953. The topic didn't disturb me because I learned about it from Joseph Fielding Smith's *Essentials in Church History*, a less than candid source. I became aware of Juanita's significance as a historian while I was a graduate student at the University of Utah during the early 1960s. However, it was not until I heard her give a talk at Weber State College in 1973 that I became motivated to read her books.

At Weber State Juanita recounted her conflict with the General Authorities over the question of publicizing the reinstatement of John D. Lee. Singled out among about fifty Latter-day Saint participants in the massacre, Lee had been excommunicated by the Church and tried and executed by the federal government. When the First Presidency informed Lee's descendants of their ancestor's posthumous reinstatement in the spring of 1961, Juanita's biography

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of the scapegoated pioneer was in the process of publication. Juanita eagerly sought permission to announce the reinstatement in her book. Threatening to rescind the action should there be any publicity about it, President David O. McKay assigned Apostle Delbert Stapley the task of dissuading Juanita. In early summer Stapley summoned Juanita to a private interview in his Salt Lake office. When she remained unmoved, the apostle recruited the assistance of prominent Lee descendants. Taking President McKay's threat seriously, anxious family leaders persuaded Juanita to fly to Phoenix and hear the pleas of an assembly of some twenty-five Lee descendants. A highly distressed Juanita eventually decided to publish the reinstatement. Her instinct proved sound: President McKay did not rescind the action, and numerous reviewers of Juanita's biography congratulated the Church for its restitution of Lee's former status.

As Juanita recounted this episode during her talk at Weber State, I was impressed, as thousands before me had been impressed, by her spunk, her integrity, and her spirit of loyal dissent. I particularly remember her account of her interview with Elder Stapley. The apostle declared categorically that God would be displeased with her publication of the reinstatement. Juanita described her response in something close to the following terms: "I didn't talk to him as a humble member speaks to an apostle; I talked to him like one ordinary person to another. I looked him in the eye and I said, 'Brother, in this matter I know the will of the Lord as well as you do.' "

Soon afterward I read Juanita's books, and in 1976 I was moved to write an essay "Juanita Brooks: The Mormon Historian as Tragedian." The point of the essay was that, as far as Latter-day Saint readers were concerned, Juanita's manner of writing and speaking about the massacre had the effect of literary tragedy. Perhaps it was because of this essay that in 1981 the University of Utah Press proposed that I write a full-length biography of Juanita. I declined this flattering proposal at that moment because I aspired to write fiction. In 1985, however, having behind me a collection of short stories and a novel, I agreed to write the biography. I wasn't cheerful about the prospect. With a mixture of uncertainty and dread I buckled down to what I knew only too well would prove a long and tedious task.

I was quickly reminded that I enjoy basic research. Throughout the summer of 1985 I spent every weekday in the library of the Utah Historical Society. I examined each item in the extensive Juanita Brooks collection and photocopied several thousand letters and manuscript pages. Toward the end of the summer I began to interview Juanita's friends and relatives. In September I made a trip to California to examine letters at the Huntington and Bancroft libraries and at Stanford University Press. All this interested me greatly. I was eager to learn what each new letter in the correspondence files would reveal, and I responded with anticipation to every interview. Furthermore, as I pursued my research, I inevitably compared myself to Juanita. My venture into her life, as I have said, proved to be a venture into my own. I discovered far more affinities between us than I had imagined.

One thing we had in common was the Mormon village. She grew up in Bunkerville, Nevada, and I grew up in Snowflake, Arizona. In numerous

writings Juanita described Bunkerville's setting: the surrounding desert and irascible river, the fields, the livestock. With an unfailing eye for the picturesque and the comic, she described the social structure of the village — church meetings, socials, and cooperative work projects. As I encountered Juanita's Bunkerville, I remembered Snowflake with greater clarity. As a boy in Snowflake I made no distinctions between the wild and the domestic. Village, fields, and mesa-studded plains belonged to the same order of being. In Snowflake I knew the source of every necessary thing. Behind each house were a garden and a barnyard from which came eggs, tomatoes, corn, and milk. One could buy shovels, shoes, and firecrackers at the ACMI, the Church-owned cooperative. Along the lanes were ripgut juniper fences constructed in pioneer times. That same aromatic juniper fueled the stoves of the village. Men and boys earned their tickets to the annual wood dance, held on Thanksgiving night, by hauling, sawing, and splitting a winter's supply for the village widows. Sometimes in good weather the entire village repaired to the nearby junipers, ate a potluck supper, and enjoyed songs and orations around a roaring bonfire built of whole trees. I remember one such occasion when a local cattleman, accompanying himself on a guitar, sang "Home on the Range." The Arizona sky stretched from horizon to horizon, ablaze with a multitude of stars that modern city dwellers can have no conception of. I was captivated by the sweet strains of this western folksong. It fixed itself in my heart, and ever after "Home on the Range" was as much a part of my patriotic store as "The Star Spangled Banner" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

As my research advanced, I recognized that another thing Juanita and I had in common was our respect for ordinary people. Juanita refused to be impressed by her own achievements, accepting innumerable honors with an undeviating humility. Her inability to vaunt herself derived, I think, from her commitment to an enormous extended family. Descended from polygamists on both sides, she had dozens of uncles and aunts and hundreds of cousins. She grew up among nine siblings. She married Ernest Pulsipher when she was twenty-one, expecting to become a rural housewife. Upon Ernest's untimely death from cancer in 1921, she obtained an education and began to support herself and her son by teaching at Dixie College in St. George. She halted her teaching in 1933 to marry widower Will Brooks. Combining her son and his four sons into an instant family, Juanita and Will boldly proceeded to add a daughter and three more sons. In the meantime Juanita developed an interest in pioneer history to compensate for her interrupted teaching career. Inevitably, her pursuit of history went on amid an unrelenting domestic schedule. For years her workplace was a kitchen table and her chief working hours were between midnight and dawn. She and Will were attentive, affectionate parents, and they maintained close ties with their children after they had become adults and begun their own families. Moreover, friends and relatives dropped in on Juanita and Will on a daily basis. With good reason Juanita complained that she lacked time to write. Yet a dense entourage of loved ones and friends was essential to her happiness.

I derived from a family not unlike Juanita's and Will's. When my parents married, my father had six children and my mother two. They produced five more children, of whom I was the last. Because my half brothers and sisters had children before or soon after I was born, I grew up regarding many nephews and nieces as my peers. Furthermore, I fraternized with a crowd of cousins on both my mother's and father's side. There were informal visits, Christmas dinners, birthday parties, wedding receptions, and family reunions.

The family reunions continue. A couple of weeks ago my wife and I drove to Arizona to attend a Peterson reunion. The event was held at Lakeside, a mountain village where my father took up a homestead in 1907. My father raised his first family on that homestead; every weekend he rode his horse home from Snowflake, where he taught school. Althea and I stayed the night with a sister in Snowflake and rose early in order to visit the Lakeside cemetery before attending the reunion. My father's first wife was buried in this cemetery in 1919, my father in 1943, my mother in 1985. The little graveyard is canopied by ponderosa pines that sigh in every breeze. I led Althea to the fresh grave of my brother Arley. Scarcely three months had passed since I had been called upon to dedicate Arley's grave. As I performed this last earthly rite for Arley, I recalled that he had once performed one of the essential ordinances in my behalf. On the Fast Sunday of January 1942 he confirmed me a member of the Church. My father, who had baptized me a couple of weeks earlier in the icy waters of Silver Creek, was in Phoenix for a cancer operation.

Althea and I drove on to Flag Hollow, a beautiful opening in the forest at the opposite edge of Lakeside. Dozens of relatives milled around grills and tables where breakfast was being served: three sisters and their husbands, a brother and his wife, two widowed sisters-in-law, many nephews, nieces, and cousins, and an innumerable host of children. Hugs and greetings followed. All morning I drifted from cluster to cluster of chatting relatives, making inquiries and listening to stories. My nephew Jack recounted an adventure featuring his brother Scott. Scott asked Jack to assist him in retrieving a bear he had shot in the woods. It was Scott's opinion that one of his mares had a suitable temperament for the task. The mare, hobbled and blindfolded, trembled violently while the brothers loaded the dead predator. Released, the mare plunged and bucked and the bear flopped crazily in and out of panniers on her back. Finally she crashed into Scott, knocking him down. Fearing his brother was dead, Jack began to pump up and down on his chest. Scott opened his eyes and roared out that Jack was killing him. Jack told his story with consummate skill. He let his voice rise and fall dramatically, he invented vivid dialogue, he assumed the wild postures of the bucking horse and the flopping bear.

At lunch I teased my niece Loretta about the irreverent escapades in which her brother Dwain and I, who were inseparable companions in boyhood, engaged. Dwain died in 1982 following an operation. During the last twenty years of his life he became alienated from the Church and, to a lesser degree, from his parents and siblings. Loretta didn't laugh at my stories. She said she

hadn't wanted a barrier between her and Dwain when he had been alive and she didn't want a barrier between her and me now that he was gone. She put an arm about my waist and I put an arm about hers and shortly we were both weeping. Looking on and weeping with us was Karen, another of my nieces and Loretta's cousin. Perhaps Loretta was weeping for her dead brother and for her father, my brother Elwood, who is also dead, and most of all for her own son, recently killed in a motorcycle accident. Perhaps Karen, looking on, wept for the same dead loved ones and also for her mother, my sister Leora, who like Elwood rests in the Lakeside cemetery. As for me, I wept for the fact that each life begins in hope and ends in sorrow. I cannot express how much Loretta's arm about my waist comforted me. A family is a mystical entity, an ineffable linkage of birth, marriage, and friendship. For better or worse, its members walk the road of mortality in the supportive company of one another.

Reminders of my village origins and of my membership in a large, loving family enhanced the pleasure of my research into Juanita's life. That pleasure was also enhanced by the minor adventures I encountered along the way. I was pleased for the excuse my research gave me to consult Juanita's living relatives, who proved very cooperative. Sometimes I felt that my encounters with them produced curious convergences of past and present. There were moments when it seemed to me that I was no longer an observer of Juanita's life but an active participant in it.

That was how I felt on an afternoon I spent with Ernest Pulsipher, Jr., Juanita's eldest son. We met at the Peppermill Casino in Mesquite and drove first to the grave of Ernest's father in the Mesquite cemetery. Next we crossed the river to Bunkerville where Ernest pointed out the houses in which Juanita had lived as a girl. Then we drove to Cabin Spring, the site of a small summer ranch Juanita's father had developed at the mouth of a canyon in the Virgin Mountains. Juanita spent the summer of 1919 at Cabin Spring. She and Ernest, Sr., were engaged, and twice he rode up to visit her. Already he suffered from undiagnosed cancer in his neck. Juanita did not return his visits, though it would have required only a three-hour jog on her horse. I think she wasn't sure she wanted to marry him. In September she called unannounced on Ernest. She discovered he had experienced, only moments before her arrival, a remarkable vision of the future: one year later, he told her, she and he would become the parents of a white-haired son. That vision proved conclusive. They married, and exactly one year and one day following the vision their white-haired son was born. Within four months of the birth, Ernest died.

Following our visit to Cabin Spring, I returned with Ernest, Jr., to the casino and had a steak supper. The restaurant was pleasant but by no means exceptional. Smoke drifted, waitresses hurried here and there, diners chattered happily. For me, however, this occasion seemed utterly beyond the ordinary. All afternoon I had fancied that in coming to Mesquite and Bunkerville I had traversed time as well as space. I could not forget that my companion had been the white-haired child of the vision. Scarcely a quarter mile away was the spot where the Pulsipher ranch house had stood. There Ernest, Sr., had died. On the day of his funeral Juanita had joined his parents and brothers

in a desperate attempt to raise him from his coffin through prayer. I pitied Juanita profoundly for that fact, knowing that her extraordinary faith could have been followed only by an extraordinary disillusionment. While Ernest and I shook hands and said goodby under the lamps of the casino parking lot, I experienced indescribable emotions. It seemed to me that the devastating events of Juanita's first marriage had just transpired and that I myself had been a witness to them.

Experiences like this, I have been saying, made my research a pleasant endeavor. In time, of course, the pleasures of concentrated research had to end, and the tedium of writing had to begin. In February 1986 I completed an outline to the biography and began to write. In July 1987 I completed a first draft consisting of twelve chapters and over nine hundred pages. I didn't neglect my task during these seventeen months; I simply couldn't work faster. I am sure I am not unusual among writers in finding the first draft the most irksome and dreary part of any writing project. In this case it seemed especially so, and I often found myself drudging forward only because I am compulsive about finishing whatever I have committed myself to.

Although chronology formed the overarching structure of Juanita's life, I had to impose upon its particulars something more coherent than their mere sequence in time. I had to record and interpret a myriad of events, influences, and personality traits. I had to measure, juggle, and position, discovering by trial and error what significance these particulars could be persuaded to assume in relation to one another. When I had arranged them in my mind, I faced the duty of casting them into sentences. Especially onerous was the unremitting necessity of groping for precise words, logical transitions, and congruent syntaxes. Furthermore, I was perpetually dissatisfied with the result. I could only hope that when I had finished the first draft I would discover therein the rudiments of a bright and engaging second draft.

I often regretted the restrictions of the genre I had chosen to work in. I was constantly reminded that a novelist disposes a wider range of technique than a biographer. A novelist can roam his imagination in search of picturesque detail and suspenseful incident. He can put words into the mouths of his characters and inspect their thoughts and feelings. He can readily enhance his style through imagery, metaphor, and other poetic devices. A biographer on the other hand is strictly limited for his material to sources which can be documented. He can't create dialogue — at least he can't if he is writing the objecjective, scholarly kind of biography that I aspired to write — and must only infer the unexpressed thoughts and feelings of his subject. He must generally cast his narrative in summary terms and must enhance his typically objective style by a cautious selection of colorful and figurative words.

Yet a biographer is no less obliged than a novelist to make his narrative compelling. Hence, as I scrutinized the letters, diaries, and interviews comprising the sources of Juanita's life, I remained alert for the picturesque, the unique, and the intrinsically interesting. I was looking for precisely the kind of incident and statement that I would have invented had I been writing a novel about Juanita. With a gratifying frequency she had obliged my future

need by behaving in an extraordinary fashion. Furthermore, her major topic, the Mountain Meadows massacre, gave a unity to her life very much like the unity a plot gives a novel. Her battle for the acceptance of her interpretation of the massacre was like the major conflict of a novel, assuming ever greater intensity and suspense through many episodes and coming at last to a climax and resolution.

Juanita didn't plan on becoming the minstrel of the massacre. She grew up believing Indians had committed the terrible deed. In 1919, at age twenty-one, Juanita learned that Mormons had first incited Indians to attempt the slaughter and then had assisted them in finishing the job. Among those Mormons, the astonished young woman learned, had been her grandfather Dudley Leavitt. In 1943 she traveled to Phoenix in search of documents related to a biography of Jacob Hamblin which she intended to write. Unexpectedly she encountered a bitter quarrel between certain descendants of Jacob Hamblin and John D. Lee. Hamblin's descendants maintained that Lee alone had masterminded the massacre and had been guilty of rape as well as of murder. Lee's descendants claimed that Hamblin's perjured testimony had assured their grandfather's execution. Juanita returned to St. George determined to write the history of the massacre. Encouraged by Dale Morgan, with whom she conducted an extensive correspondence, she completed her manuscript in 1948 and saw it published in 1950. Although she proceeded according to the canons of objective history, she wrote with a moral purpose. She wanted facts to replace a morbid, uninformed folklore among her fellow Latter-day Saints.

Although Juanita was neither excommunicated nor disfellowshipped for having written about the massacre, she encountered a widespread ostracism. She resented this ostracism so much that she repeatedly risked formal censure by requesting that the Church officially endorse her interpretation of the event. One therefore understands why Juanita was so eager to publish the reinstatement of John D. Lee in her soon-to-appear biography. By reinstating Lee, the Church had tacitly admitted that her interpretation was correct. I have already alluded to her courageous confrontation with Elder Delbert Stapley and with assembled dignitaries from the Lee family during the summer of 1961. In my view this was the summit of Juanita's life, an authentic climax to a conflict which had been developing for over twenty years. As I said, this conflict gave a major portion of her life's story the structural integration that a plot gives a novel.

Juanita's life derived its suspense from her insistence upon nonconformity within a church which emphasized obedience. She was an inside dissenter, a Mormon who in the spirit of constructive criticism offered counterproposals to doctrine and policy descending from the General Authorities. Although Juanita's dissent focused upon the limited matter of the massacre, the openness with which she propounded her interpretation of that event and the fervor with which she insisted upon her loyalty to the Church made her attractive to Mormon dissenters of many varieties. For over three decades liberals and fundamentalists alike sent her letters and manuscripts and sought her out in person. Some were brazen and defiant, others anxious and secretive. She openly supported a few, encouraged many, and was tolerant of all.

Today the Church is more tolerant of diversity than ever before, an attitude Juanita undoubtedly helped bring about. Still, by the standards of a democratic society the Church remains centralized and authoritarian. Juanita's example therefore remains potent. Obviously, dissent is another of the affinities between her and me. It was her dissent that first attracted me to her and later gave me my strongest impetus to write her biography. I will not boast that my dissent approaches hers in significance. It is more perverse than hers and more unlikely of realization. My dissent is important to me, if to no one else, because it is a part of my fixed personality, a necessary aspect of my kind of Mormonism.

In 1957 I returned from the French mission questioning whether I should be a Mormon at all. I soon married a gentile and decided that civilization would be my religion. But I found I couldn't sunder my connections with my extended Mormon family, I couldn't leave Utah, I couldn't fail to attend sacrament meeting a couple of times a year to see whether anything had changed. Gradually I learned that I was an authentic if eccentric Latter-day Saint. Of particular importance was my discovery of the liberal Mormon community, an informal network of intelligent Saints who, despite their unconventional opinions, have made a comfortable adaptation to the Church. Luckily my wife proved to be what is called a dry-land Mormon, a gentile who fits harmoniously into the Mormon scene.

I can discern a perverse defiance of ecclesiastic regimentation in all periods of my childhood. Once when I was a member of the Snowflake Ward priests quorum, the instructor turned the lesson period into a testimony meeting. Sitting beside me was my nephew Dwain. As we strolled homeward later, Dwain and I amused ourselves by bearing irreverent testimonies to each other. With pious voices we recounted attempts to heal a sick grandmother through prayer and to replenish a scantily stocked pantry through payment of tithing, deflecting at the climactic moment from the expected miracle into its opposite: the grandmother died, the shelves of the pantry became emptier.

I think a similar irreverence characterizes the fiction I have written in my supposedly maturer years. Shortly after my collection *The Canyons of Grace* appeared in 1982, a woman telephoned me to protest the story "Trinity." Featuring a male missionary who has recently discovered his homosexuality and a female missionary who has just had an abortion, the story would, my caller claimed, undermine the missionary effort of the Church. Although I attempted to put the best possible light upon the story, I had to admit that my protagonists could have been suffering Christians of almost any sort. It was perversity on my part to make them specifically Mormon missionaries. I think also of a scene in my novel *The Backslider* in which the boys Frank and Jeremy baptize their dog Rupert. Frank instructs his brother, "Now hold that son of a bitch tight so I can do this the way it's supposed to be done. If his foot comes out of the water, we've got to do it all over. God will send you to hell if part of you ain't under the water" (1986, 108).

Scandalizing the righteous is perhaps not a worthy form of dissent. But of course I believe my fiction also has a more dignified intent. By my own assess-

ment, the predominant theme of my fiction is the penitential aspect of Mormonism. I judge the humor of my fiction to be superficial, smacking of farce and burlesque. I infused my novel with farcical comedy as an afterthought. When I began my novel, I aspired to a poetic intensity that precluded comedy, and I wrote four unsmiling chapters. Then, weighed down by the melancholy of my topic, I paused, wrote a new first chapter mingling the serious and the comic, and in that hybridized vein went forward revising old chapters and creating new ones. Nonetheless, in my novel and in many of my stories I remain preoccupied by the dark side of Mormonism: an inordinate guilt, a dread of damnation, and a proclivity for dealing harshly with sin both in oneself and in others.

As a boy in Snowflake I heard the confession of an excommunicated adulteress in testimony meeting. The indelible ignominy which had fallen upon this woman horrified me. At that moment I understood, at least subliminally, that I belonged to a penitential religion. My perception of the penitential aspect of Mormonism was augmented when, as a graduate student, I first read the sermons of Brigham Young and Jedediah M. Grant on the subject of blood atonement. I was astonished, even dumbfounded, by those sermons. These venerable leaders claimed that certain sinners should cleanse their guilt through the spilling of their own blood. At present I remain sensitive to a subterranean gloom in Mormonism. I hear grim predictions of the destructions which will accompany the second coming of the Lord. I note how uncertain most Latter-day Saints are regarding their own prospects on judgment day. I even discern a significant sampling of true ascetics — Mormons who practice a stringent denial of appetite and who impose rigorous penances upon themselves for their infractions of the commandments.

It is from this penitential aspect of Mormonism that I am most consciously a dissenter. I have, as I say, depicted it variously in my fiction. In my story "The Confessions of Augustine," Fremont makes illicit love to a gentile and then abandons her because he believes God will brook no trifling with those of an erroneous faith. For Fremont true religion is a suffocating obedience. In "The Shriveprice," Darrow becomes convinced that his pioneer grandfather has committed an act of blood atonement. Taking license from his ancestor's example, Darrow plans to atone for his own ineradicable guilt by making a bloody sacrifice of himself. In "The Canyons of Grace," Arabella revolts against God by committing sexual sin and believes herself damned. She kills a polygamist patriarch who has abducted her and finds herself suddenly liberated from belief in God. So great has been God's oppression that she has symbolically killed him. These characters are alike in believing God has no patience with their fated finitude and imperfection. Whether they obey or defy him, they most decidedly do not love him. Nor do I love him. I protest the misbegotten faith that construes God in such a light.

It pleases me to conjecture that Juanita might have read my fiction with interest had it existed while she was in good health. I don't think she would have judged my depiction of guilt and penance among Latter-day Saints to be farfetched and fantastic. Despite the utter respectability of her private life and

despite the optimistic countenance she wore in public, she had few illusions about human nature. The foremost student of the Mountain Meadows massacre could scarcely have ignored the culpability, real or fancied, that lurks in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints.

A major source of my understanding of the dark side of Mormonism has been Juanita's history of the massacre. The massacre remains the single most guilty deed in the Church's entire history. Perhaps the most difficult fact about the massacre for modern Church members is that it devolved from a prayerful high council held in Cedar City some five days before the emigrants were slaughtered. In that meeting the Mormons decided to unleash their Indian allies upon the offending party from Arkansas and Missouri. Later when the Indians proved ineffectual, the Mormon militia was ordered to participate. Of course Juanita offered certain extenuations for the high council's grim decision. Like their confreres elsewhere, these Church members were in a state of war hysteria, for at that moment Johnston's army marched toward Utah with an aggressive intent. Furthermore, the emigrants had been far from tactful as they had progressed through Utah. Particularly inflammatory was the claim of some of them to have assisted in the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Numerous frontier Saints considered themselves bound by sacred oath to avenge the blood of the martyred prophets. Like many other nineteenth-century Christians, the Latter-day Saints conceived wrath to be a prominent trait of deity. They believed fervently that God would soon inaugurate the Millennium through the destruction of the wicked majority of earth's population. It was therefore not so illogical for the Mormons of southwestern Utah to propose themselves as God's instruments in the slaughter of the emigrants at Mountain Meadows. As I suggested earlier, a tendency to punish the sins of others is a part of the penitential attitude.

Because I have dealt at length with Juanita's interpretation of the massacre in my biography, I can with perhaps some justice claim in its pages to have enlarged my dissent from the penitential aspect of Mormonism. Paradoxically, however, writing the biography also renewed within me a recognition of an impulse quite the opposite of dissent. Although Juanita's example has reinforced my identity as a dissenter, it has also reinforced my submerged identity as a penitent.

Juanita had many motives for writing about the massacre. Quite late in my work on the biography it came to me that one of these motives was penitential. Unquestionably the Mormon participants in the massacre were instantly revolted by the monstrosity of their deed. Yet they clung to their rationalizations, and their fellow Saints closed protectively about them. The scapegoating of John D. Lee nearly twenty years after the massacre exacerbated rather than relieved the sense of unatoned sin. Because during all the intervening years no one else had publicly expressed contrition for the massacre, Juanita took on that duty. Through both her publications and her speeches she performed the age-old Christian ritual of confession and penance. Her desire to do penance is evident in the most notable speech of her entire life, delivered in 1955 at the dedication of a monument to the victims of the massacre in

Harrison, Arkansas. To an audience of about five hundred initially hostile non-Mormons she admitted that the massacre had been "one of the most despicable mass murders of history." Nonetheless, she went on, it had been uncharacteristic of the Latter-day Saints who carried it out. "It was tragic for those who were killed and for the children left orphans, but it was also tragic for the fine men who now became murderers, and for their children who for four generations now have lived under that shadow" (Brooks 1956, 76). Shortly afterward the president of the proceedings wrote her: "You impressed the people most favorably, and your coming has done much to establish a spirit of love and forgiveness. The Mormon Church owes you much because now the people in this section feel much better toward the Mormon people" (Fancher 1955).

As I thought about the fact that Juanita had put historiography to a penitential use, I asked myself whether I had similarly put my fiction to a penitential use. At first I posed this question almost facetiously, for, as I have indicated, I had hitherto conceived of my fiction as a protest against the penitential excesses of Mormonism. The question, once posed, returned to my thoughts over and over. In time I had to answer in the affirmative. I am not denying that in certain moods I take delight in the rebellions and misdemeanors of my characters or that I reprehend their inordinate self-punishment. I am saying that in certain other moods it is not their self-punishment which I reprehend but their sins.

I try to live by an enlightened religion. I choose to believe that God has great charity for human failing and that he expects a civilized accommodation of the appetites. But that belief — that reasoned hope — has not eradicated a very opposite set of emotions within me. Though I prefer to believe that humanity is capable of virtue and God is tolerant, I often *feel* that humanity is irretrievably flawed and God impossibly perfect. As contradictory as it may seem, I have wished in my fiction to propound the insufficiency of a rational morality. Subliminally I have joined my characters in their desire to deny the world, to mortify the flesh, to see themselves made a perfect plastic in the shaping hands of an exacting God. It will be apparent that I do not regard my characters as altogether imaginary. As far as I am concerned, they are generic Mormons, as real for my purposes as the perpetrators of the massacre were for Juanita's. Their rebellion and guilt are those of actual Latter-day Saints. And vicariously if not actually they are mine as well. I have wished to confess and do penance for their collective sins.

It was of some comfort to my mother when, about ten years ago, I began to attend sacrament meeting regularly. My mother was a very intense woman. She loved me deeply and made innumerable sacrifices in my behalf. Until her death, we visited each other frequently and wrote one another a weekly letter. Despite our affectionate relationship, she never acquiesced in the personality I had adopted upon returning from my mission. At every visit and in almost every letter she exhorted me to pay tithing, read the scriptures, baptize my wife, and otherwise obey the neglected commandments. Although my dominant impulse was to resist her wishes, I never failed to experience a desire to comply. I continue to experience that desire. Last week in church I observed a family

beside me in the pew. I particularly watched one of the sons, who seemed patient and utterly without tension or strain. The boy leaned against his father with what I imagined was a perfect satisfaction. I fancied that this boy, as he became a man, would find being a good Latter-day Saint the most natural and easy thing in the world. And I grieved that I had not grown up believing God to be kind and his commandments mild. But I also grieved that I failed to meet the challenge of the God in whom I did believe in childhood, that looming deity whose scorn for the frailty of human nature compels the disciplined and the resolute to make saints of themselves.

The ambivalence I feel toward the penitential is only one among many polarities within me. For many years, a zeal for symmetry made it difficult for me to admit that my personality is composed of contradictory impulses. I can of course comfort myself with Emerson's reassurance that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." Or, again, I can find reassurance in Juanita's behavior. Although Juanita applied objective thought and shrewd judgment to her study of the massacre, she often demonstrated opposite qualities in the conduct of her everyday life. She was in fact a complex mixture of the critical and the credulous. She was characterized by alternating patterns of opposites: love for her native ground and attraction to the outside world, resistance to authority and willingness to cooperate with others, skeptical reason and blind faith. Luckily, she had an extraordinary capacity for tolerating these opposites. Her example has made it easier for me to admit and bear the inconsistencies within myself.

This essay has been about the private education I have undergone in researching and writing Juanita's biography. I am of course happy that the project is finished and that I can now turn to other matters. But I don't begrudge the years I have spent considering Juanita's life. I hope the book will find appreciative readers, as much for Juanita's sake as for my own. Whether the book fares well or poorly, I have already harvested my personal reward from the process of creating it. I have learned things about scholarship and composition. Unexpectedly I have learned things about writing fiction. Even more important, I have been reminded that I view the world through the eyes of a villager; that I belong to a large, affectionate family; that I dissent vigorously from the penitential side of Mormonism; and that on a subliminal level I also paradoxically assent to that stern creed.

These facts help explain why I am an irremediable westerner, if I may be forgiven for alluding to a final affinity between Juanita and me. Many times during her writing career, Juanita submitted articles and books to eastern magazines and publishers. Her only successes were two articles placed in *Harper's*. She could not compete in the eastern publishing market because her ideas and attitudes were western, rural, and Mormon. I also have made substantial submission to eastern magazines and publishers, with less success than Juanita. I flatter myself that my manuscripts were not rejected on account of incompetent writing. I think they were rejected because my subject matter is conditioned by the sensibility that geography has given me. Like Juanita, I am bound by a village, a family, a church, and a region.

I was in St. George a month ago attending the annual conference of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. Two or three times during my stay I drove past the nursing home in which the comatose Juanita lies. A year earlier I had stopped and asked to see her. I was tempted to stop again, but I didn't. Before leaving St. George I chatted with Juanita's son Karl and with her daughter Willa. Willa said her mother had recently suffered a congestion of the lungs. Willa wept as she described the difficulties of keeping her mother's throat and nostrils unobstructed. All who love Juanita wait for the merciful release of her death. I am of course among those who love Juanita. I will remember with affection and admiration all that she achieved. For the rest of my life I will visit her home country, Utah's Dixie, with the same intimate sense of homecoming that I experience when I return to Snowflake. She will remain a model and an inspiration to me. Writing her biography has made me her brother.

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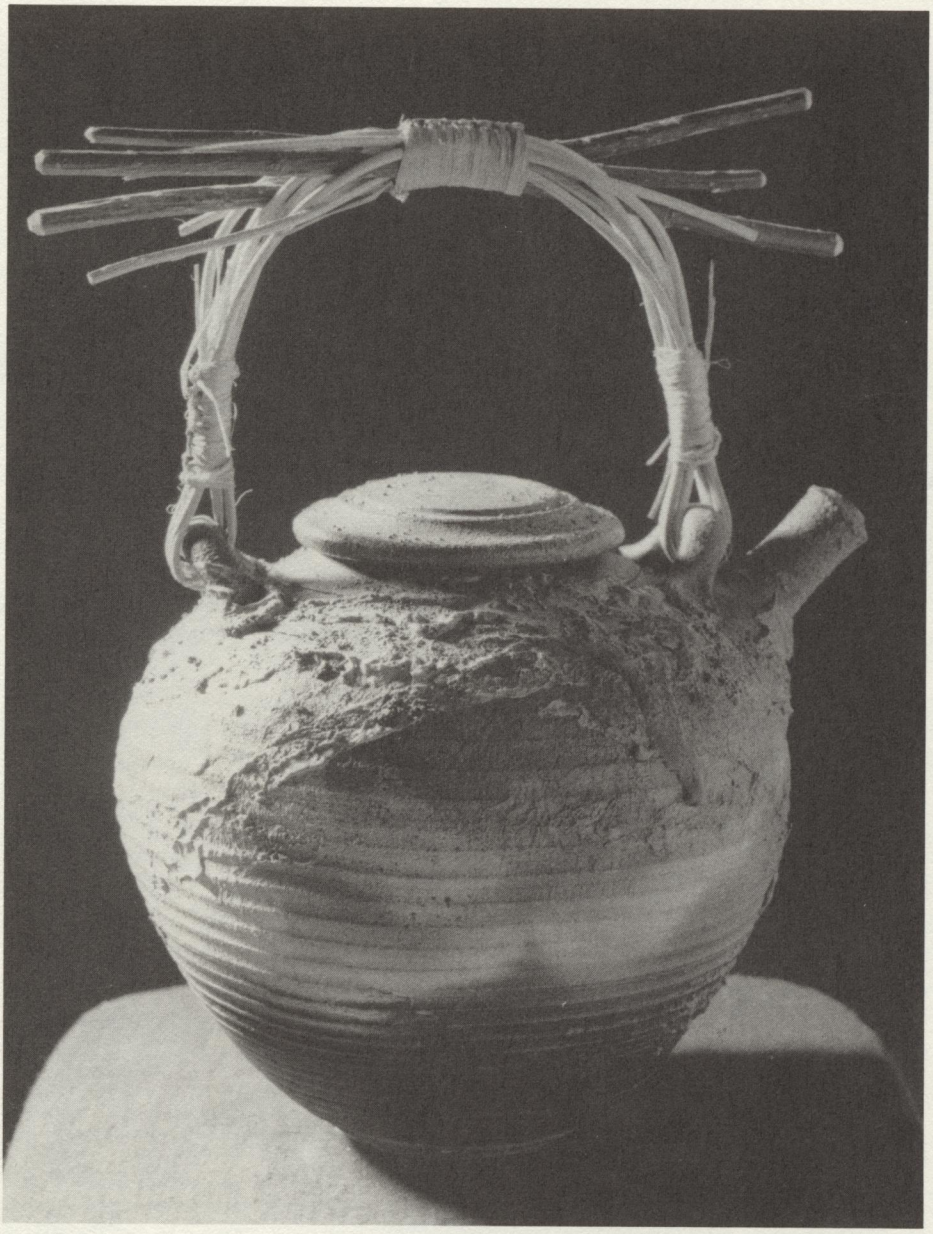

# Assimilation and Ambivalence: The Mormon Reaction to Americanization

*Armand L. Mauss*

IN THE CENTER OF SALT LAKE CITY, two important traditional Mormon symbols confront each other across Main Street: the angel on the temple spire and the beehive atop the now-closed Hotel Utah.[1] While the beehive may have originated as an allusion to the Jaredite word *deseret* (honeybee) in the Book of Mormon, it has since come to be considered primarily as a symbol of worldly enterprise throughout the Mormon heartland (H. Cannon 1980). For the purposes of this discussion, the beehive represents all aspects of Mormon involvement with the world, cultural as well as economic.

The angel, in contrast, represents Mormonism's other-worldly heritage, the spiritual and prophetic elements, eternal ideals, and remarkable doctrines revealed through Joseph Smith and passed down as part of a unique and authentic Mormon heritage. Ideally there is no conflict between the angel and the beehive, for Joseph Smith taught that there was no ultimate distinction between the spiritual and the material and that our duty was to subordinate worldly things to spiritual imperatives (D&C 29:31–35; McMurrin 1969, 1–8; O'Dea 1957).

Historically, however, the angel and the beehive have been locked in an unending struggle. Indeed, both the Bible and the Book of Mormon describe the triumph of the worldly beehive over the spiritual values of the angel. Perhaps we may ponder the diminishing visibility of the Angel Moroni as Temple

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[1] The Hotel Utah is currently undergoing renovation to house Church offices.

Square is increasingly obscured by high-rise office buildings. To set the stage for the analysis to follow, however, let me move from symbol and metaphor to a theoretical framework with which to interpret developments in recent Mormon culture and history.

Sociology and anthropology have accumulated a rich literature on the causes and consequences of new social movements (Gurney and Tierney 1983; Jenkins 1983; Kriesberg 1978–88; Marx and Wood 1975; Turner and Killian 1987). While the classical work of Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch, and their intellectual descendants may be the most applicable to the study of religious movements (Johnson 1963, 1971; D. Martin 1978; Troeltsch 1931; Wilson 1985), it seems clear that the general processes in the development of social movements are very similar, whether the movements be religious, political, or cultural. To be sure, important particulars in the histories of social movements will differ across time and cultures, and we must recognize the bias of sociologists who work with examples from North America, where we have probably the most powerfully assimilative cultures ever known.

The appearance of a new religious or social movement, like nineteenth-century Mormonism, challenges the normative order of the host society. This challenge will be the more serious, of course, the more militant and deviant the movement is; and survival itself may preoccupy the new movement initially. The overwhelming majority of new movements fail to survive even one generation. Sociologists are thus intensely interested in factors that differentiate the few movements that prosper from the great bulk that disappear early (Moore 1986; Stark 1987).

The natural and inevitable response of the host society — through not only its government but all its major institutions — is either to domesticate the new movement or to destroy it. Domestication involves various kinds of social control pressures used selectively against the movement's most unique and threatening features. To the extent that the society succeeds, the movement is assimilated. Failing sufficient domestication, the host society will eventually resort to persecution and repression.

The logical extreme of either assimilation or repression is, of course, oblivion for the movement. In the natural history of the interaction between new movements and their host societies (Hiller 1975; Mauss 1971), there are few historical exceptions to the proposition that new movements must either be assimilated in important respects or be destroyed.[2] Of course, the process is bilateral, and the assimilating society often experiences profound changes in the process, but my focus here is the internal impact of the assimilation process upon the movement itself.

Religious movements which, like Mormonism, survive and prosper, succeed, among other things, in maintaining indefinitely an optimum tension (Berger 1980; Stark and Bainbridge 1985) between the strain toward greater assimilation and respectability, on the one hand, and toward greater separate-

[2] The rare third alternative is revolution, in which the movement overthrows the society and becomes the new establishment (Brinton 1957).

ness, peculiarity, and militance on the other. Along the continuum between total assimilation and total repression is a narrow segment on either side of the center; within this narrow range of socially acceptable variation, movements must maintain themselves, pendulum-like, to survive. If, in its quest for acceptance and respectability, a movement allows itself to be pulled too far toward assimilation, it will lose its unique identity. If in its quest for uniqueness, it allows itself to be pushed toward total rejection of the host society, it will lose its very life. Its viability and its separate identity both depend upon a successful and perpetual oscillation within a fairly narrow range along a continuum between two alternative modes of oblivion.

At any given time, then, a movement is grappling with either of two predicaments. First, if it has survived for some time as a "peculiar people," conspicuously rejecting the surrounding society and flexing the muscles of militancy, then it will begin to face what I call the *predicament of disrepute*, in which the host society responds with repression and threats to the movement's very existence. In such cases, the movement typically begins to modify its posture and to adopt selected traits from the surrounding culture that will make it more acceptable. Just which traits are selected will depend on the movement's ideology and internal political struggles and resources, as well as on sheer expediency.

After a movement has achieved some success through this strategy of purposeful accommodation, however, it may soon find itself in the *predicament of respectability*. At this point, the movement has adopted so many traits from the surrounding culture that it is not readily distinguishable from the establishment, and its identity as a separate or "peculiar" people is in jeopardy. The movement must then begin to invent, or to select from the surrounding social environment, a set of traits that will allow it to lay credible claim to uniqueness in identity, values, folkways, or mission.

As the movement successfully reasserts its peculiarity, it moves back toward the earlier predicament of disrepute, and the cycle begins again. To complicate matters, every time the movement switches direction, it must contend with internal tendencies toward schism and defection (Baer 1988). This general heuristic model of a cyclical or dialectical process in the "careers" of successful movements is widely applicable, I think, in interpreting the histories of many social movements in Europe and America, at least; but from here on I would like to apply it specifically to the Mormon case in America.[3]

The geographical limitation is a serious one. Changes in Mormon culture can be expected from pressures elsewhere in the world as well, and the assimila-

[3] For related studies on other religions with "identity" problems, see Assimeng (1986), Bass and Smith (1987), Furman (1987), Hamm (1987), and Liebmann (1983). In addition to the sociological level, I recognize the importance of the psychological level as individuals grapple with the predicaments faced collectively by their movements. However, these individuals do not necessarily understand this cyclical process, either at the micro- or the macrocosmic levels, though they may react to certain feelings deriving from the two predicaments. Sociological theories are based on the naturalistic assumption that social processes do not require teleological intention or understanding by individuals for the processes to take place, any more than biological or physical processes do.

tion struggle itself will become important and perhaps take different forms in other societies, once the Mormon presence and numbers there reach significant levels. But those are subjects for other essays.

## Twentieth-Century Mormonism: A Case Study in Assimilation

While this pendulum model could, I think, be successfully applied to the entire history of the Mormon movement, it is especially useful for understanding the transformations of Mormonism in the twentieth century.[4] As this century began, Mormons were deeply enmeshed in the predicament of disrepute. Utah's relative isolation had made possible the unrestrained development of the angel motif: The Latter-day Saints, under prophetic inspiration, had self-consciously cultivated unique religious and secular institutions. From the outside, Mormonism and its way of life projected a national image — not altogether unjustified — of an un-American, even anti-American, insurgent counter-culture.

### *The Quest for Respectability*

The *Reynolds* decision of 1879 seemed to sum up the mood of the country in judicial language: The First Amendment guaranteed freedom of belief, but not unlimited freedom of practice. A society can tolerate only a limited amount of "peculiarity," even in the name of religion. By the 1890s, the increasing repression from American society had produced the desired result. The Mormons gave up polygamy, theocracy, and collectivist economic experiments, thus abandoning charismatic peculiarity except at the relatively abstract level of theology. In return, Utah achieved statehood, less harassment, and more toleration. Symbolically, the new state's seal featured a prominent beehive (Lyman 1986).

[4] As a sketch of how the same model might apply to the nineteenth century, I suggest that the New York, Kirtland, and Missouri years were innovative and charismatic ones symbolized mainly by the angel. This period (1827–39) saw major political and economic innovations and increasing militancy in Mormon behavior (as opposed to rhetoric). The repressive response of the establishment, especially in Missouri, was quite predictable. By comparison, Nauvoo represented a more successful accommodation in line with the beehive motif, until the secret of polygamy became public; up to 1844, at least, there was quite an extensive Mormon participation in the normal political and economic life of Illinois and of the nation, as well as a number of other worldly compromises.

In Utah up to the 1890s, the pendulum swung again, toward a studied rejection of American society; deviant arrangements in political, economic, and family institutions flourished. The increasingly repressive response from the rest of the country was inevitable. Historian R. Laurence Moore observes that this mutual rejection and hostility served certain political, psychological, and other interests of both the Latter-day Saints and the scandalized nation. Mormons, he says, frequently advanced their claims "in the most obnoxious way possible," while both sides seemed to go to some lengths "to stress not what Mormons had in common with other Americans, which was a great deal, but what they did not have in common" (1986, 31–32).

I am, of course, oversimplifying this social movement theory by emphasizing the more fluid and uncontrolled collective aspects of the Mormon movement and not giving equal attention to the Church's more stable organizational aspects.

From that time on, Church policy has been conspicuously assimilationist in most respects, though Mormons still struggled with the predicament of disrepute for decades. Their achievement of respectability against a background of almost universal national contempt is an astonishing success story (Alexander 1986; Shipps 1985). With the consistent encouragement of Church leaders, Mormons have become super-patriotic, law-abiding citizens. Their participation in the full spectrum of national social, political, economic, and cultural life has been thorough and sincere, not only at the grassroots level, but also as prominent leaders in many national institutions.

Since World War II, Mormons have risen in socio-economic status to a virtual tie near the top with Episcopalians and Presbyterians (Roof and McKinney 1987, 110). Not all the Saints have been able to keep up, however, and some of the less affluent have found themselves more comfortable in other religions or schismatic groups (Baer 1988). It's not that twentieth-century Latter-day Saints have necessarily been more preoccupied than their forebears with material things; but they have been more successful materially than the rest of the nation and thus have acquired a greater stake in the American socio-economic system than did their turn-of-the-century grandparents.

The Church itself, as a corporate entity, is awesomely involved in the American capitalist marketplace and in the rough-and-tumble of American politics (Gottlieb and Wiley 1984; Mauss and Bradford 1988). Church publications have regularly and approvingly featured Church members who have achieved prominence in government, business, athletics, music, arts, and entertainment, especially if they credit the Church for part of their success.

Church leaders at the general, stake, and ward levels have been drawn disproportionately from those successful in business, law, education, and one or two other prestigious professions. My tabulation from the *1985 Church Almanac* shows that about a third of the General Authorities were business administrators, another third attorneys, and a fifth educational administrators (rather than teachers/scholars), with the remainder representing medicine, dentistry, engineering, and miscellaneous fields (Deseret News 1984, 18–37).

The system of governance in the Church is now based far less upon the individual prophetic initiative of a Joseph Smith or a Brigham Young and far more upon the collective, collegial, and bureaucratic model usually associated with large corporations. While much of this bureaucratic development is the inevitable companion of growth, its effect is still to produce another kind of convergence with the corporate world. This is especially true since the advent of "correlation" in the 1960s (Gottlieb and Wiley 1984; Woodworth 1987). The Church's public relations enterprise has mushroomed in size, scope, and importance. The approval of the world has been courted not only through a growing corps of clean-cut young missionaries, but also with the Tabernacle Choir, mass-market magazine ads, and television spots and specials.

Such involvements with the world carry the constant risk of compromising the angel with the beehive. Most conflicts between the two never come to public attention. We know, however, that if the Church is going to own hotels and other businesses, then it must keep many of them open on Sundays and

serve beverages that Church members are enjoined to avoid. If Church-owned radio and television stations are major network affiliates, as many of them are, then they must sometimes carry ads for products that Saints may not use or broadcast music and programs that some Church leaders urge LDS youth to avoid.

The point is not that all involvements with the world are subversive; the Saints have always been counseled to embrace good wherever they find it. Much in the world is fully harmonious with traditional Mormon values. Nor, indeed, have all worldly borrowings been of a material nature; some have come from other religions — for example, many of our hymns (Hicks 1987). My point is only that the Saints should be clear about the source of the borrowings. Did they come from the angel or from the beehive, from within the Mormon heritage or from outside? However we might answer those questions, it does appear that the Latter-day Saint movement has resolved its early predicament of disrepute and has gone far toward achieving respectability.

*Corporate Signs of Assimilation*

While assimilation is aided by increasing tolerance from the host society, it has usually required the deviant movement to do most of the changing, by giving up especially controversial claims or characteristics. Recent scholarship on the Mormons has shed a great deal of light, not only upon the forms of such renunciation, but also upon the ideological and organizational evolution accompanying it (Alexander 1986; Gottlieb and Wiley 1984; Lyman 1986; Shepherd and Shepherd 1984; Shipps 1985).

Gordon and Gary Shepherd, for example, have traced the assimilation process through the changing rhetoric in general conference sermons. They found, among other things, a steady decline between 1890 and 1950 in such uniquely Mormon themes as Zion- and kingdom-building, eschatology, missionary work, apostasy, restoration, doctrinal differences with other churches, the corruption of outside governments, and obedience to Church leaders, while such assimilationist themes as the greatness of American institutions, patriotism, good citizenship, and fellowship with other faiths increased (1984, 174–77; 190–99).

In Mormon hymnody during the same period, successive official hymnals not only borrowed an increasing proportion of hymns from mainstream Protestantism, but the texts of some classic LDS hymns were "toned down" to reduce peculiar Mormon referents or militancy. For example, in "Praise to the Man," "long shall his blood . . . stain Illinois" became "long shall his blood . . . plead unto Heaven" in the editions after 1940 (Hicks 1987).

Important doctrinal and ritual developments during the first half of the twentieth century also reflected assimilationism. Alexander (1980) has documented how doctrines of deity were codified early in the century to eliminate both contradictions and such drastic departures from traditional Christianity as the "Adam-God" theory (Buerger 1982). The official sponsorship and widespread dissemination of James E. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* can best be understood, I think, as part of the same process of standardizing LDS concepts of

deity. While some uniquely Mormon ideas are obviously important in that book, its portrayal of Christ was heavily influenced by prevailing Victorian theories in contemporary mainstream Protestant scholarship (Thorp 1987). During the same general period, changes in the temple endowment and garment and the gradual deemphasis of the second anointing rendered the temple experience somewhat less foreign to the novice (Alexander 1986, 291–303; Buerger 1983, 1987; Mauss 1987).

The effort to bring the Church into mainstream American life during the early twentieth century can also be seen in the auxiliary organizations, beginning with the almost immediate adoption of the new national Boy Scout program in 1913 (Alexander 1986, 144–45). Social welfare professionalism was introduced into the Relief Society, some of whose general officers were encouraged by Church leaders to maintain contacts and collaboration with outside professionals (Alexander 1986, 128–36; May 1976). The Mutual Improvement Associations, at least up to the 1950s, became almost a Church extension education program, offering training in the arts, drama, and forensics and lessons on important social and ethical issues authored by noted Church professionals and intellectuals (Alexander 1986, 140–46; Kenney 1978, 1987). Indeed, individual scholars or experts often wrote lesson manuals for the Relief Society and the Sunday School, as well (Alexander 1986, 138–40; Christensen 1987). To all appearances, the social gospel movement of general Protestantism was making inroads in Utah, as elsewhere (Alexander 1983).

Dr. Franklin S. Harris, appointed president of Brigham Young University in 1921, had General Authority support for upgrading and enhancing the school's respectability as a legitimate institution of learning in the eyes of the nation (Christensen 1987; Bergera and Priddis 1985). A new religious education program of seminaries began in 1911, and institutes followed in 1926 to help young Church members articulate their religious faith and integrate it with the worldly learning they were now starting in large numbers to seek (Alexander 1986). For a few summers, prominent non-Mormon biblical scholars and theologians came to Utah to instruct the seminary and institute faculty in contemporary theological scholarship (Nelson 1985). In a few cases, the Church even provided stipends for some of its promising young scholars to obtain advanced degrees at centers of learning like the University of Chicago, expecting them to bring to the Church educational system some of the worldly professional credibility it was then lacking (Arrington 1967; Sherlock 1979; Swensen 1972). To be sure, there was much ambivalence and some controversy among Church leaders about the wisdom of these and similar developments (Sherlock 1979), but they seem clearly enough to manifest the quest for respectability in the beehive mode.

*Signs of Assimilation in the Church Population*

Such signs of accommodation and assimilation in the corporate or institutional church are fairly easy to document, since they can be traced in the historical record. More difficult is tracing changes across time in the minds of people. Such a record would require longitudinal or successive surveys of popu-

lar traits and opinions like those accumulated by Gallup. To my knowledge, there have been no such systematic surveys on Latter-day Saints earlier than those I conducted in Utah and California twenty years ago (Mauss 1972a, 1972b, 1976). By then, of course, assimilation was basically complete.

We must thus resort to inferences and assumptions about changing values, ideas, or behavior across time in the Mormon population. We might be able to assume, for example, that the changes traced by the Shepherds (1984) in pulpit rhetoric eventually influenced the thinking of the Saints in the same directions. Or, if we find major differences between the beliefs and values of older and younger respondents, we might be able to assume that those of the younger group represent a trend. Or, given that increasing proportions of Church members live outside Utah and the mountain west, we might be able to assume that the trend is away from the Utah position and toward the positions of those living elsewhere. Such assumptions might have some value, but they are weak compared to successive surveys.

However, my Mormon surveys from the late 1960s showed that the San Francisco sample was closer than the Utah sample to the moderate Protestant mainline group in various measures of religious commitment (Mauss 1972b). The San Francisco sample was also much less politically conservative than the Utah sample, both in domestic and in foreign policy preferences (Mauss 1972a). In sexual norms, marriage outside the Church, compliance with the Word of Wisdom, keeping the Sabbath, and using profanity, the two Mormon samples showed more similarities than differences, although noteworthy gaps remained among those under forty in the two locations (Mauss 1976). Though it is arguable, one may infer that at least the coming generation of Mormons and/or those outside Utah were growing somewhat "less Mormon" and thus more "assimilated" than the older Utah generation.[5]

By now, that "coming generation" has arrived at middle age, and it would be helpful to have more recent survey data for comparison. The only recent surveys of systematic LDS samples of which I am aware have been conducted under Church auspices and so are not available for analysis by scholars generally. On a tentative basis, however, we might get some indications about the characteristics of today's Latter-day Saints by looking at data available through the annual social surveys conducted by the Roper and NORC polling organizations. These surveys include relatively few Mormon respondents but still make possible some comparisons of Mormons with non-Mormons nationwide.[6]

[5] For these and subsequent inferences I draw on (1) my surveys of careful probability samples of more than 1,200 Salt Lake City and San Francisco Mormons conducted with the permission but not the surveillance of Church leaders between 1967 and 1969 (Mauss 1972a); (2) my analyses of data from the annual spring social surveys of the National Opinion Research Corporation (NORC), 1972–85 (see, for example, Davis and Smith 1987); and (3) analyses of similar NORC data sets conducted by Roof and McKinney (1987). The latter deals only peripherally with the Mormons in the sample, usually by including them in a number of interesting cross-denominational comparisons.

[6] The Mormons constitute a very small number in any one NORC survey; but by aggregating these Mormon subsamples across all thirteen years, it is possible to accumulate as many as 189. Like Roof and McKinney, I carefully studied the data to ascertain whether serious variations in survey results occurred by period or region. There were none in basic

TABLE 1

BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTIONS FOR LIFE-LONG MORMONS ("LIFERS"), FOR MORMON CONVERTS, AND FOR NON-MORMONS

| *Demographic Traits* | *Lifers* (N=113) | *Converts* (N=76) | *Non-Mormons* (N=1247) | *Prob.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Occupation | | | | |
| prof., tech., mgr. | 35% | 36% | 29% | .192 |
| clerical | 15 | 17 | 22 | |
| Occup. Prestige | | | | |
| (above middle) | 47% | 54% | 48% | .581 |
| Father's Occup. | | | | |
| Prestige (>mid) | 64 | 61 | 57 | .305 |
| Education more than high sch. | 41 | 26 | 26 | .009 |
| Income >$25K/an. | 34 | 23 | 19 | .118 |
| Class self-ident. | | | | |
| working class | 39 | 59 | 47 | .127 |
| middle class | 55 | 38 | 44 | |
| Region | | | | |
| Mountain | 63 | 42 | 6 | .000 |
| Pacific | 21 | 29 | 16 | |
| Mid & So. Atl. | 8 | 17 | 32 | |
| East So. Central | 3 | 5 | 7 | |
| Age <40 | 68 | 52 | 44 | .000 |
| Family >4 kids | 31 | 24 | 20 | .003 |
| Conservative polit. self-ident. | 55 | 31 | 27 | .000 |
| Party preference | | | | |
| Republican | 66 | 30 | 30 | .000 |
| Democrat | 26 | 55 | 56 | |

* Probability of chance distribution by chi-square test. Ns here are the maximums for each column. They change somewhat from one item to another but rarely fall below 50 for either Lifers or Converts.

They also allow us to compare Mormon converts with lifelong members, or "lifers." To the extent that Mormons resemble non-Mormons, we might infer that assimilation has occurred. We cannot know how different Mormons were from non-Mormons in the past. Still, we can infer how assimilated Mormons are with non-Mormons now. At this point in the essay, we will be comparing

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demographic distributions like age, sex, occupation, education, etc. Variations do occur by time and region in certain social and political attitudes, not only for Mormons but for the general samples. Accordingly, whenever comparisons are made in this paper between Mormons and others, they are based on data aggregated across time in the same way; thus, they are affected in the same way by both time and region and thereby remain comparable. Both in the NORC data and in my surveys, it is possible to distinguish converts from lifers; thus, that kind of comparison is also introduced where salient.

mainly the first and third columns of the tables, reserving for later a closer look at the middle column (converts).

The demographic data in Table 1 shows that the "typical" Mormon is not extremely different from his or her non-Mormon counterpart in the United States. For obvious historical reasons, Mormons are geographically distributed disproportionately in the West. They differ little, if at all, however, from non-Mormons in occupational preferences or prestige. Lifers (but not converts) do differ noticeably in educational attainment, income, politics, age distribution, and family size, all in ways that underlie the social conservatism for which Mormons have become well known.

The NORC surveys from which these data come do not ask many questions about religious beliefs; but Mormon religious differences are pronounced, though again less for converts than for lifers. Mormons are much more likely than others to believe in life after death, to hold strong feelings for their own religion, to attend church regularly, and to abstain from alcohol and tobacco, though one in six smokes and one in three drinks.

On contemporary social issues in the nation (Tables 3 and 4), the comparisons between Mormons and non-Mormons do not correspond very closely with popular stereotypes. Mormons express much more support for civil liberties than do others, reinforcing my own finding of twenty years ago (1972a). Roof and McKinney (1987, 195) found that Mormons exceed nearly all other Christian bodies in upholding civil liberties for unpopular groups. Similarly, in attitudes toward blacks and toward women's roles, Mormons rarely differ from non-Mormons in statistically significant ways; and when they do, they tend to be more liberal than the non-Mormons, though this is somewhat less true for converts. Again, these findings replicate mine as far as the races are concerned (1972a); and again Roof and McKinney find Mormons ranking

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTIONS BY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND OBSERVANCES FOR LIFE-LONG MORMONS ("LIFERS"), CONVERTS, AND NON-MORMONS

| *Beliefs* | *Lifers* (N=113) | *Converts* (N=76) | *Non-Mormons* (N=1247) | *Prob.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Life after death | 96% | 88% | 76% | .000 |
| "Strong" feelings for religious affiliation | 63% | 48% | 42% | .001 |
| *Observances* | | | | |
| Church attendance | | | | |
| weekly or more | 56% | 49% | 31% | .000 |
| <annually | 21 | 29 | 38 | |
| Smoker at present | 16 | 18 | 38 | .002 |
| Ever drink at all now | 31 | 38 | 78 | .000 |
| Ever too much? (drinkers only) | 38 | 38 | 38 | .941 |

* See note on Table 1.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTIONS BY INDICATORS OF SOCIAL CONSERVATISM FOR LIFE-LONG MORMONS ("LIFERS"), CONVERTS, AND NON-MORMONS

| *Beliefs/Attitudes* | *Lifers* (N=113) | *Converts* (N=76) | *Non-Mormons* (N=1247) | *Prob.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civil Libertarianism: Agree that atheists should be allowed to — | | | | |
| Speak in public | 78% | 82% | 63% | .001 |
| Teach in schools | 61% | 43% | 43% | .008 |
| Have anti-religious books in library | 68% | 74% | 61% | .075 |
| Church/State Separation: Prayer in the public schools | | | | |
| Approve | 51% | 50% | 37% | .059 |
| Sex-Related Issues | | | | |
| Approval of abortion — | | | | |
| For any reason | 22% | 16% | 36% | .000 |
| If single woman | 22% | 28% | 43% | .000 |
| If married, not wanting more | 19% | 24% | 41% | .000 |
| Favor sex education in public schools | 62% | 75% | 79% | .104 |
| Favor general laws vs. pornography | 62% | 61% | 41% | .015 |
| Has seen X-rated movie during past year | 15% | 5% | 19% | .293 |
| Believe homosexual relations are always wrong | 86% | 93% | 69% | .034 |
| Would allow book by homosexual in public library | 44% | 46% | 43% | .979 |
| Cynicism or "Anomia": Agreement that — | | | | |
| The lot of the average man is getting worse | 53% | 61% | 61% | .364 |
| It's not fair to bring a child into this kind of world | 19% | 34% | 43% | .000 |
| Government officials, etc., are not interested in the average man | 53% | 63% | 68% | .017 |

* See note on Table 1.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTIONS BY ATTITUDES ON RACE AND GENDER ISSUES FOR LIFE-LONG MORMONS ("LIFERS"), CONVERTS, AND NON-MORMONS

| *Beliefs/Attitudes* | *Lifers* (N=113) | *Converts* (N=76) | *Non-Mormons* (N=1247) | *Prob.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Race Attitudes: Agree strongly that — | | | | |
| Whites and blacks should attend separate schools | 7% | 4% | 11% | .447 |
| Whites have a right to segregate neighborhoods | 10% | 13% | 15% | .568 |
| Blacks should not push so hard | 23% | 41% | 38% | .205 |
| Favor laws against intermarriage | 18% | 29% | 29% | .072 |
| Favor school busing for integration | 23% | 10% | 20% | .123 |
| Would vote for a black for president | 87% | 84% | 78% | .357 |
| Gender Attitudes: Agree that — | | | | |
| All right for women to work outside home | 75% | 58% | 71% | .439 |
| Women should take care of the home, not the country | 28% | 43% | 30% | .233 |
| Women are not suited for politics | 32% | 61% | 42% | .024 |
| Would vote for a woman for president | 79% | 73% | 81% | .204 |

* See note on Table 1.

ahead of most other Christians on "racial justice" and "women's rights" (1987, 200, 209).[7]

In general, the most consistent attitudinal differences between Mormons and non-Mormons are those which also distinguish the nation's more conservative Protestants on such issues as prayer in public schools, abortion, sex education in the schools, pornography, and tolerance of homosexuality. As Table 3 indicates, Mormons tend to be much more conservative than non-Mormons on these issues. Similarly, Roof and McKinney (1987, 214) found Mormons strongly resembling Southern Baptists and other fundamentalists on these issues. A separate survey of some 900 college students at four campuses in the United States and Canada also found "general substantive agreement" on such issues between Mormons and conservative Christians, as well as very similar scores on a "Moral Majority Scale" (Brinkerhoff, Jacob, and Mackie 1987).

Mormons often cite family values and behavior as important distinguishing traits. Indeed, because of a theology and cosmology that have always been both familial and patriarchal, Mormons have been strongly oriented toward marriage and family from the beginning (Campbell and Campbell 1981; Thomas 1983). Accordingly, most studies have shown Mormons more likely than other Americans to abstain from premarital and extramarital sexual relations, to marry, to remarry after divorce or widowhood, and to have relatively large families (Bahr, Condie, and Goodman 1982; Christensen 1976, 1982; Heaton 1986, 1987a; Heaton and Goodman 1985; and Smith 1976).

At the same time, however, Mormons do not differ appreciably from other Americans in using contraceptives, in divorce rates, in the incidence of female depression, or in certain other common family problems (Bahr 1981; Bluhm, Spendlove, and West 1986; Heaton and Calkins 1983; Martin, Heaton, and Bahr 1986). Nor, despite the patriarchal rhetoric, do Mormons differ from most other Americans in the rate at which married women are gainfully employed or in how married couples share power (Albrecht, Bahr, Chadwick 1979; Bahr 1979, 1982; Bahr and Rollins 1971; Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1984; Martin, Heaton, and Bahr 1986).

[7] It is important to emphasize that the Mormon sample in these tables is not large enough, even as aggregated across the years, to carry the burden of the case for Mormon assimilation, nor am I using the tables for that purpose. The case for a social and cultural convergence of Mormons with other Americans rests mainly upon (1) the preceding paragraphs on assimilation at the corporate level; (2) the systematic evidence from the Shepherds (1984) on the changing content of general conference sermons; (3) the evidence from my own older and larger surveys; and (4) the highly corroborative findings on Mormon social attitudes and behavior from the empirical studies of other scholars cited often in these pages.

Yet, although the NORC data in these tables can be considered only as suggestive, they should not be disregarded. The tables have been presented in three columns to obviate the need for two sets of tables (one each for the Mormon/non-Mormon comparison and for the lifer/convert comparison). This form of presentation, however, actually underestimates the Mormon/non-Mormon similarities, since the converts are usually closer statistically to the non-Mormons. Thus, if the convert and lifer data were merged into one Mormon column (as in Roof and McKinney 1987), then the Mormon/non-Mormon differences would be even smaller. Furthermore, the total (merged) sample size for Mormons would be much larger than in either of the two existing Mormon columns, thereby enhancing also the statistical significance of the comparisons.

From these data, I would generalize that Mormons resemble other middle-class Americans in their basic beliefs and values far more than they differ from them (Davies 1963) and that such distinguishing traits as they do have in politics, family or sexual values, and alcohol use make them look much more like other conservative Christians than like an unassimilated minority. Recent changes in the surrounding culture have also helped erode Mormon distinctiveness. National campaigns decry tobacco, alcohol, caffeine, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise; others promote wholesome family life. National politics are more conservative than perhaps at any time in the past half century. (For a generally congruent assessment of the few differences between Mormons and other Americans, see Clayton 1986).

Thus, American Mormons have achieved a high degree of assimilation, a mixed blessing, which has brought the Church and its individual members to a new predicament.

## THE PREDICAMENT OF RESPECTABILITY

In the predicament of respectability, the corporate institution and individual members feel an increasing need to reassert their claims to a separate identity and uniqueness, to reach ever deeper into their bag of cultural peculiarities to find either symbolic or actual traits that will help them mark their subcultural boundaries. Even the traditional Mormon theological heresies have a less distinguishing effect in a society which has generally grown indifferent to theology as opposed to the search for personal fulfillment.

A new Mormon resistance to assimilation, and an effort to recover peculiarity, seem visible on at least three levels: (1) Official, where presiding authorities make renewed efforts to reassert the charismatic and prophetic element of the angel through new programs and through reemphasizing, renewing, or retrenching existing programs and principles. (2) Folk, where individuals and groups of Church members in wards and stakes identify and promote certain values and norms of behavior as uniquely or especially Mormon, in reaction to the pressures of assimilation. (3) Scholarly, where Mormon academics and intellectuals seek out, illuminate, and celebrate our unique historical and cultural identity. Such enterprises as the Mormon History Association, DIALOGUE, *Sunstone* (both symposia and magazine), and the "Camelot" days in the Church Historical Department can, I think, all be understood as part of this level (Bitton 1983).[8] However, the remainder of this essay will concentrate on the official and folk levels.

### *Official Efforts: Historical Background*

Those useful abstractions, "stages of history," are not marked by distinct boundaries. Rather, there is much overlapping at the margins, as the forces set in motion during an earlier stage play themselves out simultaneously with

[8] One of the excesses of this scholarly thrust, in my opinion, has been the effort in Canada and in the U.S. to define Mormons as a separate "ethnic group" (May 1980; Card et al., in press), an effort to which I have taken exception elsewhere (Mauss, in press).

the emergence of new forces headed in different directions. It is thus very difficult to set a date for the end of the "assimilationist stage" and the beginning of resistance to assimilation. The concern with respectability is certainly still obvious in the massive public-relations campaign of the 1970s and 1980s. Yet at some point after World War II, it seems clear that at least some segment of the Church leadership became more concerned with the costs of assimilation than with the benefits; more concerned with the consequences of a muted Mormon identity, an ambiguous peculiarity, than with maintaining or enhancing a position of comfortable respectability.

The seeds of that change may have been planted as early as the mid-1930s when the Great Depression brought a sense of crisis in the Mormon community and perhaps a renewed sense of dependence on "first principles" and on the Church as a source of security. The newly organized (or reorganized) Church Welfare Program of that time, with its stress on communitarianism, might be understood as such an expression. American political changes, exemplified by Prohibition repeal and the New Deal, were also threatening. President Heber J. Grant, for example, regarded the emerging political values as so subversive to the moral fiber of the nation that he became a Republican.

A thorough history remains to be written of the Church since the 1930s, but it seems clear, given the political and economic conditions just mentioned, that the thirties provided a fertile environment for change. The calling of J. Reuben Clark to the First Presidency during this time seems in retrospect to have been as significant as it was fortuitous. I do not mean to subscribe to such simplistic notions as a "great man" theory of history, but my reading of Clark's biography (Quinn 1983) convinces me that his appointment in 1933 had a more profound impact on the Church than any other First Presidency appointment since Jedediah M. Grant's during the "Reformation" in 1854 (Sessions 1982).

Coinciding with President Clark's appointment came the deaths of B. H. Roberts, James E. Talmage, and Anthony W. Ivins, influential proponents of a different leadership style. Equally significant and coincidental was the fact that for nearly two decades the presidents of the Church to whom Clark was first counselor were not in vigorous health, President Grant because of advanced age and President George Albert Smith because of a chronic condition. These coincidental conditions in top leadership, in effect, left the vigorous, conservative, and eloquent President Clark as the Church's most influential spokesman with few dissenters of comparable personal or ecclesiastical power.

To some extent, Clark's colleague in the First Presidency, David O. McKay, provided a degree of balance; but President McKay disliked confrontations and tended to avoid engaging Clark directly. These differences in style and philosophy signaled the emergence of "camps" among the General Authorities, evident from the tendency even in the 1930s to speak of each other as "Clark men" or "McKay men" (Quinn 1983, 117–28). In the early 1940s, with President Grant growing feebler, four young apostles were called — Harold B. Lee, Spencer W. Kimball, Ezra Taft Benson, and Mark E. Petersen. Elders Lee, Benson, and Petersen, at least, were clearly identifiable as "Clark men."

Elder Lee had a powerful impact upon Church organization as the architect of the Welfare Program even in the 1930s, and then of the Correlation Movement in the 1960s (Gottlieb and Wiley 1984, 59–64; 194–99; Wiley 1984–85). Elder Petersen, during much of his tenure among the Twelve, had the special assignment of dealing with apostates and trying to protect the Church from their influence. He undertook a number of forays against the fancied faithless, including an attempted "purge" of certain DIALOGUE scholars (myself included) as recently as 1983. Elders Lee, Petersen, and Benson have all been known for their theological and political conservatism, their preference for centralized and standardized control, their stress upon obedience to current authority, and their suspicion of scholars and intellectuals.

Because we lack access to the records of the crucial deliberations, we cannot document President Clark's exact involvement in these appointments. However, his influence during 1943–44 must have been great. President Grant was already incapacitated from the lengthy illness that would end his life in early 1945. It is apparent also that these three shared President Clark's preference for a more formal, bureaucratic, and centralized leadership style (Quinn 1983, 300).

I do not mean to suggest a conservative conspiracy. After all, such important leaders as David O. McKay, Stephen L Richards, John A. Widtsoe, and Matthew Cowley were clearly not "Clark men." I suggest only that as these Clark-sponsored men gained seniority and power, along with certain others like Bruce R. McConkie, appointed to the First Council of Seventy about the same time, they would naturally have been disposed to support the renewal and retrenchment ethos increasingly apparent in Church leadership since World War II. Their support may or may not have been decisive, but it must have been important.

Harold B. Lee's "correlation movement" expressed the organizational commitment to renewal and retrenchment. As Richard D. Poll explains from personal experience, Elder Lee, the "quintessential Iron Rod," was the prime mover behind Correlation, a program "originally intended to eliminate duplicate and inefficient programs and practices," but which by the 1970s had produced "a standardized and sanitized instructional curriculum [in which the] intellectual threat was being contained by eliminating intellectual inquiry from Church education" (1985, 17).

Even earlier, in the early 1950s, Elders Lee, Joseph Fielding Smith, Bruce R. McConkie, and others were trying to close down the "swearing elders" seminars at the University of Utah (Bergera and Priddis 1985, 155–56; Blakely 1985; Poll 1985), removing or transferring such "liberals" as George Boyd and Heber Snell from the Utah LDS Institutes (Sherlock 1979) and urging the adoption of Elder Smith's anti-evolutionist *Man: His Origin and Destiny* as an Institute text.

It is against this historical background of organizational developments from the 1930s to the 1950s that we can better understand the significance of more recent retrenchment efforts. Five such efforts seem especially noteworthy.

*Five Contemporary Features*

1. *Reassertion of the principle of continuous revelation through modern prophets.* Though a classic doctrine of Mormonism, this principle has received renewed emphasis in recent years, as manifest by the increased frequency of the charge, "Follow the Brethren!" The Shepherds confirm empirically that since 1950, if not earlier, general conference sermons have shown a greatly increased emphasis upon keeping the commandments, the dangers of disobedience, and the importance of obeying priesthood leaders (1984, Appendix C).

Second, three new revelatory sections have been added to the canon in the Doctrine and Covenants after a hiatus of nearly a century. The renewed emphasis upon the Book of Mormon, a particular preoccupation of the Benson presidency, can also be seen in this light. Admittedly the assimilationist motif of the Church can be seen in the 1981 addition of a Book of Mormon subtitle, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," thus stressing a common Christian heritage with the rest of America. Yet, at the same time, there has been an increased stress on the book as concrete evidence of the prophetic claims of Joseph Smith.

Clearly related, especially during the period of Spencer W. Kimball's influence, has been the increased focus on Lamanites and, indeed, the expansion of that term officially in recent years to cover Polynesians (England 1985). The establishment a few years ago of the private Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), housed at BYU, might be seen as a scholarly, or even a semi-official, expression of the same renewed emphasis on the Book of Mormon. All of these developments, in one way or another, stress that the traditional prophetic claims of Mormonism continue to provide a basis for Mormon distinctiveness.

Even some of the politically unpopular positions of Church leadership in recent years can be understood as efforts to maintain the integrity of the prophetic office (Mauss and Bradford 1988). The official response to criticism of the Church's pre-1978 racial policies reasserted the divine legitimacy of the prophets' leadership; and that issue early displaced the racial issue itself for leaders and probably for most members as well (Mauss 1981). Similarly, I find that official resistance to many feminist claims is not so much an expression of patriarchal politics as another assertion of the integrity and charisma of the prophetic office in the face of pressures for political expediency.

2. *Renewed emphasis on genealogy and temple work.* Few characteristics are as uniquely and authentically Mormon as these two related programs. Both have received enormously increased emphasis in the past two decades. Genealogical research has been increasingly computerized and turned over to a cadre of professionals and to specially trained volunteers at stake genealogical libraries. The name extraction program greatly facilitates ordinance work for deceased individuals, separating ordinances from demonstrated kinship.

At the same time, however, lay Saints are kept involved in the genealogy program (at least in principle) through the continued requirement for each individual to complete four generations of pedigree/family group sheets and

through expanding the meaning of "genealogy" to emphasize personal and family histories. Indeed, the genealogy program and library were, in 1987, renamed "Family History." An important effect is to foster the continued sense of connection to a unique identity and heritage among members, including converts.

Since 1950, there has been a tremendous increase in the emphasis given to temples and temple work in general conference sermons (Shepherd and Shepherd 1984, Appendix C). Up to the end of World War II, there had never been more than eight temples in operation. Five more were added in the next twenty years. The 1985 *Church Almanac* lists almost fifty, either in operation or under construction (Deseret News 1984, 12). This post-1965 increase in temples has been accompanied by a streamlining of the ceremony, both substantively and technologically, and by a modernization of the garment (Buerger 1987, 55–56).

These changes have made temple work more accessible geographically, logistically, and even psychologically to a vastly larger proportion of members than ever before (Deseret News 1984, 12). Though there is some question about how much proportionate increase has occurred in actual temple participation (Buerger 1987, 63–67), the very presence of temples in new locations and the potential for increased participation enhances the sense of distinct identity, especially among Mormons who live near the growing number of temples and wear the garment as a symbol of resistance to assimilation (Mauss 1987).

3. *The missionary program.* While Mormons have always proselyted, the creation of the 1960s slogan "Every Member a Missionary" epitomizes a renewed commitment to missionary work. Earlier in the century, mission calls to young men were by no means routine, and a relatively small proportion of them received calls. It was not unusual for farewells before 1960 to feature visiting speakers and musicians and ornate printed programs, all now generally abandoned as part of the attempt in recent years to routinize and universalize the expectation of a mission call for young men and, increasingly, for young women. Though only about a third of the eligible young men are actually serving missions in the 1980s, that is almost certainly a large increase over the proportions called earlier in the century. With nearly 40,000 maintained in the field during the late eighties, Mormon missionaries very nearly equal the combined total of all the missionaries sent from the Protestant denominations of the United States, according to a colleague of mine on the research staff of the National Council of Churches.

Other manifestations of intensified commitment to missionary work can be seen in the efficient language and other training for missionaries; the continuous resort to and experimentation with standardized proselyting plans; the ongoing sociological research on the conversion process and determinants of missionary success; perhaps an increased willingness to recruit women and retired couples (according to a knowledgeable informant on the MTC staff, women now constitute 15 percent of each new missionary group); and even the constant "remodeling" of the missionary program at the local or stake level.

4. *Family renewal and retrenchment.* The sanctity and solidarity of Mormon family life have always been recognized, by Mormons and by others, as the foundation of both church and nation (Heaton 1987a). Yet a new emphasis on strengthening the family is clearly visible in the recent history of the Church, beginning at least with the introduction of the Family Home Evening program about twenty-five years ago and epitomized in the well-known McKay dictum, "No success in life can compensate for failure in the home."

This emphasis can be seen in a variety of official initiatives: Church-published family home evening manuals placed in every home annually (until recent years); the official expectation (not always achieved) of a Sunday School family relations course annually; the regular features, "Family Handbook" and "Family Home Evening," in the *Ensign* during the present decade; articles in nearly every *Ensign* on such practical problems as marriage enrichment, inactive or nonmember spouses, divorce, and infidelity; and a general pronatal and prochild ethos that expresses itself (among other ways) in tolerance for a remarkable level of child-generated noise in worship services.

The Shepherds' data corroborate this general picture of renewed official emphasis on family life. Between 1950 and 1980, by comparison with 1920–50, general conference talks saw a five-fold increase in references to children, four-fold in references to family life, eight-fold in references to marriage, and five-fold in references to motherhood, though none in reference to fatherhood (1984, Appendix C).

This renewed family focus has, of course, coincided in recent years with the return of feminism as a major American issue; and that juxtaposition creates the best context, I think, for understanding the apparently conservative official stance toward careers or gainful employment for mothers and toward other feminist aspirations.

President Benson's widely circulated addresses of February and October 1987, criticizing mothers' employment or their postponement of childbearing, represent perhaps the conservative extreme among today's Church leaders (1987a, 1987b). Yet rarely are official statements so uncompromising. Six months after President Benson's address to fathers, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, his first counselor, in an address to Regional Representatives (1988a) later summarized for the general Church membership (1988b), extolled the career accomplishments of prominent women who had made important contributions to the world in political and other realms (Hinckley 1988). Certainly no efforts have been made to apply President Benson's instructions to the thousands of mothers who contribute their services to auxiliary boards on the general, stake, and ward levels (Huefner 1971), to say nothing of the mothers on the Church payroll itself, both in professional and clerical positions, from the Church Office Building to the BYU campus. All things considered, it is difficult to infer any specific official Church policy in this regard.

It is perhaps more helpful to interpret the admonitions of Church leaders about the primacy of the domestic role for women as asserting the priority of the family, rather than as asserting patriarchal privilege against feminist aspirations. What presumably distresses Church leaders, and ought to distress

everyone, is the deterioration of the family institution during the past generation, both in the United States and in the Church, as indicated by increasing rates of divorce, extra-marital pregnancy, abortion, and child abuse (Martin, Heaton, and Bahr 1986).

Church leaders over fifty — a large percent of those now serving — grew up in an era that assumed mothers were the chief caretakers of the family. It is not difficult to understand why so many might assume that the increasing entry of women into the labor force is correlated more than coincidentally with family deterioration. These leaders seem to be calling us back to an earlier and "safer" model of the authentic Mormon family, as another way of reasserting our uniqueness against a secularizing and assimilating world (Heaton 1987a, 1987b).

5. *Religious education.* The past twenty-five years have also seen greater emphasis upon religious education at both the high school and college levels. Even junior colleges, at least in the West, are likely to have Institutes of Religion nearby. "Early-morning" seminaries have spread to nearly every corner of the United States and overseas as well. The seminary program, in particular, must be extraordinarily expensive, both in the demands it places upon participants and in the money it costs the Church; but no systematic cost-benefit analysis has been made to see whether this program achieves its goal of enhancing the gospel knowledge and testimonies of its students. Yet perhaps more important is its symbolic significance as a means of asserting Mormon identity to one's peers. The choice of BYU for college probably has a similar function, in addition to educational goals.

LDS religious education has not only become more extensive but also more intensively Mormon. When the Church Education System (CES) was founded in the 1920s, the Church was still largely in the assimilationist mode, and its curriculum was more inclined to make use of non-Mormon scriptural and theological scholarship and to stress the articulation or the reconciliation of Mormon doctrine with the best in the "wisdom of the world" (Arrington 1967). As mentioned, promising young faculty members, with Church financial support, studied at the University of Chicago and other centers of scholarship, while visiting theologians taught summer sessions in Provo for seminary teachers (Nelson 1985; Sherlock 1979; Swensen 1972).

J. Reuben Clark opposed this trend as early as 1938 (Bergera and Priddis 1985, 60–62; Clark 1938). Another example of the changing intellectual climate in CES was the case of Heber C. Snell, a prominent CES scholar, who published an interpretation of the Old Testament in his 1949 *Ancient Israel*, a work highly acclaimed by professional scholars, Mormon and non-Mormon, and widely circulated among LDS institutes but which generated considerable internal controversy. At least as early as 1937, Snell's lectures had stirred up more general controversy and attracted the wrath of Joseph Fielding Smith. Though the First Presidency remained publicly aloof, Mark E. Petersen supported Elder Smith's position, while John A. Widtsoe, Joseph F. Merrill, and Levi Edgar Young, scholarly minded apostles from the earlier generation, took the other side. With such protection, Snell retained his institute position until

a face-saving but involuntary retirement in 1950, at the age of sixty-seven (Sherlock 1979).

Four years later, Elders Smith and Harold B. Lee personally taught seminary and institute faculty in the annual CES summer school at BYU, using Smith's *Man: His Origin and Destiny* as a text. They required all in attendance to pass an examination on it and urged that it be "taught" in the seminaries and institutes (Bergera and Priddis 1985, 152–55; Poll 1985). To the relief of many CES faculty members, President Clark (1954) a few days later effectively countermanded such an intrusion of unofficial doctrine, pointing out that only the president of the Church may define official doctrine and then only when he is speaking as a prophet. Nevertheless, the teachers who had most outspokenly opposed the Smith and Lee enterprise, including George Boyd and Lowell Bennion, both at the institute at the University of Utah, almost immediately experienced efforts to transfer them to institutes where they would be less influential.[9]

Since that time, the pedagogical posture of the CES has become increasingly anti-scientific and anti-intellectual, more inward looking, more intent on the uniqueness and exclusiveness of the Mormon version of the gospel as opposed to other interpretations, whether religious or scientific. Lesson manuals still occasionally take gratuitous swipes at scientists, intellectuals, and modernist ideas, which are blamed for jeopardizing students' testimonies. Non-Mormon sources and resources are rarely used and highly suspect. Even *Mormon* scholarly journals like DIALOGUE cannot be purchased for seminaries or institutes with Church funds, instructors' private copies are not supposed to be visible in their offices, and CES personnel are strongly discouraged from participating in Sunstone or MHA conferences.[10]

Thus, the Church, in educating the younger generation, seems to draw emphatic lines once more between Mormon and non-Mormon identities. Whether through deliberate pedagogy or selective recruitment or both, the Brigham Young University student body also has grown increasingly conservative in its outlook on religion and science during the past fifty years (Christensen and Cannon 1978).

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[9] The effort to move Boyd to USC was successful, while Bennion barely escaped transfer to Logan. My information about this episode comes from interviews with Lowell Bennion, George Boyd, and Eugene Campbell, August 1985, transcripts of notes in my possession.

[10] My generalizations about CES policy on "outside" materials and faculty participation come from recent conversations with close friends and relatives who are highly placed in the Church Education System. Examples of "gratuitous swipes" can be seen in the 1981 student manual for the LDS Institute course on the Book of Mormon, Religion 121–22 (CES 1981). The anti-Christ Korihor (Lesson 29) is personified as an academic intellectual ("Professor Cochran"). The manual quotes Ezra Taft Benson, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Bruce R. McConkie to criticize humanism, evolutionism, and birth control (pp. 8, 114, 379), to promote a highly literal interpretation of the Fall (pp. 72–73), and to perpetuate a racist characterization of American Indians (p. 112). With the exception of the reference to Indians, the Book of Mormon itself does not speak to any of those issues; thus, their use is entirely gratuitous.

*The Quest for Peculiarity at the Folk Level*

How has this program of renewal and retrenchment worked in practice? How well have "the folk" responded to the official admonitions from Church headquarters?

To assess the impact of official efforts in the five areas discussed above would require systematic data from longitudinal studies of grassroots compliance. Such data are not available. However, let me share some impressions.

I have the general impression that "follow the brethren" is a slogan taken seriously at the grassroots level, even if its operational implications are not well understood. For some, it seems to mean that "when our leaders speak, the thinking has been done." Even though a 1945 "ward teaching" message to that effect was repudiated by President George Albert Smith ("A 1945 Perspective" 1986), Elaine Cannon, speaking as Young Women's general president, repeated the slogan before a television audience of thousands in the 1970s. Church members of a more independent mind, find such a stance repugnant to the principles of free agency and personal responsibility (Cummings 1986; Newell 1986). Yet even the readers of DIALOGUE, presumably an independent-minded lot, in a 1984 survey, expressed a willingness by a margin of two to one to go along with Church policies that displeased them — perhaps with some question but with no "dissent," even privately (Mauss, Tarjan, and Esplin 1987).

Compliance with official injunctions to do genealogical and temple work is likewise difficult to assess. The name-extraction program and branch libraries in virtually every stake give the impression of more grassroots research than ever. Yet, in my stake at least, most of the users are nonmember genealogy buffs, not Saints doing their duty. With so many temples, one is also tempted to assume that more members than before are doing more temple work. Buerger (1987) has called such an assumption into question, although his data, as he acknowledges, are incomplete.

The third area of emphasis, missionary work, has yielded a record number of missionaries, as noted. Yet according to a knowledgeable informant from the Church's office of research and evaluation, only about a third of the Church's young men and a tenth of the young women accept mission calls. The survey data I collected twenty years ago from probability samples of Salt Lake City and San Francisco Mormons (Mauss 1972a) demonstrated that missionary service was a most important predictor of adult activity and commitment, second only to youthful home experiences. The missionary program thus functions as a powerful means of religious socialization for post-adolescent youth, quite apart from the new converts it generates. At the individual level, missionary service also represents a powerful assertion and cultivation of a special Mormon identity, just as William Shaffir (1978) found that "witnessing" functions similarly for Hassidic Jews. In an age when Mormons, like Jews, have been subjected to decades of American assimilation, proselyting's identity-maintaining function is extremely important.

When it comes to family programs, twenty years ago about half of the Utah and California Mormons in my survey held family home evening with any regularity. I know of no subsequent data indicating any higher levels of compliance. Given the increasing proportions in the Church of both single people and older couples beyond the child-rearing years (Heaton 1987b), it is probably not realistic to expect anything near total compliance, despite the "pseudo-family" groups into which singles are sometimes organized.

Mormon divorce rates are at least as high as those of the nation in general, though much lower for temple-married couples. Rates of child delinquency and abuse are also not far from the national average, if we can make inferences from Utah data (Bahr 1981; Heaton 1987a; Martin, Heaton, and Bahr 1986). Only 20 percent of Mormon households fit the official image of a temple-married couple with children at home (Heaton 1987b). At the same time, however, compliance with Church norms can be seen in the relatively high rates of premarital chastity, family formation, and fertility (Christensen 1982; Heaton 1987a; Heaton and Calkins 1983; Heaton and Goodman 1985).

In the division of labor and authority between spouses — patriarchal by Mormon tradition — the reality again conforms rather imperfectly with the official ideology. Mormon mothers are employed outside the home at about the same rates as other American mothers, despite a higher rate of expressed preference for at-home mothers (Bahr 1979; Heaton 1987a, 1987b; Martin, Heaton, and Bahr 1986). The rhetoric may be patriarchal, but actual decision-making is quite egalitarian (Bahr 1982; Heaton 1987a, 1987b), an interesting paradox also found in other conservative religious communities (Rose 1987). Nor do Mormon women suffer depression at higher rates than non-Mormon women in similar circumstances (Bluhm, Spendlove, and West 1986). Except for family size, it may be difficult to find many differences, either favorable or unfavorable, between Mormon families and most others.

The impact of the extensive Church religious education programs is also doubtful. Although a larger proportion of LDS teenagers attend seminary than ever before, my survey twenty years ago revealed that seminary attendance had no independent impact on later religious commitment once we controlled for home backgrounds. The *home*, not seminary, made the difference, in higher rates of missions, temple marriages, and adult activity. A much more recent and extensive study yielded similar conclusions, though it found evidence of indirect seminary impact through influencing the youngsters' choice of peers (Cornwall 1987).

### *Mormon Folk Religion and the Quest for Peculiarity*

Although grassroots compliance with official teachings and directives seems to be incomplete and imperfect, there is another dimension of this renewed quest for peculiarity: the apparent rise and spread of Mormon "folk fundamentalism." While that movement has been aided and abetted by occasional speeches or comments from individual General Authorities or, more often, local Church leaders, it is essentially a folk phenomenon that has become increasingly apparent since World War II. The distinction between the folk

and official levels, though clear enough in principle, frequently blurs in reality for these reasons: in a lay-ministry the clergy are also part of the "folk" (Sorenson 1983); and these lay leaders, whether at the general, stake, or ward levels, often fail to specify whether they are speaking in their official or their personal capacities (Capener 1984; Clark 1954; Davis 1985; Mauss 1981, 32–34; Dunn 1982).[11]

I also find that the official/lay distinction is more likely to be blurred at lower levels of the priesthood hierarchy. The General Authorities, as a body, seem to be the most parsimonious and modest about claiming prophetic sanction for their personal preferences, though a few conspicuous exceptions must be acknowledged (Buerger 1985). More often, it is local lay leaders or salaried Church bureaucrats who attribute to General Authorities an infallibility that few of the latter seem willing to claim for themselves.

Within this context, I suggest that folk Mormonism has borrowed increasingly from Protestant fundamentalism for at least fifty years. I further suggest, as an explanation, an ambiguous and undefined grassroots awareness of the "predicament of respectability." This awareness is manifest as uneasiness in the face of almost daily ambiguity about where to draw the line between the Mormon way and the world's ways. Mormon families and individuals, as a result of assimilation, have had to shoulder an increasing burden of responsibility for defining that boundary themselves. Mormons have thus had to find symbolic and psychological ways of maintaining a unique Mormon identity that used to be maintained largely in geographic and political ways. When an assimilating and comfortable world offers a great many alternative choices, and even alternative interpretations of Mormon ideals, then identity-maintaining decisions are much harder to make.

For example, how many children are necessary to comprise a truly "Mormon" family? As many as possible? Can we use artificial contraceptives to "space" or even to prevent children? What is sex "for," anyway, just procreation? Even within a marriage, is it all right to enjoy sex for its own sake, or is that too much like X-rated worldly, carnal indulgence? How much can we talk about sex, or read about it, without undermining our spirituality? How much sex (and portrayed how) is acceptable in our literature, arts, and films? How much, and what kinds, of sex education should we give our children, and how soon? What is the "Church policy" on such matters? Or what is the Lord's will? Or what is the Mormon way? Lacking definitive answers to such questions, many Saints retreat to the "safety" of sexual prudery, parsimony, or silence, for which Utah in early February 1988 was publicly criticized by U.S. Surgeon General Everett Koop.

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[11] I here characterize as "official" only those teachings, directives, or policies found either in LDS scriptures or over the signatures of the First Presidency. Thus, a given address, article, or statement by an individual apostle, high-ranking Church leader, or ward/stake leader is "folk religion," for the purposes of this essay. Such public expressions may not be the product of the careful, collective deliberations of the General Authorities and often represent the speaker's personal biases and preferences, including those derived from Mormon folk religion (Mauss 1981, 32–34; Dunn 1982).

Similarly, a rational or even traditional observance of the Word of Wisdom is not enough to ensure a unique Mormon identity for some Saints. If a "true Mormon" says that tobacco and alcohol are bad, so now do a great many gentiles, even the federal government. Many gentiles too have given up coffee and tea, or at least have turned to decaffeinated varieties. How can the Saints truly distinguish themselves today in their health practices? One way would be to eschew meat-eating, obesity, and household drugs, as the Word of Wisdom itself would suggest; but instead, many have chosen the safety of an exclusionary checklist — abstinence not only from tobacco, alcohol, coffee, and tea, but also from cola drinks, decaffeinated coffees, white flour, white sugar, and "processed" foods.

The same existential anxiety about a Mormon identity shows itself in such questions as: What can a true Mormon do on Sunday? or, more often, What must one absolutely *not* do? As a teacher, must one "stick to the manual," or may one bring in relevant "outside" material? If so, how much, and from where? Can a faithful bearer of the priesthood "let" his wife work outside the home? If so, how much, under what circumstances, and with what career plans? If gambling is officially discouraged, can a "true Mormon" play cards for fun or is there something intrinsically "un-Mormon" about holding face cards? What kind of music is acceptable for Church dances or even for a "true Mormon" home? Leaving aside the question of "suggestive" lyrics, is there a certain "beat" or decibel-level that is "spiritually dangerous"?

For all of these questions, there has been remarkably little official Church guidance offered, presumably in the expectation that the Saints should make some of these decisions for themselves. Yet for many, the decisions have taken the form of fleeing from uncertainty and insecurity to the safety of the most conservative extreme. Ironically, such differences are also conspicuous features of Protestant fundamentalism (Ammerman 1987; Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1984; Marsden 1980).

*Fundamentalism in American Religion*

Early in the twentieth century, two movements became apparent in Protestant Christianity in America: the social gospel movement and fundamentalism, whose proponents preferred the "old time religion" more common in nineteenth-century Protestantism. While the schism cut across denominational lines, denominations more heavily influenced by the theological perspective of the "social gospel" included Unitarians, Episcopalians, Methodists, American (northern) Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. These churches have come to be called "mainline" American denominations and comprise a clear majority of Protestants in the United States (Roof and McKinney 1987). In contrast, the Southern Baptists and many smaller sects have clung to the fundamentalist style and content.

This oversimplified review does not acknowledge the emergent strife between "moderate" and "fundamentalist" factions in nearly all denominations even today, or the intermediate category sometimes called "evangelical," or the "neo-orthodox" reaction in seminaries and denominations after World War II,

which has further complicated the Protestant religious scene (White 1987). Nevertheless, I think it is fair to say that American Protestant fundamentalism is characterized by such features as scriptural literalism, authoritarianism and strict obedience to pastoral injunctions, salvation by grace (sometimes through "born-again" experiences), a certain austerity in religious style, prudery in matters of sex and gender, and a hostility toward "modernist" influences like "secular humanism," biblical criticism, and scientific theories like evolution (Ammerman 1987; Marsden 1980).

This major religious development coincided with Mormonism's transition from its nineteenth-century disrepute to its twentieth-century acceptance and assimilation. As the assimilation process went on, Mormonism was understandably influenced by these same national trends (Alexander 1982, 1986). Some LDS leaders, notably Joseph F. Smith and his son, Joseph Fielding Smith, were clearly influenced by fundamentalism, which expressed itself, among other ways, in a long struggle over official policy on the theory of evolution (Bergera and Priddis 1985; Keller 1982; Sherlock 1980).

Although Mormonism has always had a certain tendency toward literal-mindedness (Cummings 1982), much in earlier Mormon history and doctrine was more compatible with humanism and modernism (Ericksen 1922; Kenney 1987; McMurrin 1969; O'Dea 1957). Moreover, fundamentalism had always provided the chief theological and ecclesiastical animus for nineteenth-century persecutions. Finally, as the American religious mainstream became increasingly tolerant toward Mormons and increasingly oriented toward the social gospel, Mormon leadership simultaneously began to include younger General Authorities like James E. Talmage and John A. Widtsoe with "modernist" scholarly credentials and a scientific bent (Alexander 1982, 46, 47, 53).

Despite the 1911 "purge" of pro-evolutionist faculty at BYU (Bergera and Priddis 1985), Church leadership in general declined to take an official position on evolution, and the topic was ruled out for discussion until revived by Joseph Fielding Smith in the 1950s (Alexander 1980, 1982; Sherlock 1980; Keller 1982). Even the enforcement of the Word of Wisdom, reflecting a fundamentalist preference especially of President Grant, did not gain Church-wide acceptance until the 1930s (Alexander 1981). Furthermore, the Church began including such conspicuously "social gospel" elements as professional social work and a children's hospital into its program during the 1920s and 1930s as part of its increasingly assimilationist posture toward the nation as a whole (Alexander 1983, 1986; Christensen 1987; Kenney 1978, 1987; Nelson 1985).

After the 1930s, however, as the Church leadership began to deal with its new predicament of respectability, it turned gradually but increasingly toward retrenchment and resistance to assimilation in order to maintain a claim to a distinct Mormon identity. The folk, for their part (including a few in high places), have found ways of their own to deal with this predicament, attempting somehow to become a little more "Mormon" by becoming a little less "respectable." One form of that effort has been a certain amount of borrowing from the less popular American tradition of fundamentalism (Crapo 1987).

*Forms of Mormon Folk Fundamentalism*

The doctrinal content of folk fundamentalism has been explored at some length and with convincing documentation by O. Kendall White (1987) in his work on Mormon neo-orthodoxy.[12] He pays particular attention to three tendencies: (1) a redefinition of God in the infinite, incomprehensible terms associated with traditional Christianity, rather than in the more contingent and finite terms used by Joseph Smith; (2) a redefinition of human nature in the pessimistic terms associated with the traditional dogmas of original sin and human depravity, rather than in the more optimistic and perfectable terms found in early Mormonism; and (3) a redefinition of salvation more in terms of grace than of works. As exponents of this neo-orthodoxy, White identifies such scholars as Hyrum Andrus, Daniel H. Ludlow, Glenn Pearson, Paul and Margaret Toscano, Rodney Turner, and David Yarn.

These writers are certainly not General Authorities, so in a strictly ecclesiastical sense they might be considered part of the "folk." They are, or have been, all associated with BYU; except for the Toscanos, they have also been Religious Instruction faculty able to articulate in their writings, class lectures, and "Know Your Religion" series, doctrinal ideas that lend legitimacy to the folk fundamentalism among their audiences. Occasional speeches in a similar vein by General Authorities naturally have had the same effect, even if not strictly official in nature — for example, "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophets" (Benson 1980)[13] and "The Seven Deadly Heresies" (McConkie 1982).

The influence of neo-orthodox theologians upon grassroots Mormons, or even the extent of folk fundamentalism itself, has not been empirically determined. However, there are some indications.

Doctrinally, the Mormon folk have always selectively adapted Church teachings to their personal needs and circumstances (Crapo 1987; Leone 1979; Sorenson 1983). I have heard sermons and lessons characterizing an awesome God and a depraved humanity that sound more like fundamentalist Protestantism than the King Follett discourse. On the other hand, an emphasis on

[12] Mormon "fundamentalism" usually refers to a subgroup practicing polygyny, but I use the term to refer to the generic Christian version described here. White too notes (p. xxi) that he considered using "neo-fundamentalism" instead of "neo-orthodoxy" but wished to avoid possible confusion with pro-polygynist fundamentalists. Despite our general congruence of ideas, he focuses mainly on formal theological developments among a fairly small coterie of (mostly) BYU-based scholars, while I attempt to appraise a grassroots phenomenon. Also, his theory of "cultural crisis" differs somewhat from my model in terms of "the predicament of respectability." (See my review of White's book in the March 1988 issue of *Sunstone*.)

[13] This address, given when President Benson was president of the Quorum of the Twelve, caught considerable media attention, not only for its authoritarian tone and content but also for its assertion that the teachings of the current Church president took precedence over the accumulated revelations of his predecessors. Whether justifiably or not, this contention was widely interpreted as President Benson's attempt to set the stage for his own presidency. A close relative of President Kimball has since told me that Elder Benson was obliged by President Kimball to offer a formal apology to his colleagues in the First Presidency and the Twelve for such imprudent public remarks.

grace rather than works is probably pretty rare apart from the neo-orthodox writers themselves.

Yet, at the grassroots level, I find the doctrinal features of folk fundamentalism less telling than expressions of intellectual style. Foremost among these traits is a constant grasping for doctrinal certainty based upon the statements of this or that Church leader, whether or not he is purporting to speak for the Church. Who has not heard efforts to bring closure and certainty to an issue by citing "the manual" or "Elder So-and-So" ? It is as though a line must be drawn clearly between truth and heresy for a peculiar but uncertain people, as well as for an atheological America. Even the term "heresy" is unusual in Mormon parlance, despite Elder McConkie's 1982 attempt to clarify which ideas must be avoided as "heresies." Few would advocate the opposite extreme of complete relativism (Dangerfield 1986), but the desire for absolutism is a classical feature of Protestant fundamentalism (Ammerman 1987). As a Mormon development, it contrasts sharply with an earlier tradition when even General Authorities occasionally disagreed with each other in public (Alexander 1982, 1986).

A related symptom of Protestant fundamentalism that seems to be spreading among the Mormons is a resort to scriptural literalism and certainty (Ammerman 1987). The literalist strain in the Mormon tradition was largely offset in the nineteenth century by the reluctance of such early Mormon leaders as Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and the Pratts to be restrained in their theological innovations by strict readings of any biblical text (Barlow 1988).

In the early twentieth century we saw Church sponsorship of some of the scholarly efforts of Roberts, Talmage, and Widtsoe to write serious theological treatises, as well as an effort to learn from the biblical scholarship of the outside world. In short, the Church seemed bent on using "higher criticism" to beat the world's theologians at their own game, confident that LDS doctrine and scriptural interpretation would stand up to scholarly and scientific scrutiny. Just where the Church stands today on scriptural literalism versus "higher criticism" is less clear. On the one hand, a certain literalist tendency can be inferred from the footnoting and topical guide in the 1981 edition of the scriptures, perhaps due to the influence of Elders McConkie and Packer, two very conservative apostles who supervised that project (Buerger 1985). Furthermore, some of the more popular works on the scriptures by LDS apostles and others have relied upon the secondary works of conservative Protestant evangelical scholars for their interpretations (Hutchinson 1982).

On the other hand, the temple endowment identifies at least the scriptural account of the Creation and Fall as not literal, and the Church has never taken an official stand on evolution (Alexander 1980; Sherlock 1980). The early twentieth century confidence in the vindicating potential of science and scholarship seems to survive also in the work of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) at BYU, though its official standing is not clear.

Still, literalism certainly flourishes among the Mormon folk (Crapo 1987; Cummings 1982; Keown 1986; Leone 1979; Sorenson 1983), and the trend

toward literalism and other forms of fundamentalism in the BYU student body has also been amply demonstrated (Christensen and Cannon 1978).

A third fundamentalist feature of emerging folk Mormonism is a striving for "pure obedience," obedience for the sake of obedience apart from rational individual thought, study, meditation, or prayer to achieve one's own spiritual witness and understanding. "Follow the Brethren!" for many of the Saints has come to mean blind obedience. Sometimes labeled "authoritarianism" (White 1987), this mentality is a regular feature of Protestant fundamentalism, where strict obedience to pastors, even in nonreligious matters, is considered obligatory for a "true Christian" (Ammerman 1987).

A clue to its extent can be found in the 1984 DIALOGUE readers' survey, where 10 percent of the respondents said that they would obey a Church directive "without question" even if they disagreed with it (Mauss, Tarjan, and Esplin 1987). Given that DIALOGUE readers are among the more intellectually independent of the Mormon folk, I assume that such a proclivity is far more widespread in the Church at large. An especially pernicious consequence of this blind obedience, according to one General Authority, in a "church where many leadership positions are held in awe," has been the susceptibility of many Church members to business scams, in the mistaken assumption that "just because someone is in a leadership position . . . he can talk about a stock proposal" ("Church Leader" 1982, 10).

Finally, I would identify certain extreme forms of social conservatism among Mormons also as borrowings from Protestant fundamentalism. One example is the addition to the Word of Wisdom of a whole check-list of other forbidden items. Another example is the tendency to push to prudish extremes the Church's traditional and legitimate insistence on the law of chastity and on pronatal family life. Manifestations of this prudery can be seen in the opposition to sex education programs in either school or church; a preponderantly negative treatment of even marital sex in Church manuals (Day 1988); a misguided and quickly withdrawn effort by the First Presidency (1982) to define and regulate acceptable sexual practices for married couples; efforts to ban erotic materials from public cable television (Associated Press 1983); austere dress and grooming codes imposed on BYU students and faculty and widely promoted in the Church generally (Bergera and Priddis 1985); and a generalized hostility to "rock music" (De Azevedo 1982).[14] In part, such attitudes may derive from an exaggerated effort to "live down" the nineteenth-century image of "Mormon licentiousness" (Cannon 1974); but here again, these extremes are also characteristic of Protestant fundamentalism (Ammerman 1987).

Sexual austerity and prudery are usually accompanied by rather rigid gender definitions (Ammerman 1987). The "cult of true womanhood," com-

[14] De Azevedo, a popular Mormon folk musician and composer, largely follows the Protestant fundamentalist line that modern rock music, partly because of its sensual "beat" and partly because of its lyrics, fosters illicit sex, drugs, violence, and satanic preoccupations. Ironically, some Protestant ministers have sponsored public tape and record burnings that have included music by the Osmonds because of their connection with the Mormon "cult"!

bining such sexual and gender attitudes, survives from Victorian times mainly in the fundamentalist segment of Protestant Christianity (Foster 1979, 1981; Welter 1966), but John R. Anderson (1986) has demonstrated again the convergence of these ideas between Mormons and Southern Baptists as revealed in their respective women's magazines.

For Mormons, BYU religion professor Rodney Turner (1972) has carried the Mormon position to the fundamentalist extreme of confining women to strictly domestic and child-bearing roles as a theological imperative, quite at odds with the politically and socially active images of Mormon foremothers expressed in the nineteenth-century *Woman's Exponent.*

Officially, the LDS church has taken a pronatalist stance, rather than the anti-contraceptive position of Roman Catholicism (Heaton 1987a); and Mormon couples, despite relatively high fertility rates, use artificial contraceptives at about the same rates as do others in the nation (Heaton and Calkins 1983). Yet in the downright hostility toward contraception of Turner (1972, 213–42), and of a few individual Church leaders, we can see again the expression of a fundamentalist outlook on sex and women, which has some following among the Mormon folk.

## SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In summary, I argue that during the past few decades, and especially since the 1950s, Mormons have developed a growing uneasiness at both the official and the folk levels about the "predicament of respectability." Official efforts have been made to restore some of the tension with the surrounding American culture that had eroded during a half century of assimilationism and to redefine a separate identity for a "peculiar people." This retrenchment effort can be seen in such traditional Mormon institutions as the office and calling of modern prophets, temple work and genealogy, missionary work, the family, and religious education.

At the folk level, Mormons have apparently borrowed from or converged with the ideas and styles of Protestant fundamentalists. The largely unconscious and unarticulated motivation for such borrowing has again been the predicament of respectability. The successful assimilation of Latter-day Saints into the American mainstream has made it increasingly difficult for them to define a unique identity, either to themselves or to their non-Mormon neighbors. Among such fundamentalist borrowings are doctrinal absolutism, scriptural literalism, blind obedience, and certain extremes of social conservatism and austerity. It is as though Latter-day Saints had spent the first half of this century striving to become more like Episcopalians, only to reverse course in the second half and begin emulating the Southern Baptists! Ammerman's (1987) observations about the functions of this fundamentalist outlook among the Protestants apply equally well to the Mormons. The Protestant fundamentalists, she says, seek to find a clear line between the "saved" and the "unsaved," between their way of life and that of the world. They stake their identity on having the discipline to "say no"; and until their stance attracts a certain amount of ridicule and

opposition, they are not sure that they are "Christian" enough (or here "Mormon" enough).

Another instructive historical parallel occurred among the Jews during the Babylonian captivity. According to one scholar:

> It was in Babylon that the Jews most noticeably acquired their sense of being different, of being a peculiar and indeed superior race. . . . Here the Jews drew more and more within their own hard shell. . . . The desire to be different from their neighbors led them to discriminate meticulously between such food as was permissible [under] the Law and such as was not. Whatever the origin of these dietary tabus may have been, their observance now became an obsession . . . [with certain foods being] . . . openly shunned by all Jews in as ostentatious a manner as possible. . . . How else were they to assert their distinctive role, their sense of a unique vocation, their pledge of complete obedience, unless by making it plain for all the world to see that . . . they were determined to be no longer like "all the nations" but were a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation?" . . . Beginning with the laudable intention of expounding the distinctively Jewish observances . . . , this priestly concern to safeguard the heritage of Israel ended in later Judaism as a stranglehold on the community, killing the spirit of the law by insisting on the letter (Neil 1975, 262–64).

While it has not been possible in this essay to establish the *extent* of folk fundamentalism among the Mormons, there is enough evidence to establish its *existence*. Subsequent research to estimate empirically the actual extent and influence of Mormon folk fundamentalism (and of White's neo-orthodoxy) would be fascinating and valuable, and not just for academic reasons. The continuing appeal of Mormonism to its current and prospective members will have as much to do with the social and intellectual environment of its folk religion at the ward and stake levels as with the success of the missionary program itself. The media images of Mormonism fostered by the Church public relations program may attract the initial attention and good will of a great many people; but the actual converts, especially the enduring ones, will come from among those who like what they see, hear, and feel when they mingle with the Mormon folk.

What may those converts be like? We can get a few intimations by looking again at Tables 1–4, which allow us to compare lifers and converts for the past decade or so. When Mormons are compared to others without this distinction (Roof and McKinney 1987), they present an image of a well-educated, conservative, affluent, and largely assimilated people. However, when the converts are separated out, some interesting and important distinctions appear. For example, while Table 1 shows that Mormons taken altogether do not differ much from the national averages in occupation, occupational prestige, or occupational background, converts are more like non-Mormons in most other demographic respects, particularly in education, income, class identification, age, family size, and politics.

Table 2 indicates that in religious views, feelings, and observances, converts tend to fall between lifers and non-Mormons, except in regard to the Word of Wisdom, where they are much closer to the lifers. In social conservatism (Tables 3 and 4), Mormon converts statistically resemble lifers more than non-Mormons on civil liberties, school prayer, abortion, pornography

laws, and homosexuality. On the race and gender questions, differences are few; but in those cases, converts are the most conservative. See, for example, attitudes about blacks "pushing," intermarriage, busing, and all the gender questions.

In sum, the tentative profile that emerges from the tables of the Mormon convert, compared to the lifer, shows that the convert has lower levels of education, income, and class identification; is more likely to be living on the west coast or in the southeastern quadrant of the country; is less likely to have a large family; is much less conservative in politics, but at least *as* conservative in social issues like tobacco and alcohol use, school prayer, abortion, pornography, and homosexuality; tends to be somewhat more cynical or disillusioned about the world (Table 3); and tends to be more conservative in race and gender attitudes. The regional difference is worth emphasizing. Note that almost a fourth of the converts (22 percent) came from the southeastern quadrant of the country (bottom two categories of "region" in Table 1), known both for its Protestant fundamentalism and its populism.

Such data suggest that American converts may come disproportionately from among those already inclined toward fundamentalist thinking by virtue of their education, social class, and region.[15] If such a postulate is plausible, the logical inference is that Mormon folk fundamentalism is coming in with converts. On the other hand, it could be that such converts are attracted by the folk fundamentalism that they see already in the Church. In either case, the question of Mormon folk fundamentalism is not merely academic but has profound implications for the emerging quality of the Mormon grassroots religious experience. It will also eventually have implications for the kind of Church leadership that emerges in the next century.[16]

The irony in this apparent convergence between Mormon folk religion and Protestant fundamentalism is that the most conservative Protestants have always been Mormonism's most venomous enemies (Brinkerhoff, Jacob, and Mackie 1987; Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1986; White 1986). Even today, Protestant evangelicals and fundamentalists like the Tanners make up the core of

[15] Such a suggestion must remain tentative, due to these sketchy NORC data. The first problem is the sheer paucity of the Mormon data, especially from the converts, as acknowledged in Note 7. Another problem is that we are not able to distinguish long-term from short-term converts; but if we assume that long-term converts become more like lifers, then the data in these tables are actually underestimating the distinctiveness of new converts. A third problem is in the legitimacy of generalizing from data aggregated over a thirteen-year period, a procedure which obliterates any trends. However, this temporal averaging does not affect comparability, since all three categories were aggregated and averaged in the same way.

[16] One of this paper's reviewers has suggested alternatively that Mormons, having achieved a degree of acceptance by mainline Protestantism, are now trying to win over the more conservative Protestants. In other words, the assimilation process is not really being resisted but only completed. While this explanation is possible, it eventually converges with my thesis, since success with conservative Protestants would bring increased rejection from mainline Protestants.

Certainly, many other explanations are also possible. At this point, the data available to me seem largely consistent with the heuristic theoretical framework I have proposed. I invite others to generate new theories, analyze new data, and continue the dialogue.

such anti-Mormon organizations as Ex-Mormons for Jesus and Saints Alive in Jesus.

More serious than this irony, though, is the vulnerability of fundamentalist Mormons to anti-Mormon propaganda. Mormons who think that "following the Brethren" means blind acceptance of anything any Church leaders have ever taught, and who take a literal, proof-texting approach to scripture study, are especially susceptible to anti-Mormon attacks. For them, each new anti-Mormon "disclosure" becomes a crisis of faith. To the extent that a fundamentalist approach prevails in the Church Education System, Mormon youth will be made more vulnerable, not less, to the arguments of Protestant anti-Mormons, who have little trouble showing that "the Brethren" have not always taught the same things and do not always interpret the scriptures literally. Thus, if those of fundamentalist mentality are increasingly the most likely converts to Mormonism, they might also be the most vulnerable to defection, unlike "intellectuals," who are by training better able to handle relativity and ambiguity, worrisome though they may sometimes be to "the Brethren."

I began this essay with the symbols of the angel and the beehive — the charismatic, other-worldly tradition of Mormonism and the more worldly tendencies also embraced by Mormon culture. Mormonism's success so far has been found in its ability to maintain an optimum degree of tension between the two strains. Lately Mormonism seems to have been reemphasizing the angel motif. Yet Saints who recoil from the secular as they look to the angel must beware lest, in their anxiety, they reach for the sectarian instead. Sectarian philosophies like fundamentalism are every bit as much a product of the world's cultures as are the more materialistic expressions of the beehive — and fully as subversive if carried too far.

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# sonnet on life's dangers

*Linda Sillitoe*

cop and father, he cautioned us of more
than boogeymen and fire. in case of snakes,
freeze where you are, same for skunks and por-
cupines. brave enough to tromp on cracks,
still, protectively, he didn't tell
the grownup side:

how at every comfort zone
a snake must suffer silence, strain and swell
and burst again, then nakedly slide stone.
how, when skunkly instinct flares, you bravely turn
in the alarm in case none else should dare —
then find you misperceived (and befouled the air).
or even as porcupine outshrieks his ecstasy
he plummets backward out of the trysting tree.

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# During Recess

*Linda Sillitoe*

Spring sneaked into town while court convened.
One noon, I walk from my office to my
old neighborhood and find it well-kept.
The ditch I'd hurtle galloping home
from school has been curbed and guttered.

Jack's shop is owned and run by Asians now
who mop, exchanging Vietnamese. I buy candy
from the uncrowded shelves and return to work
tracing my old route to junior high, now a shell.
Behind me, my grade school hollers its recess.

Listening back, I hear my own voice, my own
shoes on the hopscotch, swiftly recalling how
to ignore the bell until the line forms
then beat the blood in my face to the door
where I assume that Miss Blunt still waits.

No one supposes I am walking back to my ugly notes
on a double murder, a naturalist losing spring
to unearth a spider web. Extricated, it must gleam
geometrically, word by word. Sunstreams, continue your
hard green in the surprised leaves; give me, unjustified,

what killing cost: more sky, more time.

# The Mormon Conference Talk as Patriarchal Discourse

*Dorice Williams Elliott*

EVERYTHING MEANS SOMETHING. When I write a list of food names on a long, narrow sheet of paper, not only the words themselves but the form in which they are written indicate this is a grocery shopping list. I can tell at a glance my grocery list from the notes I've been taking for a seminar paper. By the time I've read half a sentence, I can distinguish a newspaper article from a romantic novel. Merely from the tone of voice of a radio announcer, I can distinguish a public radio station from a "top 40" station. And if I should happen to turn my radio or TV set to a general conference broadcast, it takes only about thirty seconds to identify it — even if I'm not listening carefully to what is being said.

As a literary critic and a Latter-day Saint, I often find myself sitting in Church meetings listening not only to the content of a talk, but also the message conveyed by the form itself. And, as a feminist, I am often aware that many of the forms we use to communicate with each other in the Church inherently reinforce and reproduce patriarchal relationships.

Of all the unique Mormon genres — testimony bearing, two-and-a-half minute talks, public prayers, etc. — undoubtedly the most distinctive and authoritative is the conference talk, delivered by a General Authority at a general conference, our most public meeting. Along with its various broadcasting conventions (the set time limit, the plexiglass square in front of the speaker, the frequent glances at the teleprompter, etc.), the talk itself has a predictable pattern. It often begins with a personal address to the audience ("My dear brothers and sisters . . .") or with a humble admission of the awesomeness of the occasion ("It is a humbling experience to speak before you today"). The

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talk generally deals with a general Christian moral-ethical principle, a "missionary" message, or a generally accepted (noncontroversial) doctrine. Speakers frequently cite personal anecdotes (especially experiences with members resulting from talks, interviews, or letters received) almost always quote scripture, and commonly use at least two or three apt quotations from famous writers taken out of their original context from quote books. The conference talk frequently stresses the uniqueness of the Church's messages or organizations by contrasting the Church or its members with "the world," though it never singles out other religions, political parties, or specific groups. The talk frequently includes blessings, assurances, and admonitions — almost always in the second-to-last paragraph (as reprinted in the *Ensign*). It always ends, of course, with a testimony.[1]

This basic form with its various conventions, formal and informal, is manipulated with varying levels of skill by general conference speakers (and by thousands of other speakers who imitate the form in other meetings). Some of the talks are masterfully constructed, others less so. And of course the sincerity of the speaker — or the Holy Ghost — can make a poorly written talk effective and powerful. But along with whatever content a particular speaker intends to express within the standard form, the form itself has both a function and a meaning.

One way to make the meaning of a form more visible is to alter its use. What happens, for instance, when a form conventionally used by the most powerful men in the Church is used to address an audience that is all women? For of course the General Authorities asked to speak in the annual general women's meeting use exactly the same format that they are accustomed to using in their other assignments. Even though their subjects differ from those addressed to a mixed audience in the more public general conference or to a priesthood leadership meeting, the essential form is identical. And transferring that patriarchal form to the discussion of issues thought to be relevant to women triggers a dissonance between form and content that exposes some of the meanings built into the form.

To demonstrate this potential conflict between the content and the form of the general conference talk, then, I intend to apply some of the techniques of contemporary literary analysis to a talk given by President Gordon B. Hinckley at the general women's meeting on 28 September 1985 and reprinted in the November 1985 *Ensign*. I choose this particular talk for analysis because its content is one of the most progressive I have heard from an official Church source on women's issues. Nevertheless, the intended message of the talk is subtly undermined by the powerful message of the form. I want especially to note here that it is not my intent to criticize President Hinckley. This

[1] Obviously, this is not a statistical or even a detailed rhetorical analysis of the form of the general conference talk. Doing such an analysis would be an interesting and useful project in itself but is outside the scope of this paper. My intent here is merely to suggest a few of the conventions of this relatively unique genre (though it is of course similar to many other kinds of public speeches), since my interest is not so much in the details as it is in the *ideology* of the form.

is a significant talk by a good man, significant because it gives institutional weight to some of the real concerns of Latter-day Saint women. President Hinckley, like all of us, speaks in the discourse available to him; we are all trapped by the language forms in which we speak and think. But by analyzing what I consider to be an exceptionally progressive and significant talk, I hope to show all the more clearly the inherent "message of the medium."

President Hinckley's talk, entitled "Ten Gifts from the Lord," is addressed explicitly to women who wonder why they don't have the priesthood and discusses the "privileges" women have that compensate for the lack of priesthood power. As such, it directly, though tactfully, engages issues of power — institutional as well as spiritual. Many of us are uncomfortable using the word power when discussing Church leadership relationships because we have been warned so many times about the sin of "aspiring." Mormon women especially have been taught that to desire power is worldly, un-Christlike, and unfeminine. But there are many ways to define power, and some of our most sacred ceremonies are designed to enable all of us, including women, to share God's power. And certainly, however we might want to disguise it with more tactful language, our Church leaders do exercise a great deal of power over the lives of the members. Even "righteous dominion" is still dominion, and women, of course, are generally excluded from exercising the most obvious form of that dominion in Church government. The purpose of President Hinckley's talk, however, is to demonstrate to women that they *do* have power in the Church. But, paradoxically, the form of President Hinckley's talk, while addressing issues of women's power — power to serve, teach, lead, pray, and prophesy — effectively asserts his own *greater* power and, by extension, that of all males in the Church.

Although I want to examine President Hinckley's talk primarily as an oral presentation, let me first say a word about its written form in the *Ensign*. Although President Hinckley spoke last in the actual meeting (the position of most impact, or the power position), in print his talk occurs first (the most powerful position in that setting). The description of the meeting explains that

> Latter-day Saint women and girls ten years and older joined with those in the Tabernacle on Temple Square to receive counsel from Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; Elder J. Thomas Fyans, of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy; Sister Barbara W. Winder, Relief Society President; Sister Ardath G. Kapp, Young Women General President; and Sister Dwan J. Young, Primary General President (1985, 86).

This introduction implies that the women assembled primarily to hear the men speakers, and secondarily the women. As with all the talks printed in the conference issue, a photo of the speaker appears in the first column. President Hinckley looks serious, dignified, and intent, as do all the other male speakers in the magazine, except one. The women's pictures, by contrast, show them smiling broadly and, in one case, actually pulling a face. While their pictures are admittedly more engaging, they do not convey the same sense of authority.

Another aspect of the printed talk is the kicker (the one-sentence excerpt from the talk which is printed in italics below the title). These short quotations also tend subtly to give a sense of authority to the male speakers, especially President Hinckley. The kicker to his talk reads: "Dwell on the remarkable blessings that are yours, the great privileges of your lives as women of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the transcendent spiritual gift that may be yours" (1985, 86). To attract attention to President Hinckley's talk, the *Ensign* editors have chosen a quotation that is an imperative rather than a simple declarative statement. The quote contains both a command and a promise, giving it the feel of scripture, the most weighty Church discourse of all. Even in terms of space, President Hinckley's kicker takes up four lines of print; most of the others are three lines, the women's all two. Thus even the printed form of the talk lets the reader know that this talk is important because it was delivered by one of the Church's highest leaders.

Similarly, in both the printed and the oral versions of President Hinckley's talk, the tone of authority is established in his first three words: "I am confident . . . ," as compared to the women, who begin "Thank you, girls," "How I wish," and "My dear sisters." President Hinckley's syntax throughout is characterized by his almost exclusive use of imperative and strong declarative sentences: "May your prayers be answered," "I urge you . . . ," "Spare yourselve the indulgence of self-pity," "Do not worry away your lives with concerns over 'rights,' " "Accept the challenge," "Go forward," etc. When President Hinckley expresses a wish, as did Sister Kapp, he says not "How I wish" but, more directly, "I wish he were. . . ."

President Hinckley begins his talk by establishing — humbly — his position as spokesman for the First Presidency by explaining the absence and relaying the blessings of Presidents Kimball and Romney. He follows this by invoking the central binary opposition that is the foundation of both his talk and of the Church attitude toward women in general — *we* the Brethren/leaders and *you* the women. Says President Hinckley: "In behalf of *these*, our Brethren and leaders, in behalf of the First Presidency of the Church, I thank *you*, all of *you*, wherever *you* may be, *you* great Latter-day Saint women" (1985, 86, my emphasis).

The notion of binary oppositions is central to the thought processes of Western civilization, as it is to Mormon culture — "For it must needs be that there is an opposition in all things" (2 Ne. 2:11). Even our ability to perceive objects depends on our perception of their difference from other objects. But contemporary deconstructionist[2] critics point out that wherever there is a binary opposition—truth/error, presence/absence, identity/difference, speech/

[2] Deconstruction (also called post-structuralism) is an influential and controversial philosophical and literary movement which critiques the foundations of Western thought and puts language itself into question. Initiated by French philosopher Jacques Derrida, its most famous American adherents are the critics of the "Yale School"—Geoffrey Hartman, J. Hillis Miller, Harold Bloom, and Paul De Man. Very simply put, deconstructionists try to undo either/or thinking and to explore the paradoxes inherent in all uses of language. By looking for the hidden premises or the key exclusions on which texts or thought-systems are built, such critics are said to "deconstruct" discourse.

writing, being/nothingness, life/death, mind/matter, master/slave — one half of the pair is "privileged." There is always, says Jacques Derrida, a "violent hierarchy" in which "one of the terms governs the other . . . or has the upper hand" (1981, 41). We can be quite comfortable with such "violent hierarchies" when the concepts involved are good and evil, life and death, sin and righteousness, love and hatred, joy and pain, etc. But when the pair is man/woman, the dichotomy is less comfortable. Here we want to try to impose some notion of "separate but equal" — a notion which the Supreme Court and our own cultural system of logic says is not possible. Deconstructionists want us to learn to "use and erase our language at the same time" (Derrida 1981, 41), and feminists want us to preserve positive difference while establishing full equality, but our language as we use it currently — and as President Hinckley's talk uses it — does set up binary oppositions in which one half is clearly "privileged."

In fact, President Hinckley uses "you," "your," and "yours" so frequently and insistently throughout his talk that it becomes a refrain reminding women that they are the Other. Even when he talks about himself growing up, he says "When I was a *boy* growing up." He repeatedly uses phrases like "the men, as well as the women," "their views [the women's] carry as much weight as do the views of any of the Brethren," "in the case of women as it is in the case of men," "as surely as there is a temple president there is also a temple matron," etc. Such phrases keep the terms constantly opposed, constantly locked in the hierarchy, even while asserting "privileges" and "rights" for women. This is even more apparent when, in his conclusion, President Hinckley begins using the rhetorical device "no less" — "Please know that your place in the divine plan is *no less* important, *no less* great, and *no less* necessary than that of men" [emphasis added]. The effect on the listener of this repeated "no less" is particularly ambiguous — while the literal meaning of the phrases suggests equality, this construction actually emphasizes the "less" — I am telling you that you are equal, says President Hinckley, but of course you know everyone thinks you are less.

This brings up another interesting point about the language which a feminist must pay attention to in a discourse like this one. As I mentioned earlier, we tend to perceive objects, concepts, etc., in opposition to other objects, concepts, etc. We recognize a chair partly because it is *not* a table, a desk, a couch, or a piano. Thus when we say "chair," we simultaneously call up in the mind images of chair and not-chair. This has interesting applications for President Hinckley's talk when he says, "a few Latter-day Saint women are asking why they are not entitled to hold the priesthood. To that I can say that only the Lord, through revelation, could alter that situation. He has not done so, so it is profitless for us to speculate and worry about it" (1985, 86).

The not-said of this passage is that since the Lord *could*, he actually *might* alter the situation. Though it is profitless (prophet-less?) to speculate about it, President Hinckley's language actually invites us to do so. Similarly, when he lists the executive opportunities of the auxiliary presidents, he simultaneously

calls up for the listener — largely subconsciously — the list of areas where they do *not* have executive power. When he climaxes that list by saying that Dwan Young serves on the National Cub Scout Committee, the not-said is the hundreds of other committees — almost all more powerful than Cub Scouts — on which she might serve.

Let me hasten to add, however, that I for one do not doubt President Hinckley's sincerity when he says, "My dearest sisters, you, as women, have tremendous executive responsibilities in this Church. And no one appreciates more than I the wonderful contributions you make and the great wisdom you bring" (p. 88). I think the not-said here is the great personal burden this man has felt in his role as leader and chief executive to the Church, and perhaps his personal friendship with and gratitude for the women he is talking about — here it is the not-said which conveys his real emotions through the formal words of the official discourse.

Because of their generally noncontroversial nature, conference talks often deal in stereotypes, especially when dealing with the subject of women and their roles. In President Hinckley's talk, the most obvious of these are statements like "you possess an instinctive inclination to help those in distress, and have a peculiar and remarkable way of doing so," (p. 87) and "we regard a happy marriage as the greatest mission any young woman can enjoy" (p. 88). When President Hinckley holds out rewards and promises to women, they tend to be peace, love, and security — stereotypically feminine desires. In this talk, however, these kinds of stereotypes are used with a peculiar rhythm which I call the "give-and-take-away" pattern. For instance, President Hinckley spends three quite provocative paragraphs discussing scriptural precedents of women prophesying. But then he follows that up with "Can anyone doubt that many women have a special intuitive sense, even a prescient understanding of things to come?" (p. 88), which seems to turn the spiritual power of prophecy back into stereotypical "women's intuition." Similarly, he speaks of the great power of sister missionaries — and follows up with the line about marriage being a woman's greatest mission. He celebrates at some length women's opportunities for education — and then tacks on the old "in case you don't marry" and the familiar "sense of security" having an education brings to women; where he began with women studying for science, the professions, and "every other facet of human knowledge," he ends by urging women to enhance their appreciation of the arts, especially music — so we're back to the drawing room.

Throughout this talk addressed to women, as he advises and counsels them, President Hinckley keeps himself separate and uninvolved. He speaks as a kind, benevolent, appreciative leader to *others* who have concerns, questions, and problems. One of the tacit rules of the conference talk, in fact, is that the speaker never expresses his own anguish, doubts, or fears, unless they are already safely resolved and in the past. But the surface of any text may also cover a hidden message, as recent feminist critics have discovered in texts written by women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite the

apparent seamlessness of the surface, if we look closely we see that many texts have a point of rupture — a place where the texts transgresses the laws it seems to have set up for itself.[3]

Although it may not be obvious to a casual listener, there is such a point in President Hinckley's women's meeting talk — a point at which the terms of opposition are reversed and man's fear of women is revealed — the fear that lies behind all patriarchal discourse. The "blessing that no man can enjoy" is, of course, bearing children. As President Hinckley points out, without mothers, the race would soon die and "the purposes of God would be totally frustrated" (p. 88). Thus even God, in a sense, is dependent on women to fulfill his purposes, although President Hinckley is careful to assert from the beginning that motherhood is a "God-given privilege." The glories of motherhood are, of course, another standard cliche, especially in Mormondom. What reveals the fear, however — the fear of the power women have which men must keep under control — are his remarks about artificial insemination: "I recognize that there are many unmarried women who long to have a child. Some think of bringing this about by artificial impregnation. This the Church strongly discourages. Those who do so may expect to be disciplined by the Church. A child so conceived and born cannot be sealed to one parent. This procedure frustrates the eternal family plan" (p. 89).

What is so insidious, so dangerous about artificial impregnation for a single woman? Simply that it leaves men out of the birth process entirely. It does indeed frustrate "the eternal family plan" where a priesthood holder rules over the woman like God. This one little paragraph taps into the fears of man since the beginning — as Dorothy Dinnerstein puts it, "men's powerful impulse to affirm and tighten by cultural inventions their unsatisfactorily loose mammalian connection with children" (1976, 80–81). Could "the Brethren" of the Church share, in a guarded, veiled, hidden way — hidden especially from themselves — the male ideology of a Norman Mailer, who says of another male writer, Arthur Miller:

> For he captured something in the sexuality of men as it had never been seen before, precisely that it was man's sense of awe before woman, his dread of her position one step closer to eternity (for in that step were her powers) which made men detest women, revile them, humiliate them, defecate symbolically on them, do everything to reduce them so one might dare to enter them and take pleasure of them . . . . Men look to destroy every quality in a woman which will give her the powers of a male, for she is in their eyes already armed with the power that she brought them forth, and that is a power beyond measure — the earliest etchings of memory go back to that woman between whose legs they were conceived, nurtured, and near strangled in the hours of birth (1971, 116).

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[3] See especially Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), and Nancy K. Miller, "Emphasis Added: Plots and Plausibilities in Women's Fiction," in Elaine Showalter, ed., *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 339–60.

Such language seems strong, even shocking, especially applied to the general blandness of a conference talk. I don't actually mean to suggest that President Hinckley and his spiritual colleagues harbor the extreme sexist animosity which oozes from a Norman Mailer. But the conventions and traditions they have inherited for thinking about, classifying, and relating to women are built on a foundation of fear and a need to control the root of that fear — women. In the midst of this otherwise progressive and loving talk, a hint of that collective fear emerges.

Nonetheless, I find President Hinckley's talk a hopeful one. His careful combing of the standard works for scriptures which hold out promise to women, his emphasis on powers and capabilities of women, his oblique inferences that radical changes are at least possible, and his personal expressions of gratitude and appreciation for women's contributions mark important departures from similar communications of only a few years ago. Unfortunately, as I hope I have demonstrated, the form in which these insights have been expressed tends to undermine their force. Besides the graphic presentation of the printed talk, the tone of authority established through the strong syntax, the insistent setting up of binary oppositions with one term — the male one — being privileged, the insistent use of "you" to emphasize woman's otherness, the implications called up by the not-said when discussing women's opportunities, the use of stereotypes in a "give-and-take-away" pattern, and the talk's "navel" — the rupture that lets in a vision of man's desperate need to control women — all these aspects of the discourse tend to subtly counteract the positive message the talk is trying to express.[4] President Hinckley discusses women's access to spiritual power in a power discourse that reinforces his own power and their exclusion from it. Still, it is a beginning. If powerful men like President Hinckley are even attempting to infuse new content into the patriarchal forms of the Church, that is a positive sign.

If women themselves are ever to have full access to spiritual and even administrative power in the Church, perhaps they will need to invent a new kind of Church discourse, one that will allow discussion and celebration of their capabilities and concerns without reinforcing their lack of any real power. I think it is in response to that need for another discourse that women have always joined together in discussion groups, neighborhood chats, Relief Society testimony meetings, and in their own publications, which the official Church, incidentally, has consistently attempted to abolish. The recent rise of such publications as *Exponent II* and of retreats for LDS women indicates that at least some Mormon women are actively seeking to find both printed and oral means of expressing their concerns and capabilities outside of official conventional forms. But real progress will have been made only when the men in positions of power are also able to escape the confines of their patriarchal discourse and the modes of thinking about women which it forces on all of us.

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[4] I borrow the word "navel" to describe this moment of rupture from Gayatri Spivak (1974, xlix).

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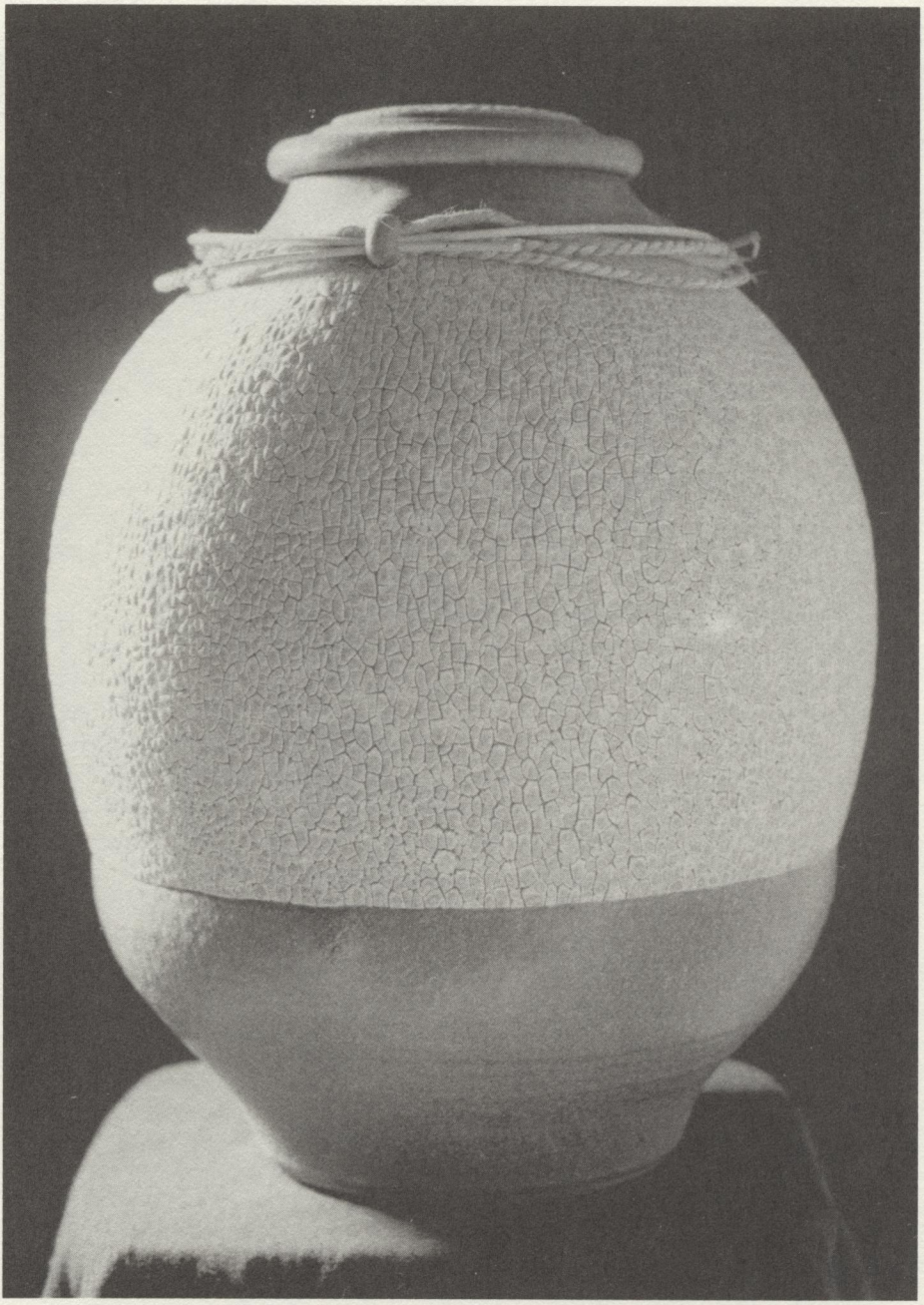

# "A Song for One Still Voice": Hymn of Affirmation

*Susan H. Miller*

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, FROM PAUL'S INJUNCTION, "Mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13), to King Benjamin's declarative, "The natural man is an enemy to God" (Mosiah 3:19), teaches the death of the natural man, the birth of the spiritual. But the paradox is that our physical bodies, created by God and, according to Mormon doctrine, fashioned after his own of flesh and bone, are endowed with sensory awareness and perception, with needs and desires — indeed with the capacity to find joy or damnation through the senses. Often in the intense desire, the yearning to learn spiritually, we feel the pull of polar extremities: to find God through denial of the senses or to find him through surfeit of the senses. We desire the dramatic. Dealing implicitly with this paradox, Bruce Jorgensen's "A Song for One Still Voice" (1983) quietly, but insistently, reveals another way to God — through performance of simple duties and appreciation of sensuous detail: affirmation of body and spirit.

Superficially simple, this short story details not more than an hour or two in the life of a married man who rises early one morning while it is still dark to take his water turn. This explicitly simple act, however, takes on deep implicit significance as surface action works rhythmically with meditative flashbacks. Contact with his family and nature prompts Carl's introspective, lyric reflections. The detail builds gradually through an intricate synthesizing of imagery, recollections, and sensuous awareness of nature and human relationships.

Equally important is the point of view from which the story is told, because it forces us, at least with a second or third reading, to *notice* the narrator's voice. After the first reading, I questioned why this exposure of a man's actions and thoughts was not given the immediacy of first person. The story is Carl's alone, and there is no need for a narrator to move to other characters. Yet a

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heightened awareness of the third person narrator compels the reader to evaluate this voice as it links outside action with inside view. The lack of artificiality in the narrator makes him a trustworthy guide to Carl's innner self.

Although paralleling the simple action of Carl's taking a water turn, the journey centers on reflexive spiritual perception and thought. The luminosity of the story is achieved through the narrator's selective interior monologue. As readers, we become aware of a privileged status with narrator-as-guide reflecting Carl's genuineness. But the narrator's voice maintains a crucial distance, preserving the sanctity of the individual, while at the same time allowing entrance into Carl's mind and heart. Ultimately, the narrator discloses the quiet dignity and integrity of Carl's acts and thoughts.

The initial imagery shifts cyclically from warmth to cold as Carl gets out of bed in the early morning and leaves the house, returning later to the warmth and intimacy of his wife and children. The juxtaposition of warmth and cold not only emphasizes the coldness of the room and out-of-doors, but it also provokes a mental observation on experiences that have taught him "his first terror of the simple elemental world." He remembers the difficulty of thawing a frozen water line and thinks of his grandparents "lasting out the winter" and of his own responsibility to provide his family's needs: "shelter, heat, food, clothes" (p. 2). The recursive movement is again to warmth as he touches the floor and is "thankful for the carpet" (p. 2).

Paralleling this simple thought is a meditation on the beauties of nature: The hawthorn in the front yard is about to bloom and he remembers seeing it last fall as he came "into the room one afternoon . . . to a moment's stunned joy at the pear-yellow light flooding through the drawn blind" (p. 2). This pattern of concrete incident prompting reflection intensifies Carl's everyday experiences; he realizes and accepts the duality of nature: terror and rapture. The pattern, then, establishes a refrain that continues throughout the story, taking on the melodic rhythm of song.

The dominant quality of this short, sweet "song" is stillness, while the cumulative force of the details leading to Carl's moment of grace resonates with intensity. Subtle intertwining of present events evokes memories, sublime in their lyrical quality. Sensuous detail that elicits delight in the simple pleasures of human relationships and nature informs the texture of his reflections. Putting on "stiff shoes" and taking "hat and gloves from the hooks" invokes this lyrical remembrance:

> He remembers coming home early one afternoon last week, quiet to surprise them, walking through the house, then opening the door to the porch and seeing them blurred and pastelled through waterspotted glass and screen: sitting under the blossoming apple trees, petals strewn thick around them on the grass, the little girls calling to make it rain again, and she shaking a low branch to shower more on them. He stood and watched, drowned in delight that he could find no words for, hardly daring to go on out because his coming might be less to them than what they already had (p. 3).

Another meditative flashback occurs when he thinks of the newly planted garden: "peas, carrots, lettuce, thin grasslike spears of onion sets." This

prompts the recollection of "onion-stuffed nylons" (p. 4). As he hung them on the porch the previous fall, he noticed the cat "claw down" a hummingbird:

> He himself pounced on the cat to rescue the bird, got it in his hand, felt the shock of its unimaginably intense life, saw at its throat what he first thought was blood, then realized was the ruby, glowing in the dusk as if the bird bore the summer's whole harvest of light (p. 4).

Demonstrating the intricate connections between mind and world, this passage, likewise, testifies poignantly of the beauty and pain, the glory and danger of nature. Nature's dangerous, even predatory aspects must be felt, experienced — acknowledged.

Gentle irony is at work here reminding us that roses and lilies are nice, but even onions will suffice to evoke religious meditation. We cannot escape the commonplace. By accepting reality, with both its positive and negative qualities, we can penetrate the mysteries of existence, find the universal through the particular. Thus Carl senses how the intensity of the bird's movement and its ruby throat, which he mistakes for blood, becomes a metaphor for the sum total of existence: "the summer's whole harvest of light" (p. 4).

The "light" imagery is intricately interwoven into a background of darkness, creating a subtle chiaroscuro. Each element, in significant religious ways, reveals and defines the other. The obvious movement in the story is from darkness to light: Carl rises in the dark to take his water turn; and at the story's end the light, which invests and penetrates his surroundings, symbolizes a spiritual communion with God and his creations. But paradoxically, it is revelatory light from the moon, not the sun — the symbol generally associated with God's power. Mythically, the moon represents intuitive, creative powers; and as one of God's creations, it possesses also the powers of illumination and transformation. The moonlight resting on tangible, sensory objects discloses the holiness of their very essence. Doctrine and Covenants 88, with its elucidation (among other things) of what the light of Christ is, confirms the puissance Carl feels in and through and from God's creations, particularly the moonlight:

> As also he is the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made; And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings; Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space —
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> The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God (D&C 88:8, 10–13).

Scriptural elements of water and light continue to penetrate and connect throughout the story. "Silver" imagery also intermingles with the "light" and "water" imagery. As Carl opens the headgate, the water flows like "silver flickerings" until it becomes "a still, blade-pricked sheet of dusky silver." And the light from the moon on apple branches is also "like silvery weightless snow" (p. 5). Perhaps I am straining at a gnat to compare Jacob's Well with Carl's headgate. But similarities do exist. Literally, both are ordinary sources of

water for humans and nature; spiritually, they both transmute to "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). The water and light elements create a recurrent beat, crescendoing in Carl's moment of epiphany. Together they are catalysts, illuminating the ordinariness of Carl's surroundings — the bare clay, the weeds, the apple branches — and effecting spiritual transport — the weightless free fall, the world's tidal bulge, the yearning beyond prayer.

Still, the dangers implicit in the imagery of darkness exist and are given voice. An action as simple as Carl's brushing the *light*string makes him think of spiders: *black* widow spiders, so dangerous he has taught his children to kill them (p. 2; my emphasis). Carl also fears stumbling in the dark hallway; he does stumble and almost falls over a tree stump in the yard, wishing he had a flashlight. But when he gets to the street, the artificiality of the "hard glare of mercury-vapor lamps" which he dislikes because of the "livid cast they give to the skin, the tarry-looking shadows they throw around even pebbles" is subtly juxtaposed to the naturalness of the night sky, where "out of the glare, he can look up at the stars, thick, clear, shining, a steady, warm light" (p. 4). The dark sky makes visible the beauty and order of the heavens. Contrasting the artificial against the natural light, Carl meditates on the constellations and the sun:

> It felt good to know the sky, and he'd wonder what it was like to know it as God does, galaxies and even clusters of galaxies flung like seeds to the far fences of the universe. He'd read that a planet within the great Hercules cluster would be seared in the light of a thousand suns, and supposed that to be like the place where God dwells (p. 4).

This passage exposes the meditative movement of the mind and its ontological link with the world — from the actual event of stumbling in the dark, through a comparison of artificial light to natural light, to reverential awe at the grandeur of the heavens and God's power and knowledge as symbolized in the sun.

Interspersed with his meditations on nature are Carl's delight in the simple pleasures of his family and his daily activities. He feels "a sort of stewardship" (p. 2) for his rented home, yard, and garden. To eat something grown by his own labor "feels good" (p. 5). We find no deification of nature, only delight in as ordinary an act as planting and watering a garden—but acknowledgement that "he still doesn't like weeding" (p. 5).

Carl notices concrete particulars. And their quiet but strategic accumulation gives us a man who prizes sensuous detail: the flowering hawthorn, the blossoming apple tree, his daughters' play, a neighbor's shared garden surplus, a friendly dog, shining stars, the throb of a hummingbird, a breath of fresh mint, even the "faint odor" of vinegar in his wife's hair. Carl's experiences teach us that valuing the tangible world is an expression of love for God's handiwork, an acknowledgment that the earth and they that dwell therein belong to him — a touchstone to the secrets of the universe.

The framing image of the story, however, is not nature, but Carl's family — his wife and children. During the story he moves from the warmth of a shared

bed and thoughts of his children back to his wife and daughters at the story's conclusion. His tender regard for his wife parallels his responsiveness to nature: "He senses with his whole body" her need of sleep, even though "he half-wishes to wake her" (p. 1). After he returns, he kneels by the bed, kisses "her warm, pulsing temple" and again wants to wake her (p. 5).

Because the story has been built so carefully on physical and spiritual communion, I find his unresponsive wife the one disquieting feature of the story. Even given his tender regard for his wife (and her sleepiness), I almost wish that she had been physically responsive to him. The complaint is minor, perhaps not justifiable, except that the steady advance to an ultimate communion with the Spirit has included responsiveness to and response from other things, including a dog. A part of this might have included a loving union of husband and wife. Why? Because much fiction depicts our inability to synthesize spirituality and sexuality. Jorgensen himself believes that sexual intimacy between husband and wife is a vital link to the sacred. In an essay of Virginia Sorensen, he states:

> If, in Mormon belief, love is a thing "most joyous to the soul" and if only "spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fullness of joy," then the sexual love, the erotic personal union, of husband and wife may well be the richest earthly symbol and foretaste of celestial beatitude, and men and women both rightly may and ought to seek and find it in marriage (1980, 55).

This story might have shown that physical intimacy can be sacred, not sensational. Nevertheless, Carl's private inference: "There is no loneliness like the body, nor any delight" (p. 5), is a haunting affirmation that our physical self is a means to the spiritual.

Significantly, the episode prior to his moment of grace brings Carl back into his home and in contact with his family. Just before the harmonizing of the light with the delight and fear he knows exists in sensory experiences, Carl diapers his baby daughter and turns "her warm, tumblesome body end for end so she lies as she should" (p. 5). Although this simple act emphasizes the pervasive stillness, even gentleness, in the story, an intenseness informs the texture — much like the piercing, penetrating quality of the still small voice that came to Elijah. When Elijah tried to reconvert the wayward Israelites with a show of force, God humored him by sending fire to consume the sacrifice, even to "lick[ing] up the water that was in the trench" (1 Kings 18:38). Only momentarily were the people persuaded. The Lord's lesson was that fireworks are only a flash in the pan — good for a hurrah but not a hosanna. Discouraged, Elijah went to the mountains to hide, but

> behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:
>
> And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice (1 Kings 19:11–12).

Then God met Elijah's grievance that "I, even I only, am left" (1 Kings 19:14) with the assurance that he was not alone; others remained who also were faithful. The still voice exposes the ambiguity of the aloof self with the collective group, thus displaying the potency of human connectedness.

Carl's experiences confirm the Lord's lesson to Elijah: simplicity has staying power that theatrics do not. Carl too knows the value of human relationships, especially in their innocent form of nurturing rather than coercing. After touching his wife, diapering his baby, and checking on an older daughter, Carl looks to "the east window" and sees "unbelievably, snow," which is actually "some surprise of the light," illuminating weeds, water, trees.

> Looking at it, he is weightless, in free fall as if the earth has dropped from under him, or as if he is drawn up with the world's tidal bulge and loosed in the gravity of light, yearning farther out and from deeper within than in any prayer he has ever spoken (p. 5).

We come to feel in our bones, as did Carl, the veracity of his moment of grace.

Studied, the journey to this moment of grace is as significant as the epiphany itself, because it details not a harrowing journey into a secret heart of darkness, nor a sublime transport of the soul through consummation with idealized nature, but rather the harmonized existence of a man content in his stewardship in the ordinary world. The power of "A Song for One Still Voice" for those who, like me, are drawn to the glorious excesses of terror and rapture; who, in fact, become addicted to the painful ecstasy of richocheting between heaven and hell, is its affirmation, indeed its healthy reminder, that another way — perhaps a more sure way — to God is not through dramatic confrontation of wind, earthquake, and fire, but through the light: sweet . . . simple . . . still.

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# Snowfall at Glenflesk

*Karen Marguerite Moloney*

The hush that sheathes the road is sure and slow.
My lights suspend a galaxy of flakes:
The silence is as haunted as the snow.

I conjure kindred names I would not know
Had no one told me how your welcome wakes
The hush around your turf-fire, sure and slow;

Had Conor and his liegemen long ago
Been late to flock the glen beyond the lakes,
Their sanctum still as haunted as the snow;

Or had you never dusted off to show
The pedigrees you walked these hills to make.
*The hush that sheaths the farm is sure and slow,*

*And still you jigsaw all the leads I know,*
*Till, dancing down the fields of my mistakes,*
*The sentence comes as swiftly as the snow:*

*"Curreal! Your Julia's from Curreal. And so*
*It seems you're kin to half the valley's folks."*
The hush that sheathes the glen is sure and slow,
Our sanctum still as haunted as the snow.

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# "Cast Me Not Off in the Time of Old Age"

*Nell Folkman*

> When they can't run their lives any more, they get angry. People think they're just being difficult, but it's because they've lost their identity; they've been *someone* all their lives, and now they're nobody.

Growing old in the last part of the twentieth century is unlike anything that has gone before. The population of older people in the United States has increased dramatically, rising from 18 million in 1965 to more than 29 million in 1987 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988, 15). By the year 2020, those over sixty-five will comprise 20 percent of the population (Holden 1987, 272). Those over eighty make up the fastest growing group, and the number of 100-year-olds will triple by the turn of the century (Maxwell 1987, 710).

Although the Church does not keep comparable statistics, we might expect, due to the higher-than-average birthrate for LDS families, that the percentage of aged in the Church (in the United States) would be less than for the country as a whole, even though Mormon health practices tend to increase longevity. Census data for Utah seems to support this; 8.2 percent of Utah's population is over sixty-five compared to 12 percent for the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988, 15, 73).

For the first time in history, we have two groups of old people. The "young-old" are in their sixties and seventies, healthy, vigorous, financially secure, integrated into the lives of their families and communities, politically active, and, in the Church, going on missions. The "old-old" are those in need of special care.

In spite of all the talk of parents being abandoned to nursing homes, family care for the old-old is still the rule for LDS families as well as most other Americans. Almost all of this care is given by wives, daughters, and daughters-in-law. Because they live longer, many women will also care for ailing spouses.

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Nearly 80 percent of primary caregivers are women (Hagestad 1986, 151; Garland, King, and Weiner 1987, 60). Work excuses sons from giving care; women must formulate work schedules around care of elderly parents. When sons do help, they usually take on only such traditionally acceptable responsibilities as making home repairs or managing finances (Wood 1987, 30).

Caring for the elderly today is different than it was in earlier periods because, for the first time, young-old women are caring for old-old parents. A study by the National Center for Health Services Research showed that the average age of caregivers was fifty-seven with one-third of them over sixty-five (Wood 1987, 29). Women who have looked forward to the time of life when it would be "their turn" and children's needs would no longer be their first priority now find that they must again put others' needs before their own.

Taking in aged parents, or extending care to them in their own homes, always dramatically increases the work load for sometimes already overburdened women. It is especially difficult for the growing number of single women who must work outside the home to support themselves and their children. Even in traditional families many women find it necessary to work to meet family expenses. The high cost of missionary service and college for large families forces many LDS mothers back into the workplace as their children become older. Increased illness among young-old women can often be traced to stress created when the care of older parents is added to an already full life (Hagestad 1986, 149).

While this "graying of America" has become a matter of great concern for the medical and mental health professions and the government, the Church seems to have taken little official notice. In 1983 Paul H. Dunn spoke in general conference about "those who have been privileged [to have had the] experience of having aging parents and grandparents with them" and "the countless ways the elderly bless our lives" — the only talk I can recall in recent years about the elderly.

As the voice of the Church, the *Ensign* contains a multitude of articles suggesting ways to deal with many of life's problems: how to teach our children, reach a straying family member, improve sagging marital relations, and even keep ourselves financially solvent. Except for occasional touching stories about the blessings of caring for aging parents, however, the old have been largely ignored. True, the June 1987 issue has several articles about older people going on missions and working in genealogical libraries, name extraction programs, and temples. It also contains a thoughtful, helpful personal essay on coping with a husband who has Alzheimer's disease (Walters 1987, 62).

Many of us have wonderful memories of the grandparents who lived with us when we were children or, as adults, have experienced the joy of serving our aged parents. But these memories should not blind us to the difficulties that may arise.

A Relief Society presidency in which I served became aware that many sisters in our ward were struggling with the care of their elderly parents. In an attempt to address these needs, we replaced our outlined fifth Sunday Relief Society lesson with one on aging. During this class time, many sisters shared

the frustration and real hardship they were facing trying to give their parents the kind of care they felt they deserved.

Problems seemed to center around two areas: the overwhelming demands placed on women, and decisions about how and where care was to be given. The stories that follow were shared in this Relief Society meeting or in subsequent interviews with Relief Society members in several wards. One sister has permitted me to include excerpts from a journal she kept while caring for her mother. I hope that sharing these stories will increase our dialogue and understanding of the problems as well as the joys of caring for our parents.

In the past, people who reached old age could count on several children living nearby to care for them and could stay in their own homes surrounded by their family and lifelong friends. Now families are often scattered, and other arrangements must be made.

My mother was only sixty-two and I had been married little more than three years when I had to face the kind of problems that arise when parents need help and there are no children living close by. My husband had just finished graduate school, and we were getting established in a new job and new home. We had one child and were expecting our second. Even though we had been to visit my parents five months earlier, I felt a strong prompting to return. With my husband's blessing, I took our small daughter and made the trip from Arkansas to southern Utah where they lived.

Mother's health had always been fragile, but as the burdens of caring for small children eased, her weak heart had actually become stronger, and the shadow of death which had lurked just around the corner during our childhood began to fade. Therefore, when I arrived at her home that January, I was not prepared for the extent to which her health had deteriorated. She was never one to stay in bed. Even after a heart attack she'd be up in a day or two managing the family's activities. Now it was obvious that she would have to remain in bed permanently. With her damaged heart nearly worn out, her body was swollen with edema, and other vital functions were failing as well.

As the eldest daughter, I had always taken over when mother was ill. When I left home to attend the University of Utah, I still returned back as often as I could. During these visits I spent most of my time doing the things Mother wanted done that my father didn't see the importance of doing. Now, I stepped easily back into my familiar role. I felt a special joy and closeness to Mother as I took care of her medical and personal needs, bathed her, brushed and fixed her hair, and made sure her bed was neat and comfortable and the house the way she liked it. Yet, as my two-weeks' visit stretched longer and longer, I felt inexplicably close to tears, resentful, and almost angry. I longed for my husband. Our daughter needed her father. He needed us both. He had urged me to stay as long as I felt it was necessary. But what if that turned out to be months or even a year?

It would have been less painful to split myself in two than to choose. Where did I belong? "Honor thy father and thy mother," the scriptures say, and "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth" (Psalms 71:9). And yet, I recalled just as clearly Genesis 2:24:

"Therefore shall [a woman] leave [her] father and mother, and shall cleave unto [her husband]."

My feelings could not be entirely attributed to the separation from my husband. When some visiting neighbors asked Dad what plans he'd made to take care of Mother when I returned home, he answered, "I've always expected Nell to stay and do it." But he hadn't asked me. My help was just *expected*. Nobody had asked me what I wanted to do; I had not even asked myself. I was just an obedient child again, not an adult used to being consulted with and making my own decisions.

Conflicting needs, feelings of resentment and guilt, and the physical strain of caring for Mother, even with my father's help, took their toll. I began having problems with my pregnancy. I consulted Mother's doctor, who told me she might live six months or longer. He recommended a practical nurse for Mother so that I could go home. "It will be easier for her to get used to a stranger caring for her now while she's still in control of her faculties than later on," he advised.

When I discussed it with my husband, he said, "I miss you as much as you miss me, but you're there and see how things are. You'll know how to make the right decision." As I continued to search for answers within myself and to pray, I began to understand and accept my own feelings. Only then could I talk to my mother about how I felt. She shared with me the feelings of resentment she'd had when her widowed mother insisted she leave a teaching job she loved and come back home to live. She understood why I needed to go back to my own home.

When I told Dad I'd decided to leave, he responded with bewilderment and incredulity. "I'd always counted on you being here when your mother needed you," he lamented. Even though I felt my decision was right and knew that Mother understood, I still felt enormous guilt. Visitors made me feel worse when they wondered, "How could you do this to your own mother?" But with a little more time to think about it, Dad realized that it would be best for me not to stay, and my pregnancy became a convenient scapegoat to deflect some of the continuing criticism from others.

We interviewed several practical nurses in spite of Dad's insistence that he could surely care for Mother himself. Over the years he'd always done a lot to help, but I didn't see how he'd be able to cope with the intimate personal care she needed day after day. Finally, we hired a nurse for a few hours each day. At last I felt comfortable with my decision to leave, and my prayers confirmed my feelings. My parents understood, and I had come to understand myself.

Mother died the morning I was scheduled to leave. I was not surprised. A patriarchal blessing, given to her by her father when she was very young, promised her that she would "live as long as she so desired." She often spoke of it. I am convinced that her faith alone had kept her alive to raise four children and bury two others. Now life was no longer worth the effort. It was time for her to enjoy a sweet reunion with her parents and her two children who had died so young.

If we live close enough to parents to help them as they get older, they may be able to stay in their own homes much longer than would otherwise be pos-

sible. This was the case of Leona, a single mother who still had two children at home when her parents began to need help. Although she worked full-time, she assumed responsibility for their care, driving fifteen miles from her home to theirs several times a week to help with housework, laundry, and shopping. Her sisters lived too far away to help regularly, and her brother, who lived nearby, did not see their care as his responsibility.

Caring for her parents took most of her after-work time, especially after her mother became ill. She says, "I was always spending too much time with my folks and didn't have time for my kids. Dad couldn't do things the way Mother wanted. It was easier for me to do it than see how bad Dad felt when she scolded him. She scolded me too, but it didn't bother me as much."

As her parents' need for help increased, she was forced to change from a full-time to a part-time job. She never had quite enough money to make ends meet although her father helped her financially from time to time with such big items as taxes or car repair.

When her travel time mushroomed because of added traffic congestion, Leona simply didn't have time for everything. With the help of her brother and sisters, she convinced her parents to move closer to her. This was easier on Leona, but her parents never adjusted to their new home. Her mother had an especially difficult time. "Her family had been her life, and when they were gone, her home and her set way of doing things became her security. It provided the only continuity in the events of her life. She was too set in her ways to accept changes."

Her parents' needs continued to increase until Leona was needed almost full-time. She quit her job when her father decided to pay her for her help. "I needed a job, and they needed a helper. I was fortunate my dad could afford to pay me. Many parents couldn't. But the pay was never enough. I couldn't say to my dad 'I need more — this just doesn't make it.' He would never understand because it was more money than he'd ever spent when he had children."

Leona's help enabled her parents to remain in their own home for several years, but after surgery her mother had to be moved to a skilled nursing facility. Leona hated the indignities her mother endured and wished she could take her mother home again. "The worst part of a nursing home is they don't have time or patience to consider the individual. They have their routine that *must* be followed regardless of how the person feels about anything. One day, when my father and I went to visit Mother, we had a hard time finding her in the day room. They had her hair pulled back tight with a bun on top of her head and had literally slopped makeup on her — totally unlike anything she was used to. There she sat with a cup of coffee in front of her, completely disoriented and not knowing what to do. No wonder we didn't recognize her; she didn't recognize herself.

"After Mother died, Dad lived only fifteen months. He did pretty well living alone at first. I continued to help him every morning and, in the evening, I'd go back and fix dinner. Sometimes I'd stay and eat with him. He needed that, but I still had a son at home. I didn't spend enough time with him.

There's a kid who could have gone wrong! He was left alone too much. I'll have undying gratitude that he didn't. And he knows it!"

Leona was fortunate to be able to get a home health aide to relieve her part of the time when her father began to need care around the clock. Even so, he fell several times, and Leona and the aide were unable to lift him. Leona called her brother from work several times to help them. A move to a nursing home became inevitable.

The change was extremely hard on him. He didn't like all those strangers touching him and calling him by his first name, and he was often angry and belligerent with the nursing home staff. Leona gives us insight into what it can be like for an elderly person under these circumstances.

"What they didn't understand was that this man had always been given titles of respect: President, Mister, or at least Brother. No one other than his wife and family ever called him anything else. This perceived familiarity was more than he could tolerate.

"My dad was a man who was admired and looked up to. He'd passed the California Bar before he even went to law school. He'd been a stake president and a counselor before that. He was a counselor in the mission presidency. He'd had people come to him for advice and counsel all his adult life, and suddenly he couldn't even make a decision about what shirt to put on or what he'd like for dinner. It was not only the absence of status that made life unbearable for him, but also his total dependence on someone else. He was angry, not only because he'd lost some of his capability, but also because he really didn't know what he wanted. Mother would always know what he wanted and take care of it. Others couldn't do that. He just couldn't adjust to her not being there to do that for him."

Leona, now nearly sixty, does not regret the sacrifice she made for her parents. She works in two low-paying, part-time jobs and gets a little money from some family property. She has no retirement or health insurance and has not been able to accumulate savings. In fact, she's still trying to pay off the debt she accumulated over the years just providing necessities for her children.

"Dad just didn't pay me enough, and I didn't really expect him to. But it was hard." She feels her brothers and sisters had little understanding of how close to the edge, financially, she lived for so many years.

We might expect that large, close families in the Church would make it easier for Church members than for the general population to share the workload and financial burdens of caring for failing parents. However, when I asked Leona why nearly the whole burden of her parents' care fell on her, she answered, "My brothers and sisters did what they could. But even when we were little and my dad would say, 'Now your mom needs help,' I was always the one who'd do it. My sisters just weren't inclined that way." My observations lead me to believe that this unconscious choosing of one family member to be the "helping one" is rather common.

When they can no longer manage in their own homes, moving aged parents into an adult child's home can often be a rewarding solution for everyone. However, this is not always the case. Some aging parents find little to stimulate

and interest them in the homes of their children. One such ninety-year-old father, whose daughter wanted him to escape the cold Utah winter by coming to her comfortable California home, put it this way: "They think they're doing me a favor, but I hate it. They're gone in the morning as soon as I get up. Everyone is busy with work or school or church; I hardly have a chance to see them. I can't drive here like I do at home. I feel trapped. I'm not coming back again!"

Sometimes what starts as a rewarding experience can become a real nightmare. Martha's mother, Elsie, had lived in a retirement center since moving from New York to California to be nearer her daughter. Having her mother close by, with their nearly daily visits, was a great joy for Martha. They enjoyed each other's company and the chance to be close again after many years' separation.

In time, however, Elsie began to deteriorate both physically and mentally. When she fell, panicked, and couldn't find the emergency button, Martha decided to move her mother in with her and her husband.

It was easy at first. Martha wrote in her journal, "Home health aides come three times a week to watch mother so I can continue my job [teaching special students part-time]. I hope I don't have to give that up. Tom and I can get out to a concert or see friends once in a while."

Within a few months, however, Elsie's physical and mental condition had further deteriorated. Martha lamented in her journal: "I feel like I'm trying to walk a tightrope. Mother often wants 110 percent of my time, energy, and attention. By the time I take care of her, spend a little time with my family, and meet other commitments, I have no time to renew myself. I pray so hard to make good decisions."

The doctor instructed Martha to keep her mother as mobile and independent as possible by using a wheelchair and helping her with physical therapy several times a week. Elsie fought this all the way, resisted the wheelchair, and would have nothing to do with the exercises. "It's my body and I'll do what I want with it," she snapped. "Leave me alone. You can't make me do it."

Constantly having to lift her mother into the wheelchair and onto the bedside commode strained Martha's back. "My back has been so bad I've had to go in for physical therapy too. I must try to remember to do my own exercises. When I find time, it's usually so late I scarcely have energy to wash my face and brush my teeth before falling asleep exhausted."

Elsie's bizarre behavior became increasingly difficult for Martha and Tom to deal with. "She demands to go to bed, then accuses me of locking her up. She thinks people are stealing her things. She accused Tom of trying to poison her. Mother never used profanity, now I'm ashamed to write down what she says. She curses me and says 'I have no children.' The next minute she wants to be hugged and kissed. I try to understand the brain damage that causes her to do these things, but it still hurts."

Home health aides quit almost as fast as they were hired, unable to cope with the abuse. Although her husband tried to help when he was there, Elsie

usually wouldn't let him. The burden fell more and more on Martha. Medication to reduce Elsie's paranoia had little effect.

Martha became chronically exhausted. "It was bad enough being up half a dozen times a night, but now nights have become a real nightmare. Mother screams, tears off the bedclothes, bangs the commode seat, demands to be fed, wants to get up in the wheelchair and then back into bed. I'm up four or five times every hour all night. I can't keep on much longer.

"Mom always begged me never to send her to a rest home, and I promised her I'd take care of her as long as I could, but I've reached a point where I'm afraid I'll be the one to break down and end up in the hospital. I've spent hours looking at nursing homes. Mostly I get, 'No room.' 'Long waiting lists.' They all seem like warehouses and the smells are terrible."

Desperate, Martha finally chose a nursing home that seemed to offer the best care, but no bed was immediately available. "It's been two months since I applied at the nursing home. I call the doctor and tell him I can't go on much longer. I tell him he's got to get her in."

Even so, Martha was filled with remorse when, a month later, a bed became available and Elsie was finally moved to the nursing home. Martha wrote, "What have I done putting my mother in this place? She deserves better than this. I stay with her most of the day, but she still begs to come home. I feel so guilty! I have reread my journal a dozen times to remind myself why she has to be there. But I still hate it!"

Elsie's physical condition continued to deteriorate, and Martha had to learn how to cope with the slow process of dying. "Now Mother's leg is full of gangrene. It's agony for her to have the dressings changed. The doctor says it should be amputated; in the next breath he says that no surgeon in his right mind would operate on someone so old and frail. Why does God let her go on like this? How much more must she take?"

Martha found some solace in the scriptures. Alma 38:5 was particularly helpful: "I would that ye should remember, that as much as ye shall put your trust in God even so much ye shall be delivered out of your trials, and your troubles, and your afflictions, and ye shall be lifted up at the last day."

"I try to put my trust in God and ask him to sustain me. But I still ask, 'Why does Mother have to suffer so much?' I pray constantly that she will be relieved of her tribulations soon."

When the doctors decided they had no choice but to operate, Martha gave her consent. "I have prayed to know that this is the right decision and feel impressed that we should go ahead." After surgery, Martha sat by her mother's bed day after day. "She's not really conscious, but it seems to comfort her if I sit and hold her hand. She talks about going on a long trip. 'Do we have all the baggage? Why can't I leave now?' I tell her, 'I've taken care of everything. It's all right for you to go now.' I think we're all ready for her to leave." Still, she lived nearly three weeks longer.

What can we learn from these stories? Leftover emotional baggage, which may surface during times of stress, must be dealt with before we can make realistic decisions regarding our parents' care. Sometimes we can do this by

ourselves; sometimes we need counseling to help with self-understanding. It helps to recognize that seeking counseling is not a sign of weakness or lack of faith. Martha learned from a community support group that sharing ideas and giving support to one another made coping easier.

Having support and counseling within an LDS framework is important for most Church members. However, Martha found that the counselor she saw several times from LDS Social Services seemed better trained to deal with marriage and family than with geriatric problems. Discouraged, she finally turned to a counselor outside the Church who specialized in geriatrics.

Caring for our parents does not mean that we physically have to do everything for them. Our own well-being and the welfare of our families must be considered along with the needs of our parents. When demands on time and energy for elderly parents' care become so great that family relationships break down, when our loved one's condition continues to worsen despite our best efforts and we no longer have any time or place for respite and renewal, we need to make other arrangements. As John Wood points out, you must have help "when there are no more happy times, loving and caring have given way to exhaustion and resentment, and you no longer feel good about yourself or take pride in what you're doing" (1987, 31).

As Martha discovered, keeping a journal can put things in perspective. Rereading her journal reminded her why her mother had to be in the nursing home.

If we care for the elderly in our homes, we should make it as easy on ourselves as possible. Some hospitals conduct workshops on aging and the area Agency on Aging has useful information and advice. A hospital bed, bedside commode, and wheelchair make home care easier. Geriatric medical consultation is a must, as is a continuation of some outside interest. Martha wrote, "My teaching job is the main thing that keeps me sane. As I concentrate on the needs of those children, I can forget for a short time the difficulties I have at home."

Men need to reassess their role in care giving and accept their share of the responsibility and work. On the other hand, women need to examine the way they may exclude men from this role. Leona's father was capable of doing many of the things she did for her mother, but because his help did not meet his wife's standards, it was rejected. In my case, I assumed that my father could not do bathing, toileting, and other personal care chores. Now I wonder what blessings I deprived him of by making this assumption.

Leona summed up what she learned this way: "You can't feel guilty. Just accept that you're doing the best you can. You've never been down the road before. You have to forgive yourself for what you don't know and can't do. You must pray a lot. One thing that was most important to me was to know that my Heavenly Father knew what I was doing and approved of it and that I had both the mental and physical strength to do it. Without that, I couldn't have made it."

Should there be an institutional role for the Church? In our community, other churches offer programs for the elderly: classes, exercise programs,

organized craft activities, telephone care networks, and special day care for Alzheimer's patients. Most of these programs are open to anyone. Some are free; some have a small fee.

While the Relief Society provides some activities for women, older women often don't relate well to the usual homemaking classes, and there are few things especially designed for them. There is almost nothing for men. For some older people, serving in the temple provides companionship and a feeling of worth and belonging. Still, many feel lonely and isolated and need more interaction with their peers.

Good home teachers and visiting teachers can offer real service. Leona asserted, "My father's home teacher was tremendous, and Mother's visiting teachers continued to call on him after Mother died. That meant a lot. People were kind to greet my father when he came to church with me; even the little boys would hurry to open the door for us. It would lift him for days."

She also wished there could be Church-sponsored nursing homes. "Nursing homes here don't understand the difference between LDS standards and the standards of others. My parents would have been happier 'with their own kind.' Maybe this is better in Utah. Here in California it's hard to find a nursing home with other LDS patients."

Even though we have a tremendous network of support among Church members, there are gaps through which people may fall, and often the support they receive isn't sustained. Undoubtedly, as the aged population in the Church increases, it will be a drain on the family, on the Church, and indeed, on the economics of everyone. We need to start now to think about how to meet the needs of these older members.

As part of our own personal preparedness program, parents and children need to discuss these future decisions with each other. Much of the guilt described by these sisters could have been reduced if decisions regarding parents' care had been made before the help became necessary and while parents were competent to make rational decisions. Older people need to let their children know where and how they want to be cared for, their feelings about life-prolonging mechanical devices, and the state of their financial affairs. Parents also need to understand their children's family and financial situations. Insurance to cover costs of long-term care should be considered. The way things stand now, a family must spend itself into poverty before government help is available.

When children promise, "I'll never put you in a nursing home" or parents extract such a promise from their children, it can only lead to more pain and guilt for caregivers. When my father's Alzheimer's disease necessitated twenty-four-hour care, my decision for nursing home placement was easier because he had, long before he became ill, let me know that his worst dread was not a nursing home, but becoming a burden to his family.

No one likes growing old, but unfortunately there is only one alternative, and most of us try to avoid it as long as possible. If we start making plans early, not only for how we will manage to care for our parents when they are old, but also how our children will care for us, we can increase the joys of

this service and lessen the pain and guilt many people experience as they make decisions regarding their parents' care.

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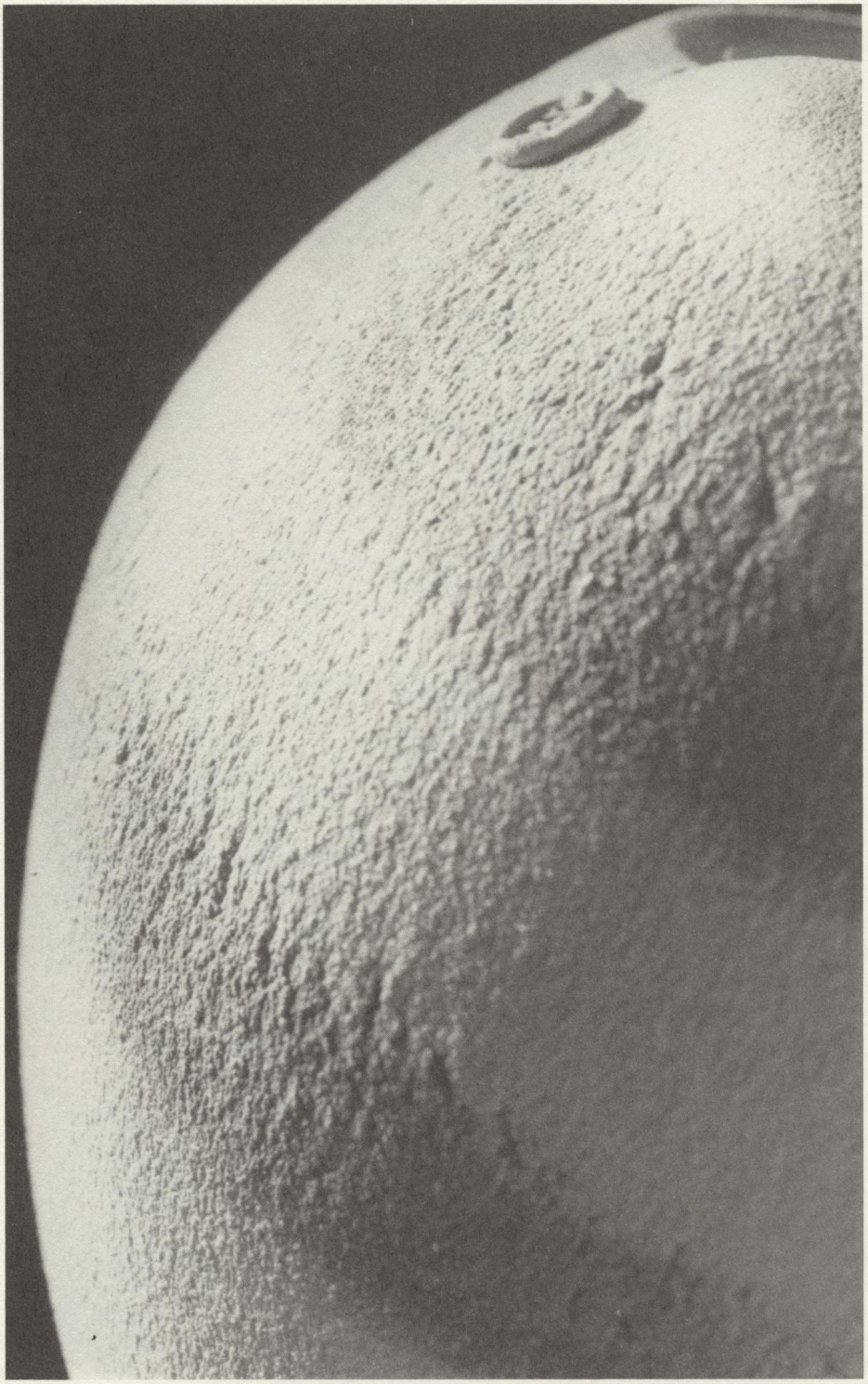

# Pilgrims in Time

*Dian Saderup*

FOUR CARVED BISHOPS KEEP VIGIL above the threshold to Canterbury Cathedral. The filigree of sculpture surrounding them is as airy as lace, though crafted of stone. It looks as if it could rise upon wind as easily as shatter to earth.

I clutched my purse, camera, mittens, and notebook in one arm as I passed beneath these warders then heaved open the heavy wooden door. In the entryway a sign tells visitors that Canterbury is not a museum but always foremost a place of Christian worship, as it has been throughout the centuries and will remain for ages to come, hallowed by the blood of the martyred Beckett who was assassinated there in 1170 for opposing King Henry II's interference in church affairs. However, for me, the cathedral remained a museum — another esthetic exercise to get through. As a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints I already had my shrines. Also I was fatigued from two weeks of endless sightseeing and worried by news of family problems back home in Utah. I was unprepared for epiphany and do not know now — except through the series of strangely related images and thoughts that brought it — how to convey my experience of Canterbury.

I left the entry chamber, awkwardly fiddling to get my instamatic camera into the tennis sock I use for its case; photographs were prohibited. Then I looked up. A tourist handbook had informed me that the vaulted ceiling of Canterbury's nave is the highest of any cathedral in England. That bit of architectural trivia had done nothing to prepare me for what now soared above my head. The sheer vertical columns on either side thrust nearly ninety feet from floor to ceiling, where they arched inward and fanned into perfect stone fingers that met and interlocked at the highest point. Emily Dickinson once wrote that a poem is true poetry if it makes you feel like the top of your head is going to blow off when you read it. Each time I lowered my eyes and traced the

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upward motion of the nave I felt as though the crown of my head might lift away with whatever wind that place had power to stir so suddenly within me.

"Seems impossible, doesn't it?" a stranger coming from behind me said. I nodded. She brushed my arm then walked down the center aisle. I remembered what a sprawling hulk the cathedral was from the outside and could now see it held dozens of turns and enclosures to explore. I was glad to be left alone as I passed from the nave and entered the adjacent north aisle, a straight, pillared passageway lined with tombs and memorial plaques. The succession of arches now moved before me. I walked several steps and stopped. Below my feet was a slate covering someone's burial place in the floor. His name, birth, and death dates chiseled in the stone were so eroded they were barely discernable.

Looking down at the marker, I had a sudden, vivid memory of my grandmother — invariably composed, dignified, formal — at my grandfather's funeral the past spring. Just before the final closing of the casket, she had lurched forward, falling upon his body, her lips pressing his cheek, ear, brow, and wispy hair. My grandfather's body was placed in a Los Angeles mausoleum in a large sealed drawer with his name in gold letters carved into the white marble: Raymond Leroy Fix. I glanced up at an ebony and pearl inlaid plaque on the wall of Canterbury. It read: *In Ever Loving and Proud Memory of my Husband Major General Henry Richard Abadie C.B., 1915. Also of his four sons who gave their lives for their country.* The woman's name was nowhere on the marker. I thought of my grandmother's famished lips as I read the words cut into the stone at the bottom of the marker: *May they find rest in the bosom of our Lord. Amen.* Continuing down the aisle, I brushed the tip of my index finger against each stone column as I passed. The tall arches overhead receded before me and unfurled behind.

As I walked I worried one corner of the blue airmail envelope clipped to my notebook. The letter I'd received from my mother the morning before hadn't contained harrowing news, just disturbing details that gnawed the underside of my consciousness like moths — continual, discomforting reminders that the fabric of the world I shared with my family was subject to a kind of random, inevitable unraveling. My father, who had suffered a minor stroke a year and a half before, had spent forty-five minutes unsuccessfully trying to insert a typewriter into its case. When my mother found him at it, she merely turned the case over and fit the machine inside. Once, he could fix nearly any mechanical object imaginable. My older brother with a wife and four children was still out of work after nine months of unemployment; my mother said he suffered overwhelming discouragement. Arthritis was gradually fraying the joints in my younger sister's knees and hands and back. She was in medical school and had hoped to become a surgeon.

Such thoughts of home rose and fell repeatedly in my mind, insisting themselves upon me, then passively receding as I encountered various parts of the cathedral. I saw the effigies of Henry IV and Joan of Navarre. All of King Henry's alabaster fingers were broken off at the knuckles; the Queen had lost both her hands. The tomb of Archbishop Chicheley arrested me. The effigy

on the upper table of the vault shows the bishop in his scarlet, gold-trimmed robes. His mitre is studded with gems. The small figures of two boys reading sacred texts flank his gorgeously shod feet.

Beneath this vision of elegant repose, on a slab placed directly upon the stone floor containing Chicheley's body, is a solitary figure. I peered through the arches that support the upper table and connect it to the lower slab. The figure is without coloring and is naked. It lies upon a simply sculpted burial sheet which is drawn up by one of the bishop's thin hands over his left hip and loins. The marble skin clings to the ribcage the way wasted flesh does to a starving man's. The jutting bones of face and skull are thinly veiled in flesh; the neck is a series of sinews and veins, vessels thick, as if turgid with blood. The figure is a cadaver.

I crouched close to a single arch. I wanted to put my hand through it, to touch the still stone that signified Chicheley's once-quick body. I gently placed three fingers against the smooth chill of the archbishop's left hand, then spread my whole palm over the bent knuckles, covering the hand completely.

Many signs in museums I had visited over the years had requested that I not touch sculptures because the oils in my skin could damage the surface of the stone, wear it away by imperceptible degrees. But here I didn't move for several minutes. I thought of the broken-off fingers on Henry IV's alabaster effigy and of his queen's vanished hands, and I thought of my father, as my mother told me she had found him sitting on his bed eighteen months ago when he had had his stroke. The right side of his mouth had drooped when he smiled at her and spoke a garble of words. At first she had thought he was making some sort of joke and she'd laughed, but then she'd seen his hand, oddly curled, in his lap. My outstretched arm began to tire. When I stood up, my knees crackled the way they've done for the past five years whenever I crouch low then rise.

As I continued on through the cemetery that is Canterbury, beneath me and around me were the dead. But above me the pillars and ceilings of each section I entered flung themselves upward in an ecstasy of arches. The vaulted structure of the cathedral from west to east forms two inter-connected crosses. A line running the length of the nave, through the choir and the presbytery and into Trinity Chapel, is the great shaft of the cross. Two separate sets of transepts are distinct intersections of that shaft. Arches form the tracery framing the multiple stained glass windows throughout the building and dominate the orderly stonework panelling the walls.

Every passageway between enclosures is an arch. The exquisite woodwork of the choir stalls is a series of arches elaborately ornamented with tiny flowers, ribbons, crowns, and cherubs. In the dim space behind a facade of arches high above the choir I could see the gleam of metal organ pipes. When I stood at the base of the south aisle of the nave, I watched the steady march of arches to the first set of transepts where they jog slightly, take on an airier form, ascend a bank of stairs, and finally conclude their procession, curving into the faraway crown of the apse. Everywhere one looks in the cathedral, arches conspire to draw the eyes toward pinnacles, great and small.

I sat down on one of the many wooden chairs that line the nave in rows and experienced a tangle of sensations: persistent vague anxiety about things at home, raw excitement, a growing esthetic and spiritual awe, keen hunger for a banana or anything sweet. The cathedral was chilly. I massaged each of my white fingers. I still hadn't come upon the spot where Beckett had been murdered; as far as academics went, that was probably the most important thing for me to see. I scaled the vault of the nave once again with my eyes, then lowered them quickly. I felt my scalp rise almost perceptibly. For an instant I thought about the sword stroke of the one assassin that had sheared the crown off of Archbishop Beckett's head, the tip of the assassin's blade then shattering upon the stone pavement. There was a story associated with that amputated crown, but I couldn't remember it. After resting a few more minutes, I gathered up my notebook and purse, into which I had earlier stuffed my mittens and camera. My boots were heavy as I walked; the nerves in my neck and head felt electric, as though my hair might lift and stand on end.

In the southwest transept I came across the tiny gift stall. I picked out a card with a soft watercolor of the cathedral on it. My parents back in Provo would enjoy getting it in the mail and clearing a space for it among the stacked sheets of music cluttering my mother's piano. A woman in line ahead of me handed a book she'd been thumbing through for several minutes to the cashier.

"That'll be ninety-five pence," the cashier said pleasantly.

The woman, whose hands were rough, her nails rimmed with thin lines of soot, handed her a one-pound note, then said, "Are you sure? I thought it was a pound fifty."

The cashier turned the book over. "I guess the prices have gone up. I'm sorry."

The woman began to pick change from her wallet.

The cashier glanced quickly at the book jacket. I caught a look at the cover. It had an orange sunrise on it. The title was *Coping with Depression.* "But see —" the cashier said, "this has a flaw. The corner's bent. The pound will cover it fine."

"Why, thank you," the woman said. "Thank you." She took the thin package and put it into the pocket of her worn coat. I bought my card and left the stall, moved by the small kindness I had happened to witness.

The stone stairs leading to the ancient site of Thomas Beckett's shrine in the eastern end of Canterbury are so worn by the passage of pilgrims' feet that they are wavy. In 1538 Henry VIII, enraged by the threat of papal authority to the throne, had had the shrine destroyed: the tide of pilgrims to the cathedral from throughout England and the Continent had become intolerable. Ascending those stairs now, I felt like part of an invisible procession. The undulant stone beneath my battered hiking boots was memory given physical form.

When I came to the corona, or crown of the apse — the tip of the great cross formed by the cathedral — I remembered having read that it was here the crown of Beckett's head had once been preserved. The corona has now been designated The Chapel of Saints and Martyrs of Our Time and houses memorial displays on the Reverend Martin Luther King and the German phi-

losopher, writer, and nun, Edith Stein, a Jewish convert to Catholicism and victim of the Nazi Holocaust. Her family, I read, had never been reconciled to her conversion, a grief that was a cross she bore the greater portion of her life. Shortly before her arrest in Holland and deportation to Auschwitz where she was to die four days later in the gas chambers, she had written: "The total gift of one's being and of one's whole life is the will to live and work with Christ, which also means to suffer and to die with him in that terrible death from which the life of grace issues forth for humanity." Stories of her ministrations to those with her on the death train from Holland to Poland continue to this day. I looked at the black-and-white photographs of her, brittle traces of her life and faith: a dark-haired girl at her mother's side, a tentative smile half hidden by her hand as she ducks the glance of the camera; a speaker behind the lectern of a university auditorium; a plain, dignified woman in a nun's habit among a group of sisters at the Carmel in Cologne.

Nearby, a tiered stand held several flickering candles: signs, I read, of offered prayers and the sustained offering of our lives. I put a coin in the black metal box on the stand, took a candle from beneath it, and lit it off the wick of one already burning, then placed it among the rest. A group of French school boys came noisily up the apse, talking in words I couldn't understand. One tall boy blew out two candles with a single breath. A woman shushed and herded them all into the corona, squeezing me up against the glass box of the memorials. I edged my way out of the room, their exotic chatter fading behind me as I walked back beneath a continuously unfolding canopy of arches.

Memories flowed through me like a strong current, breaking off into a strange network of smaller streams dappled by light and shadow. One was of a woman whose name and face I don't remember, a nurse in a hospital I was in years ago. It was after midnight, and I had been crying, unable to stop for over an hour. Several nurses had come in one after another, each reprimanding me for keeping the other patients in the ward awake. Then this woman came to my bedside and took my hand in hers and stroked it. I told her I was afraid. She said she would hold my hand and not leave me. She stayed for a long time as I finally drifted to sleep, then hovered at the borders of my dreams all night, bringing her flashlight periodically to shine it briefly on my face and to cover my hand with hers for a moment. In my memory now I can see her only as some dim spirit in a dark room, a reddish light glowing from her palm like an offered gift.

Retracing my way down the wavy stairs, I saw to my left a second passage, paralleling them but descending yet another level into a dark region deep in the cathedral. A sign above this passage read *Silence Please Beyond This Point.* One of my boots squeaked as I made my way into the Romanesque crypt that lies beneath the apse. The crypt, or undercroft, is the oldest surviving portion of Canterbury, dating from the early 1100s. When I entered its shadow realm, the past encountered at every turn in the building above stretched suddenly into antiquity. The orderly sea of arches over me here were not high and not light. The rough low ceiling, with its dim gridwork of stone domes, appeared to support a great weight.

In the apse and the nave, the tunnels of arches had been magnets drawing, not only my eyes, but something intangible within me from earth upward. But here in the crypt it was as though the ceiling were some heavy mysterious substance stretched down at regular intervals and fixed to the earth. If heaven were a tent of stone, the pillars of the undercroft would be the stakes that fastened it to the hard ground, and the domed space thus created would be the air we breathe. Through a rhythmic field of columns, I could see at the center of the crypt the tiny yellow shivering of a few candles.

I moved among the network of columns with the regular squeaking of my one boot, sudden tears filling my eyes. Each of the many domes in the ceiling was supported by four capitals carefully ornamented with minute designs — all cut, I was instantly aware, by specific hands: fervently precise gifts to God. Who had crafted this place? Had they had children or fat infants or still sons lying in the ground wherever home had been? Had the air turned their fingers white with cold, as it had done mine, while they tapped their rude chisels into the rock? Was the bread they ate dry against their tongues as they chewed, or had they sometimes had the luxury of butter? Did their fingers and palms ever bleed as they worked? Had they thought with desire of the pillowy flesh of their wives to pass the laboring hours? Or of the incorruptible pillow that is the Holy Spirit?

Then all around me, not just the crypt but the whole of the cathedral came to startling focus within the eye of my mind: Canterbury was a kind of continual upward striving, with its roots in the descent that is death.

I continued on through a succession of columns and domes to the quivering candles in the gloom at the heart of the crypt. I came to the Chapel of Our Lady of the Undercroft. As requested by a sign, I lit a candle in remembrance of the souls of the departed, and I read the words inscribed at the base of the woman's effigy: *For God's sake, pray for the soul of Johane de Borwasche who was the Lady of Mohun.* Every adoring detailed corner of the cathedral and each laden pilgrim's step upon these stones were an ageless chorus of prayers for the soul of Johane de Borwasche, and for all the dead and dying.

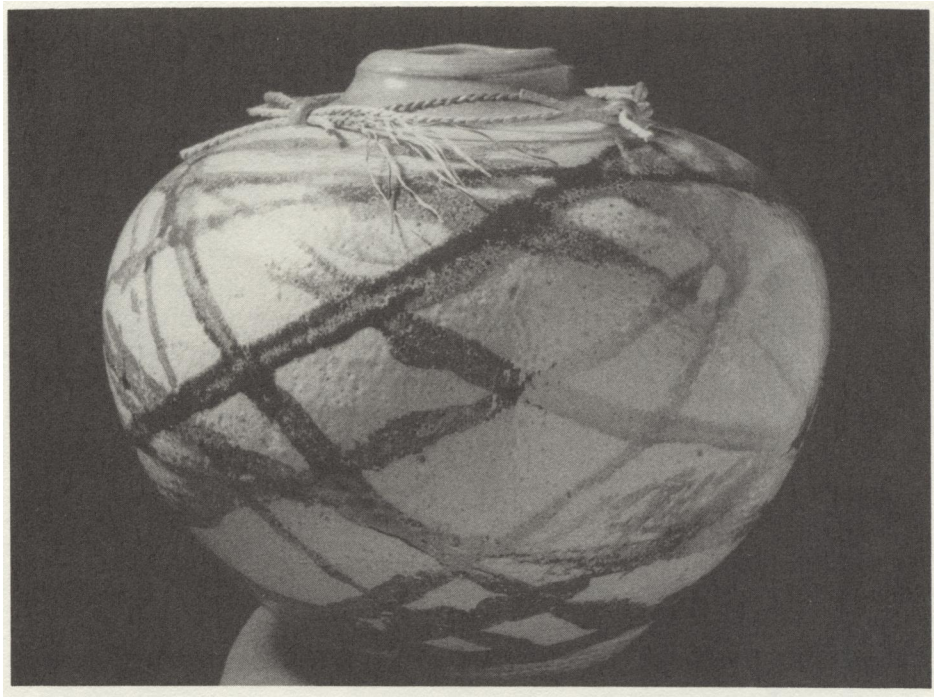
When I ascended from the undercroft on stairs opposite the ones I had come down, the narrow hall I then passed through opened into the one area of the cathedral where I had not yet been, the northwest transept, and site, I discovered, of Thomas Beckett's martrydom. In this plainest corner of Canterbury, the simple letters etched in the wall read:

Thomas Beckett
Archbishop Saint Martyr
Died Here
Tuesday 29th December
1170

A single brass candlestick held one lighted taper. This was the spot where one of Henry II's knights had sliced the crown from Beckett's head, and where the Archbishop had died.

It seemed that since entering the cathedral I had come a long journey. The related complex of images along my way had filled me with a kind of ineffable vision, but now, at once, everything was simple. Musical Middle English words from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* sounded in my head, memorized several years ago for a medieval literature class: "From every shires end/Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,/The holy blisful martyr for to seke,/That hem hath holpen, when that they were seke."

A low padded bench invited prayer before the holy place. Alone in the transept darkening with the fading light of the lengthening afternoon, I knelt on the bench and lifted my eyes to make both petition and offering: God bless my father that he might regain his speech more fully, my brother that his depression might lift, my sister that her arthritis might be eased, my mother with strength and comfort to bear the distress of her loved ones and an uncertain future. I named the specific woes of all those precious to me, family and friends, finally asking blessing upon all the suffering world, that as we labor beneath the weight of sin and mortality the grace of God might surround us, to nourish our hope in a land of grief.



# If I Were God

*Gay Taylor*

I OFTEN MUSE WHAT I WOULD DO IF I WERE GOD: Would I first stop wars, eliminate hunger and disease, make people loving and caring? I think not. Though the prospect is appealing, I know that we are here to work out problems. If we had no walls to climb, no boulders to move, we might as well have stayed in heaven and be done with it. I would consider, instead, some of the things that God is alleged to have done or commanded us to do. Which would I approve of, and which would I not — if I were God?

If I were God I would, as many claim he did, create the world and then give us a few billion years to work out our own salvation, possibly with a nudge here and there to keep us on the right track. How interested he must be! There have been some odd results along the way, for example, the 300,000 species of beetles, the praying manti alone accounting for 1,700. British scientist J. B. S. Haldane, famous for his work in genetics and biometry, when asked what the products of creation had revealed to him about God, quipped, "He had an inordinate fondness for beetles" (in Lewin 1982, 134).

Another mystery I have wondered about is the curious impulse of a bean vine to curl to the right around a pole. If you try to change its course, it sulks and hangs down. The best gardener I know did not know the answer — he hadn't even noticed the phenomenon! So I asked my brother, Keene Dimick, the genius chemist who developed the technology of gas chromatography. "It's called the coriolis force," he explained. "Any body in motion, like a hurricane or the water going down the drain, or a bean vine, will swirl to the right in the northern hemisphere and contrariwise in the southern hemisphere. It's due to the earth's rotation." Nothing to quarrel with there.

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Anthropologist Loren Eiseley in *The Star Thrower* tells of a sparrow hawk he captured which put up a fight to give his mate time to escape. The next morning Eiseley took the bird into his hand, careful not to startle him.

> He lay limp in my grasp and I could feel his heart pound under the feathers but he only looked beyond me and up. I must have had an idea then of what I was going to do. I just reached over and laid the hawk on the grass. He lay there a long minute. In the next second he was gone, straight into that towering emptiness of light and crystal. I could not see him. The light was too intense. Then from far up a cry came ringing down. I was young then and had seen little of the world, but when I heard that cry my heart turned over. It was not the cry of the hawk I had captured. Straight out of the sun's eye, where she must have been soaring restlessly for untold hours, hurtled his mate. And from far up, ringing from peak to peak of the summits over us came a cry of such unutterable and ecstatic joy that it sounds down to me across the years (1979, 91).

I imagine God must be pleased with the progress of creation, both man and bird, at moments such as these.

A young ex-nun friend told me once that all through her growing up years she had imagined God as a tapioca pudding. I didn't ask for an explanation. It's hard to get a handle on the infinite. For my part, I view God as an evolved me. If I could be all-loving, all-forgiving, kind, helpful, humorous, playful, cheerful, growing in wisdom, joyful, compassionate, creative, nurturing, tolerant, knowing the secrets of life and death, without guile, envy, jealousy, hate, or anger — all raised to the Nth degree — that would be Father in Heaven. Tone down the creativity a bit and increase the nurturing capacity and that would be my view of Mother in Heaven.

To clarify nurturing I inevitably think of my mother, who had an instinct to nurture in the best ways, including unending scorn for laziness or half-effort. "What are you ever going to amount to?" was the question we dreaded. She extended her concern to all around her and enlisted us in this cause. In fact, my most vivid memories of Christmas day are gathering at my grandmother's with our cousins from up and down the street and leaving with a good deal fewer things than we had arrived with in the morning. "That would do for Ruthie," Mother would say, pouncing on some nice little trinket. Across to a delighted Ruthie it would go, and we soon learned to value the glow of sharing more than our trinkets and toys. The careful tasting of the spoon of warm food before offering it to the baby, the warm iron wrapped in flannel for our cold feet, the cool hand and sip of water in the night when a fever raged — these are the nurturing things I remember and anticipate finding in the nurturing female, the Mother in Heaven.

During my eighty years of living, I have often wondered if people — from the earliest records down to now — know what they are talking about when they say our nurturing heavenly parents did this or want us to do that. When I was about nine years old going to school in the little Mormon town of Bancroft, Idaho, I learned in religion class, held after school every day, that to take the Lord's name in vain (meaning profanity, though I have since heard that it means perjury) would draw down dire consequences, and "damn" and

"hell" were just as bad. So whenever my kind, helpful, funny, tow-headed younger brother would say one of those words I would cry. One day we were running around under the quaking aspen trees on the hill when he stubbed his toe and exclaimed "Damn it!" He then looked straight at me and grinned, expecting my usual lecture. Instead, this time I asked myself, "If I were God, would I punish such a darling boy for that?" Never would I, so God wouldn't either. I have used that yardstick ever since.

To find out why I developed such an independent streak, we have to go back to my beginnings. I was lucky. While I wasn't actually born in a sheep camp, I was certainly conceived there and except for the first four days of my life at my grandparents' home in Soda Springs, Idaho, under the care of the famous Dr. Kackley, I lived in that same sheep camp for the next three years.

I digress here to talk about Dr. Ellis Kackley, a man I would be proud of, if I were God. Born in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee in 1871, Dr. Kackley graduated from the University of Tennessee and within three days of reading an advertisement in a medical journal arrived in Soda Springs. In a letter to Mrs. Sadie Mickelson and her husband, of Lago, Idaho, printed in 1958, he wrote:

> It was a fortunate day in my life when I stopped in Soda Springs, it was an unopposed practice one hundred by two hundred miles. There wasn't a bed pan south of the Oregon Short Line Railroad, and if there was one north of the railroad I never saw it, but we could cut off a board and lay it across an old milk pan.

He went on to say,

> We hear so much about taking the baby through the abdomen, that is considered a very major operation in a modern hospital, but we did it then with no more help than those good [Relief Society] women. . . . The Relief Society is the only society that I have ever wanted to join, to me it is the biggest thing in your church or any other church.

Dr. Kackley died in 1943.

When stricken by illness or wounds in our family our modus operandi was to trust God, castor oil and turpentine, homemade "canker medicine," and "sticky dope." The only time I ever saw Dr. Kackley again was when he was pushing a caustic pencil into a wart on my eight-year-old heal while Papa held me down. I consciously and deliberately screamed as hard as I could. Papa always used his magic touch to take off our run-of-the-mill, ordinary warts, but why, oh why, hadn't it worked with this one!

With a third child in that sheep camp learning to walk, my family built a log cabin in a beautiful little canyon leading out of the Bancroft Flats, 6000 feet above sea level, a great altitude for developing lung power, covered with snow eight or nine months of the year but burgeoning with life the rest. Three more children were born in that cabin, aided by Mrs. Aston, midwife to the whole county.

Watching the struggle for life in all the plants and creatures in those rolling hills, I gained an understanding of the interwoven order of things. If we killed

off the coyotes that bayed lonesomely through the moonlit nights and took one of our lambs now and then, the squirrels and rabbits would move in to eat the grass that the lamb's mother needed to survive. If a sheep got his hide ripped on a barbed wire fence, the flies moved in to lay their eggs and raise their little maggots. The chicken hawks ate the little birds, and the little birds ate the maggots.

When the squirrels overpopulated, Papa intervened with his poison, which not only killed the squirrels but his best sheep dog who had eaten one of the animals. My cousin Ruth was visiting us that tragic summer, and we were assigned the task of cutting off the tails of the decomposing animals. The county was paying a bounty of a penny for each tail. Armed with pail and scissors, we traveled along the fence where the poison had been spread and clipped away. Ruth was handicapped by not having any shoes. Her father was a prominent sheep man and a senator in the Idaho legislature, so it was not that she had no shoes, but that she had none sufficiently awful to wear in the hills. So instead she wore a pair of my mother's high-heeled slippers which kept falling off. We were also both put off by the smell, but nonetheless we did get quite a bucketful of tails. Experiences like this give one a philosophical turn of mind.

I also learned early the truth of the statement that the rain falls on the just and the unjust. Before the advent of tough Siberian wheat, frost would destroy the crops of the kind, good man as well as the neighbor who made slaves of his children and wife and beat them besides. On top of that I was a great reader and by age ten had read everything I could find at home or in the little library the MIA president kept in her home. I devoured the usual fare: Louisa May Alcott, Jean Stratton Porter, Hawthorne, the Brontes, Dickens in part, Harold Bell Wright, Zane Grey, Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Sorrows of Satan*, *Arabian Nights*, and a book of Norse mythology. I couldn't help but notice, especially in the Norse myths, that good did not always triumph.

Papa was also a reader; in fact, he read to the family every night while Mama darned stockings and we ate apples, carefully putting the peels on top of the stove to perfume the house. Papa memorized easily, especially verses from the Bible or Edgar A. Guest. We heard every day about the awful fate of scribes and pharisees or those who were like whitened sepulchres, beautiful without but full of corruption within; or that on no account could a rich man get to heaven. (I like Ishmael's remark in Melville's *Moby Dick*, "How cheerfully we all consign ourselves to perdition!")

My father had an Irish wit and loved to tell stories. He ran a shearing operation a couple of summers in a place called Hole-in-the-Rock outside Soda Springs. He hired the shearers and a cook and brought in food, sheep dip, wool sacks, and other supplies. I remember the cooking shack and bunkhouses, but the main attraction to us kids was the ramp leading up to a platform just big enough for a sheared sheep to stand on. The sheep was then encouraged to go down a slide which dumped him into a trough about fifty feet long filled with creosote sheep dip. As he swam along he was poked under now and then to take off ticks and other parasites. Father garnered some good stories from

these summers. The cook brought out a pie one day and set it down on the table. "Raisin!" the men shouted enthusiastically. "Custard," corrected the cook as with a flick of his towel he shooed off the flies. Another time the cook warned, "If anyone complains about the food, he'll be cook!" It wasn't easy to bake in an oven heated by sagebrush; it was either too hot or too cold. So inevitably one morning a fellow slipped. "Burnt on both sides and dough in the middle," he muttered. Then he added hastily, "But it's just the way I like it!"

I remember in the shearing camp that although the men were paid a lump sum, they worked like fury to be the one with the most pelts at the end of the day. If I were God I would be proud of those fellows.

Mama and Papa never took us to church except to be confirmed after baptism, but we learned a lot of the Bible from Papa, in selected bits, and, as I said, we did attend a religion class after school. Here I learned those great ennobling concepts revealed to Joseph Smith: We were with God in a pre-mortal existence. As we are, God once was, as God is now, we may become. There can be eternal progression, but it is earned. The redemptive love of Jesus marks the path, but faith without works is dead.

About the age of ten, in a fit of religious excitement, I decided to read the Bible from beginning to end. Here began my questions. If I were God, raised to the Nth degree in all the positive attributes and virtues, would I condone, let alone command, all those killings?

Having a good grounding in the ways of Loki and Thor and other pagan gods, I could regard a great many of those Old Testament stories as myths. After all, Samson could not have held on to 300 foxes while he set fire to their tails and turned them lose to burn up the corn of the Philistines. Watching one bull tear up a pasture convinced me that Noah would have had a problem getting pairs of all creatures onto a boat. These were surely tall tales like the stories of Paul Bunyan and Jack-the-Giant-Killer.

But what about the stories that seemed to be historical incidents? The story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah seems to be supported by archeologists. Surely there must have been ten children below the age of eight who were righteous. Now I concede that maybe the children weren't being counted, but at age ten I had a different perspective. Besides, suppose Abraham had gotten together with Lot who had two daughters with husbands, and maybe they added four righteous servants and all stayed in Sodom, might then the place have been saved? Or, I wondered, was it simply an earthquake that people laid at the foot of God?

Then I came to the sacking of Jericho, killing and burning animals, children, men, and women — except for the harlot and her family. Yes, I know why. The Israelites needed that city out of the way. But does that make it proper to blame the carnage on God? If I were God, I would resent that presumption as much as I would resent the modern armies who claim he is on their side.

Whenever anyone begins to tell the story of Abraham and Isaac as a stirring example of obedience, I have to leave the room. To me it is the most horrify-

ing story in all literature with the exception of Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" — another story of sacrificing a human to please God and thereby bring prosperity to the community. If God wanted to know if Abraham would follow orders in all things, could he not look into the heart of the man? Does the story not lead us to see God as a bit of a sadist? I have read several explanations for this story, but common sense tells me God had nothing to do with it.

Reading that lavishly beautiful book of Job, again I pose my usual question, "If I were God, would I put all those troubles on a righteous old man just to win a bet?" If we omit those arguments with the Devil, which some Bible scholars say were not in the original book but were added by some pious theologian, the story stands as a commentary on the greatest mystery of life: God's inequities. God does not explain. He simply reminds Job that the secrets of the universe are known only to Him. He asks: "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom? . . . Doth the eagle mount up at thy command? . . . Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth . . . [and] the morning stars sang together?" (Job 39:26–27; 38:4, 7) In other words, bear the burdens you were sent to bear; live the life you were sent to live.

Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken," suggests that our choice of paths largely determines our soul's development:

> Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
> And sorry I could not travel both
> And be one traveler, long I stood
> And looked down one as far as I could
> To where it bent in the undergrowth; . . .
> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference (1963, 429).

But would it? If I had gone to a different school, followed a different career, married a different person, lived in a different country, would it indeed have made all the difference? The differences, I think, would be merely superficial, not essential. In the long run, our soul's growth is measured by how we react to our circumstances. We could change them around in a dozen ways, branch off on any number of paths, and still come out the same way. After all, we have only to learn two lessons, as I recall a wise rabbi once saying: "We need to learn to love God and love our fellow man — all else is commentary."

When I was thirteen, my family moved from Bancroft to the larger town (5000) of Nampa, Idaho. We lived near a church and began attending the services. I advanced quickly. By fifteen I was secretary of the Sunday School and was giving readings in what we called "conjoint," a once monthly Sunday evening meeting where all the auxiliaries took part performing music, poetry, and skits. I also became a Beehive girl. I had by now settled my thoughts about the Bible stories but certain Church teachings posed other dilemmas for me. For example, I was told that only married women would go to the celestial kingdom; the single women would be handmaidens forevermore. Since I had freckles, was skinny, and spent most of my spare time in the astonishing Carnegie library, I thought my chances of marrying were nil. Now was that

any reason to be a handmaiden forevermore? Again I asked myself, would I treat a person that way if I were God? Of course not.

I did not then and have never had any trouble with the different roles of men and women in the Church. If I were God I would send directives exactly as it seems to me he has done.

To the male I would give the priesthood that carries with it 80 percent inventiveness and creativity — the thing that enables him to imagine such useful things as lines down the middle of the highway or a windshield wiper. To the female I would give the ability — 90 percent of her — to nourish, nourish a child within her body, then nourish a family, a nation, and, given the chance, a world. The other 10 percent of her would be creative intuition. Deep within, women know what life is about.

I am afraid I am doing what the pope objected to. When he visited San Francisco during the summer of 1987, he remarked that the Catholic Church was not a cafeteria; his flock could not pick and choose what edicts they would follow. My impertinent reaction to that authoritarian statement was, why couldn't they?

There is a story from the wise men of India:

Once upon a time when God had finished making the world, he wanted to leave behind him for man a piece of his own divinity, a promise to man of what he could become, with effort. What man could find too easily would never be valued, so he ruled out as locations the high mountains, the depths of the earth, the middle of the ocean, "for," he said, "I have given man a brain and he can learn to conquer all those obstacles too easily." Then he smiled, "I'll hide it in the place he will never think to look. I'll hide it deep inside man himself."

Why can't I listen to my own divinity? Even though that singing divinity within me might be so corroded with greed, lust, envy, hate, and other negatives that the music may go unheard for a time, sooner or later Francis Thompson's Hound of Heaven, traditionally assumed to be Christ, but who I suspect is the Divinity within us, will chase me "down the nights and down the days" and "down the arches of the years" and catch me up, and I will have to listen.

This is not to say I should not heed the wise counsel and admonitions of those in whom the divinity glows far more brightly than in me. I should attempt to, and I do.

My husband, Samuel W. Taylor, is a writer. (Whoa! I did get married after all, no handmaiden me. And he even likes freckles.) His office is about fifty feet from our house. When I want to toll him in, I turn a handle on a World War II field phone which buzzes on his twin phone. He signals back and heads for the house. He doesn't know what he is coming in for — a telephone call, a visitor, a meal — but he says to himself, "The little woman has a reason for calling me."

When my divine self buzzes me, I hope I will answer its summons as readily, understanding the real meaning of the questions put to me and not be like the little boy, lost in the supermarket, being carried on the shoulders of someone who keeps asking, "Do you see your mother?" and he finally responds with some exasperation, "No. No. I keep seeing my father."

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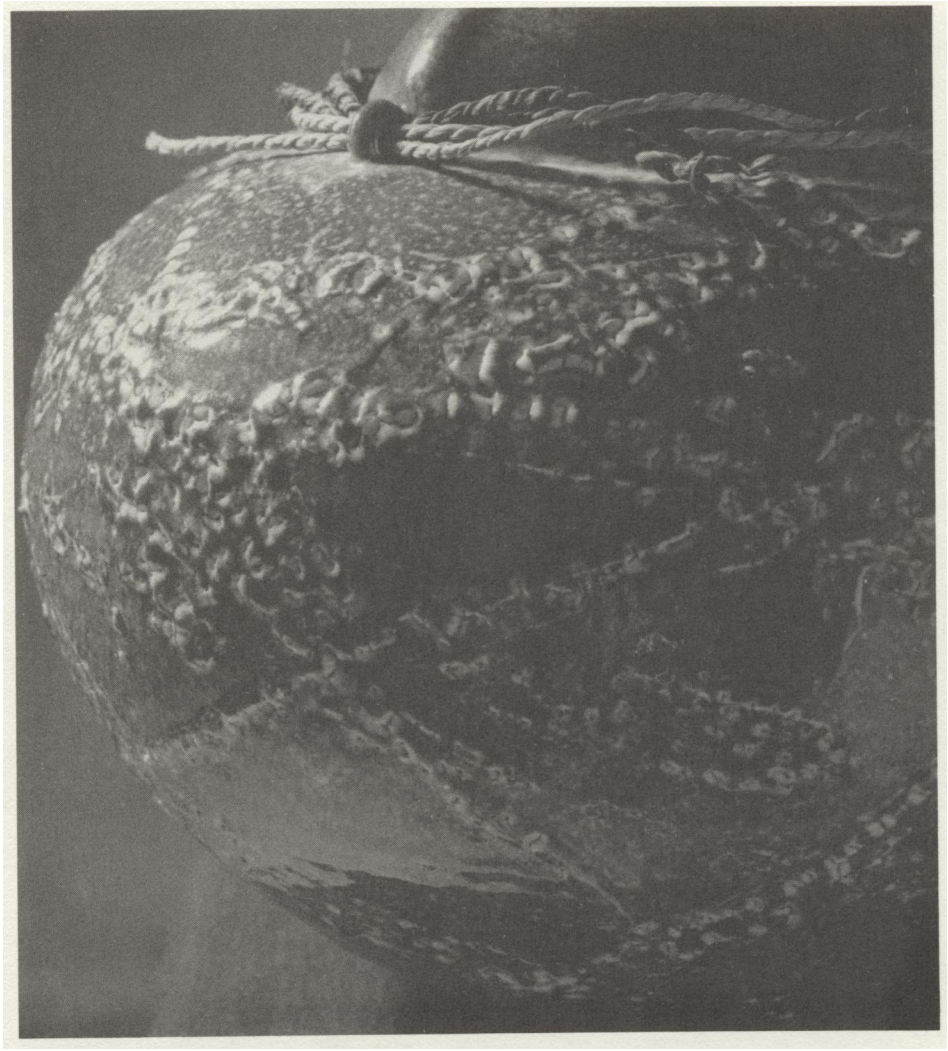

# If I Were Satan

*Samuel W. Taylor*

IF I WERE SATAN, I'D KEEP A SCRAPBOOK, a book of remembrance, if you will, of the hidden face of evil. It would contain such eternal verities as this by English philosopher and mathematician William Kingdom Clifford, quoted from the preface to *The Haunted Fifties* by I. F. Stone: "If there is one thing in the world more wicked than the desire to command, it is the willingness to obey." Satan would be pleased by this reference to one of his basic principles, the voluntary surrender of free agency.

I sometimes suspect that Satan's chief interest in promoting the more obvious evils is simply to deflect our attention from more insidious distortions of truth. In *Myth and Ritual of Christianity*, Alan Watts points out that,

> most people are not aware of any greater evils than lust, cruelty, murder, drunkenness, greed, and sloth. From the angelic point of view these "sins of the flesh" are as far from real evil as conventional goodness is removed from true sanctity or holiness. . . . Jenghiz Khan, the Marquis de Sade, Heinrich Himmler, and Jack the Ripper are mere blunderers. The true Satanist must always have the outward aspect of an angel of light, and will never, under any circumstance, resort to the cruder, violent types of evil. He must be so clever that only an expert in holiness can discern him, for in this way he may far more effectively mislead the sons of men and please his Master, whose supreme craft lies in deception, and subtle confusion of the truth.

I sometimes wonder who among us may be one of his minions. It has been said that "at every meeting held in the Lord's name, Satan also attends." Or, as Daniel Defoe puts it in *The True-Born Englishman*, "Whenever God erects a house of prayer, Satan always builds a chapel there." Perhaps members of my own Redwood City First Ward inadvertently foster Satan's precepts and principles.

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*SAMUEL W. TAYLOR has published an uncounted number of stories and articles in the big magazines of fond memory as well as fourteen books, both fact and fiction, serious and humorous. He has worked in Hollywood, for studios and independents, and was nominated for an academy award for his work on Walt Disney's* Absent-Minded Professor, *which was based on two of his short stories.*

If I were Satan, I'd be pleased at the proportion of elders and prospective elders in Redwood City First Ward. As membership clerk, I kept the records of a total of forty elders, about half of whom were active, and eighty prospective elders whose prospects weren't very bright, for we never saw them. Out of the forty elders, just nine had temple recommends.

Things are different, I'm sure, in Deseret, where Church activity and position can be useful in business affairs and employment. But out here in the California boondocks it profits us not. If we're active, it's for different reasons, perhaps for the best of all reasons.

If I were Satan, I'd be sure to paste in the scrapbook as a sample of progress Carl G. Croyder's May 1975 article in *Harper's*, "In Defense of the Old Hypocrisy." Croyder laments that we've adopted aliases with our new lifestyles, so that the Seven Deadly Sins have "gone legit," becoming respectable in today's world. Pride's new name is Success. Covetousness is Lawsuit, Lust is Expression, Anger is Indignation, Gluttony is the Good Life. Envy, always the creep of the crowd, is Regulation. And Sloth's new name is Freedom. "Sloth," the author says, "may be lazy, but he's not stupid." Croyder adds to the ancient seven an eighth vice, a modern baddy, Hypocrisy, whose premise is that anything at all is okay so long as we get away with it. Under a Root-of-All-Evil subheading, I'd include George Orwell's sardonic version of 1 Corinthians 13:

> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not money, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
>
> And though I have the gift of prophecy, understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not money, I am nothing.
>
> Money never faileth; but whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.
>
> And now abidth faith, hope, money, these three; but the greatest of these is money.

Satan might also include in his money section Brigham Young's statement that Adam and his family paid tithing. The Devil might smirk: paid to whom?

Under a scrapbook section on Progress in Science and Technology, I'd include as another sign of progress General Omar Bradley's comment:

> We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we do about peace, more about killing than we know about living.

And under Progress in Sales and Statistics, I'm sure this story would delight Satan: A missionary who had served in Germany told me that Elder Marvin J. Ashton on a visit to the mission had requested data not only on the number of baptisms but on the percentage of these converts who had remained active. Mission leaders collected data from the various branches and wards and were dismayed to find that 93 percent of converts fell away during the first year after baptism.

Now, if I were Satan, I would encourage the practice of sending out young missionaries who are taught an excellent sales pitch that isn't strictly accurate. In this way, converts come in the front door with stars in their eyes and then, after stumbling over a half-truth, slip out the back door never to be seen again. Thus far only one missionary assigned to my ward has ever heard of, for example, the Mountain Meadows massacre. Nor have they had any knowledge of the previous practice of plural marriage, except knowing how to change the subject.

My own research over a period of years has never uncovered a single truth, however "sensitive," one-tenth as dangerous as a half-truth. So, as Satan, I would foster happy mythology, history as we wish it might have happened. I also would severely frown on any attempt to use humor in writing about LDS subjects. I would studiously ignore Joseph Smith's statement that sometimes he spoke as a prophet and sometimes as a man. He must have been kidding, don't you think? I wonder if anyone knows of a single time, in our official history, when Joseph spoke as anything but a prophet. I don't.

As Satan, I would also encourage Church officials to ignore all attacks on the Church, such as the dedicated campaign of Jerald and Sandra Tanner of the Utah Lighthouse Ministry. I would simply pooh-pooh their violently unfriendly book, *Mormonism, Shadow or Reality*, issued in Salt Lake, together with the condensed version, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, published in New York. What do we care that the combined sales have been more than 50,000 copies? What does it matter that missionaries are hit with hard questions from readers of these books and are unprepared to answer?

But it isn't only past history or difficult doctrines which snarl missionary efforts. If I were Satan, I would have chuckled at an observation Anthony Boucher, author and critic, made to me after he and I had been on the program of the League of Utah Writers Round-Up. Boucher had been fascinated by the Peculiar People, but one practice bothered him. "I've heard it time and again from your people: 'Yes, I'm a Mormon, but I like a cup of coffee with breakfast.' 'I'm a Mormon, but I take an occasional highball.' 'Oh, yes, I'm a Mormon, but I smoke — in private, of course.' 'I'm a Mormon, but after two years in England I acquired the habit of morning and afternoon tea.' "

Then, bemused, Boucher said, "But, Sam, in all my life I've never heard a member of my faith say, 'Yes, I'm a Catholic, but I eat meat on Friday.' " Is the eighth vice Satan's trump card?

I'm sure Satan also hooted at the reaction of Rutherford Montgomery at the Round-Up another year. Monty, an old friend and author of more than 140 books for teenagers, had batched with we when we both were working at the Disney Studio. After the Round-Up, I took him on the Temple Square tour. Then, as we started back, I asked, "Well, Monty, how did you like Zion?"

His answer was from left field: "Sam, I'm ashamed of you and your people! You have a great and unique history that you should be proud of! Yet for an entire week I've heard nothing except apologetics for it from all sides."

A stranger, he was sensitive to an attitude to which I'd been long accustomed.

Perhaps we would not be so uncomfortable with our history if we were not so well practiced in whitewashing it. If I were Satan, I would certainly make every effort to keep a tight rein on Church history, in order to make it easier for such things as the Tales of Hofmann to haunt us again. Satan had to be happy with Mark Hofmann, former missionary and a master con artist, for he charmed both historians and General Authorities into paying big bucks for fake documents supposedly pertaining to early Church history. His prize counterfeit, for which he anticipated getting a cool million dollars, was to be the "discovery" of the lost 116 pages of the Book of Mormon. Wow! What an operator! Satan must have guffawed. But then historians began to smell a rat, so Hofmann killed two people with bombs in an attempt to cover his tracks. He then by accident was a victim of a third bomb, intended for someone unknown. He did recover, yes, and yes, he now is serving a life sentence. But the Tales of Hofmann have had a tremendous negative impact on the Church image. The president of a foreign mission told me that the Hofmann case had made conversions virtually impossible in his mission.

Satan's disciples are few in number, but placed in strategic positions. I couldn't qualify. Not that I'm particularly devout or especially spiritual, which I'm not, but simply because I've done my homework on him. And in the final analysis, I'm probably not worth bothering with anyway. Knock on wood. Besides, Satan doesn't recruit people who believe Ralph Waldo Emerson's maxim that "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind." He avoids those who aspire to be among the valiant as described by William Wetmore Story's *Io Victis*:

> They only the victory win
> Who have fought the good fight and have vanquished
> the demon that tempts us within;
> Who have held to their faith unseduced by the prize
> that the world holds on high;
> Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist,
> fight — if need be, to die.

And anyhow, he can't beat the Lord's deal. I'm convinced that however often and however badly I fail to measure up, the good Lord will give me another chance. Satan on the other hand will never forgive a single mistake or allow repentance for weakness. With the Lord's deal, all I really need is faith the size of a mustard seed and a contrite heart. I'd be foolish to bet on Satan. The Lord's game is the only one in town.

# The Weed

*Paris Anderson*

THIS MORNING I WENT TO THE FUNERAL OF A FRIEND who was killed in a motorcycle accident. I slipped into the only vacant pew in the very back of the chapel and listened to the kind and often tearful eulogies. At the front of the chapel the closed casket stood surrounded by beautiful wreaths. A single white rose was placed near the center, a few inches from where my friend's heart should be. I wept.

When I returned home, I made a sandwich, though I was in no mood to eat. I could already feel a hypoglycemic headache coming on. I chewed slowly and wondered about death, wondered why it strikes the young and beautiful — the delicate white roses. I wondered too why it seems unable to approach certain individuals, like my grandfather, a gnarled thistle.

I met my grandfather when I was five years old. Late in the summer that year my parents decided to expose our backward southern Utah family to the real world. We went to Disneyland. Almost as an afterthought, my mother called her wayward father in Burbank and arranged a visit. I was immediately apprehensive. From the little I had heard of him, I had concluded my grandfather was an ogre.

Once I had asked my mother why the other children at school had two grandfathers, but I didn't have any. She brusquely answered that my father's father had died and her father lived in California. She said he was a very skillful mechanic, but a heavy smoker and drinker; then she made me promise never to smoke or drink.

Later that night when I went to the kitchen for a drink of water I overheard my mother talking in angry tones to my father about the man who had

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abandoned her family when she was nine. I decided then that my grandfather was an ogre. What else could I assume him to be, when the only beings inhabiting my fairy-tale world that were evil enough to run away from their families and smoke were vile creatures resembling school buses (my father frequently told me stories in which grunting, smoke-belching beasts were the villains). And, because of these stories, I was afraid to meet my grandfather — the ogre. I feared such a beast might shred my body, as the creatures of my father's stories often did to the unfortunate heroes. And yet, I was almost eager to see him. After all, I had never seen a real ogre before.

When we arrived at my grandfather's dismal house I was paralyzed with dread. My sisters, both older, stepped from the car and jumped in place. My brother, the oldest, hurried out of the car and up the sidewalk, where a hissing goose stood in the uncut grass. The goose, quick as lightning, flashed its beak to the ground, then lifted it skyward, chortling dark and sadistically. Terrified, I shrank into the corner of the back seat, and after a moment of futile persuasion, my father yanked me from the car and carried me up the sidewalk. As we passed the goose, its head flashed again, and I cringed at the horrifying chortle. The goose was oddly balanced on the back of a large tortoise. My father set me down on the doorstep, then rang the bell. With grotesque fascination I turned and watched the goose. Slowly, the tortoise poked its head out and surveyed the ground, apparently looking for its tormentor. The goose beaked the tortoise's head again, and it snapped back into hiding. Again, the evil chortle. I giggled. And suddenly I knew I would like my grandfather — or at least his brutal goose.

My father rang again, and in a moment a hollow, rusty voice invited us in. My father pushed the door, and we entered.

"Hello," my mother called into the murky, smoke-filled room.

After a moment's silence a voice asked us into the living room.

We walked into the dark room, guided by the radiant brightness of the silent TV. I stood by the TV and gazed at the figure in the lounge chair. He was exactly as I had imagined him: fat — tremendously fat — though he didn't seem to be much taller than my brother. His skin was dark and leathery. Occasionally he would lift a live coal to his lips, then smoke would pour from his nose. I smiled wildly — proud.

"These are your grandchildren," my mother said as if completing an obligation of the flesh.

"Well, how many are there?" the ogre grunted.

"Four."

"And how many are you?" the ogre asked, pointing at me.

I didn't answer for a moment, confused.

My father prodded me. "Go ahead, tell your Grampa how many you are."

"I'm only one of them. Those are the others," I said, pointing at my brother and sisters.

Grampa shook his head and pretended not to laugh.

My grandfather was kind to me that day — kinder than he was to my brother and sisters. He gave me a large pocketknife, which my mother took

away almost immediately. He taught me to read his marked poker cards. That evening he took our family to a restaurant and insisted that I sit next to him. He ordered for me, then ate half my dinner, making silly jokes as he speared my food with his fork. Jokes like, "Oops, better get that before it falls off."

That night our family started back to Utah. I slept all that night, but, when I awoke, I heard my mother speaking in hushed tones to my father, as if she were afraid we children would hear. "He must have been drunk," she said. "He can be a very nice person when he's a little drunk." She paused, then continued. "He's mean when he's sober and really mean when he's too drunk." She seemed angry again, perhaps remembering her childhood.

A few days later, back in Utah, my sisters, no doubt tired of the old school yard chants, invented a new one. They joined hands, as if to dance around a mulberry bush, and chanted, "Our Grampa's this big . . . Our Grampa's this big. . . ."

I didn't see my grandfather again for fifteen years, nor did I hear about him. When I was twenty, my mother's sister received a call from my wealthy great-aunt, Grampa's sister, asking her to go to California to bring my grandfather home to Utah. His neighbors had sent around a petition which a judge honored. Apparently, Grampa had become too filthy and mean to live in Burbank.

I was very surprised that my mother and aunt decided to accept my grandfather when he had rejected them forty years earlier. But I quickly realized it was a matter of blood to them.

I was excited to see my grandfather again. Though the memory of my only day with him was very dim, it was one I had held fondly through the years. My family had moved to Provo two years earlier, so it took only minutes to drive to my aunt's house in American Fork, sixteen miles to the north, to meet Grampa when he arrived.

I was appalled when I saw him. I remembered him as being very large — a jovial man who was kindest to the smallest. But somewhere in the years since I had seen him, he had become scrawny. He had lost an enormous amount of weight, but his skin had not changed size. It hung in loose flabs from his bony limbs like wet wallpaper. But in spite of this tremendous weight loss, he still dressed in the clothes of a very large man.

"Hello, Grampa!" I called out when he was close enough to hear me.

"Hhauw," he called back.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, amazed at the terrible effect those years had had on his speech.

"Ai'm gluyauw."

Yes, I thought, you are gluyauw, whatever that is.

My uncle, who was holding his arm, led Grampa into the house. Grampa shuffled as he walked — once on the right, two quick shuffles on the left. My uncle helped him get settled in a comfy chair in the corner of the living room, then Grampa began a hardy effort to vegetate. I sat quietly for a few minutes, waiting for us to become buddies again, or at least wanting Grampa to recog-

nize my attentiveness. But he rarely looked at me, and when he did, he glared. I was confused, but I quickly rationalized that the old man was tired from the move. I should return another day.

At home I realized Grampa and I were no longer buddies. I thought it unfair that the years had made me too old to be a buddy; or perhaps they had made him too old.

I reluctantly returned to my aunt's house two days later, more out of a sense of obligation than fondness. I found Grampa there, alone in the cherished and well-kept wooded area of my aunt's yard. He had a bow saw.

"Hello, Grampa," I said as I approached.

"Hauw."

"How do you feel?"

"Ai'm gluyauw," he grunted.

He was feeling much better, I could tell. "Wha'cha doin'?" I asked, trying to imitate his language.

"Ai'm prunn. Ese trees are too bi."

It was hard to believe he was merely pruning. He was cutting the trunks a few inches below the first fork, so the trees looked like small fence posts. But it quickly became apparent that he was, indeed, pruning. If he were merely cutting down the trees, he would have cut near the base of the trunk, not at the top. He was pruning all right, and doing such a fine job, those trees would never need pruning again.

I watched him. I admired the old man, working hard — slow and steady. Then, with a new grunt I couldn't understand, he handed me the saw. I understood what he wanted. I threw myself into the work, trying to impress him with my physical abilities. When I had nearly cut through the trunk, he uttered another unintelligible grunt. I ignored it. Suddenly the trunk snapped, swung upward, catching me under the cheekbone, and knocked me to the ground. Grampa shook his head.

"Ai shou'a caserated m'self," he said. "Ai tol you, ya' be'er t'tha sie. Sometimes ese ki'back."

I smiled, embarrassed by my naivete. I felt something cool running on my cheek. Blood. I started toward the house.

"Whe'you gon'?" Grampa asked, fire in his voice.

"To the house to get a bandage."

"Ai shou'a caserated m'self," Grampa said again. "Ge'back ere'n work. We go'a lot a trees."

Obediently, I returned to the trees and started working, blood dripping.

That evening my mother told me the evil thing the old man had done while her sister was in Salt Lake. She sounded distraught, as if Grampa was already becoming a problem. Suddenly I was secretly proud and happy. Grampa and I were too old to be buddies, but I felt we were now — accomplices.

I didn't see Grampa again for two weeks. I walked into the kitchen of my aunt's house one Friday night. Grampa was sitting at the table eating a snack. I sat down.

"Hello, Grampa."

He didn't respond.

"Wha'cha doin'?"

He didn't answer. He ate, spreading dark spicy mustard with his finger onto small slabs of cheese. I helped myself to his cheese, using my finger to spread the mustard.

"Hey, this is pretty good," I said truthfully.

He didn't comment. We continued eating in silence, spreading with our fingers. On my third slab I noticed Grampa spreading the mustard a little thicker. I accepted the challenge and spread mine deeper than his. I chewed quickly, then swallowed. Grampa spread thicker yet and ate, chewing slowly. He seemed to relish the battle, as if expressing his anger over losing his freedom. I quickly grabbed another slab and spread the deepest yet, trying to say his confinement wasn't my fault and that I resented having only one memory of a grandfather while growing up. After a moment of this, my mouth began to burn as if hell had lodged itself under my tongue. I got up and poured two glasses of water. I had lost the battle.

In a moment I began to eat again, spreading lightly. We ate in silence. Soon my aunt walked into the kitchen, watched us for a moment, then chuckled.

"I see you two take after each other," she said.

I smiled uneasily at her; Grampa didn't respond.

She left, and we continued eating. Grampa finally took a sip from his glass.

"I'm going back to college in a couple of weeks," I said.

He ignored me.

Frustrated, I finished eating and left.

I didn't see Grampa again before I left for college. I was mad at him for not accepting me — for barely acknowledging my presence. I was mad at him because he didn't treat me like an accomplice. I knew I was nothing to him.

I didn't see him, but I heard a story about him. Apparently, Grampa decided to cut the trees we felled into logs for the fireplace. With my uncle's circular saw he cut the branches off the trunks, then held the trunks on his lap and cut them into small lengths. He cut seven or eight pieces before he cut into his leg. The wound was deep and bled profusely. He hurried to the house for help, but no one was home. In the garage he found rags to stop the bleeding. Then, with the logic of a derelict, he straightened a fishing hook and sewed his leg with line. Later, my aunt came home and took him to the hospital. Though I laughed when I heard this story, I was embarrassed by it.

Two days later I left for Southern Utah State College in Cedar City, my hometown. I liked college life, but the hours of homework bored me. Occasionally, my mother would mail me a cassette-letter with stories about Grampa.

On the first tape she told how my rich great-aunt had bought a house in Orem for my grandfather. My mother's brother moved into the house with his family to take care of Grampa, who lived in an apartment built into the garage. Grampa seemed happy there, living alone and independent. He took to stealing shopping carts. He wasn't stealing them simply to make trouble, like a juvenile delinquent; he stole them to fill a need produced by old age *and* to make trouble, like a senile delinquent. His particular need was to carry im-

ported beer and other groceries from the liquor store. For Grampa, with cane in one hand and a shuffling, unsteady gait, carrying objects was impossible. He filled a shopping cart, then pushed it home, leaning heavily upon it. He carried his cane in the basket for dogs or for side trips. Stealing carts worked very well for Grampa, and when the police finally arrived at his house, he was on the street with a full cart and had three other carts in the yard.

The police were very kind. They made him return the three idle carts and buy the fourth. Two weeks later the same officers returned with a blaze-orange stocking cap. They gave it to Grampa and ordered him to wear it while on the streets with his cart so that drivers could see him.

The tape ended abruptly, and I didn't hear the rest of the story. Of course, I hid the tape, embarrassed.

A month went by before I received another cassette. The story it contained was a wonderful diversion from my heavy load of undone homework.

My mother said early one Saturday morning she received a call from a boyish-sounding BYU student. He said Grampa was at Utah Lake Park where the road crossed the Provo River. I knew the place well; several times I had gone there to feed the ducks crusts of bread. It was about two hours shuffling distance from Grampa's home. The kid asked my mother to hurry, saying Grampa had fallen in the river and he had jumped in to save him. They were both very cold, and he was worried about the old man. My mother hurried to the river and found Grampa sitting on a log, acting like a wet cat, muttering quietly and shivering. The student's date was there, standing as far away from Grampa and as close to her date as she could.

"You should keep better watch on your father," the kid said as my mother got out of the car.

"We can't control him," my mother answered, trying to sound reproachful. "Come on," she said to Grampa, "get in the car, and let's go home."

Grampa obediently shuffed to the car, leaning heavily on his cane, and got in. My mother opened the trunk and wheeled Grampa's cart over to take it home. The kid helped her load it and its contents — four six-packs and several fifths. My mother thanked the kid, got into the car, and drove away. Grampa told her what had happened.

My mother said: "Your grandfather told me, 'I stopped to watch the ducks. I miss my ducks. I guess I lost my balance. I grabbed my cart, then all of us went in. I got my cane to get out, but I kept falling. Then, this fool jumps in — trying to be a hero. The damn fool. He jumps in and pulls me out. So, I hit him with my cane and made him go back for the cart. Son of a bitch, he lost a fifth of rum. The son of a bitch.' " She hesitated when she quoted his cussing.

A roommate in the next room overheard the tape and started laughing hysterically. He came into my bedroom and asked me if the story was true. I told him it was, and he said, "I wish my grandfather was like that. My grandfather just sits around in a rest home and drools." He left my room laughing, and suddenly I was very proud of Grampa. I reminded myself we were kind of like accomplices.

I received another tape the week before mid-terms. I was very anxious about the tests, but I was too far behind for studying to help, so I listened to the tape a few times instead.

My mother said: "About a week after I sent the last tape, Daddy got arrested by the Orem police for pruning the trees along the sidewalk by his house. And you know how he prunes trees. Anyway, he went back to California before his court date. When he came back, the seasons had changed, and the leaves had started falling. When Daddy went into the courtroom he told them the trees were dying and it wasn't his fault, because he had gone to California and couldn't take care of them. The judge laughed, then showed Daddy a petition his neighbors had signed. He ordered him to go to the mental hospital for a psychological evaluation. He said he had to stay there three months."

My mother said on his first day there, he went into a doctor's office, and the doctor said, "Mr. Stewart, do you know what my name is?"

Grampa said, "Well, you dumb son of a bitch, if you don't know your own name, I'm not going to tell you."

My mother said Grampa almost immediately turned the rec-room into a pool hall. It started out innocently. Grampa played nine-ball at a dime a point. He allowed himself to lose a few times but never lost more than sixty cents. He frequently won upwards of a dollar fifty. Then he turned to seven-ball at a dollar a point. He often won over twelve dollars per game. The other patients began to refuse to pay their debts, so Grampa recruited a big man to collect. The big man was spending the last six months of his prison sentence in the hospital to get off drugs. After he broke one nose, the other patients paid off quickly.

The story was not as funny as others my mother had told, but I listened several times, trying to distract myself. It didn't work. All I could think of were the examinations and what a fool I had been for not consistently doing the homework that would prepare me for them. I admitted to myself that I was a fool who played around too much — probably like my grandfather when he was young. It occurred to me then that college was no place for me and most likely never would be. I probably would never be responsible enough to do homework.

The next morning I left Cedar City and moved back to Provo where I got a job in a gas station. I was very happy there, making trouble when I could.

The mental hospital sent Grampa to a nursing home in Springville, which my great-aunt agreed to pay for. She also agreed to send him a few hundred dollars a month for pocket money.

Grampa was disagreeable there. He frequently flushed washcloths down the toilet, trying to back things up. He succeeded a few times. When the staff started hiding the cloths, Grampa resorted to more creative ways of entertaining himself. He bought a basket of juicy red apples and gave them to his mates. When one polite old gentleman refused an apple, saying he had no teeth, Grampa called him a yellow son of a bitch. Then he added, "Hell, I've only got two." The gentleman finally accepted the gift, and Grampa grinned evilly as the old duck sucked on the skin.

Things soon quieted down with Grampa. The staff of the nursing home began to accept his eccentricities and quit reporting his bad behavior to us on a weekly basis. The only times I saw Grampa were on holidays or on his birthday. My mother would send me to the nursing home to bring him home to dinner. I noticed on the first of these infrequent visits that Grampa had modified his shopping cart. He had cut off the top half of the wire basket to ease loading and unloading. He had rewrapped the handle bar to make it larger and easier to grasp. He had replaced the rear wheels with the big wheels and the axle of a baby carriage. The cart now rode more smoothly and was easier for Grampa to push. His skill as a mechanic was evident.

I also noticed that Grampa's shuffle had become much slower and weaker. His speech had deteriorated even more. I realized Grampa would soon die. I resigned myself to thinking I would soon be without a grandfather, like when I was a kid. It was easy to think this; I had survived most of my life without him, and I knew I would continue to survive when he was gone. Even during the time I had known him, I was only one person — alone in all my battles. It was easy to think — but sad.

At the end of dinner that first night, Grampa and I were the only ones who asked for mince pie for dessert. I remembered that night with the mustard and cheese. I remembered that my aunt said Grampa and I took after each other. I realized at that dinner that I did fight all my battles alone, but I was more than one — I was two. And suddenly, thinking I would soon be one again became tragically painful. My father drove Grampa home that night.

Six months later Grampa became a problem again. He had taken to hiding the false limbs of the amputees among his mates and to starting fires. The home decided he was dangerous and kicked him out. I was very happy — very proud. I began to hope I would be two for a long time.

At the next holiday I picked Grampa up at a motel across the street from the home. His shuffle was still slow and weak, his speech still difficult. Innocently, I asked if he missed the nursing home. His speech was difficult, but his answer was not.

"Tha fuckin' place?" he said.

I brought him to my home for dinner, and I enjoyed his company, though we never spoke. I took him back to his motel that evening. We didn't say good-bye after I helped him to the door of his room, but I think he knew I meant to say it. And I think he meant to say it too.

Another six months went by, and Grampa again became a problem. And again, I was proud. The manager of Grampa's motel called my mother and said Grampa was too filthy to keep. He was to be evicted the next Friday.

Wednesday evening my father and I went to clean Grampa's room in preparation for the move to another motel. The room was as we expected — squalid — but I admired it. My father and I collected Grampa's dirty clothes and soiled sheets to wash. As my father picked one pair of overalls off the floor, he shook them gently. They didn't bend. We both laughed.

I carried two five-gallon buckets to the laundromat and filled three machines, putting extra soap in each. I dried and folded the clothes, then went back to Grampa's room.

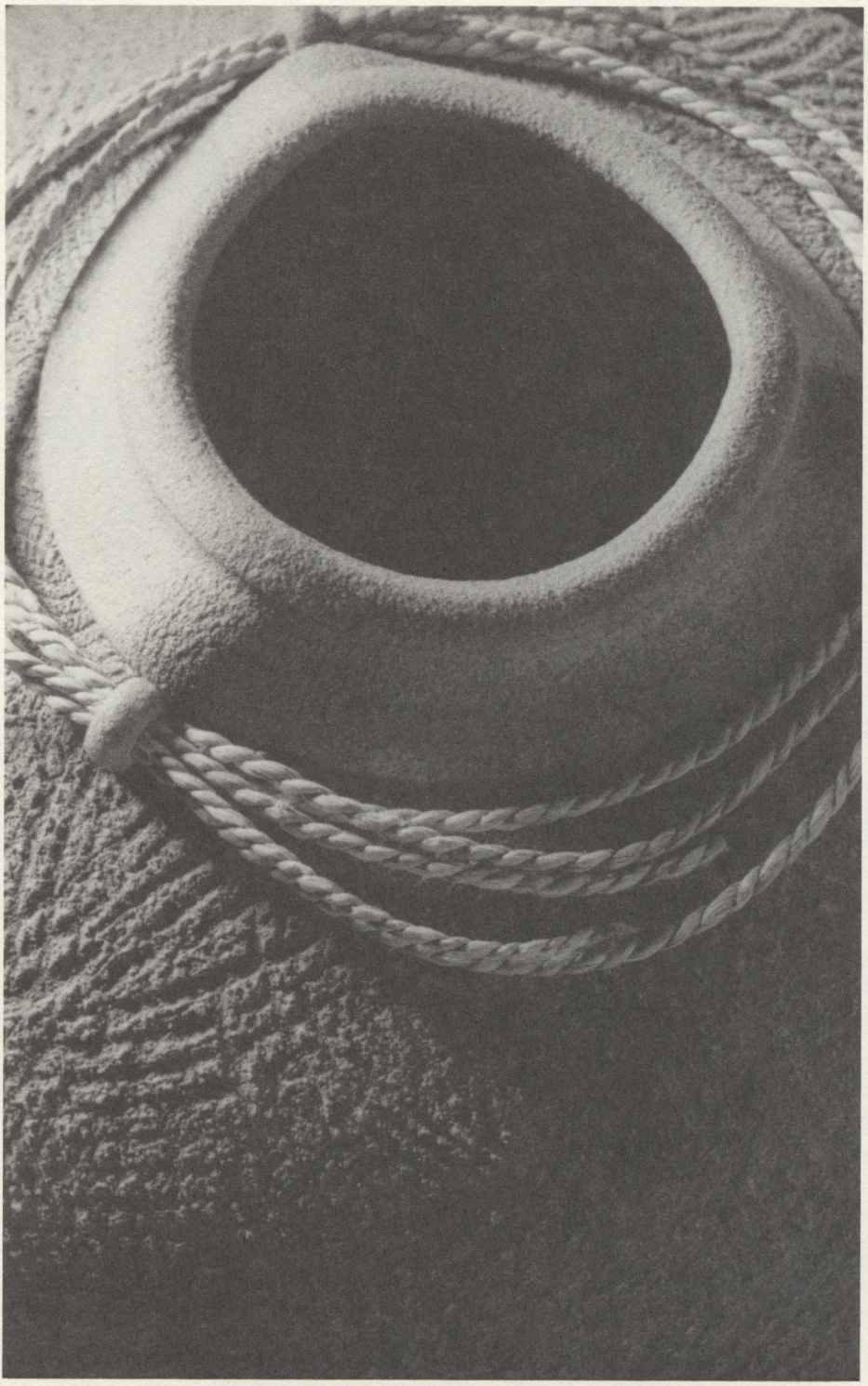
My father had finished most of the cleaning, but there were still various types of wire lying about the room. Though he didn't need the money, Grampa collected wire and occasionally sold it to recyclers for a few pennies. My father and I quickly finished the room, then offered to help Grampa to his new motel. Grampa nodded. Friday morning, he said, as if that was the time he wanted our help. I had to work Friday morning, but my father said he would be there. He went out to the car and got in.

As I passed Grampa on my way to the car, he said quickly, "Ese trees are too bi. Le's prun toni'."

"Yeah," I said, grinning evilly, "they are too big." I walked to the car, trying to subdue my grin. I was wildly proud. *I was an accomplice.*

I came back later that night, about 2:00 A.M., and the old man, he was waiting.

I returned home from the funeral of my beautiful friend—the white rose—and I wondered about death. I wondered why it strikes the young and beautiful — the delicate flowers. And I wondered why it seems unable to approach certain individuals, like my grandfather — a gnarled thistle. A thought occurred to me then: Weeds are always the last to die. I repeated the thought aloud and took comfort in it, assured of my own immortality.



# Lesser Voices

*Sherwin W. Howard*

Sun-circled history
Paints famous fools
But leaves plain brown men
Unremarked

And yet
With passing years
Who is to say which dust
Is valued more
In garden of the gods

## Jonahs
### Who bent to drink

Ten thousand proven men and Gideon
Camped close by Harod's well
To melt in ceaseless Midian sun

Then came the tremulous command
And those of us who drank like honest men
Confiding face to cooling stream
Were sent as frightened children
To our tents
While jittery zealots
Distrusting even heaven
Were honored by the fray

Fanatics breed in desert dust
And shadow every wind that blows

Discount what histories say —
Luck hires poets to sing sweet songs
Where only bitterness was sure

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Your prophet Gideon
Spoke by chance
Or even destiny
But not god's voice

What kind of oracle
Would not forgive
At crumbled tower of Penuel
And slew unarmed bravery?

Your Gideon
Guided by whom
Made images of gold
That led all Israel
Whoringly astray

Enough of fevered dust
I follow less inspired clay

## Guhrish
### Shield bearer for Goliath

I say he was a damn-ed boy
And nothing more
Chin naked, dumb brave
Ego and complexion burst
In grand embarrassment

Spurning humble gods
This David was a hollow dream
Who'd never seen bright
Hawk-scraped clouds
Sure victory's omen

My master scorned
His clutch of stones
As woman's gleaning
But compassion was too kind
To slaughter bending babe
Beside the drying brook —
Wisdom may kill ants before they sting
But honor holds to rules of war —
And so we let his faltering steps
Close to their certain fate

I've seen how heroes die
Surround with battle flame
Where pikes roast genitals
To steamy succulence of life
But this was mockery
Drummed dead by common stone
Tinkling down war-tempered brass

What honor lies in pebble?
What monument in peasant sling?
He was a damn-ed boy
And misery will track
His naive generation

## Musca
## The third thief at Golgotha

I did what common man must do
When hammered clouds hide sun
And royal guilt accuses innocence

Of course
I'd heard the whispered talk —
He may have been Elias
God-honored even now
But who is thief to say
Or what to do

The other two were friends
Straightforward simple thieves
Embarrassed most at being caught
Before they'd traded spoil
For skins of grape and food
To feed gaunt families
But
All profession holds some risk

I follow Roman soldiers
Tormentors of our carelessness
To watch fat purses drink sweet wine
Until they need sure fingers (mine)
To lighten them, and I oblige

What soul does not seek paradise
Both here and hereafter?

## Rachel

### Witness to Herod's massacre of children

It was not just
That sister had all joy —
Face fair
Husband most civilized
And four full sons
Good following lambs
That I might tend but never own

Then came mad Herod's fantasy
His holocaust screamed down dark streets
Large knocking at small doors

But we were safe
It was well known
No prince was born
Beneath bright star
Not in our small home
Just baby girl
A failed mother's hope

So
When two soldiers forced their way
I laughed their search of raftered bed
Until a final blindness
Swept her from arms to floor
Where dream spilled out
Against cold stone
To breathe one final cry
Then silence absolute

As God lives
I did not glance
At sister's son asleep
In cabinet-hidden innocence

But somehow soldiers made discovery
And bid him join their master's grisly feast

In Ramah tears may never cease
But prayers for justice stopped
Cold afternoons ago

# Jack-Mormons

*Edward A. Geary*

AUNT ELLA USED TO SAY that a man who doesn't live his principles is a poor specimen. This observation, like her other nuggets of conventional wisdom, was ostensibly directed at me, but she always cast a squinty glance over her sewing glasses at Uncle Jack as she said it. Uncle Jack didn't let it bother him. Usually he ignored her comments, perhaps riffling the newspaper a little or raising it higher in front of his face. Once in a while, though, he would offer a mild retort.

"Old Fairbank was saying the same thing only yesterday."

"Not that principle!" Aunt Ella snapped. "You know what I mean."

Old Fairbank was a polygamist, the leader of a community called the Order of Enoch that operated a coal mine a couple of miles farther up the canyon. To this day I do not know his given name. We called him Old Fairbank to distinguish him from Young Fairbank, a blond giant who drove one of the community's coal trucks. There were numerous other Fairbanks, of course, including an undersized boy my age named Billy, who could not possibly have shared all his parentage with Young Fairbank. The Enochites lived in a ramshackle group of tarpaper barracks huddled at the mouth of a side canyon bearing the ironically appropriate name of Cohab Hollow — so called because it had served as a hiding place for polygamists from the town of Helaman during "the Raid" by U.S. marshals in the 1880s.

None of us on the outside knew for certain how many people lived in the Enochite community. When Aunt Fran worked as a census taker in 1950, her assigned territory included Cohab Hollow. She arrived without advance warning and found a confused welter of women and children inside the first dwelling. But at the second door she was met by Young Fairbank, who conducted her from house to house, not allowing her to enter but stating at each one the names of the inhabitants.

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"Not that I believed him one bit," she would say as she recounted the experience. "But lawsie! What could I do? That man is as wide as Charlie Keller's barn."

Aunt Fran was broad in the beam herself. Aunt Ella ran more to bone and had been wound up tighter. I sometimes thought of her as resembling the gas pumps in front of the inn — the old-fashioned tall, skinny kind with round bulbs on top that still had "PEP 88" painted on them, even though, as Paul Manchester pointed out to Uncle Jack every time he delivered gas, the name had been changed years before.

Uncle Jack operated the Sagehen Inn, a combination filling station, diner, grocery, and fishing tackle shop that was most commonly referred to in Helaman as "that beer joint up the canyon." We lived next door to the business in a bungalow Uncle Jack had brought in from Mohrland when they closed the mine there. It was a rather shabby clapboard structure, but Aunt Ella had made it quite comfortable on the inside. There were two bedrooms, a kitchen that always smelled of fresh bread, and a front room where we sat around the stove in the evenings while Uncle Jack read the paper and Aunt Ella sewed and lectured. On the acre or so of ground that stretched back to the creek, Uncle Jack — true to his Mormon roots to this extent, at least — had built a chicken coop and pig pen and had planted some fruit trees.

In its upper reaches, Helaman Canyon is lush with fir and aspen groves and water meadows, but we lived near the mouth of the canyon, in the rain shadow of the high plateau. The mountains rose on either side in a series of gray cliffs and steep talus slopes sparsely covered by stunted piñon and juniper trees, with here and there an ancient ponderosa pine maintaining a precarious toehold on a ledge. Below us, the canyon floor widened to form a sheltered place for fruit farms. Above us for several miles, each side canyon had one or two coal mines, small operations with tipples clinging to the mountainside and slack piles that dribbled coal dust into the creek. The creek itself was at its fullest where it ran past the Sagehen, having gathered all its tributary streams but not yet having been diverted into irrigation canals. The roar of the water in the boulder-strewn channel used to keep me awake for the first few nights after I arrived in the spring. Then it faded into a background music I scarcely heard until I left in the fall, when the sudden silence again made it hard to sleep.

I lived with Uncle Jack and Aunt Ella from the opening of fishing season in May until the close of deer season in late October. That was the period when the Sagehen did most of its business and therefore when I theoretically could be of most use. In the winter, the only customers were coal truckers and on Saturday nights underaged boys from Helaman trying to buy beer. I spent the winter months in town with Aunt Fran, partly because it was closer to school and partly because it was assumed I might be a help to her in clearing the sidewalk of snow and filling the woodbox and coal scuttle. I now see that a more fundamental reason for this yearly cycle was the sisters' sense of sharing a burden, fulfilling a duty together. My father was their younger brother, and they felt they had spoiled him as a child and were therefore somehow respon-

sible for the way he turned out. I'm not sure exactly how he did turn out, for I saw very little of him. He used to blow into town without warning, driving a big car and announcing that things were finally falling into place and it wouldn't be long before he would be able to give me a home and all sorts of advantages. Then he would disappear again, and we would hear nothing from him for perhaps a year or more.

Aunt Ella and Aunt Fran remained surprisingly nonjudgmental about my father. At any rate they never said anything unfavorable to me. But I suspect that was partly because of their general opinion that men were inclined to go to the bad. Uncle Ed, Aunt Fran's husband, had died before I was born, but all indications were that he had been a jack-Mormon too, like Uncle Jack. The aunts went to Relief Society together every Thursday with other women whose husbands also fell short of the standard, and I have the impression that the quilts they were forever stitching were for them symbols of the fabric of society itself, rather worn but preserved, patched together in a new design and sustained by the fierce intensity of females who held fast to the principles their men were allowing to slip.

And yet they did their utmost to make sure I would turn out all right. It can't have been easy for them, taking in an awkward child long after their own families were grown, but I never heard a word of complaint. I did hear plenty of words of admonition, which I didn't much appreciate, and I remember innumerable and interminable sacrament meetings spent painfully wedged between Aunt Fran's hips and Aunt Ella's bones.

Looking back, I can see that it was a good life in many respects, though I was a rather sullen and resentful adolescent. I felt that Aunt Ella, especially, kept me on too short a leash, was always finding chores for me to do. I can still hear that shrill voice, calling me away from whatever was interesting. "Pe*ter! Pe*ter! Come in now!" And yet in retrospect it seems as though I had immense leisure. I used to climb the cliffs — despite Aunt Ella's apprehensions that I would fall — or hike up the side canyons to the rolling country on top of the plateau. Sometimes in the evenings I would run up the road as far as Cohab Hollow or even farther, feeling my muscles surge and drinking the chill air in great gulps. Or I would go fishing in the creek behind the Sagehen, picking rock rollers from submerged stones to bait my hook and carrying the native cutthroats straight from the water to Uncle Jack's grill. It was a good life, and they were good people, the two old women I used to refer to privately as Mutt and Jeff, and the easygoing man who gave no sign of resenting my intrusion on his domestic peace, what there was of it.

It would be wrong to suggest that the Church in Helaman was entirely carried by the women, though they were certainly more numerous than the men. I think of Sister Higgins, massively aproned, arms bulging as she slapped a dollop of mashed potatoes on each plate at a ward dinner; or nervous little Sister Sanderson, sparrowlike with her gray bun and flighty movements; or the Singing Mothers, a solid phalanx of floral fabric and quavering soprano. Many of the men who attended church seemed a little weary, as if they were there less from conviction than from lack of imagination. Some of them had re-

formed in later life, including Brother Sanderson, the second counselor in the bishopric, who never tired of retelling the story of his road to Damascus. He had been completely inactive in the Church for many years, though his wife was president of the Relief Society. They had brought up a family on the same model, the daughters pious and dutiful, the sons wild, dropping out of school as soon as they were old enough to join the Navy. Brother Sanderson had been out in the hayfield one Sunday afternoon, leaning on his pitchfork and having a smoke, when the bishop came to call him to be Sunday School superintendent. He had taken one last pull on his cigarette while he reflected that he had always figured on getting active someday. Then he snuffed the offending weed underfoot, and with no more difficulty than that, apparently, stepped across the dividing line between jack-Mormon and good Mormon.

According to Uncle Jack, Bishop Huntington was also greatly changed from what he had been as a young man, though you would never have guessed it. They had been wild kids together, and the bishop, without quite acknowledging that bond, used to work on Uncle Jack on every possible occasion, trying to get him to set his life in order. Since Uncle Jack didn't go to church and the bishop didn't patronize the Sagehen, those occasions didn't come up too often. Once in a while, though, they might meet at the post office, and the bishop was always very friendly.

"Well, Jack! How are you? We don't get to see much of you."

"Well," Uncle Jack would drawl, "you know where I'm at."

After the initial greeting, the bishop would get a serious look on his face and lower his voice to a confidential tone. "I was thinking just the other day that we could use you to work with the scouts. We need good men, Jack."

"That lets me out. You know me, Charlie — Jack the jack-Mormon."

The bishop also gave me special attention, perhaps to encourage me in my good attendance record (as if that were my doing!) and keep me from being led astray by the bad influences in my life. He had a rather gruff heartiness that didn't quite seem sincere to me at the time, though it probably was. He was fond of showing off the strength of his grip, and you had to brace yourself to keep from flinching when you shook hands with him.

I don't believe Uncle Jack ever thought of himself as an outcast. Indeed, the jack-Mormon was virtually an established role in a town like Helaman, altogether different from the situation of the non-Mormon families who moved into town from time to time and usually moved out again within a year or two. To be a jack-Mormon was in part a personal choice and in part, it seems to me, a function of one's occupation. It was obvious that no one in Uncle Jack's business could be a pillar of the Church, but it went further than that. I remember three different county sheriffs during my growing-up years, all of them nominal Mormons but none of them active in the Church. I doubt whether a zealous church-goer could have been elected, even though the county must have been nine-tenths Mormon. I also have the impression people trusted an irreligious physician more than a church-going one. Perhaps this preference rested on the unstated view that science was alien to religion, and if you put yourself in the hands of a scientific healer you wanted one who was committed

all the way. You could always supplement his treatments, if you wanted to, by calling on the elders for a blessing.

This may be an unwarranted generalization. The only physician in Helaman was old Doc Clifford, and he was a thoroughgoing jack-Mormon yet at the same time the object of immense respect and affection. Even the most pious eagerly opened their homes to his odorous cigars, and his funeral — which as far as I know was the only time he ever passed through the church-house doors — drew the biggest crowd in Helaman memory.

This tolerance of different ways did not, however, extend as far as Cohab Hollow, whose inhabitants were regarded as having cut themselves off from respectable society. It is both inevitable and ironic that a Mormon community should oppose polygamous marriage practices — inevitable because to enter polygamy is to challenge the Church's authority, and ironic because Mormons are in the position of defending polygamy in the past while opposing it in the present. Almost every family in Helaman had forebears they honored for clinging faithfully to "the principle" during the nineteenth-century persecutions. Bishop Huntington himself was descended from polygamous grandfathers on both sides and was known to boast of having more than two hundred first cousins. Then in almost the same breath he would insist that something had to be done about "them cultists up in Cohab Holler." Except for periodic efforts to identify and excommunicate Mormons who had joined the Order of Enoch, however, this opposition was most often manifest in a determined silence, as if the problem would go away if it were ignored assiduously enough. Since the Enochites preferred to keep to themselves, there were few instances of open conflict.

The most visible members of the Order were the children who attended school in Helaman. Riding the canyon bus for the first two months of school each fall, I got to know the Cohab Hollow kids pretty well. I even developed a loose friendship with Billy Fairbank, who saved me a seat each morning. We chatted easily enough on the journey to and from town, but I don't recall playing with him at recess. I do remember his inviting me up to his place to play one Saturday when we were in about the third grade. Without telling Aunt Ella where I was going — for she would surely have prohibited it if she had known — I walked up to Cohab Hollow and found Billy waiting for me on the outskirts of the community. We played beside the creek for several hours, cutting stick horses from the willows that grew along the banks. I remember it as a pleasant enough day, but it was never repeated.

Most of the Enochite kids dropped out of school by the eighth grade, though I'm not sure whether from ostracism or from the view that that was enough education. It was never entirely clear what happened to them at this point. Neither Billy Fairbank nor any of the others ever talked about their home life or the workings of the Order. We assumed, however, that the boys went to work around the mine. Sometimes they would show up several years later in the more visible role of truck drivers. The girls did not reappear in public, and there were dark rumors of their being married off at fourteen and

immured within the walls of Cohab Hollow or some other community in the broad fundamentalist underground.

Uncle Jack did not share the good Mormons' reluctance to discuss the merits of polygamy. He loved to argue on any topic, and since most of the people who came into the Sagehen were inclined to complain about something or other in the dominant religion Uncle Jack frequently found himself defending Church policies. He was even ready to stand up for the Word of Wisdom. He stoutly maintained — puffing vigorously at his pipe all the while — that the world would be a better place if tobacco and alcohol had never been discovered. These views did not, however, present any barrier to pursuing his occupation, for in this as in other things he was always ready to acknowledge the weakness of the flesh.

Whenever he had the chance, Uncle Jack tried to draw Old Fairbank into discussions of polygamy. We didn't see many Enochites at the Sagehen, but Old Fairbank sometimes stopped in on his way back from Salt Lake (where we assumed he had gone to visit his other families) in order to play the punchboards. It was best for him if he failed to win anything. Then he would simply punch out a couple of dollars' worth of holes and go on his way. But if he happened to win a box of chocolates, he was in trouble. Though he never admitted it, it was obvious he didn't dare go home with a present for one wife if he didn't have something for the other. He might end up spending ten or twelve dollars before he won a second box of candy and went grumbling on his way.

On these occasions, Uncle Jack loved to rag him about polygamy. The discussions put Old Fairbank in a difficult position because he felt compelled to defend the continuing validity of the principle of plural marriage without admitting that either he or his people actually engaged in the practice. Old Fairbank not only denied having more than one wife but would scarcely admit even to one, insisting that he had no real interest in women at all and that if it were not for the obligation to protect and provide for them he would have been much happier living exclusively in the company of men. At the same time, however, he could not keep silent in the face of any challenge to his fundamentalism.

"Seems to me," Uncle Jack would say, as casually as though he were making an observation about the weather, "that one wife ought to be enough for any man."

"Wasn't enough for Brigham Young," Old Fairbank would retort. "Wasn't enough for Joseph Smith. Wasn't enough for your own great-grandpa."

"Those were different times."

Old Fairbank shook his head. "Eternal principles don't change. If it was true in Brigham's time, it's true today."

Uncle Jack would then slip into his role as defender of the Church. "But the authorities have told us to give it up."

"Yessir — and the minute they did that they ceased to be the Lord's anointed. But the Lord knew there would be a falling away in the last days, and he prepared a remnant of the faithful." You could hear a change come

into Old Fairbank's voice as he slipped into the rhetoric the Order used among themselves. And then Uncle Jack would close in for the kill.

"You must be part of that remnant, I suppose," he would say mildly.

"I never said that," Old Fairbank growled. "I don't know nothing about it — no man in creation knows less about womenfolk than I do." These words would take on a special edge if he had just spent more money than he intended on the punchboard.

During the summers, Aunt Ella always brought me to town with her on Thursdays when she went to Relief Society. I would have preferred to stay home, since it was more peaceful when she was gone, but she insisted on the theory that it must be lonely for me to live so far away from other boys my age. When I met her at Aunt Fran's place in the late afternoon, she invariably inquired whether I had had a good time playing with my friends. I always said yes, though in fact I usually spent the day by myself, thumbing through magazines in the drugstore, wandering up and down Main Street, or maybe, if it wasn't too hot, running on the dirt lanes that divided the fields outside of town.

Though there were boys I got along with in school or priesthood meeting, I didn't have any close friends. For the most part, I preferred being alone, but I could sometimes work up a pretty good dose of adolescent self-pity by thinking of myself as a misfit. It wasn't as though I didn't belong in Helaman. There had been Ansons among the first settlers. It wasn't simply that I lacked a regular family. There were other kids who lived with relatives. Nor was it just because Uncle Jack was somewhat disreputable, though that probably had a part in it. In grade school I can remember being picked on by the other boys because I lived in a beer joint. However, I wasn't a very inviting target for bullies, partly because I was always big for my age and partly because Uncle Jack, who claimed he had once wrestled with the Swedish Angel, taught me a very effective headlock.

By the teenage years, Helaman boys had generally aligned themselves with one of two crowds, the straight-arrows and the cowboys. Not that they called themselves by those names; they were pejorative epithets applied by one group to the other. The cowboys wore western shirts and boots with their Levi's, had long hair (long, at least, by the standards of the 1950s), and walked with a certain swagger. They often got drunk at school dances and engaged in fist fights outside the gym. They were the boys who hung around the Sagehen on Saturday nights, and I doubt whether Uncle Jack any more than the aunts would have permitted me to hang around with them. The straight-arrows, on the other hand, cultivated an ethic of "coolness," which was inseparable from Jantzen sweaters and spit-shined loafers. In warm weather, they rolled up the sleeves of their already short-sleeved shirts, and some of them went so far as to press a crease into their Levi's. The straight-arrows were more likely than the cowboys to be seen at church, but that doesn't mean they were especially pious. I used to watch enviously, from my place between the aunts, as they slipped out of sacrament meeting early to catch the last picture show. When they wanted to party, they did so less openly than the cowboys, driving over to Orangeville and filching bottles out of unlocked cars at the Canyon Club.

I don't recall that I ever felt any desire to be a cowboy. I did at times aspire to straight-arrow status, but it seemed that I lacked the essential qualifications. Aunt Ella bought all of my clothes out of mail-order catalogs, selecting on the basis of her notions of practicality rather than fashion. Even my hair refused to conform. If I had it cut short, no amount of Butch Wax was sufficient to make it stand up in the sculptured perfection the other boys seemed to achieve so effortlessly. And if I let it grow out a little, no amount of Wildroot Creme Oil would keep it properly slicked down.

My social stock rose somewhat when, in the tenth grade, I made the high school track team. The team wasn't very hard to make in our small school, but even so athletes were in a special category. Actually, my athletic skills were extremely limited. Basketball was the big sport in Helaman, as it was throughout rural Utah, but although the coach tried me out a couple of times because of my size, I was hopelessly slow and awkward. For the most part, I lacked the skills for track and field too, the speed for the sprints, the spring for the jumps, the muscular coordination for the pole vault. But the coach discovered I could run the distance races. My form, I'm sure, left a great deal to be desired. My one asset was that I didn't get tired. I could run a mile or more at almost full speed without really feeling it, and even though my full speed wasn't very fast it was faster than anybody else in the school could go for that distance. I won the mile at the county and regional track meets that spring. At the state meet, I came up against boys who had both speed and endurance and who had received better coaching. I finished fourth, but that was enough. It was so rare for our little high school to make any kind of a showing against the big schools from upstate that my performance made me a hero for a week or so and secured for me, during my remaining two years of school, a place among the athletes.

That was the spring of 1953. During the summer of that year, on July 24th, Arizona law officers staged a massive raid on the polygamous community of Short Creek, just south of the Utah border. The event received widespread media coverage, with *Time* calling it "The Great Love-Nest Raid." Utah officials joined in the campaign with well-publicized arrests of several polygamists in the Salt Lake area. Old Fairbank, who had already served prison time in 1938 and 1944, dropped out of sight. Bishop Huntington held Church courts for several Enochite women, none of whom appeared, and pressed Sheriff Jones to take legal action against the community. I can remember the sheriff bemoaning the pressure over a beer at the Sagehen.

"What the hell harm are they doing? They keep to theirselves."

"Maybe they're a danger to innocent women," Uncle Jack said.

"Hah! Not if they saw those rabbit hutches they live in!"

As far as I can tell, there was no direct connection between the Order of Enoch and the group that controlled Short Creek. The fundamentalist subculture has always been fragmented and given to power struggles, but at the same time there is a kind of network, and with the temporary scattering of the Short Creek community Cohab Hollow received an influx of new residents. The already crowded housing was stretched beyond its capacity, and some people were forced to live through the winter in tents.

I followed these events in the newspaper and the Sagehen gossip but didn't think they had any direct bearing on my own life. But when school opened that fall, I found on the canyon bus — in addition to an increased number of grimy and sad-eyed children and my old friend Billy Fairbank (who had not dropped out of school at the usual age, and who was on the way to becoming the first Cohab Hollow kid in memory to graduate from high school) — two sixteen-year-old girls. Mary and Annabel Jacobson were sisters but obviously not full sisters. Annabel was big and slow, with heavy features and a downcast look. Mary was slim, fresh-faced, and naturally outgoing. Somehow she managed to wear clean clothing and took advantage of the gym showers at school to wash her hair. She was unlike any other girl who had ever lived in Cohab Hollow.

Her presence on the canyon bus seemed almost miraculous, and for the first couple of weeks I was madly in love. I waited with sweaty palms in front of the Sagehen each morning for the bus to arrive, filled with dread lest Mary should vanish as suddenly as she had appeared. With time, the daily association tempered my romantic passion into the first genuine friendship I had ever experienced with a girl. I admired her pluck and the way she asserted a claim to a normal life in spite of the disadvantages of her situation. We didn't date. No Enochite girl would have been permitted to go with an outsider. But we usually had lunch together then sat talking on the lawn until time for afternoon classes. Although she departed from the Cohab Hollow norm in many ways, Mary shared with the others the code of absolute silence about her home life. I had come to take that for granted and so thought little about it until later, when I learned more of the difficulties she actually existed under.

Part of the bond between us was our marginality, but this was changing even as I grew conscious of it. Within the first few weeks of school, Mary had gained an unprecedented measure of acceptance for someone from Cohab Hollow. The teachers liked her because she was bright and curious, and as a lively and attractive new girl at school she even captured the attention of the straight-arrow boys, though they never forgot where she came from. I remember overhearing Duke Rollins (adapting a line from a Tennyson poem everybody had to study in Mrs. Dale's senior English class) refer to Mary as "the flower in the cranny wall." The town girls were slower to accept her, partly, I suspect, because Annabel was always hovering in the background, an everpresent reminder of all the Cohab Hollow stereotypes.

I too was less marginal than I had been before. I was not exactly popular — my personality would hardly have allowed that — but I was now somebody, an athlete. Although I would not have admitted to valuing this new status, it did in fact mean a lot to me, probably more than I realized at the time. That is how I account to myself for my actions — or inaction — in the incident I am going to relate.

After deer season, I moved back into town with Aunt Fran, and without the daily bus trips I saw less of Mary, though we still spoke when we met in the halls and often had lunch together. Autumns in our valley were usually mild and pleasant, but deer season typically marked a seasonal change to colder

weather. So it happened that year, with early snow and cold, the kind of weather that sends all creatures in search of shelter.

It was a Monday morning, I remember, probably toward the end of November, and I was a little late, hurrying down the hall when I ran into a loud cluster of students outside a classroom. I stopped out of curiosity to see what they were doing, and a boy grinned up at me and made a fanning gesture across his face. Looking over the top of the crowd, I saw that the room was empty except for two forms. Annabel Jacobson sat seemingly oblivious to the commotion, inscrutable Indian eyes fixed upon the blackboard as if she were trying to decipher some invisible message written there. In the next seat sat Mary, face aflame, hands tightly folded on the desk in front of her.

While I stared, the boy beside me filled me in with sketchy details that I later pieced together into a more coherent account. Evidently, a skunk had found its way into the Jacobsons' tent during the weekend. After living with the odor for some time, they had grown sufficiently accustomed to it that they failed to realize how thoroughly it had permeated their clothing, and so they had come to school as usual, only to be met, as they walked into class, by a wild scramble to escape from the room. Unfortunately, the teacher, a young woman just out of college, caught by surprise had joined in the flight instead of attempting to control it.

The sight of the normally resilient Mary so entirely overcome by shame put me completely at a loss. All at once, she seemed like a stranger, a typical Cohab Hollow girl after all, outside the bounds of human sympathy. While I was struggling with these impressions, Miss Jenkins, the teacher, pushed past me, accompanied by Mrs. Nixon, the girls' phys-ed teacher and the one everybody turned to in an emergency. Mary looked up as the women entered the room, and our glances met for a painful instant. Then she dropped her eyes again to her folded hands.

Mrs. Nixon hustled the girls over to the gym where they could shower while she went in search of clothing for them to put on. The halls and classrooms were alive throughout the day with crude jokes about the skunky Cohab Hollow kids, and I found myself living in terror of the moment when someone would remember my connection with them. Still struggling with my own first reaction, I looked for Mary in the lunch room, but she was nowhere to be seen, though Annabel was there as usual, impassively shoveling down her food. I learned later that Mary had stayed in the shower room all day, refusing to go to class or to see anyone except Mrs. Nixon.

After school, I went to the place where the canyon bus loaded, and Mary was there, looking very small in a borrowed dress too big for her. She had pulled her hair severely back in a braid that made her look like the Eastern European refugee women in the newsreels. Just before she stepped through the doors, she shot me one glance — of pain, accusation, desperation — I didn't know how to read it then, and I still don't know what, if anything, she might have been trying to communicate. Nor do I know whether she went back to Short Creek, or hid herself in Cohab Hollow, or perhaps eventually escaped the fundamentalist subculture. I never saw her again.

# The "Restoration" in British Columbia: The LDS and RLDS Churches on Canada's West Coast

*Robert J. McCue*

FACTIONALISM AND SCHISM ARE COMMON PROBLEMS in religious movements, problems to which the followers of Joseph Smith were not immune. Their definitive separation came soon after the Prophet's death. A scattering took place as they were driven from Nauvoo, but ultimately two major groups coalesced, one in Utah, the other in Iowa. This essay focuses on the efforts of both groups to establish congregations in Canada's far west and explores why the growth of the Latter-day Saint and Reorganized Latter Day Saint churches in British Columbia became so lopsided after World War II.

No one knows precisely when the first Saint arrived in British Columbia. Brigham Young seriously considered Vancouver Island as a place of refuge in 1846 and again in 1857 (Bancroft 26:238). It is probable that at least one Mormon arrived in British Columbia before 1858 because by that time a gold-bearing gravel bar in Fraser River near Lytton was known as "Mormon's Bar" (Travaillot to Douglas 1858). The first documented arrival was that of William Francis Copley, who landed in Victoria about 1875 after traveling from Utah via Nevada and California with his wife and three small children and established a home near Cobble Hill on Vancouver Island (Copley n.d., 5; McCue 1979, 53). Then in 1886, at the suggestion of President John Taylor, Charles Ora Card looked over the southeastern portion of British Columbia in search of a haven for persecuted Utah polygamists but in the end selected a site across the Rocky Mountains in what is now Alberta (Tagg 1968, 25).

Alex McMullen, a member of the Reorganization who arrived from Ontario in 1897, was the first disciple of the Restoration to attempt to spread his faith among the inhabitants of the remote and rustic land of British Columbia. McMullen was a young school teacher who had secured employment in Chilliwack, a farming community some sixty miles up the Fraser River from Van-

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couver (McMullen 1941, 1; Jewett n.d., 1). The following year William Johnson arrived in Nanaimo from Iowa to work in the coal mines (Johnson 1919, 630). Both men wanted to spread the message of the Restoration and requested that missionaries be sent. In July 1899 Elder Daniel MacGregor arrived from Ontario and became the first missionary of the Restoration in British Columbia. After trying unsuccessfully to attract converts in Nanaimo, MacGregor transferred his activities to the Chilliwack area.

> This was the beginning of the work in British Columbia. A school house was secured in East Chilliwack and Brother MacGregor held services each evening and on Sundays with good attendance. The Gospel story was so different from the popular teachings of the day, that much persecution was aroused and many trials endured, but withal the work moved ahead (McMullen 1941, 1).

In spite of the difficulties encountered, Elder MacGregor was persuasive in his preaching, and on 1 October 1899 "the first baptismal service was held in Camp Slough . . . when five persons joined the church" (Jewett n.d., 2)[1] These five — Henry Stade, Isaac and Emily McMullen, R. J. Muirhead, and Alice Mary Smith — proved to be pillars of the RLDS church for the rest of their lives. Other baptisms followed, and on 11 November 1900 Apostle R. C. Evans visited Chilliwack, ordained three men to the priesthood, and organized the first branch of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in British Columbia. Evans called Daniel MacGregor as presiding elder, Henry Stade as presiding priest, John Stade as presiding teacher, and Maggie MacGregor as branch secretary. Three weeks later Apostle Evans organized the New Westminster Branch with Alex McMullen, recently moved from Chilliwack at Evans' request, as presiding elder (McMullen 1941, 1).

At the turn of the century the Utah branch of the Restoration began to take an active interest in British Columbia, this time not as a place of refuge but as a source of converts. From 1886, when Charles O. Card decided there was no suitable place in British Columbia for settlement, until 1902, the Utah Mormons had shown no official interest in British Columbia. Then on 15 March 1902 the Church added British Columbia to its Northwestern States Mission, with headquarters in Portland, Oregon (Northwestern 15 March 1902). The *Victoria Daily Colonist* reported on 13 May 1903 that missionaries had arrived in Victoria under the leadership of the mission president, Nephi Pratt. Although they did not record names, the missionaries reported finding some Latter-day Saints in Victoria (Northwestern 14 May 1903), possibly some of the Copleys.[2] Like Daniel MacGregor four years earlier, these missionaries faced opposition (*Victoria Daily Colonist* 12 June 1903, 5). Unlike MacGregor, they were not initially successful in making converts, and not until 1904 were they able to form a Sunday School in Vancouver (rather

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[1] McMullen lists eight baptisms (n.d., 1). Clara Smith lists only four (n.d., 1). Jewett (n.d., 2) indicates that a second baptismal service followed the first by about a week.

[2] There is an undocumented tradition among the descendants of W. F. Copley that he baptized some of his children long before the arrival of either RLDS or LDS missionaries (Copley n.d., 11).

than Victoria), after locating Edward Neill and his family, who had moved to Vancouver after joining the Church in Brisbane, Australia. Neill served as the superintendent (Roy n.d., 1).

Meanwhile the RLDS congregation in Chilliwack was growing, and in 1904 Henry Stade donated a small building that was remodeled and used as the first building for worship owned by the Saints (Smith n.d., 1). The following year witnessed the first visit to British Columbia of a president of one of the Restoration groups. RLDS President Joseph Smith III and his family spent several months visiting his wife's parents in New Westminster.[3] An energetic program of preaching in public meetings strengthened the spirit of the Saints but produced few converts.

But neither was the LDS missionary effort very successful at that time. An LDS conference in Vancouver in 1909 recorded an attendance of twelve, with only ten at Sunday School. Not until 12 February 1911, more than ten years after the first RLDS branch was organized, did the Latter-day Saints have enough members to organize their first branch in British Columbia. Edward Neill served as the president of this Vancouver Branch (Roy n.d., 1). About a year later the RLDS were able to organize a mission in Vancouver in addition to the branches in New Westminster and Chilliwack (Sudaby n.d., n.p.).[4]

World War I brought mixed results for Mormon groups in British Columbia. The LDS American missionaries who remained in the province during the war found themselves, as able bodied young men, under censure for not being in the military as were so many young Canadians. Two elders who were "working in the country[side] without purse or script, were deported as suspected spies" (Hackney 1950, 151). Nevertheless, an extraordinary number of converts was baptized, and in the summer of 1918 the first LDS Sunday School in Victoria was organized, fifteen years after proselytizing began (Northwestern 2 July 1918). Later that year the elders reported four additional baptisms and commented on their progress:

> We feel very good over our success in that city [Victoria], because a little more than a year ago we hadn't a single member there. In fact, for several years we had missionaries in that locality, and, notwithstanding their faithful labors, it was considered

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[3] Sudaby n.d., n.p.; *Saints Herald* 24 April 1937, 528 and 1 May 1937, 561. The first visit by an LDS Church president was in July 1911, when President Joseph F. Smith, Melvin J. Ballard (president of the Northwestern States Mission), "and party" toured Victoria "after attending a conference of the Union Stake in La Grande, Oregon." No public meetings are mentioned (Northwestern 19 July 1911).

[4] For the RLDS "mission" denotes a small local congregation. Historically the typical RLDS progression in British Columbia was to establish a group, which grew into a mission and finally became a branch. The RLDS congregations are now all part of a single British Columbia District.

LDS "missions" include a broader jurisdiction which directs proselytizing activity within a defined geographical area and supervises the leadership of local branches. The typical LDS progression in British Columbia has been the establishment of a Sunday School which developed into a dependent, then independent branch. Branches were grouped into districts, which were also supervised by the mission. Ultimately the branches developed into wards which are grouped into stakes. Current missionary work in British Columbia, excluding the Peace River and Cranbrook areas, is supervised by the Canada Vancouver Mission.

a barren field. Now their efforts have been crowned with success and today we have five families, or twenty-one members (Northwestern 10 Sept. 1918).

Before the end of the year at least three more families were baptized (Northwestern 7 Dec. 1918). Melvin J. Ballard, president of the Northwestern States Mission, offered this explanation for the increased interest in religion in general and Mormonism in particular: "When the casualty list appeared each morning there were thousands of fathers and mothers who began to pray who never prayed before in their lives. . . . There have been ten times as many baptisms . . . in the last year, as we have had in any preceding year with the same number of missionaries' (CR 6 April 1918, 64). The RLDS experience in Canada was apparently similar: "It may be a surprise to some of our members to learn that the largest number ever baptised in Canada [by the RLDS] for any one year [prior to 1919] was the year 1918 — 751. The next largest was apparently 1917 . . . and the third largest, 1914" (Burgess 1919, 604).

By 1920 the Reorganized Church was the largest Mormon group, with organized branches at Rosedale and New Westminster, a mission in Vancouver, and a Sunday School in Nanaimo. The Latter-day Saints had succeeded only in establishing a branch in Vancouver and a Sunday School in Victoria.

During the 1920s both groups acquired real estate. By 1925 the Vancouver LDS branch had approximately 100 members, and this growth persuaded the congregation to acquire a proper meetinghouse. So, some twenty years after the RLDS acquired their first building, the LDS purchased an old church at 804 East Fourteenth Street from another denomination for $3,000. But the satisfaction of owning their own place of worship was tempered by some harsh realities: "The only means of heating [the building] . . . was an ineffective furnace which smoked so badly that the windows had to be opened to clear the fog and then closed again because it was too cold, then the process repeated over again" (Roy n.d., 12).

At about this same time the RLDS mission in Vancouver built a place of worship at Slocan and Dundas Streets (Sudaby n.d., n.p.), and the Rosedale Branch moved from a rented hall into a newly completed building in 1928 in time for a visit from RLDS President Frederick M. Smith (Smith n.d., n.p.).

The 1920s were also a time of membership expansion for the Reorganized Latter Day Saints as the mission in Vancouver became a branch. But the LDS experience was different. Outside of Vancouver the Utah-based Saints struggled for survival. The Sunday School in Victoria died at mid-decade as the members moved away and were not replaced.[5] The missionaries were withdrawn from Victoria in March 1923 (Northwestern 25 March, 8 Oct. 1923, 16 Aug. 1924, 22 Sept. 1929). Efforts to establish groups in other parts of the province proved unsuccessful. For example, an LDS Sunday School began in Creston in the early 1920s but dissolved in 1927 when the families that started

[5] The last entry in the Victoria B.C. Sunday School "Minute Book" is dated 3 August 1924. However, George V. Copley indicates that the Sunday School survived until he left Victoria late in 1926 (Copley to McCue 1 and 6 March 1975).

it moved back to southern Alberta (Forsyth to McCue 1982). Another family, moving into the Creston Valley later in the year, expecting to find a functioning LDS branch, was understandably disappointed (K. Luscher n.d., 5; Boehmer n.d., n.p.). Another Sunday School was established in Creston in 1928 and developed into a small branch by 1931, only to dissolve a year or so later as once again members moved away (K. Luscher n.d., 6). LDS missionaries ventured briefly into the south-central portion of British Columbia in 1920 but did not return until 1929 (Tagg 1963, 253). Nevertheless, by the end of the decade, when the first total membership figures are available, the LDS had drawn approximately even with their RLDS counterparts: 257 Latter-day Saints, 252 Reorganized Latter Day Saints (Brunson to McCue 1983; Rowe to McCue 1983).

During the 1930s more durable LDS units began to appear primarily through the migration of Church members from areas where the faith was already flourishing. In 1937 LDS Sunday Schools were firmly established in Nelson, Trail, and Victoria ("Nelson" n.d., 1; Hillier n.d.; Taylor to Luscher 1980). Members moving from other areas of Canada, rather than new converts, provided the nucleus for each of these new Sunday Schools. In 1938 the Vancouver Branch became the first ward in British Columbia and part of the newly created Seattle Stake until it reverted in 1945 to branch status in the Northwestern States Mission (Roy n.d., 14, 16).

In the 1930s the RLDS established a mission on Lulu Island and strengthened its existing units. In spite of the LDS migrations, by the end of the decade the Reorganized Latter Day Saints had 342 members on their rolls and the Latter-day Saints 301.

The 1940s witnessed significant gains by both groups. World War II labor needs caused the Canadian population to become increasingly mobile. Several Saskatchewan RLDS families moved to Victoria in 1940 to work in the shipyards. They began holding church services on 17 November 1940 and were formally organized as a mission four months later (Sudaby n.d.). About the same time a mission was also established in Vancouver's Kitsalano District (Baker and Carson 1982). Later in 1941 the RLDS Church organized the British Columbia District, giving Latter Day Saints in B.C. a greater measure of self-government (McMullen 1941).

This same decade witnessed the beginning of real growth of the LDS Church in British Columbia as branches were established in Cranbrook, New Westminster, Creston, Kimberly, Nanaimo, Nelson, North Vancouver, Trail, and Victoria, as well as Sunday Schools in several other centers.[6] Like their RLDS counterparts, the LDS central leaders were placing more trust in local leaders to handle local church affairs. In December 1947 British Columbia was detached from the Northwestern States Mission to become part of the

[6] For this paper's purposes an LDS branch is considered to have been "established" when it began submitting monthly reports to the mission headquarters and was individually listed on the annual statistical report submitted to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. A Sunday School or a dependent branch commonly existed in a community for some time before this independent reporting status was achieved.

new Western Canadian Mission. The province was in turn divided into districts (K. Luscher n.d., 20; Northwestern 30 Nov. 1947). LDS growth during the 1940s was sixfold (1,793) while the RLDS doubled their membership (711).

To conclude that once organized the branches of either group flourished without struggle would be erroneous. Transportation, both in the days of horse and buggy and in those of motorized conveyances, has often been a problem. Henry Stade "drove with horse and buggy, eight miles to [the RLDS] church, no day was too cold or stormy, no night too dark for him to drive that distance to perform his duty" (Jewett n.d., 3). One Latter-day Saint calculated that he had traveled 12,800 miles in twenty months to "hold my calling true" as first counselor in the Fairmont Hot Springs Branch presidency (Passey to Luscher 1979). Another sister caught the 3:45 A.M. bus to attend church services sixty miles away and the 7:00 P.M. bus to return home (D. Luscher 1983, 1).

Finding suitable meeting places was another common problem: "When Daniel [MacGregor] came with the key [to the Camp Slough school] he wasn't able to get in [because the door had been deliberately blocked from the inside], so he delivered his sermon from the school steps to a large group of people. After this service R. J. Muirhead offered him the use of his workshop in which to hold [RLDS] services" (Jewett n.d., 2). During the summer in Creston priesthood meetings were held out under the trees and even the woodshed was used as a classroom (Boehmer n.d., n.p.)

Often the women held these struggling groups together, as one Creston woman reports: "For what it is worth I should mention the fact that I made the benches (with slanting backs) for our first little [LDS] church down by the river. (I loved carpenter work) so it was a pleasure and a challenge. Sister Craig made our first sacrament trays from wood with coat hangers for handles" (Boehmer n.d., n.p.). Women in the LDS Fairmont Branch organized meetings in the absence of priesthood leaders: "The sisters held Sunday school, Sacrament and Relief Society meetings as best they could. Once in a while some one would come that held the priesthood and we could have the Sacrament. Many times there were only 3 or 4 out to meetings" ("History" n.d., 4).

Early slow growth for the "Brighamites" and "Reorganites" can be attributed to general apathy as well as to the direct persecution some Saints experienced. Disinterest and apathy toward their message frustrated faithful Saints. No one came to a meeting at which Melvin J. Ballard was scheduled to speak. The meeting was moved to a street corner and attracted 200. Although public meetings were seldom totally ignored, lack of interest was typical, and a crowd of twenty-three members and missionaries was considered good attendance (Northwestern 18 June 1910, 14 Feb. 1913).

Though the RLDS arrived earlier in British Columbia, they only maintained their membership edge through the 1930s. Although the 1940s were their best growth decade, they were surpassed fourfold by the LDS who have ever since expanded more consistently and faster than the RLDS. The 1960s were an especially fertile growth period for the LDS, as seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1

| Decade End | LDS | Increase | RLDS | Increase | Ratio* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20s | 257 | | 252 | | |
| 30s | 301 | 44 | 342 | 90 | 1:2 |
| 40s | 1,793 | 1,492 | 711 | **369** | **4:1** |
| 50s | 3,872 | 2,079 | 934 | 223 | 9:1 |
| 60s | 10,288 | **6,416** | 1,130 | 196 | **33:1** |
| 70s | 14,240 | 3,952 | 1,272 | 142 | 28:1 |
| 1985 | 16,200 | 1,960 | 1,381 | 109 | 18:1 |

Data from Brunson to McCue (1986) and Third Quarter 1985 Activity Reports for the Cranbrook, Vancouver South, Vernon, and Victoria LDS stakes and the Grande Prairie, Prince George, and Terrace LDS districts.

* Ratio refers to the comparative population increases of the two groups.

Why this difference in growth rates? One factor is the way in which the LDS Church has responded to the migratory habits of its members. The pattern is common to many successful LDS branches in British Columbia: a family strong in the faith moved into a community where it sometimes, but not always, found other members of the Church; missionaries were requested; a Sunday School was organized which met first in a home, then, as membership rolls grew, in a rented hall, and finally in a Church-owned meetinghouse. The beginnings of the Trail and Victoria branches are illustrative:

> Bill, our eldest son, wanted to go to [the LDS] Church so bad[ly] that I wrote to the Northwestern States Mission in Spokane, Washington, about holding a Sunday School here. Elder Wallace B. Grant came immediately to Trail . . . I think [with] Elder Handy [as] his companion (Taylor n.d., 1).

> [We] came to live in Victoria in 1935. For the first two years there was no [LDS] church, and we did not meet any members. . . . [When] Brother Melvin Oxspring and his family moved here from Vancouver he wrote the Mission President and explained our situation, and Elders Owen and Samuelson were sent to work here. On October 17, 1937, a . . . meeting was held at the home of Brother Melvin Oxspring at 54 Government Street. . . . It was decided to organize a Sunday School (Hillier 1969, 1).

As numbers grew in each community a branch was formed, dependent on the nearest firmly established branch. When the dependent branch had acquired enough members, either by conversion or move-ins, it was given independent status. The work of both the missionaries and the local leaders was closely supervised by a mission president, an experienced leader from a more highly developed area of the Church, whose objective was to bring in converts with a goal of eventually organizing a stake.

This relatively aggressive missionary system with its extensive support for emerging branches of the Church has been the key to the comparatively rapid growth of the LDS Church in British Columbia. It should be noted that the initial RLDS foothold can be attributed to a similar process: Alex McMullen requested the help of a missionary, and Daniel MacGregor was sent. Working

together they established branches in both Chilliwack and New Westminster. But after a promising beginning the RLDS missionary effort in British Columbia has consistently been on a smaller and much less aggressive scale than the LDS effort: one missionary in the initial RLDS contingent in 1899 compared to six in the first LDS missionary work in 1903 (*Victoria Daily Times* 13 May 1903, 3; Northwestern 14 May 1903).

In 1983 there were 120 full-time LDS missionaries in British Columbia and probably the same number of part-time local missionaries. By contrast, the RLDS depend on a few part-time local missionaries. In other words, the LDS Church, with its larger world-wide financial and membership resources, has devoted more money and labor to missionary work in British Columbia than has the RLDS Church. In addition, the RLDS Church does not seem to have developed an effective support system to aid members, living in isolation from their co-religionists, in bringing in new members and developing new missions and branches.

The economy has also played an important role in the growth of the LDS membership. The 1930s were a period of economic disaster for the world in general as well as a slow growth period in LDS membership in British Columbia. The 1940s saw an increase in LDS membership thirty-four times the previous decade's growth. The 1950s brought nearly one-and-one-half times the increase of the 1940s. The 1960s tripled previous growth. And the growth of the 1970s, though only two-thirds that of the 1960s, was nearly twice that of the 1950s. The 1960s appear to have been a period of exceptional prosperity in British Columbia, and there is some correlation between the increase in LDS membership and net migration into the area (*Historical* 1983, A349). Both figures show a bulge in the 1960s, but the population increase is disproportionately larger than the increase in the general population. (See Figure 1.) However, the same national economic and migratory factors seem not to have affected the Reorganized Latter Day Saints in the same way. RLDS membership increase reached a peak in the 1940s, and the annual increase percentage has since shown a steady decline.

For an explanation one must return to the apparent differences in migratory habits and emphasis on missionary endeavor. The large number of full-time volunteer missionaries that the Latter-day Saints have maintained since World War II, along with substantial immigration of members, seem to have made the difference in the growth patterns of Latter-day Saints and Reorganized Latter Day Saints in British Columbia.

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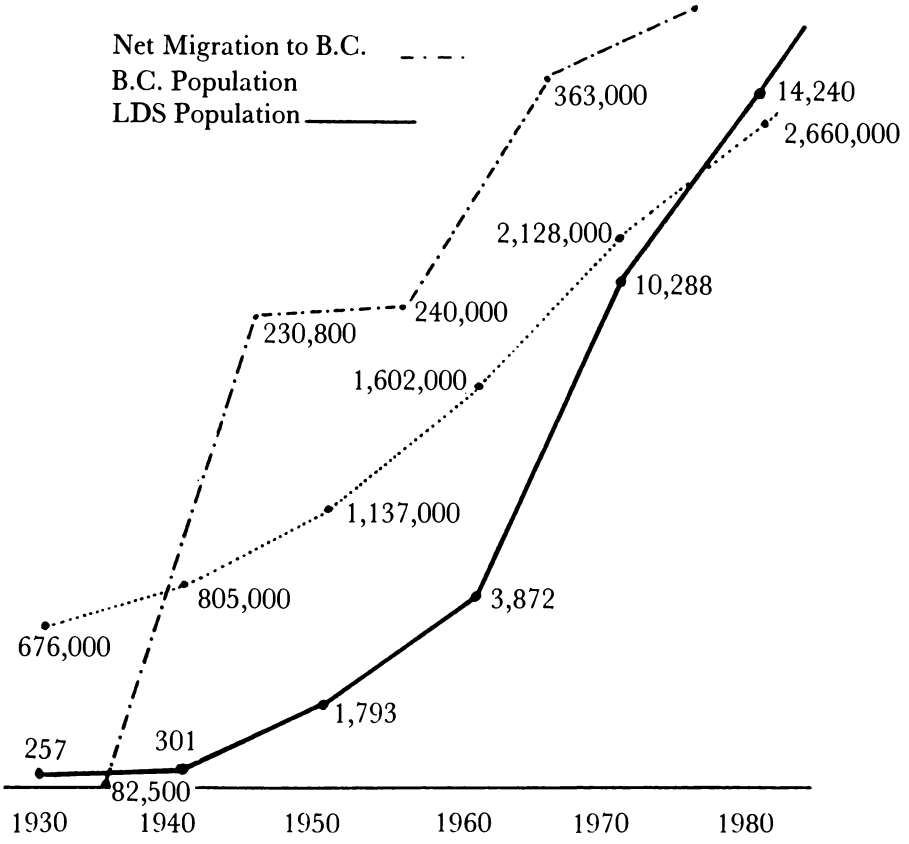
FIGURE 1

COMPARISON OF LDS AND OVERALL POPULATION GROWTH IN B.C.



# History for the People

*Utah: A People's History* by Dean L. May (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 210 pp., illus., index, $25.00 cloth, $14.95 paper.

Reviewed by M. Guy Bishop, Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

DEAN L. MAY has tackled a difficult problem in this brief survey of Utah's history. First of all, his book came *after* the successful media presentation of the same material instead of vice versa, as is usually the case. Second, Professor May is a professional historian who, by training and, presumably, inclination, commoniy writes for a like-minded audience. And, finally, *Utah: A People's History* has been preceded by several other solid treatments of the same subject. Nevertheless, this book *does* accomplish its purpose — to provide a companion volume to KUED television's Utah history series (p. x).

May's beginning chapter, aptly entitled "Man and Desert," provides a strong introduction to the book by immediately calling our attention to the fact that surviving in Utah has not always involved cozy homes, mundane commutes to one's workplace, air-conditioned summers, and centrally-heated winters. Utah was, and in many ways still is, a harsh land. As the forty-niners, who passed as quickly as possible through the area on their way to the riches of California, observed, Utah was a distinct land marked by vast deserts and a huge saltwater lake. Even for the Mormon immigrants of 1847 and later, the Great Salt Lake Valley — not to mention areas more distant and isolated settled later — must certainly have been a disheartening reminder of the fertile soil and abundant water left behind in the Midwest. It clearly took a dispossessed and/or a committed people to live in the Great Basin.

Chapters two and three, almost Turnerian in interpretation, discuss the impact of the fur trappers and then the Anglo-American farmers, merchants, and community builders who succeeded the Jedediah Smiths and Peter Skene Ogdens across the Rocky Mountains in hopes of exploiting the natural resources and open land of the West. Chapter four discusses the Mormons, whose presence, the author notes, cannot be escaped in any study of Utah (pp. x–xi). On 22 July 1847, William Clayton accompanied the first sixty wagons of Mormon pioneers into the Great Salt Lake Valley. May notes Clayton's first impression, "The land looks dry and lacks rain" (p. 65) — certainly one of history's great understatements! But, as would his fellow Latter-day Saints, Clayton tried to remain upbeat by adding that the numerous creeks and springs in the location might be used to moisten the land somewhat. From that thought and commitment sprang present-day Utah.

Dean May has rendered a more than adequate, popular treatment of Utah's history. Some might criticize him for the extensive coverage he gives to Mormons throughout *Utah: A People's History*, but a quick review of any recent Utah history, for example that of Charles S. Peterson, demonstrates what May notes from the outset: you cannot write about the Beehive State without writing about the Mormons. It would be like writing about Massachusetts and downplaying the Puritans.

The format of this book, written for a popular audience, has allowed May to make some useful asides that would have been out of place in a more "scholarly" monograph. For example, he advises his readers that, when visiting archaeological sites, "It is against the law and shamefully irresponsible to alter or remove . . . artifacts" (p. 19) — an ethical issue certainly important for Utahns as well as other Americans to understand.

Finally, the University of Utah Press should be congratulated for publishing what is truly "a people's history" of Utah. This reasonably-priced, attractive book abounds in well-chosen and placed illustrations and maps and clearly fills a need in the Utah history book market. It is highly readable, factually sound, and interesting to the casual browser. In other words, in this book May has accomplished what he set out to do.

# What Do Mormon Women Want?

*Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 268 pp., $21.95.

Reviewed by Rebecca Reid Linford, a Ph.D. student in Renaissance history at UCLA, currently a political analyst for the United States government.

EARLY IN MY ACADEMIC CAREER I determined to study neither Mormon history nor women's history, so I was at first somewhat hesitant to review this book which obviously dealt with both. As a historian I have steered clear of the ongoing debate surrounding the validity of the New Mormon History; and I have always had difficulty understanding the more strident anti-male, anti-patriarchy feminists in the Church. The book's title, too, aroused my suspicions. I guessed that it might be a collection of sappy "Especially for Mormon Women — Volume IV" type of vignettes promoting faith and sisterhood. Or maybe the title was actually a tongue-in-cheek twist for a raving feminist diatribe against a dictatorial patriarchy.

Happily, I discovered within a few pages that I was wrong. This collection of essays has been written by thoughtful, scholarly Mormon women who think and feel deeply about various aspects of Mormon womanhood. Each essay shows that intelligence and faith are not mutually exclusive — not even for Mormon women. These sisters have overtaken the "sisters in spirit" cliche and infused it with a new depth and beauty.

Taking its roots from a lunch/discussion group that met in the early 1970s in Salt Lake City, this compilation discusses pertinent social and religious issues. The first two essays examine the Eden story and other biblical stories about women, tracing them through centuries of Judeo-Christian theological and cultural interpretations and showing how they have influenced the way women are viewed today. While they do not directly deal with the sisterhood of religious women, both lay the groundwork fundamental to an understanding of the evolution of scriptural and religious views on the role and value of women and therefore to an understanding of the successive essays.

Jolene Rockwood's refreshing examination of the Genesis account sheds new light on the garden scene, showing how the story may have been twisted to reinforce patriarchal and cultural stereotypes. She traces the Genesis story through centuries of theological debate and doctrinal reinterpretation, showing how each generation has used Eve as a scapegoat, not only for the sin in the garden but for many of the world's ills. Rockwood also identifies the special meaning for Mormon women of the Genesis account as communicated in the temple ceremony, noting several subtle

but constant reminders that women are subject (inferior?) to men and that they somehow deserve blame. Rockwood's reanalysis of the Hebrew text leads to a riveting new interpretation of what transpired and a quasi-revolutionary and exalted way of looking at women.

I did, however, have a few problems with Rockwood's analysis. Her brief romp through history tends to emphasize only negative views toward women; she does not show, for example, how the Cult of Mary during the late medieval period helped counterbalance Eve's culpability. Also, some of her interpretations of the traditional scriptural account seemed far-fetched if not incredible. For example, when Rockwood describes Eve's judgment following her transgression, she guesses that the phrase "thy desire shall be to thy husband" means that Eve desires Adam to return her to her former state of equality rather than ruling over her. I felt Rockwood was really stretching there.

Melodie Moench Charles takes the scriptural precedents for women beyond the Eden story for a comprehensive and far-reaching overview. She concludes that throughout religious history Jesus had the most democratic, liberated views of the value and role of women. He broke the stringent mores that dictated male behavior and attitudes toward women by teaching women scriptures, speaking to them in public, involving them in his work. He directed his teachings and offers of salvation to women as well as men. Moving from the New Testament setting to the nineteenth-century Mormon world, Charles states that "subordination and inferiority of women is no longer explicitly preached in the Mormon Church" (p. 57) and then shows how the message is still implicitly conveyed through modern prophets' dicta about such subjects as women's roles. The Savior's liberated and liberating attitudes and practices stand out as being even more liberated than those of the men who would restore and direct his church more than 1800 years after him. Apparently it is easier to restore ordinances for salvation than the Savior's loving attitudes and behavior.

An interesting analysis of the first real Mormon sisterhood network by Jill Mulvay Derr reveals the quasi-cliquish nature of early Church experience. Derr examines a group of women in Salt Lake City in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of these women were plural wives of Joseph Smith and later of Brigham Young. They crossed the plains together, blessed and healed one another, served in the Relief Society and officiated in the temple together, and fought together for women's suffrage and Utah statehood. They were bound together by shared experiences, family connections, and ecclesiastical and political ties. These networks continue to some extent today in book review clubs, support groups for new mothers, and "study groups," which flourish in Utah. They seem a natural result of the early Church leaders' emphasis on community and give many women a feeling of belonging and opportunities for expression, although at times these networks seem too exclusive and intimidating to the outsiders who long for friendship and inclusion. I wish there were currently more opportunities for developing such sisterhood networks.

In another revealing and informative essay, "Mormon Marriages in an American Context," Marybeth Raynes compares and analyzes Mormon and non-Mormon marriage attitudes and practices. Raynes finds that we are not so different from our Gentile sisters after all; statistics reveal that on such issues as birth control, working women, premarital sex, and birth rates we follow — to a lesser but comparable degree — the national trends. Raynes interviews prominent Mormon psychologists and family therapists who not only interpret the data but make noteworthy suggestions to Church authorities on how such matters could be handled more effectively, more lovingly.

Three authors trace the erosion of women's power and status in the Church. Linda King Newell, Carol Cornwall Madsen, and Jill Mulvay Derr show that al-

though women have never been doctrinally or scripturally prohibited from using or developing spiritual gifts, Church authorities have eventually put an end to women blessing one another, prophesying, healing, presiding autonomously over their organizations and auxiliaries, and serving in gender-blind administrative positions — all things that the Prophet Joseph Smith had previously encouraged and supported. We are left to wonder why General Authorities today have not questioned the reasons — of lack thereof — for these "rescinding orders." Why are so many talented, spiritually gifted women left unutilized?

A connective thread running through many of the essays in this collection is Mormon women's relationships with and understanding of the priesthood. Women writing on this topic (particularly Grethe Ballif Peterson in her survey of eight active LDS women) make it clear that several changes are necessary in the ongoing womanhood/priesthood drama. The first is a redefinition of priesthood. Men's and women's perceptions of and attitudes toward priesthood vary greatly. We may ask: Do men see priesthood as a secondary sex characteristic or as the literal power of God given to them to better serve humankind? Why is the "priesthood/motherhood" comparison continually promulgated with no mention given to fatherhood? Why are single or childless women forgotten in practically any Mormon value system, especially when all single, childless men still receive and practice priesthood? Of fatherhood and priesthood, which technically is the greater responsibility? In reality, which gets the greater attention from the majority of male Church members? How does this impact Mormon families? Do men in the Church perceive priesthood as the actual power of God upon which the entire universe is founded, or as the opportunity and authority to serve in administrative, ecclesiastical positions and to receive gratification from their priesthood superiors? Peterson points out that many women feel dependent on a man to enjoy the blessings of God's power and feel completely excluded from substantive management and administrative positions within his Church. It seems there should be a higher, more concrete standard for mutual understanding of this important priesthood power.

Another key issue that several authors deal with is women's equality with men. Practically all of the authors described the early days in Church history as a seemingly unprecedented era of liberating equality for women. This era saw a strong, quasi-autonomous Relief Society organized by Emma Smith and functioning with Joseph's full approval; the empowering temple ceremonies/rituals, also established by the Prophet, which revealed woman to be an essential element in man's salvation; the spiritual gifts of healing and blessing and other talents possessed and exercised by strong women.

However, I was somewhat confused about how the temple ceremony elevates a woman to a man's status. I am wondering if these authors have attended different temples than I, for I seem to remember when I received my own endowments not only promising to have sex only with some unseen, unknown, faceless future husband, but also promising to obey this generic man as he obeys God! I grew up believing that true equals do not obey one another. I do not understand how the temple ceremonies, therefore, can be used to argue that woman is "just as equal" as man just because he cannot get to heaven without her. Fortunately I have no serious questions about my value or self-worth, but I worry about many of my Mormon sisters who are fed a constant, subtle diet of submission and "knowing one's place." I marvel that so many of them are genuinely happy and satisfied in their traditional roles.

A comprehensive women's volume would be incomplete without several looks at Mormonism and motherhood. Linda Wilcox provides us with two such essays. Her first, on the concept of a Mother in

Heaven, stresses that humankind has always sought for a loving, nurturing presence. Wilcox traces this desire to the teachings of such early Church leaders as Erastus Snow, who taught that "God" was actually the combination of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, that our Heavenly Parents were God. She reports that certain early Church authorities believed Heavenly Mother was actually the third member of the godhead, or the Holy Spirit. However, because of paucity of official Church pronouncements on her existence and characteristics, a grassroots "Mother in Heaven" movement has mushroomed among Latter-day Saint women. Perhaps this widening folk theology will prompt Mormon theologians to more closely examine and more clearly define her.

In a second essay, Wilcox examines the roots of the Mormon emphasis on the mothering role. She identifies many of the ill-defined and too well-defined roles and expectations of Mormon mothers, as well as their joys and blessings. She documents Church dicta against working women, which blame them for such misfortunes as neglected, delinquent, uncared-for children (ignoring the fact that most of these children are being tended by their fathers, babysitters, or in daycare centers). The Church equates motherhood with godhood, emphasizing that mothers perform the same holy calling as our Heavenly Father does — without realizing that by making motherhood sacred they are simultaneously excusing fathers from any real participation in or responsibility for parenting. Wilcox points out that fortunately the absentee-father role is changing, that fathers today are taking a much more active, hands-on role in parenting; but she also notes that this is happening not because our theology has changed, but because men are discovering that fatherhood is fulfilling.

While I am enthusiastic about most of this book, I am surprised that some things were left unsaid. The authors have successfully articulated questions and issues, but I was sometimes left wondering what women really want. Priesthood? And what do I want, after reading about the way things used to be and speculating on how they could or should be? What purpose does sisterhood serve, how does it better our lot? Is it just a way to comfort and support each other until the next life when everything will be made right? I found no answers — only mild frustration and hope for amelioration. I would have liked to see some contemporary sisterhood networks examined; perhaps the relationships/bonds formed with full-time sister missionaries, or a study of university students or of student wives, who often form particularly strong, emotional ties.

In the past, I have avoided speaking or thinking about Mormon women's issues, not wanting to be out of harmony with the Church or fearing that once I started voicing my problems I'd never shut up. This book has demonstrated that there are others in the Church — my sisters — who have not only felt many of the same frustrations and problems about being a woman in the Church but have quietly and intelligently examined these questions. Not only do I feel a sisterhood with them because of our common questions and feelings, but I have renewed hope that the condition of women in the Church can and indeed will improve. *Sisters in Spirit* invigorated and challenged me. It should appeal not only to students of women's issues, but to all Church members and authorities as well.

## History of Historians

*Mormons and Their Historians* by Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 213 pp., $20.00.

Reviewed by Gary Topping, curator of manuscripts at the Utah State Historical Society.

THAT SUCH A VOLUME AS THIS could be written at all is happy testimony to the development of a Mormon historiographical tradition. Its appearance at this late date, however — over a century and a half after the Church's foundation — is less happy evidence of just how slowly that tradition has matured. The rise of a scientific, objective Mormon historiography began, according to the authors, barely thirty years ago, and there are still fewer outstanding practitioners of that craft than one would like to see, though clearly the field is thriving both numerically and intellectually.

It is thriving so well, in fact, that few readers are going to be satisfied with this brief and shallow sketch of the bold contours of the Mormon historiographical tradition, welcome as it is. These two senior scholars simply present too few historians and works, too little sustained analysis, too little comparison with intellectual currents outside of Mormondom, and too few recommendations for fruitful new directions for this study to stand as anything but the barest of introductions.

The book has its undeniable strengths. Those of us who daily ply the trade routes of Mormon literature generally know something of Edward Tullidge through the articles of Ronald W. Walker on the Godbe circle and B. H. Roberts through Davis Bitton's studies. But what do most of us know of Orson Whitney, to whose fat volumes we keep turning, or Andrew Love Neff, or even that awe-inspiring engine of compilation Andrew Jenson, unless we have taken the time to trudge through his lengthy autobiography? The thumbnail sketches of the lives and works of these men, as well as of Willard Richards and George A. Smith, are most welcome and will enable us to use those older histories with enhanced understanding and enjoyment.

In a sense, though, the biographical chapters through the one on B. H. Roberts, which comprise roughly the first half of the volume, are the least satisfying ones. Bitton and Arrington chide some of the early historians, in their concern to promote the theological and historical uniqueness of the Church, for their inability to recognize that anything other than the golden plates and Joseph Smith's revelations could have fashioned Mormonism. But the authors themselves have failed generally to examine intellectual currents outside of Mormonism that may have influenced its historiography.

Those early historians were clearly working within a Victorian aesthetic tradition heavily seasoned with Byronic romanticism, nationalism, and extravagant oratorical rhetoric, none of which were by any means unique to Mormonism. Yet Bitton and Arrington give us only the barest passing mention of such ideas with the exception of their discussion of Tullidge's Mormon nationalism. Many early Saints, including some of the historians, lacked extensive formal education. Newly appointed Church historians could not be expected to begin their tenures with remedial reading in George (or even Hubert Howe) Bancroft, Parkman, Prescott, or other prominent historians of their day. There was, nevertheless, an intellectual climate which they shared with those historians, and the authors of this study owe us an account of that climate.

If, as it seems clear, Mormon historiography turned an important corner in the 1940s, then surely Bitton and Arrington slight the agents of that reorientation, Bernard DeVoto, Fawn Brodie, Dale Morgan, and Juanita Brooks. In the perfunctory paragraphs on each in an omnibus chapter they are lumped together under the accurate but superficial principle that none possessed academic degrees in history. (Those four, in fact, succeeded so embarrassingly well at the historian's craft that we Ph.D.s might well pass over, rather than emphasize, their lack of credentials.)

The authors' hasty sketches of Brodie and Morgan are particularly inadequate. They damn Brodie with faint praise as a good storyteller but a faulty researcher, while failing to discuss extensively Morgan's history of the Latter-day Saints because it was left unfinished at his death.

One wonders, though, since Morgan's history was completed at least in draft form to 1830 and since his appraisal of Joseph Smith and his account of the writing of the Book of Mormon differ in few if any significant ways from Brodie's, does Morgan the researcher vindicate Brodie the storyteller? This and similar questions await fuller study.

The book's discussion of Mormon historiography since Arrington took over as Church historian in 1972 is generally adequate, though many will wonder why some figures are not discussed and others only briefly, particularly Arrington himself, surely a colossus of the field. Their account of the dismantling in 1982 of what Bitton has called the "Camelot" of the Church historian's office under Arrington is gentle — even to the point of whitewashing. Many regard that action as a banishment concomitant with the dramatically restricted access to the Church archives. Rather than offering suggestions for future historiographical development, the authors conclude with a plea, well taken but too gently urged, for the reopening of the Church archives as the necessary prerequisite for future historiographical development.

Finally, the editors at the University of Utah Press have served Bitton and Arrington poorly. They allow such sentences as "Reaching more people was his narrative history" (p. 76) to stand, this example occurring, incredibly, at the beginning of the authors' account of B. H. Roberts's grammatical and stylistic lapses. And far too much yuppified jargon pollutes these pages, including phrases I doubt Bitton and Arrington employ in informal discourse, let alone in scholarly exposition. They are, for example, "up front" in their acknowledgments; they point out that Orson Whitney was a "people person," that B. H. Roberts in a period of youthful dissolution almost went "down the tube" as a Church member, and that Bitton's *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* gives the "nitty-gritty" of Mormon history. One is thus surprised that the final chapter contains no "bottom line" on Mormon historiography. Such expressions, even when placed within quotation marks, do little credit to the literary excellence previously established by these scholars.

## Humanity or Divinity?

*The Last Temptation of Christ*, a film by Martin Scorsese, produced by Universal Studios, 1988, and based on a novel of the same name by Nikos Kazantzakis (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960).

Reviewed by George D. Smith, president, Signature Books, and Camilla Miner Smith, freelance writer.

OUTSIDE THE SAN FRANCISCO THEATER where we saw *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Christians paraded with guitars, bullhorns, sandwich boards, and placards (some in Cantonese) protesting the blasphemous portrayal of their Lord and Savior. Anti-semitic signs accused Lew Wasserman, the Jewish chairman of MCA (parent company of Universal Studios), of persecuting Jesus. One Baptist minister labeled the film as filthy and ugly, predicting that it would bring God's fiery judgment down upon America. Among those defending the filmmaker and the First Amendment rights of theaters and viewers to choose what movies to see, were men dressed as nuns identified as the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, marching with signs that read "Thou shalt not censor."

Inside the theater, the tone was more subdued. Having our bags checked by police at the door somehow gave us a sense of having entered an important place. At least there was a quiet anticipation that seemed reverential. We were curious to see what had upset so many people (though we realized that many of the protesters had not even seen the film).

The film began with a disclaimer that it was based upon the fictional writing of Nikos Kazantzakis and not upon the Gospels, themselves written many years after the events they describe.

When Jesus, played by Willem Dafoe, comes on the screen, he is unsure of his identity. As a carpenter, he builds crosses for the Romans on which his fellow countrymen are crucified. His friend Judas Iscariot criticizes Jesus' acceptance of the Roman occupation. Jesus answers that he is angry at the injustices but that when he begins to speak words of anger, he inexplicably ends up speaking words of love. Jesus is also troubled by voices. His mother suggests that he have them exorcised if they are of the devil, and he replies that they may be exorcised if they are of the devil. But, what if they are from God? Can one exorcise God?

In the Kazantzakis novel, these voices resulted in a seizure, and caused Jesus to break his betrothal to Mary Magdalene (played by Barbara Hershey in the film), shaming her in such a public way that she became a prostitute. Though the situation is not clearly drawn, the film picks up this story as Jesus visits a house of prostitution, wishing to speak to Mary Magdalene and ask her forgiveness. This is one of the scenes that had offended the fundamentalist critics outside the theater as we and Jesus watch Mary in the brothel. Jesus is waiting to be alone with her and apologize, an apology she rejects.

The movie is good at showing Christ's uncertainty and anguish, but it fails to show him as a charismatic leader and teacher. Since the story is not taken directly from the Gospels, the film portrays Jesus as a man of his times, not someone who would attract a devoted following, not someone sure of his mission.

What really seems to test the forbearance of the crowd outside the theater is the dreamlike temptation Jesus experiences while on the cross. Christ's last temptation is an enticement to live a normal life. While dying on the cross he alone sees a small girl who invites him off the cross and explains that he no longer has to go through the extraordinary agony, suffering for the accumulated sins of the world. He is free. She leads him from the executions on Golgotha toward a wooded area. A wedding party appears and Jesus asks, "Who's getting married?" The young companion replies, "You are, Jesus." We see Mary Magdalene, beautiful in white. Jesus embraces her; we see her pregnant with Jesus' child. However, she dies in childbirth, and Jesus takes Mary and Martha to wife. As the young female guide tells him, all women are one, only different faces.

Jesus ages before us, fulfilled, with a happy family of children. Then, as he lies dying, he meets Saul of Tarsus who tells him that he is not the real Jesus. The real Jesus died on the cross and gave justification to Paul's Christian evangelism. At this point, Jesus recognizes his greater role and, in an act of free will, chooses crucifixion. As he returns to the cross, we learn that the young guide is really Satan presenting one last spellbinding temptation for Jesus to overcome. Since Jesus does not succumb, we may understand that Jesus is "one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet [is] without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

It is this temptation of sensual love, marriage, and children that causes us to see the truly human side of Jesus. And it seems to be this demonstration of humanity that offends the protestors. Perhaps we are more comfortable thinking of Jesus as divine, above temptation. It was this instinct that led to the third century heresy, called Docetism, which held that Jesus was not really human, but only appeared to be. The orthodox Christian doctrine of incarnation, eventually set down in the fifth century at the Council of Chalcedon, defined Jesus as having both humanity and divinity within his nature.

If there was an anticipation of lust and scandal at the beginning of the film, the end left us with reverential understanding. Martin Scorsese seems a very religious man who has presented the human side of

Christ with the uncertainty and anguish that is part of being human. This is a Christ humans can relate to, one who understands mortality.

# *BRIEF NOTICES*

*The True Believers* by Alyce S. Rohrer (Port Washington, N.Y.: Ashley Books, Inc., 1987), 454 pp., bibl., $18.95.

THIS BIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL traces the life of Henry Lunt from his conversion to Mormonism in England in 1850 to exile in the Mexican colonies in the 1890s. Carefully researched from Lunt's journals and letters, family histories, and public records, the story tells of Lunt's conversion, travel to Utah, missions in southern Utah and England, years as bishop in Cedar City, and his plural marriages. An introductory section summarizes the history of Mormonism, and an annotated bibliography lists works on related topics.

The practice of polygamy is a central focus in the novel, particularly from the wives' point of view. The difficulties of the practice on a personal level, and its challenges to the faith of those who lived it, provide conflict throughout the novel. After the Manifesto Lunt's faith led him to live the last years of his life in the Mormon colonies in Mexico, where plural marriages continued for a time. Lunt's own difficult last years, as told here, reflect the hesitant end of Mormon plural marriage.

*The Writings of Camilla Eyring Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), xvii, 157 pp., $10.95.

CAMILLA EYRING KIMBALL served as a refreshingly candid and outspoken role model for Mormon women during a time of upheaval in expectations and roles of women during the 70s and 80s. And yet, as her son Edward observes in his introduction, "no one would be more surprised at the appearance of a book containing her words than Camilla Kimball" (ix).

But for many women it was her unpretentious ordinariness that made Sister Kimball more influential than she might have been in her otherwise glamorous position as the prophet's companion: "I know something of losing one's parents, of seeing one's spouse racked with stress and pain, of having one's savings of many years wiped out by theft or bank failure, of watching loved ones stray from the gospel, of having a child stricken with crippling illness, and of feeling disabling old age creeping on" (p. 27). She boldly revealed her own doubts and independence from her husband: "I am a bit more restless than my husband. He has always been solid and unquestioning in his faith, and he has never been able to understand why I have to question and delve" (p. 109). Sister Kimball upheld the traditional values of family and Church with untraditional style. She championed the challenging "profession" of homemaking and warned that "rather than directing both marriage partners away from the home, we need to encourage both to make strengthening the family their primary concern" (p. 10). Her writing is always full of gently persuasive common sense rather than intimidating authority.

Sister Kimball has been an influential, effective spokesperson for women. Her example was influential because of her position as "first lady" to the Church. Her voice was and continues to be effective because it is one of the few official voices that is personal, reasonable, candid, direct yet nonjudgmental — and female.

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