



DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



ARTIST'S NOTE

"The painting on the cover of this issue is called 'Prodigal' and was conceived around Jesus' parable of reconciliation and unconditional love. It deals with much more than the simple elements of a wayward son returning to his father. In addition to the idea of reconciliation to an earthly father and thus a heavenly father, this painting also deals with the reconciliation of a lost human to himself.

"Bludgeoned by the beliefs of those who seem absolute in their certainty of right, religious and otherwise, humans are, I believe, first lost to themselves before they become wayward in the eyes of their fellows. There is often a terrible darkness within the human soul as we turn inward from the pain of pressure from the enlightened and all-knowing, not to mention simply cruel. And so, within this work and much of my work, there is the plumbing of the darkness within to find the real light of self. And then, gradually perhaps, there is a forgiving of those who have done the damage. Often they are not wanton in their brutality. Even so, they must be included in the reconciliation if ultimate inner union and true communion with one's fellows are to occur.

"The sensuality of this work may prove offensive to some (and indeed the painting was gently declined by the clients), but I believe I was both innocent to its deeper content at the time and naive as to its potential impact on others. After all, my use of the nude comes from a timeless tradition in art.

"And perhaps I was really blind to its autobiographical implications. Now I see the beaten, turned away figure as being bruised as I was. I shared personally the need of the central figures for the love and acceptance of a father or others, but also the need of each person to love him- or herself. And then finally, with a certain peace within ourselves, we turn, the fullness of the inner light aglow and sensually whole, to complete our spiritual quest."

—Trevor Southey

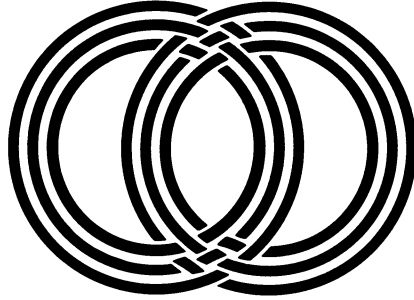
EDITORS: *Martha Sonntag Bradley and Allen Dale Roberts*
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: *Gary James Bergera*
MANAGING EDITOR: *Susan Staker*
OFFICE MANAGER: *M. Shayne Bell*
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES: *Marie Cornwall*
SCRIPTURAL STUDIES: *Mark D. Thomas*
FICTION: *Levi S. Peterson*
POETRY: *Susan Elizabeth Howe*
BOOK REVIEWS: *Delmont R. Oswald*
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *Dotti A. Mortensen*
BUSINESS MANAGER: *Alan L. Smith*
LEGAL COUNSEL: *Richard H. Bradley*
DESIGNER: *Warren Archer II*
ART EDITOR: *Frank T. McIntyre*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Paul M. Edwards, Independence, Missouri
B. J. Fogg, Provo, Utah
Michael W. Homer, Salt Lake City, Utah
David C. Knowlton, Salt Lake City, Utah
Armand L. Mauss, Pullman, Washington
Steven Peterson, Ephraim, Utah
Lorie Winder Stromberg, Los Angeles, California

EDITORIAL BOARD

J. Michael Allen, Orem, Utah
David Anderson, Salt Lake City, Utah
Curt A. Bench, Salt Lake City, Utah
Melodie Moench Charles, San Antonio, Texas
Todd Compton, Santa Monica, California
Gloria Cronin, Provo, Utah
Steven Epperson, Salt Lake City, Utah
Vella Neil Evans, Salt Lake City, Utah
Kent Frogley, Salt Lake City, Utah
Harvard Heath, Provo, Utah
George Henry, Jr., Salt Lake City, Utah
Duane E. Jeffery, Provo, Utah
Dale C. LeCheminant, Salt Lake City, Utah
Kathryn Lindquist, Salt Lake City, Utah
Rebecca Linford, Chicago, Illinois
Ron Molen, Salt Lake City, Utah
Martha Pierce, Salt Lake City, Utah
Gregory A. Prince, Gaithersburg, Maryland
D. Michael Quinn, Salt Lake City, Utah
Marybeth Raynes, Salt Lake City, Utah
Paul C. Richards, Orem, Utah
Kent A. Robson, Logan, Utah
John Sillito, Salt Lake City, Utah
Kathy Smith, Layton, Utah
Margaret Merrill Toscano, Salt Lake City, Utah
David P. Wright, Chelmsford, Massachusetts
Lawrence A. Young, Salt Lake City, Utah



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.*

CONTENTS

LETTERS iv

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

- EDITORS' INTRODUCTION: 1
THE TIMES—THEY ARE A'CHANGIN'

- THE LDS INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY AND *Lavina Fielding Anderson* 7
CHURCH LEADERSHIP: A CONTEMPORARY
CHRONOLOGY

- DIALOGUE TOWARD FORGIVENESS: *Richard D. Poll* 67
A SUPPORTING VIEW—A RESPONSE TO "THE LDS
INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY AND CHURCH LEADERSHIP:
A CONTEMPORARY CHRONOLOGY"

- LIBERAL SPIRITUALITY: A PERSONAL ODYSSEY *L. Jackson Newell* 79

- A PLEA TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE *Paul James Toscano* 95
CHURCH : CHOOSE LOVE NOT POWER

- A RESPONSE TO PAUL TOSCANO'S "A PLEA TO THE *Elbert Eugene Peck* 109
LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH:
CHOOSE LOVE NOT POWER"

- DISSENT IN THE CHURCH: *James E. Chapman* 121
TOWARD A WORKABLE DEFINITION

- ON SPECTRAL EVIDENCE *Eugene England* 135

SCRIPTURAL STUDIES

- JESUS THE PEASANT *John Dominic Crossan* 155

FICTION

- ONE ON THE AISLE *Karen Rosenbaum* 171

POETRY

- EXERCISING THE PRIESTHOOD *Derk Michael Koldewyn* xii

- BREADCRUMBS *Dixie Lee Partridge* 5

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----|
| BECOMING A WRITER | <i>Derk Michael Koldewyn</i> | 65 |
| SNOWY NIGHT | <i>Lisa Bolin Hawkins</i> | 77 |
| NOTES FOR A SON, 19, LIVING ABROAD | <i>Dixie Lee Partridge</i> | 78 |
| NIGHT MYTHS | <i>Dixie Lee Partridge</i> | 93 |
| BETH-LEHEM | <i>Richard Tice</i> | 119 |
| WHAT EL SALVADOR MEANT TO A THREE-YEAR-OLD | <i>B. J. Fogg</i> | 153 |
| SAINT THERESA AND THE LEPPRESS | <i>Kathryn Kimball</i> | 170 |
| SESTINA FOR THE COMING FALL | <i>Anneliese Warnick</i> | 183 |

REVIEWS

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-----|
| A NEW KIND OF ABUSE The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Escaping Spiritual Manipulation and False Spiritual Authority Within the Church <i>by David Johnson and Jeff Van Vonderen; and Churches That Abuse by Ronald M. Enroth</i> | <i>J. Frederic Voros, Jr.</i> | 185 |
|---|-------------------------------|-----|

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS | 193 |
|-----------------------|-----|

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| ABOUT THE ARTIST/ART CREDITS | Inside back cover |
|------------------------------|-------------------|

Dialogue: A Journal Of Mormon Thought is published quarterly by the Dialogue Foundation, P.O. Box 658, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84110-0658, 801-363-9988. *Dialogue* has no official connection with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Third class postage paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. Contents copyright 1993 by the Dialogue Foundation. ISSN 002-2157. Regular domestic subscription rate is \$30 per year; students and senior citizens \$25 per year; single copies \$10. Regular foreign subscription rate is \$35 per year; students and senior citizens \$30 per year; air mail \$55 per year; single copies \$15. *Dialogue* is also available on microforms through University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-1346, and 18 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 4EJ, England.

Dialogue welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, notes and comments, letters to the editor, and art. Preference is given to submissions from subscribers. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* including double-spacing all block quotations and notes. For the reference citation style, please consult issues from volume 26 on. If the submission is accepted for publication, an electronic version on an IBM-PC compatible diskette, using WordPerfect or other ASCII format software, must be submitted with a hard copy of the final manuscript. 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 Designer or Art Director at the same address.

Prefers Free Agency

I am writing to talk briefly about the article by Rebecca Chandler (Summer 1992). I must first say that I was mostly pleased with the article since I, like she, am interested in seeing how members of the church react to different situations of stress. However, I felt I must write about her reference to free agency. She already has an assumption that "free agency" means the freedom to choose in terms of social and political freedom. While this sounds comforting to many, it is hard to back up with the LDS scriptures which do not refer to "free agency" at all, a term which is a strange one since as a non-LDS professor once remarked to me, "If you have agency, it has to be free." I believe the whole notion is somewhat vague, explaining why in last conference members were told there is no free agency, just moral agency.

I do still like the term free agency, used by almost all the general authorities, but tend to like a definition given by my grandmother, which is also supported by Truman G. Madsen. She wrote: "Free agency implies full freedom of choice, provided, naturally, that the choice does not conflict with the exercise of free agency by others and that the choice is righteous." Madsen gave a similar view, and by choosing evil you lose your freedom, a view also supported by Talmadge in *The Articles of Faith*.

It may be that some of the members who told Rebecca Chandler they were

"entirely free to do exactly what they were told" had an entirely different understanding of what free agency meant; an understanding more in line with the one I like. What I suggest is that free agency is not that well defined, and for this reason Rebecca Chandler may have made a mistake in understanding what the members she talked to meant. As I am an anthropologist, I am well aware that it is hard to present another person's view if you already believe you know the right one and if you have only a cursory knowledge about these people. Reading the conflicting ideas about what agency is, I am not sure there is a right one.

Bruce R. Josephson
Roanoke, Virginia

Alliance Up-Date

The purpose of my essay, "Sexual Hegemony and Mormon Women: Seeing Ourselves in the Bambara Mirror" (Summer 1992), was to examine both a process people use to define their identities through difference and the ways even strong independent women may inadvertently subordinate themselves to men. An indirect topic was the Ouelesseboungou/Utah Alliance and one of its expeditions to Mali, West Africa, which served as vehicle for my exploration of sexual hegemony within the two cultures. The Alliance has changed since I wrote the paper in 1989

and even since the journal went to press early in 1992. Its progress deserves an up-date.

I am happy to report that late in 1989 most of us women from that expedition were invited to join the Alliance board of directors. Since then one woman has not only been board chairperson but was responsible for guiding the Alliance smoothly and successfully through a rough management transition. Others of us have been committee leaders. All have been instrumental in making women an important component of decision-making (we were always vital to material production) in Alliance projects both at home and abroad.

It would be lovely if I could also say that female genital mutilations have ceased to be performed in Ouelessebou-gou. However, it is a cultural practice imbedded for thousands of years in African tradition; it will not stop abruptly. Perhaps it could be more easily eliminated if it were not so prevalent among most African and Mid-eastern countries. It is estimated that at least 100 million women currently suffer various forms of genital mutilation ranging from clitoridectomies to infibulation.

Even though the Alliance is only now discussing the mutilation problem directly, we have worked hard to build a strong base from which we may be able to address the issue in the future. Our approach to development is through a slow process that emphasizes Bambara ownership of projects that will be sustainable without our assistance. Therefore, we have tried these years to earn trust from the Bambara people and to help them improve their lives on the most basic level. They must have food and water before they can consider social change. In addition to helping them dig sturdier wells and grow gardens

that are productive year round, the Alliance has instituted a medical program that has trained village health workers who provide superficial treatment, preventative information, and sterile instruments. We have also recently initiated a literacy program that will enable these villagers to learn to read and write their own language for the first time in centuries.

It is our profound hope that these combined projects will be instruments for change to improve the health of all the Bambara people. But change must come from within. And in order for change to occur, fear—including fear of information—must be confronted and overcome. These people, our sisters and brothers, deserve our patience, our love, and our courage to remove the obstacles we unconsciously construct in our own paths.

Kathryn Lindquist
Salt Lake City, Utah

A More Forgiving Perspective

I had mixed emotions about Marlene Harris Austin's article "Afterthought" (Fall 1992). I could relate to her feeling of isolation during her grief; when I was in graduate school I was hospitalized and never received any contact from the visiting teachers or Relief Society president of my new ward. It hurt me at the time. Now that I'm in the Relief Society presidency myself, I have a more forgiving perspective.

What I have discovered after two years of sitting in presidency meetings is that there is a baseline of suffering going on in any given congregation at any given time. On the surface, our suburban ward seems to have the blessings of Zion scattered upon it, the chapel

filled with beautiful, affluent, talented members. Scratch the veneer, however, and beneath there is divorce, mental illness, desperate health problems, and sudden unemployment. The bishopric announced from the podium this past Sunday that a thirty-one-year-old sister, mother of a toddler, had less than two months to live. She has pancreatic cancer.

After being privy to these often secret sufferings, I wonder if Austin's implied question of "Why don't we help each other more?" is not as appropriate as asking ourselves how even a few people are able to cope with their own sorrows and yet sometimes still continue to pour love from the pitcher. Our Relief Society president, for instance, accepted her overwhelming assignment less than six months after the death of her eight-year-old daughter. For the first year of our presidency, I cannot recall seeing Jolene without a film of tears clouding her eyes. Yet Jolene still managed to convey her sense of caring to those under her stewardship.

Let me stress that Jolene is probably the exception. Most of us, myself included, become extremely dysfunctional when a crisis strikes. We are often walking around in autopilot, hoping we remember to feed ourselves and family members at least a couple times a day. If we hear the whisperings of the Holy Spirit prompting us to call another in need, we feel too exhausted to respond. We may have the desire to serve but unfortunately not the energy. I know that when I was going through a divorce three years ago, a young sister moved into the ward who really needed me to befriend her. I could not do it. My well was dry. I have the wherewithal to make the overtures now, but it's too late, she's already moved away.

And so I would say to Austin that

sometimes a combination of factors in a ward may temporarily render many of the normally responsive Saints inadequate for consistent service. Yes, I agree with her assessment that often people are uncomfortable with grief and unskilled in dealing with ongoing difficulties. But there are some individuals who are blessed with a sense of knowing what to do. It's possible that those members had their spiritual radar temporarily malfunctioning when Austin needed their skills the most. I hope she will be forgiving.

My new insight has helped me to be more understanding when a ward member seems oblivious to the list of current struggles I'm sure must be embossed across my forehead. I am learning that I must sometimes ask for specific deeds of kindness. When other people are distracted by their own straits, it's ineffective to rely on subtle promptings, even holy ones. Even if we shout, some people will not be able to respond.

Should there come a time again when I am not there mentally to answer the door knock of a needy brother or sister, I hope they will give me a second—or even third—chance. I hope they will knock again, loudly.

Kathryn E. Dawson
Columbus, Ohio

More Than a Voice

I appreciate what Barbara Elliott Snedecor is getting at in her essay, "On Being Female: A Voice of Contentment" (Fall 1992). However, I must strongly disagree with her contention that our Mother in Heaven could or would put down her physical body in order to function in the office of Holy Ghost.

If the Holy Ghost can and does ef-

fectively testify to us of the feelings and thoughts of our Father in Heaven; then it stands to reason that the same Holy Ghost can and does testify to us of the thoughts and feelings of our Mother in Heaven as well. I believe our Mother in Heaven, as well as the eternal companion of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be full, complete, and equal members of the Godhead. As such the office of Holy Ghost would naturally testify of them and convey their feelings to receptive children.

The eternal marriage of our Mother and Father in Heaven is certainly as vital and necessary as are our own eternal marriages. The unique being created by the two of them together is immensely greater than the sum of the two separate persons. I believe the physical aspect of their union to be as important as the emotional and spiritual are to the whole equation. The vitality and the synergy that result from the whole being that they create together requires all aspects of male female relationship to be in order—mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical. For me, this belief precludes the possibility of our Mother in Heaven laying her physical body aside for any purpose. The highest priority is the Oneness of our Gods.

It is my understanding from past research I have done that if one looks into the etymology of the name of God, we find that the name itself represents both the masculine and the feminine. Should we say that our Father is a chauvinist then, or rather should we say that our view of God has been in error? Certainly our Father in Heaven who must honor, cherish, and love his own wife above and beyond all other beings, would not appropriate to himself the whole name of God.

I wonder if the only reason we as a church do not know more about our

Mother in Heaven is because we have not asked. Certainly God's encouragement to, "Ask and it shall be given," "Knock and it shall be opened unto you," or his promise that "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" apply to the desire to know more of our Mother in Heaven as well as any other righteous desire.

One day not too long ago as I was meditating on the subject of our Mother in Heaven, I was suddenly struck by the illuminating idea that as Christ said to the apostles, "If you have seen me you have seen the Father." So then as I have known my own great-grandmother, grandmother, and mother, each of whom has exemplified to me what is best in humanity. Then I have known my Mother in Heaven and the love and caring and strength she is capable of. As literal, genetically linked daughters of God, these women—I would also include my own wife here—have drawn for me a tremendously accurate picture of my Mother in Heaven.

Todd Sidwell
Los Angeles, California

Euphoric Anesthesia

I wish to relate to you two disturbing and frankly embarrassing experiences I have had recently. The first took place on the Washington temple grounds at Christmas time last December. I had looked forward to bringing my non-member friend and significant other to a choral presentation that was being put on by the youth of a local stake, assuming that we would hear one of the beautiful programs Mormon choirs are particularly known for at that time of year. Instead, we got two solid hours of watered-down Christian fundamentalist "feel good" music reminis-

cent of much of the mass-produced Southern Baptist (and, unfortunately, Mormon) sap that is threatening to drive authentic religious music, both gospel and sacred, out of business. But what was worse was the theatrical Pentecostal-like atmosphere. Five teenage girls stepped forward at different points in the program to bear their testimonies of the happiness that Christ had brought them, while the mellow tones of easy listenin' faded to a lull in the background. And all five then proceeded to bawl as if their lives had come to an end.

Meanwhile, three of the boys standing on the top row of the risers collapsed with a thud at various intervals, which only added to the spectacle. And the vapid tones of "chloroform in sound" (to paraphrase an infamous quote by Mark Twain) continued as concerned parents rushed to revive their children. Unfortunately, the prevailing spirit of the evening was one of pleasant euphoric anesthesia bordering on delirium, and not one of thoughtful spiritual sentiment.

My friend was shocked to think what kind of training our children must be getting through the programs of the church, and I was mortified. All I could do was to try to explain to her that that's not really the way it is in an ordinary ward. And yet, unfortunately, I think that's the way it is becoming everywhere, as manifest by the second event, which I would also like to briefly describe.

Just today when I popped in a video cassette of a recently created church-produced film called "Our Heavenly Father's Plan," we were once again inundated with the sickly-sweet tones of Muzak while a young man expressed, in obviously affected tones, how much his life had been changed by the gospel. The

background music was programmed to send that little chill up your spine, so that they wouldn't have to rely too heavily on the text to achieve the same. The message was beautiful, but so insipid when presented in such a trite way! (Incidentally, I know that taste in music varies, and I sincerely believe that any one style of music is as valid as another. But there is such a thing as quality, and the vast majority of laymen and musicians alike would agree that this music is severely lacking in that.)

I would not be so critical if I thought that this was the best we could do. But the original (1960s) BYU production of "Man's Search for Happiness" proved we could do better. And there have been others. "John Baker's Last Race" is also a very good film from that period. These may be what Spencer Kimball had in mind when he expressed his hope that the arts would become better developed among our people. Indeed, "Mormon art" will never be worthy of that title if it fails to reflect our great history and to better define our cultural identity and the motivating forces behind our way of life in ways that cause us to celebrate instead of cringe in embarrassment.

Of the films that have been released in recent years, the only one with any merit whatsoever is "A Rare and Precious Possession." Not one of the others can be watched without one gritting one's teeth and "enduring to the end." And I can't think of much Mormon music of merit since Bradshaw's "Restoration" except for a smattering of nice new hymns and a few organ pieces.

I am appalled at this "feel good" anti-intellectual (or perhaps "anti-art") approach to the gospel that undermines the vital message my ancestors struggled to bring forth and to preserve, and I would be interested to hear others'

views on this disturbing trend in the church.

David Harris
Washington, D.C.

Announcement

The Case Reports Committee of the Mormon Alliance invites contacts from individuals who feel they have experienced ecclesiastical or spiritual abuse within the context of the LDS church or who know about the experiences of others.

The Mormon Alliance is a new organization to identify, document, and address such problems. Spiritual abuse or injury occurs in a religious system when individuals act without adequate accountability, using position, "special" status, or presumed special understandings of the gospel in ways that violate the agency, injure the spiritual growth, coerce the compliance, damage the self-esteem, and/or demean the dignity of others, whether leaders or members.

The Case Reports Committee invites contact both from those who feel that they have suffered spiritual abuse and also from those who feel that their ecclesiastical leaders have acted nurturingly and protectively in situations where abuse or injury was a possibility. We invite both leaders and members to report their experiences.

We are not interested in church-bashing. Our goals as a committee are: to listen nonjudgmentally and confidentially (We realize that simply being able to talk will be an important step for some people.); to document accurately and responsibly the events that occurred, from multiple perspectives wherever possible; to prepare selected cases for publi-

cation; to promote healing and reconciliation; to help restore faith in God's unfailing love and the Savior's unfailing grace; and to heal breaches of trust within the Mormon community.

Please telephone or write to:

Lavina Fielding Anderson
(801) 467-1617
1519 Roberta Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84115

Janice Allred
(801) 225-4967
221 W. 3700 N.
Provo, UT 84604

Mormon Alliance
6337 S. Highland Drive Box 215
Salt Lake City, UT 84121

Editors' Notes

Jessie Embry guest-edited the winter 1992 issue of *Dialogue*. We appreciate her work on that issue.

We are pleased to announce the Steven Molen Essay Contest, named in honor of the late student, writer, and son of Ron and Norma Molen. The purpose of the contest is to encourage students and young authors (under thirty years of age) to submit new works analyzing subjects of relevance to Mormons. We hope to print one such essay per issue, beginning with Steven Molen's "The Identity of Jacob's Opponent: Wrestling with Ambiguity in Genesis 32:22-32," which will appear in the summer 1993 issue. Each of the essays selected for publication will receive an award of excellence in the amount of \$250.

Due to rising production costs, as well as the increase in the number of pages comprising each issue, we are announcing a modest increase in the regu-

lar subscription rate from \$25 to \$30 a year, effective 1 January 1993. Rates for students and seniors will hereafter be \$25; rates for foreign subscriptions will be raised proportionately. The journal has raised its rates only twice since its inception twenty-seven years ago. Given that the price of the average American history journal is \$43 per year, we believe that *Dialogue* is still an excellent value at the new subscription rate.

Beginning in 1993, we urge those submitting manuscripts to also subscribe to the journal. While *Dialogue* unquestionably derives benefit from the manuscripts it receives, we believe authors also benefit from the publication of their work. We believe it to be a reasonable request to ask that authors, in return, show their support of the journal by subscribing.

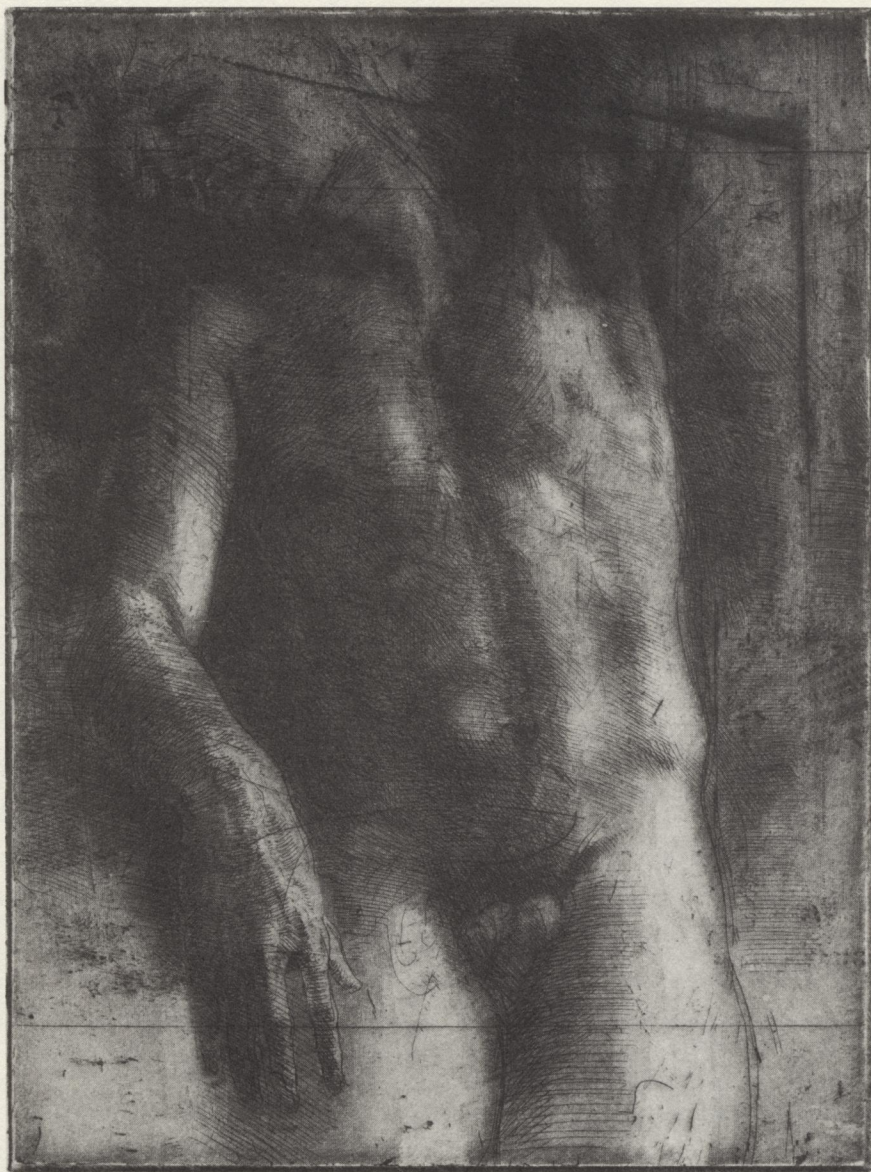
We apologize for the "lost label phenomenon" which resulted in some copies of the winter 1992 issue not reaching subscribers. Since the labels are missing, we do not know who you are.

If you did not receive your winter 1992 issue (volume 25, number 4), please drop us a note or give us a call at 801-363-9988 and we will send you a copy as soon as possible.

Readers will notice that beginning with this issue *Dialogue* has adopted the use of footnotes in article reference citations.

Dialogue now has an account with a local securities firm, creating a depository for those wishing to make tax-deductible donations of stocks or other securities and funds. Please contact the editors at 801-363-9988 for details.

As the new editors of *Dialogue*, we sincerely thank all of you who have already given your support to our fledgling effort. The response to our pre-Christmas 1992 fund-raising letter was generous and heart-warming. We also appreciate your manuscripts, suggestions, and words of encouragement. Because of you, we feel well sustained in our new callings.



Exercising the Priesthood

Derk Michael Koldewyn

A Wednesday evening
down in the back
of the chapel, we played
King of the Mountain on the
steep soft slope; sliding
stifflegged into each other,
legs all a tangle, staining our
jeans a dark forest green.

Then Ken slid hard into Mike,
his brother, who hit him back,
hard. They tumbled downhill,
flailing, shouting,
till Rich broke it up.

They sat there, shouting, shoving,
when I got up to go home.
And, walking away, silent
anger and fear in my stomach,
I thought of our deacon's quorum
the Sunday before, our teacher
showing us our duties in the scriptures.

"Do you know," he said,
"that you have the power
to command angels?" I didn't
but now I did, and so I walked
around the rock face of the chapel,
and knelt

fervent and unseen.

Editors' Introduction: The Times—They Are A' Changin'

FOR AN INCREASING NUMBER of Latter-day Saints, recent experiences in the church bring to mind Charles Dickens's description of the revolutionary years of the eighteenth century in his novel, *The Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. . . . It was the season of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us."

In these times of change and possibility for the church, we observe its struggles with complex problems and perplexing dilemmas posed by the modern world. Its responses vary widely but impact us all. The work that "goes forward in an orderly, wonderful way," as expressed by one recent general conference speaker, has unquestionably changed the church. It is now an organization with international dimensions that test established systems of conducting the church's business. Financial control, correlation, standard planning, the emphasis on reduction and simplification while we are at the same time rapidly expanding have altered the relationship between the institution and individual members.

Robert Bellah's recent book, *The Good Society*, suggests that Americans frequently place themselves in an impossible predicament with institutions because both create expectations which are at mutually exclusive cross purposes and cannot be met. As a remedy, Bellah proposes ways in which we can make sense of our institutions by understanding how and why we form them and how they in turn form us. Through this process of shared empathy, members of institutions, churches included, can cooperatively develop ways of altering them for everyone's betterment. This is a challenge worthy of Latter-day Saints as we move with our church into an uncertain future.

This past year has been one of dichotomies, highlighting how important this effort will be. The same year the church's Humanitarian Service Division donated more than a million dollars worth of food and materials to African nations the church's condemnation of members on both the right and the left has created bitterness and suspicion for many. While hundreds

of thousands of new members are joining the church, long-time members are being pressured to leave.

During the same year that the sesquicentennial Relief Society service projects set a new and exciting standard for community involvement and the LDS Foundation donated \$50,000 to Holy Cross Jordan Valley Hospital's new Women's Center, women and men have been officially condemned and privately chastised for praying to Mother God or heavenly parents, a concept some feel comforting and consistent with early church thinking.

It is difficult to reconcile recent general conference addresses like that of Elder Dallas Archibald that reminded us that "attempting to force others to accept our way of thinking will cause them to close their minds to our teachings and ultimately reject our words. They have their free agency," with the recent condemnation of independent study groups, Mormon periodicals and books, and the Sunstone Symposium. At the same time, the debate over academic freedom continues to rage at Brigham Young University challenging the meaning and mission of that institution.

Clearly, these issues do not affect all of us equally or in the same way. In fact, many may find it difficult to identify problems at all and continue to feel welcome in the community of Saints. Nevertheless, there are many among us who privately suffer pain and are searching for a better way.

Often when we find it difficult to understand how an institution works we use family metaphors to describe the interrelationships in an attempt to make the problem more familiar and therefore more easily understood and addressed. In this instance, we might conceive the church as being involved in a confused, messy divorce, or perhaps many thousands of divorces. As the writer Pat Conroy observed when his own marriage dissolved, "each divorce is the death of a small civilization." When one individual is hurt or leaves, that exit effects relatives, friends, neighbors, employers, teachers, clergy, and scores of strangers. When the religious contract between the church and any of its members fails, for whatever reason, the entire church family suffers a great, sometimes irretrievable and uniquely irreplaceable loss. The current attitude of some leaders that apparently certain kinds of members are dispensable flies in the face of Jesus' parables of the one lost sheep and the prodigal son.

When songwriter-singer Bob Dylan wrote his folk anthems, "The Times—They Are A Changin'" and "Blowin' in the Wind" in the 1960s, he posed simple but profound questions echoing the crucial issues of his day. This spirit of concerned questioning, seeking, and striving gave birth to *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* in the same decade. More than twenty-five years later, a similar attitude lives on because the questions remain for the most part open and unresolved. As *Dialogue* moves with the church through the gates of history into the new millennium, important

questions will persist. As editors, we ask readers to join us in bringing a positive answer to the looming query: What kind of religion will Mormonism be? We believe that *Dialogue* can, and of necessity should, play a constructive role in determining the outcome of this question.

Since 1987 *Dialogue* has been in the capable hands of Ross and Mary Kay Petersen and their editorial team. We applaud their thoughtful work and many accomplishments. In keeping with the foundation's policy of bringing new perspectives to the enterprise every five years, a selection team has chosen a new group of editors to take the journal through 1996, the anniversary year of Utah's statehood and the thirtieth anniversary of *Dialogue*, to mid-1997, the sesquicentennial of the Mormon settlement of the Great Basin. Through this momentous half-decade, the journal's co-editors will be Martha Sonntag Bradley and Allen Dale Roberts, with assistance from associate editor Gary James Bergera. The three come to the task after having recently worked together on the *Journal of Mormon History* with editor Lavina Fielding Anderson. Together we have decades of involvement with Mormon publications. Nevertheless, we accepted this new challenge reluctantly and with reservation born of experience. Each of us was already over-committed, but we were all compelled by the belief that *Dialogue* can and must be a force for good, a forum for some of the best thinking in Mormon studies.

We are joined by an entirely new supporting cast including an Editorial Committee, Advisory Committee, and Editorial Board, among others. The Editorial Committee, with whom we will work the most closely, is a diverse group of multi-talented individuals: Delmont Oswald, Director of the Utah Humanities Council, as book review editor; Levi Peterson, professor of English at Weber State University, as fiction editor; as issues and essays editor, Marie Cornwall, professor of sociology at Brigham Young University; Susan Howe, professor of English, also at BYU, as poetry editor; Mark Thomas, banker, as scriptural studies editor; Alan Smith, an attorney, as financial advisor; and Dotti Mortenson, a political scientist, as editor of letters to the editor. The names of other board and committee members are found on the masthead at the front of this, our first issue.

Our initial issue is in large measure an attempt to understand the human aspects of the institutional church, to examine the form it is taking in the 1990s, and to assess and comment on how the church in turns forms us. These essays are written by men and women known to most readers for their thoughtful, caring insight into the nature and quality of our religious life. To some of us, they are revered as mentors. We look to their example as we feel the weight of the passing of the mantle.

In 1992, following the recent fall of Communism and the 1960s acceptance of the reformist provisions of Vatican II, the Roman Catholic church finally admitted to erring for the past 359 years in officially condemning

Galileo Galilei for his belief that the earth revolves around the sun. Pope John Paul II took a personal interest in the case because the church's continued denouncing of Galileo's "heresy" symbolized for centuries the church's apparent rejection of science and modern progress in general. The pope understood the longstanding elements of the conflict between the messages of science and faith. Because of the gravity of the issues at stake, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences took thirteen years to bring the pope a "not guilty" verdict for the scientist who was forced by church inquisitors to "repent" and spent the final eight years of his life under house arrest. In commenting on the problem, the pope observed, "One day we may find ourselves in a similar situation, which will require both sides to have an informed awareness of the field of and limitations of their own competencies."

So it comes to this. Let us all, members and leader-servants of God alike, reason and take on this worthy task together. Because so much of our religious experience plays out, in, and through the institutional church, an improved, more humane and Christlike institution is essential if we are to lead better lives. We have been moved by the recent expressions of several members who have said, almost as if they were singing in unison, "This is my church too." Does the individual Mormon belong to the church or does the church truly belong to the individuals who sustain its existence?

If this is a church by and for the members then it is left to the members to exercise their inherent moral authority through responsible discipleship to make the church better. We are not merely clients or stockholders in the corporate church. We are part of the family of the church—the community of God on earth—an organization whose existence depends on the participation and support of its members. Ideally the institution is in the service of the individual's pursuit of salvation. The institution, in fact, has no independent life and is not an end in itself. It exists solely as a social vehicle for helping people find joy on earth and later happiness in the family of God. The institution and the individual should be engaged in the search for a good and happy life together, and not be at odds with one another in a dichotomous, competitive relationship destructive to both parties.

We choose to believe that this is the spring of hope, that we have everything before us. In these times of change, it is left to each of us to make a difference, through dialogue, in realizing our fondest hopes.

Breadcrumbs

Dixie Lee Partridge

(for the latchkey kids of our city)

*Now who will tell the children fairytales? the ones where simple crumbs
over the forest floor endure to help us home.*

—Jorie Graham

The fairytales were wrong:
to identify big feet
with wicked stepsisters, ugly with unloved,
princes and frogs with anything
but world news and the bog by the river.
Ducklings grow into ducks,
a beauty set apart from swans.

Still, I cannot think of childhood
without my mother's voice unraveling tales:
"There was a bear
whose name was Jim.
Children weren't afraid of him. . . ."
Whether ironing clothes or bottling fruit,
her words moved with her work—
their steady rhythm drawn
into repetition as we begged for more—

and in the end were stored up with sleek jars
of cherries where a shaft of light made them glisten
like jewels I reached to touch
again and again.
And I took for granted coming home
to the yeasty smells of rising bread
and my mother so in place there.

Today in a grey winter light
I drove toward home through rush-hour traffic:
street upon street of darkening houses,
drapes unclosed, a faint flicker
of blue from each window . . . again and again
the curved glass of screens
that sell us our stories.

The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology

Lavina Fielding Anderson

THE CLASH BETWEEN OBEDIENCE to ecclesiastical authority and the integrity of individual conscience is certainly not one upon which Mormonism has a monopoly. But the past two decades have seen accelerating tensions in the relationship between the institutional church and the two overlapping subcommunities I claim—intellectuals and feminists. As I have struggled to understand that conflict, I return again and again to the idea of control. Both intellectuals and the institution claim aspects of the same territory and relate to it differently. Both claim supremacy—the supremacy of institutional authority in one case and the supremacy of the individual conscience in the other—and try to influence or control historical interpretations, theological understandings, and the nature of the Mormon community.

The resulting conflicts are not those of intellectual property alone, relevant only to academics. They affect people's jobs, church service, personal feelings of esteem and worthiness, social relations with ward and stake members, worship in congregations and in temples, feelings of acceptability to God, and even personal spirituality. The conflict has brought with it feelings of betrayal, mistrust, and deep personal pain for many. Many, even though they remain active and accept callings, are stigmatized and marginalized by successive generations of bishops, sometimes perpetuating a tradition on their own and sometimes acting on information received from their own ecclesiastical leaders. No conflict is a simple heroes-versus-villains scenario. Even people who differ sharply can deal with each other respectfully and lovingly. That we so fail to do so is a sign of our humanness, but it is also a marker of the power differential that exists

between members and leaders in an organization as hierarchical as the LDS church.

I present the material that follows as a chronology, partly because the basic facts of "what happened" need to be determined before a responsible analysis can be made and partly because I believe it shows patterns over time that are both hopeful and ominous. In the past twenty years, I feel, the motives, means, and determination of members to affirm autonomy and integrity in matters of intellectual interests and personal spirituality have increased. But the pattern of ecclesiastical intervention, directiveness, and oppression has also intensified. To some extent these tensions are signs of a healthy community in dialogue with itself. But at some point such conflicts cannot avoid rending the unity of our community, violating the covenants of Christian behavior made by leaders and members alike, and blaspheming the Savior's atonement by our unrighteous exercise of power, control, and dominion.

There are many constituencies left unrepresented by this approach. Other essays could deal with the conflicts experienced by scientists, social scientists, artists, seminary and Institute teachers, or social activists in applying their professional tools to Mormonism. I limit this chronology to historians and, to a lesser extent, feminists because of my personal identification with those groups. And of the many themes that could be explored, I focus on instances that demonstrate attempts to assert ecclesiastical control over members regarding intellectual and feminist issues.

Furthermore, I approach this topic as a woman interested in relationships. I am less interested in the various positions defended and attacked about, say, the New Mormon History than I am about how such attacks and defenses are conducted, what they do to our community, and the human costs in pain, mistrust, and violations of agency. The relationship between Mormon intellectuals and feminists and their church is a troubled and painful relationship. I pray and work for reconciliation. Yet I am deliberately disclosing information that is negative, potentially disruptive, and embarrassing. Why?

I am doing it because I feel I must. After the joint statement of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve issued in August 1991, I wanted to understand and accept. I spent the fall and the winter carefully rereading the Book of Mormon, paying particular attention to passages about pride, rebelliousness, and disobedience. I prayed, fasted, went to the temple, performed my callings with new exactness, and was newly attentive in meetings. From the bottom of my heart, I wanted to avoid self-deception or intellectual pride. I had prayed to know my responsibility in the Vietnam War, about priesthood for blacks, about the IWY conference and the Equal Rights Amendment. In each case, I received a clear answer: "This is not your cause."

But on this issue, I received a different answer. I received the calling of a witness in the household of faith. I am not an accuser. I am not a judge. I know that the record is incomplete. I know that there are parts I do not understand. I know that many of the victims of ecclesiastical harassment have not been totally innocent of provocative actions. Furthermore, I know that this chronology is lopsided. Since I have gathered these reports from members, not from ecclesiastical leaders, they inevitably reflect the perspectives of the members. Nor am I free from personal sympathy in reporting them. There is no way, at this stage, to make allowances for the fact that a bishop or a general authority would probably tell his version of the story differently, that the member's shock and hurt inevitably overlay memories of the experience, or that the member may minimize in retelling, or may be genuinely unaware of, the extent to which his or her behavior may have been interpreted or misinterpreted as provocative, defiant, and deviant. I do not speculate on the motives of members involved in the cases reported here. Some of these motives may have been unworthy. But I do not speculate on the motives of their ecclesiastical leaders either, and some of *those* motives may also have been unworthy.

Despite the lopsidedness I insist that such a record is worth creating and maintaining. It is driven by the search for knowledge. We must not deny that such things exist nor that they are wrong. Once we know what happened, then we can begin to understand it. With understanding comes forgiveness. And with forgiveness, love can increase in our community. I want a more loving community, a more inclusive community, a more forgiving community.

For example, the disclosure that Elder Paul H. Dunn had fabricated some of his military and baseball stories and his explanation that they were just "parables" was excruciating. I felt personally betrayed and exploited. But when I read Elder Dunn's apology in the *Church News* soon after the full, helpful, and balanced discussion of the issue in *Sunstone*, I forgave him, willingly and fully. Thanks to both *Sunstone* and Elder Dunn, I feel that a breach in the community has been healed. Certainly the one in my heart has been. I offer this chronology as a loving voice to the on-going dialogue within our community, with the hope of forgiveness, with the offer of forgiveness.

CHRONOLOGY

14 January 1972. Leonard J. Arrington becomes director of the Church History division and the first professional historian to serve as Church Historian. He is sustained in that position by vote on 6 April at general conference.

20 April 1974. Reed Durham, president of the Mormon History Asso-

ciation and a teacher at the LDS Institute, University of Utah, delivers his presidential address at the annual meeting in Nauvoo, Illinois, on the significance of Masonic jewelry and emblems to Joseph Smith. "When some participants 'questioned his testimony,' he sent a letter of apology and affirmation to all participants and has not attended an MHA annual meeting since."¹

1976. *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, by James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, is published. It sells out within a few months but is not reprinted because some general authorities are offended at its approach. A second printing eventually appears in 1986, and a new edition is published in 1993.

Spring-fall 1976. In separate addresses Elder Ezra Taft Benson defines "historical realism" as "slander and defamation," denounces those who "inordinately humanize the prophets of God," and instructs CES personnel: "If you feel you must write for the scholarly journals, you always defend the faith. Avoid expressions and terminology which offend the Brethren and Church members." He also warns them not to buy the books or subscribe to the periodicals of "known apostates, or other liberal sources" or have such works on office or personal bookshelves.²

Fall 1976. Paul Toscano learns that he is blacklisted from publication in the *Ensign*. Pursuing inquiries through his bishop and stake president, he is informed by Mission Representative Hershel Pederson, a personal acquaintance, that Elder Mark E. Petersen thinks Toscano is part of a secret organization to restore the "Council of Fifty" and the First Quorum of Seventy. Eventually the stake president tells him the matter is resolved.³

1 April 1977. Elder G. Homer Durham is assigned to be managing director of the Historical Department.

June 1977. At the Utah state meeting of the International Women's year, almost 14,000 women cram the Salt Palace, many of them responding to a public invitation from the Relief Society to send ten women per ward and many of them in response to private "assignments" from ecclesiastical leaders. Defensive and threatened, they see the prepared IWY agenda as an attack on the family and vigorously vote down such resolutions as equal

1. Patricia Lyn Scott, James E. Crooks, and Sharon G. Pugsley, "'A Kinship of Interest': The Mormon History Association's Membership," *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (1991): 156n9.

2. "God's Hand in Our Nation's History," Twelve-Stake Fireside at Brigham Young University, 28 Mar. 1976, 8; photocopy in my possession. He gave the identical speech more than eight years later on 30 December 1984 to Canyon Road Ward in Salt Lake City. "The Gospel Teacher and His Message," 17 Sept. 1976, 15-16; photocopy of typescript in my possession.

3. Paul James Toscano, Memo to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 21 Aug. 1992, 1-2.

pay for equal work. In state meetings elsewhere and in the national convention in Houston, Texas, in November, the IWY organizers, in an official statement, link the church to the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birch Society.⁴

24 February 1978. Elder Durham's title is changed from "managing director of the Historical Department" to "director of the History Division of the Historical Department," the title formerly borne by Leonard Arrington. Sometime between this date and 1 June 1978 portraits of Church Historians from John Whitmer to Elder Durham are hung in the second-floor hallway leading to the administrative offices. They include photographs of Elders Alvin R. Dyer and Joseph Anderson, managing directors of the Historical Department during Arrington's tenure but never referred to as Church Historians. Leonard Arrington is conspicuously omitted.⁵ In the summer of 1990, a separate grouping of division heads' portraits is hung, including those of Donald Schmidt, Earl Olsen, Florence Jacobsen, and Leonard Arrington. Portraits of succeeding Church Historians Dean L. Larsen and Loren C. Dunn are also hung, but that of intervening Church Historian John Carmack (1989-92) is not, at his own request.

April 1979. Paul Toscano and the BYU bishopric of which he is a member are summarily released by Curtis Van Alfen, the stake president, with no reason given. Later former ward members tell him that, according to the new bishop, Van Alfen called the release "dishonorable."⁶

August 1979. N. Eldon Tanner, first counselor in the First Presidency, states in the First Presidency message in that month's *Ensign*, "When the prophet speaks the debate is over."⁷

19 August 1979. Ann Kenney, a student at the University of Utah, is set apart as president of the University of Utah Second Stake Sunday School. Gilbert Sharffs, counselor in the stake presidency, assures her that he has been "strongly impressed" to issue the calling and also had a general authority approve the calling. On 24 September she is released. Sharffs explains that "in the past there has been no policy set. The quorum [of the Twelve] was divided on the issue, and the decision was left to the president." The president was Ezra Taft Benson.⁸

Fall 1979. Paul and Margaret Toscano are asked to speak in sacrament meeting on reverence. Before the meeting begins, Bishop Sheldon Talbot tells them their former stake president, Curtis Van Alfen, telephoned Talbot

4. Linda Sillitoe, "A Foot in Both Camps: An Interview with Jan Tyler," *Sunstone* 3 (Jan.-Feb. 1978): 11-14.

5. Peggy Fletcher, "Church Historian: Evolution of a Calling," *Sunstone* 10 (Apr. 1985): 46-48.

6. Toscano, Memo, 2.

7. "The Debate is Over," *Ensign* 19 (Aug. 1979): 2-3.

8. "Church Tradition Now a Policy," *Sunstone* 10 (Feb. 1985): 32-33.

and warned him they had "apostate" leanings. "If you say one word I disagree with," Talbot states, "I will close the meeting." Shaken, the Toscanos deliver their talks without incident.⁹

Fall 1979. Neal and Rebecca Chandler of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, respond to a request from the National Organization of Women to host a discussion group of Mormons with Sonia Johnson, known nationally as a Mormon equal rights activist. A few weeks later at stake conference, Elder James E. Faust outlines the church's stand against the Equal Rights Amendment. After the meeting he and two members of the stake presidency overhear Neal expressing distress about the church's "dissembling about organized lobbying campaigns in Virginia and Florida and Missouri." For the next several years, Chandler later discovered, each time his bishop, Peter Gail, proposed him for executive positions, he "was told that this was not a possibility and was admonished to stop raising it as though it were."¹⁰

1 December 1979. Sonia Johnson is tried and excommunicated in a bishop's court. During the previous year, the Church Public Affairs Committee, while claiming that Mormons against the ERA were acting independently as concerned citizens, had organized covert activities including the following: Some wards in Virginia distributed brochures and petitions in their lobbies "linking Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum with the LDS Virginia Citizens Coalition." "The newsletter of the McLean Virginia Stake" announced "that President Spencer W. Kimball had enlisted the membership to fight the ERA." "Funds raised by Virginia bishops were laundered by a pseudo-account called FACT (Families Are Concerned Today)." "Wardhouses and church meetings were used in Florida to lobby legislators. . . . Church Boy Scout troops passed out anti-ERA literature to ward members in Arizona. . . . Anti-ERA leaders were set apart in Missouri where Relief Society sisters were bused (wearing dresses and carrying sack lunches, as instructed) from stake centers to the state legislature." President Hinckley at a press conference the day after the church's sesquicentennial celebration on 6 April 1980 "appeared on NBC's 'The Today Show,' denying that the Church had bused Relief Society sisters to legislatures in Missouri and Illinois." The aftermath includes "excommunications, disfellowshipments, releases from Church jobs, revoked temple recommends, voiced fears, hurt, and despair of scores if not hundreds of women, one of whom took her own life." At several subsequent general conferences, Mormons for the ERA pay for airplanes to tow banners over Temple Square announcing "Patriarchy is Malarky" and "Mother in Heaven Loves

9. Toscano, Memo, 2.

10. Neal Chandler, letter and untitled manuscript to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 14 Sept. 1992, 4-5.

Mormons for ERA.”¹¹ As another consequence a group of Mormon women with historical and feminist interests who have been regularly meeting for lunch at the Lion House or in a dining room off the church cafeteria since 1974 plan a book of historical and theological essays on Mormon women.¹²

Winter 1979-80. A survey of *Exponent II* readers shows that 66 percent rate themselves “very active” with an additional 18 percent reporting themselves as “above average” in activity; 43 percent are employed; 95 percent have attended college; 95 percent subscribe to the *Ensign*; 35 percent subscribe to *Dialogue*; and 22 percent subscribe to *Sunstone*. They average 3.5 children.¹³

26 February 1980. Ezra Taft Benson as president of the Quorum of the Twelve gives a controversial speech at Brigham Young University titled, “Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophets,” including: “1. The prophet is the only man who speaks for the Lord in everything. 2. The living prophet is more vital to us than the standard works. 3. The living prophet is more important to us than a dead prophet. 4. The prophet will never lead the church astray. 5. The prophet is not required to have any particular earthly training or credentials to speak on any subject or act on any matter at any time. 6. The prophet does not have to say ‘Thus Saith the Lord’ to give us scripture. . . . 11. The two groups who have the greatest difficulty in following the prophet are the proud who are learned and the proud who are rich.”

J. D. Williams, a professor in the University of Utah political science department, calls “Benson’s speech ‘a plea in anticipation’ of his becoming church president.” Don LeFevre, public communications spokesman, responding to press inquiries, agrees that “Benson’s speech accurately portrayed the church’s position that a prophet can receive revelations from God on any matter—temporal or spiritual” and that “the prophet’s word is scripture, as far as the church is concerned, and the living prophet’s

11. Linda Sillitoe, “Off the Record: Telling the Rest of the Truth,” *Sunstone* 14 (Dec. 1990): 12-26; see also Linda Sillitoe and Paul Swenson, “The Excommunication of Sonia Johnson: A Moral Issue,” *Utah Holiday*, Jan. 1980; Linda Sillitoe, “Church Politics and Sonia Johnson: The Central Conundrum,” *Sunstone* 5 (Jan.-Feb. 1980): 35.

12. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson, eds., *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987). Contributors were Jolene Edmunds Rockwood, Melodie Moench Charles, Linda P. Wilcox, Maryann MacMurray, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Linda King Newell, Jill Mulvay Derr, Marybeth Raynes, and Grethe Ballif Peterson.

13. Sheryl Davis, “Our Readership: What the Survey Shows,” *Exponent II* 7 (Winter 1980): 1.

words take precedence in interpreting the written scripture as it applies to the present." However, he denies as "simply not true" a newspaper report which says the president of the church "is God's prophet and his word is law on all issues—including politics."¹⁴

8 March 1980. Paul Toscano is asked to be a witness at the temple wedding of Ron and Kathy Ray in Mesa, Arizona. At the door his and Margaret Toscano's recommends are confiscated and they are refused entrance. The temple president informs them that their bishop, Sheldon Talbot, called the temple president requesting that action. The Toscanos immediately call him. He gives them no information except that they are "unworthy" to enter the temple, even though they accompanied Kathy for her endowments the day before. Distressed and humiliated the Toscanos participate in the brunch and reception and then return to Orem, Utah, where they discover that several friends have received summonses to church courts, essentially as "accomplices" of the Toscanos. Finally, they learn that Talbot is acting on rumors that the Toscanos have been conducting the temple endowment in their home, are performing plural marriages, have been teaching false doctrine, and have been leading others out of the church. Elder Mark E. Petersen refuses to meet with Paul. A former BYU bishop intervenes with Elder Petersen. The scheduled courts are canceled. Over the next six months, the Toscanos meet with their stake president and bishop three times in lengthy sessions of five to six hours each. The stake presidency's investigation concludes that there is no substance to the rumors. Their temple recommends are returned to them.¹⁵

1 June 1980. Speaking at a fourteen-stake fireside at Brigham Young University, Elder Bruce R. McConkie identifies "Seven Deadly Heresies," including: "God is progressing in knowledge and is learning new truths," "Revealed religion and organic evolution can be harmonized," and "There is progression from one kingdom to another in the eternal worlds or, if not that, lower kingdoms eventually progress to where higher kingdoms once were."¹⁶

14. Ezra Taft Benson, "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophets," 1-7; typescript in my possession; all-capitalized words and underlining eliminated. David Briscoe, Associated Press Writer, "Benson Speech Stirs Speculation on LDS Changes," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 2 Mar. 1980; photocopy of clipping in my possession; "Interpretation of Speech Not Correct, Church Says," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 27 Feb. 1980; photocopy of clipping in my possession.

15. Toscano, Memo, 2-3.

16. Photocopy of typescript of pre-delivery text in my possession, including changes given during delivery and, separately, changes made in the published version.

1 July 1980. It is announced that the History Division, renamed the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, will move to Brigham Young University.¹⁷ By February 1981 a sixteen-volume history of the church is canceled and the authors are paid for the proportion of work they have done.

19 February 1981. Elder Bruce R. McConkie writes to Eugene England, rebuking him for his views on "The Perfection and Progression of God," ordering him to stop speaking or publishing on the topic, and announcing: "It is my province to teach to the Church what the doctrine is. It is your province to echo what I say or to remain silent."¹⁸ England dutifully ceases speaking on that topic for several years.

March 1981. Mark Hofmann offers his forged Joseph Smith III blessing, first to the LDS church, then to the RLDS church, and then sells it to the LDS church. The RLDS church trades other objects for the forgery, which seems to support its tradition of lineal inheritance.

25 June 1981. (I regret taking so much space with the following incident, but I believe it may be useful in illuminating the issue of attempted control by drawing sharper boundaries between "official" and "unauthorized" publications.)

At about 9:30 a.m. the managing editor of the *Ensign*, Jay M. Todd, ushers me upstairs to the office of Verl Scott, where I am informed I am being "summarily terminated for distributing confidential material to unauthorized personnel."

Background: Elder Hartman Rector had delivered a conference talk in April containing a list of sins of the last days (abortion, homosexuality, birth control, and sterilization, among other things) that was "toned down" for publication.¹⁹ Peggy Fletcher, publisher of *Sunstone*, had said the magazine would run parallel before-and-after versions transcribed from the videotape. I offered to supply her with a copy of the old text, then sitting in its pigeonhole waiting to be thrown away, since the conference *Ensign* had

17. Lavina Fielding Anderson diary, 3 July 1980.

18. Photocopy of letter in my possession.

19. Gary Bergera wrote to Elder Rector inquiring about the difference between the published version of his talk and the version reported in the *Deseret News*, *Church News*, and *Salt Lake Tribune*. Elder Rector replied in a hand-written note: "Sometimes it is not expedient to make people angry by telling them in too plain terms what their problems are. . . . I presume a combination of things made the First Presidency decide to eliminate certain portions of my remarks even tho' they had received and cleared the talk before it was given. It is O.K. They know best. However, what was said is still true." Gary J. Bergera, Letter to Hartman Rector, 11 May 1981; undated response handwritten on the bottom of the letter by Hartman Rector.

been published in May. I photocopied the lowest (earliest) version and put it in the interoffice mail, addressed to a *Sunstone* volunteer who was a church employee in another department. Jay later told me that he saw the envelope in the out-going mail and felt inspired to open it.

While I understood that conference talks were confidential *before* they are delivered, I asked for clarification about how a conference talk could be confidential *after* it is delivered. Verl Scott assured me that a manuscript of what the *Ensign* actually printed would still be considered confidential. Jay and a representative from the Personnel Department escorted me to my office, supervised the packing of my personal effects, and took me to my car. The whole process was over before noon. Jay also informed me that the earliest version of the Rector talk, which I had not read, actually contained additional material that did not appear in the delivered version.

I expected to feel traumatized by being fired. To my surprise I didn't. I felt cheerful. I received dozens of calls from friends who were angry, sympathetic, grieved, and hurt. I appreciated their concern, but we usually ended up laughing together. Judy Dushku offered to organize a legal aid fund so I could sue. I told her I didn't want my job back. Marybeth Raynes said, "You'll probably crash in a couple of days. Call me, day or night, if you need to talk." I never did. Linda Sillitoe sent me a poem that instead captured my feelings precisely:

One by one
they throw us from the tower.
And we spread our wings
and fly.

I have never experienced a moment of regret for the almost eight years I spent at the *Ensign* nor one moment of regret that I am not still there; but I interpret these feelings purely and wholly as a blessing bestowed upon me. As a result, although I sometimes disagreed with Jay's management style and felt considerable frustration periodically at the correlation review system, I have only the best of memories about my work there. The next day I went in, shook hands with Jay, assured him that I held "no hard feelings," and asked him to communicate my farewells and best wishes to the staff.

Jay probably had reasons for feeling that my value as an employee was marginal. Although Christian was born three months earlier, I had no plans to stop working. Jay strongly disapproved of working mothers. I not only attended but persistently participated in academic and scholarly conferences and argued, I'm sure at wearisome length, for bolder editorial treatments of "sensitive" issues. In January 1980 Elder Boyd K. Packer had warned church employees that "keeping confidences" is "a condition of

our service," adding, "an incident . . . traced to you, or to someone you are responsible to supervise . . . could be of most serious concern."²⁰ Jay would certainly have felt that responsibility heavily. Furthermore I "offended" Elder M. Russell Ballard, the magazine's managing director, and Amelia Smith McConkie, wife of Elder Bruce R. McConkie, by giving a paper at a BYU Women's History Archives conference which suggested that their grandfather (Joseph F. Smith) characterized Mary Fielding Smith's wagonmaster with inaccurate harshness. Jay had accompanied me to the interview with Elder Ballard and was almost certainly embarrassed by the situation.²¹

22 August 1981. Elder Boyd K. Packer, speaking to Church Education System personnel, warns that church history, "if not properly written or properly taught, may be a faith destroyer" and may in fact give "equal time" to the "adversary." He states, "There is no such thing as an accurate, objective history of the church without consideration of the spiritual powers that attend this work" and urged taking a selective approach to history.²²

30 September 1981. Louis C. Midgley of BYU's political science department attacks the New Mormon History and historians for a lack of faith. Joined periodically by David Earle Bohn and Gary Novak, he continues his vigorous critique of "objective" history to the present.²³

20. "Keeping Confidences," 18 Jan. 1980, 10; photocopy of typescript in my possession.

21. I volunteered to discuss the matter with Sister McConkie. Elder Ballard instructed me to call Elder Bruce R. McConkie instead, who agreed I should discuss the matter with Sister McConkie. Sister McConkie had no additional evidence besides family traditions of Joseph F.'s "kindliness" as an adult to add to the evidence I had assembled about the wagonmaster. Anderson diary, 13 Feb. 1981. The paper was published as "Mary Fielding Smith: Her Ox Goes Marching On," in Maren M. Mouritsen, ed., *Blueprints for Living: Perspectives for Latter-day Saint Women*, Volume 2, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), 2-13.

22. Boyd K. Packer, "The Mantle Is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect," 22 Aug. 1981, CES conference; photocopy of typescript in my possession.

23. See, as examples, "The Mormon (His)story," (letter to the editor), *Sunstone*, Feb. 1992 [mailed in Aug. 1992], 9; and "The Acids of Modernity and the Crisis in Mormon Historiography," in *Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History*, ed. George D. Smith (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 189-226, first published as "The Challenge of Historical Consciousness: Mormon History and the Encounter with Secular Modernity," in *By Study and by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, eds. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/FARMS, 1990), 2:502-51. The Smith volume includes "Unfounded Claims and Impossible

18 November 1981. The *Seventh East Press* publishes D. Michael Quinn's 4 November address to Phi Alpha Theta, the BYU student history association. He responds point by point to Elder Packer's address, warning that "a history which makes LDS leaders 'flawless and benignly angelic' . . . borders on idolatry."²⁴

25 January 1982. The First Presidency writes Leonard J. Arrington a letter extending him an "honorable release" both as Church Historian and as director of the History Division. Elder Durham is set apart as Church Historian privately on 8 February 1982. Neither Leonard's release nor Elder Durham's appointment is announced at April conference, although President Hinckley says, "Elder G. Homer Durham, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy and the Church Historian who, if I remember correctly, was born in Parowan, has now addressed us."²⁵

15 February 1982. A story by Kenneth L. Woodward, religion editor of *Newsweek*, reports the Packer/Quinn conflict, pointing out that Quinn "violated the Mormon taboo that proscribes the faithful from publicly criticizing 'the Lord's Anointed' by name." Elder Packer's address, originally scheduled to appear in the February issue of the *Ensign*, is withdrawn²⁶ but is later published in *Brigham Young University Studies*.

23 February 1982. Don Schmidt announces to the Archives Search Room staff that nobody will see any papers of former apostles until further notice.²⁷ Although this policy is later modified, rules governing access

Expectations: A Critique of New Mormon History" (227-63), a revised and expanded revision of "No Higher Ground," *Sunstone* 8 (May-June 1983): 26-32, "The Burden of Proof," *Sunstone* 10 (June 1985): 2-3, and "Our Own Agenda," *Sunstone* 14 (June 1990): 45-49.

24. "Historian Responds to Apostle," *Seventh East Press*, 18 Nov. 1981. This essay was reprinted as "On Being a Mormon Historian" with an "Aftermath" recounting subsequent consequences, in Smith, *Faithful History*, 69-112.

25. Fletcher, "Church Historian." I was working in the History Division offices on Monday, 7 February, and wrote in my diary that day: "Leonard came beaming and chuckling out of his office, waving a letter from the First Presidency—all four of them—informing him that he had been released as Church Historian at the time his title was changed and no, they didn't want to meet with him, but he should feel free to take any questions he had to Elder Durham."

26. "Apostles Vs. Historians," *Newsweek*, 15 Feb. 1982, 77; Boyd K. Packer, "The Mantle Is Far, Far Greater," *Brigham Young University Studies* 21 (Summer 1981; received several months later): 259-78.

27. Anderson diary, 23 Feb. 1982; see news story by Linda Ostler Strack, *Sunstone Review*, Sept. 1983, 4-7: "Certain scholars who requested materials that they had been working with in an unrestrained fashion were told that their sources were either on restriction or being reassessed."

continue to bob and weave over the next ten years.

25 February 1982. Jack and Linda Newell accept the editorship of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, effective that summer. I agree to be associate editor.

28 February 1982. At a meeting of the B. H. Roberts Society, James L. Clayton of the University of Utah denounces the archival restrictions and challenges Elder Packer's position: "Selecting only those topics and historians that are comfortable in order to lead the membership more easily into the promised land is, to put it bluntly, intellectually and morally irresponsible from the historians' point of view."²⁸

2 March 1982. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, speaking at a BYU devotional, denounces the "spiritually immature" who "devote themselves to gaining a special, personal relationship with Christ," singling out for special censure "a current and unwise book which advocates gaining a special relationship with Jesus." The book's author, George Pace, writes a public letter of apology.²⁹

May 1982. Michael Quinn's stake presidency informs him that five former bishops have recommended him as the new bishop for his ward but that "Apostle Mark E. Petersen has blocked the appointment." Elder Petersen asks the stake presidency, "Why is Michael Quinn in league with anti-Mormons?" apparently referring to the unauthorized publication of his address to Phi Alpha Theta by Jerald and Sandra Tanner.³⁰

Fall 1982. Neal Chandler is called to teach his elders' quorum. The bishop, acting on complaints from "a squad of recently returned missionaries," swiftly calls Chandler, an elder, to teach the high priests' group.³¹

11 February 1983. Paul Richards, BYU Public Communications director, informs Dean Huffaker, editor of *Seventh East Press*, that the paper cannot be "sold at the campus bookstore or on campus newsstands after Feb. 16. [Richards] declined to say whether the ban was ordered by church officials in Salt Lake City."³² An unofficial student newspaper at Brigham Young University that had drawn some criticism for its articles on Mormon history

28. George Raine, "Historical Debate 'Formal,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Feb. 1982, B-1, B-2.

29. Bruce R. McConkie, "What Is Our Relationship to Members of the Godhead?" *Church News*, 20 Mar. 1982; George W. Pace, undated letter without salutation; photocopy of typescript in my possession; see also "Who Answers Prayers?" *Sunstone Review*, Apr. 1982, 2, 13.

30. D. Michael Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and Its Aftermath)," 90.

31. Chandler, letter and manuscript, 2-3.

32. "Paper Seeks to Reverse Ban by BYU," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Feb. 1983, B7.

and doctrine, it had published an interview with Sterling McMurrin, Mormon philosopher, on 11 January in which he expressed disbelief about the First Vision and ancient origins for the Book of Mormon. The newspaper ceases publication on 12 April and is followed very briefly by the *University Post*, which also folds. The McMurrin interview is reprinted in *Dialogue*, Spring 1984.

April 1983. Brent Metcalfe is first fired, then at his stake president's insistence allowed to resign, as a security guard at the church office building. He "said he never was 'given a black and white reason' for his firing, but had been questioned repeatedly about his writings for the now-defunct *Seventh East Press*, an independent student newspaper at Brigham Young University."³³ Metcalfe researched the New York period of church history extensively.

15 May 1983. Elder Packer, speaking at an Aaronic priesthood commemorative fireside, states: "Some, out of curiosity, claiming their interest is only academic or intellectual . . . push open the doors of the temple and stride into those hallowed precincts to discuss sacred ordinances. In doing so they assume an authority that is not theirs."³⁴ He may be alluding to David John Buerger's article, "'The Fulness of the Priesthood': The Second Anointing in Latter-day Saint Theology and Practice," an early draft of which circulated through the Church Administration Building. The finished article appears that week in *Dialogue*.³⁵

Sunday, 22 May 1983. Dawn Tracy publishes an article in the *Provo Daily Herald* reporting that she talked to fourteen³⁶ Mormon writers in four states who "had been questioned" by local ecclesiastical leaders. All had contributed to *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, or the *Seventh East Press*. Roy Doxey, former BYU dean of religious education, says that Apostle Mark E. Petersen "ordered the investigations." Elder Petersen, whose assignment has long been the investigation and suppression of fundamentalist Mormons, has apparently expanded his mandate to include other individuals whom he defines as enemies of the church. In 1962 he told a conference of seminary and Institute

33. "Man Fired From LDS Post Says He's Still Faithful," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 Aug. 1983, 2-B. "Metcalfe's firing was the most serious action taken against 12 Mormon authors known to have been questioned about their writings or faithfulness by their local church leaders this spring."

34. Transcript from videotape of the broadcast speech; photocopy in my possession.

35. David John Buerger to Elder Mark E. Petersen, 21 May 1983; photocopy in my possession.

36. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 May 1983 ("LDS Church Telling Editors to Use Only 'Faith Promoting' Stories?"; photocopy of clipping in my possession), gives the numbers as "six writers and seven editors."

faculty, "In teaching the gospel there is no academic freedom. . . . There is only fundamental orthodox doctrine and truth."³⁷

Three of the writers who were investigated are faculty members at BYU. Jack Newell, co-editor of *Dialogue*, comments, "We are gravely concerned that the faith of any Latter-day Saint would be questioned including the basis of his or her commitment to legitimate scholarship and the free exchange of ideas."

Scott Faulring's stake president chastised him for his writings but admitted he had never read the offending articles. This stake president also "warned him to be cautious in his writing" and refused to tell him "who asked him to talk to me," said Faulring. Gary James Bergera of Provo, also interviewed, commented: "My stake president told me that if the prophet told me to do something wrong, I would be blessed if I obeyed. . . . He said what I had written was anti-Mormon because it wasn't uplifting." The stake president, Penrod Glazier, singled out an article about Jerald and Sandra Tanner published in *Seventh East Press* and a news story Gary had co-authored on an anti-Mormon conference in Alta published in *Sunstone Review*. According to Bergera, the stake president "said it was clear in the article that I didn't support the Tanners. . . . But because I interviewed them I came close to supporting them." Bergera's stake president denies that he is acting on orders from anyone else but several years later confirms to another stake president that he was asked to "watch over" Bergera by Elder Mark E. Petersen. Other writers questioned are Armand Mauss, Thomas G. Alexander, David John Buerger, Lester Bush, Edward A. Ashment, Jeff Keller, and Richard Sherlock. Carlos Whiting, a Mormon writer from Silver Spring, Maryland, is quoted as saying the writers who were interviewed are upset and adds, "Anti-intellectualism being manifest in the church is contrary to basic doctrine. . . . More serious, however, seems to be the inept approach of the various leaders involved in the inquiries."

J. D. Williams denounces the proceedings as "an inquisition" and adds, "Passing ecclesiastical judgment on writers who have conducted serious, historical research is a denial of everything the church stands for." When Peggy Fletcher learns that her bishop also received a call, she goes to a "high church official to complain. It was later learned on good authority, she said, that the Council of Twelve Apostles was asked to lay off and, indeed, the calls abruptly ended."³⁸

37. Mark E. Petersen, "Avoiding Sectarianism," address to Seminary and Institute Faculty, 22 June 1962, 3; photocopy of typescript in my possession.

38. "Editor Upset over Efforts to Silence Scholars," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 26 May 1983; photocopy of clipping in my possession; photocopy of undated and untitled typescript of the Newell statement of response in my possession; Anderson diary, 17 May, 21 June 1985; "LDS Bishops

During this same period, Maxine Hanks, a returned missionary who is working at the *Seventh East Press* and teaching Sunday classes at the Mission Training Center, is released with no reason being given. When she insists on meeting with her supervisor, he denies that her release has anything to do with the *Seventh East Press*. "It wasn't that you weren't good enough or smart enough—and it wasn't that you weren't pretty enough," she remembers him saying. "If I had to give a reason, I would say that you are perhaps a little too intelligent for the elders. You are perhaps a little too intellectual." He will not discuss the possibility of a revised approach or reengaging her to teach.³⁹

These episodes are not without their comic side. Linda King Newell is under ecclesiastical investigation both for her prize-winning and controversial biography of Emma Hale Smith, co-authored with Valeen Tippetts Avery (New York: Doubleday, 1984) and for her coeditorship of *Dialogue*. She is at the time serving in her ward's Relief Society presidency while Jack is serving in the bishopric. An unnamed man, identifying himself as "the director of correlation," calls the other counselor in the bishopric, asks whether Linda has a temple recommend, and, upon being informed that she does, asks someone in the background to "hand me the file on Linda Newell." After a few more questions about Linda's worthiness, the caller terminates the conversation. The following Sunday the counselor takes Linda aside and asks, "Now, which general board have you been called to?" Peggy Fletcher's bishop reportedly assumes that the call to him is also for clearance for a general board calling and recommends her in enthusiastic terms.

Ron Priddis learns from a relative as early as 1976 that Elder Petersen "has a file" on him. But these episodes, known collectively as the Petersen Inquisition or the Petersen Witch Hunt, are important for establishing (1) that files are being kept systematically on writers for independent LDS publications and (2) that others besides Petersen are involved in creating and maintaining these files.

Want 'Faith-Promoting' Articles," *Provo Herald*, 22 May 1983, 3; David John Buerger to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 4 May 1983; John Dart, "Sunstone Provides Intellectual Safety Valve for LDS," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 Sept. 1984, 12B. "LDS Leaders Challenge Y Professors' Faith," *Utah Valley Enterpriser* (Provo), 8 June 1983, article reprinted from the *Provo Daily Herald* gave the figure of "at least 14 authors and scholars in four states" who had been questioned "in the last 50 days." Three BYU professors had been questioned "within the last two weeks." The article added: "All of the writers being questioned have written for *Seventh East Press*, a now-defunct student newspaper banned from sales on the BYU campus, or for *Dialogue* or *Sunstone*."

39. Notes reporting incident in my possession.

13 June 1983. President Gordon B. Hinckley, speaking at graduation exercises at BYU-Hawaii, comments: "We have those critics who appear to wish to cull out of a vast panorama of information those items that demean and belittle some of the men and women of the past who worked so hard in laying the foundation of this great cause. . . . They are savoring a pickle, rather than eating a delicious and satisfying dinner of several courses."⁴⁰

Fall 1983. Paul Toscano is called to be gospel doctrine teacher in his Orem, Utah, ward. The three high priest group leaders complain about the calling to the stake president, who blocks the appointment. When the bishop protests, the stake president permits the calling. But the group leaders continue to monitor Paul weekly until a move to Salt Lake City takes the Toscanos out of the ward.⁴¹

Spring 1984. A survey of *Dialogue* subscribers shows that 94 percent are LDS, 88 percent attend church "every" or "most" Sundays (although no attendance figures are publicly available, the churchwide average is generally considered to be no more than 50 percent), two-thirds accept the Book of Mormon as "an actual historical record of ancient inhabitants," and less than half feel they should "go along with" a policy with which they disagree—10 percent accepting it "on faith" and another 37 percent expressing disagreement and then complying.⁴²

October 1984. Elder Ronald E. Poelman, speaking in conference on "The Gospel and the Church," observes: "As individually and collectively we increase our knowledge, acceptance, and application of gospel principles, we become less dependent on Church programs." This statement, along with many others, is recast in the *Ensign* version to read: "As individually and collectively we increase our knowledge, acceptance, and application of gospel principles, we can more effectively utilize the Church to make our lives increasingly gospel centered."

Elder Poelman, though not the first general authority to have his talks edited, becomes the first to retape his talk to make it consistent with the video version that is sent to the foreign missions and for the historical archives. His retaping is complete with a cough track to make it sound as if an audience is present. He does not speak in general conference again for four and a half years.⁴³

40. "Stop Looking for Storms and Enjoy the Sunlight," *Church News*, 3 July 1983, 10-11.

41. Toscano, Memo, 3.

42. Armand L. Mauss, John R. Tarjan, and Martha D. Esplin, "The Unfettered Faithful: An Analysis of the *Dialogue* Subscribers' Survey," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Spring 1987): 27-53.

43. See Poelman addresses, "The Gospel and the Church," *Ensign* 14 (Nov.

Fall 1984. Paul Toscano is called to teach elders' quorum and then released. When he asks why, the elders' quorum president tells him the reason is a secret but, believing such a procedure to be unfair, tells him that Paul Taft Fordham, the stake president, ordered the release. Fordham received a call from Elder Hugh Pinnock who read a newspaper report of a *Sunstone*-sponsored debate between Paul and Margaret Toscano and two Episcopal ministers on the question, "Is God Married?" Neither Fordham nor Pinnock has ever met the Toscanos.

From a general authority contact, the Toscanos learn that their membership records have been "tagged" with a computer code instructing any bishop or stake president calling for their records to contact the previous bishop or stake president about their activities and standing in the church. The Toscanos are never officially informed of this "tagging."⁴⁴

April 1985. D. Michael Quinn's hundred-page article, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," appears in *Dialogue*. It definitively identifies a significant number of general authorities as marrying, performing marriages, and authorizing the marriages of others in polygamy after the Manifesto of September 1890.

Even though Michael had informed general authorities as early as 1979 of his research and received authorization from Elder G. Homer Durham as late as January 1985 to examine First Presidency materials, Elder James M. Paramore, acting on instructions from three unnamed apostles, orders Michael's stake president to confiscate his temple recommend. He further instructs the stake president to tell Michael that this action is "a local decision." The stake president agrees to hold the interview, refuses to lie about the source of the instructions, and warns Michael that the instructions to confiscate his temple recommend might constitute a "back-door effort" to have him fired from BYU, since temple-worthiness is a prerequisite for church employment. He tells Michael "to tell BYU officials that I had a temple recommend and not to volunteer that it was in his desk drawer."⁴⁵

12 April 1985. Steven F. Christensen, who purchased the Salamander letter in January 1984 from Mark Hofmann, donates it to the church. Only after Hofmann leaks copies and a session of MHA is devoted to it is the text published in the *Church News*.

Spring 1985. Neal Chandler's elders' quorum president calls him as instructor. Chandler "suggests that for complicated historical reasons this was probably not a good idea." The president insists. The entire bishopric,

1984): 64-65; "Adversity and the Divine Purpose of Mortality," *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 23-25.

44. Toscano, Memo, 3.

45. Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and Its Aftermath)," 91-92.

two high councilors, and a counselor from the stake presidency attend the meeting. One vigorously challenges virtually every point, despite the elders' quorum president's characterization of the lesson as "completely uncontroversial." The quorum president affirms that he wants Chandler to continue and will "get back to him," but Chandler is never asked to teach the class again.⁴⁶

9 June 1985. Bishopricks in Idaho, Utah, and Arizona receive telephoned instructions from church headquarters early Sunday morning not to invite Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, co-authors of a biography on Emma Smith, to speak on historical topics in church meetings. Neither Linda nor Val is officially informed of this decision.

At their own request Linda and Jack meet with Elders Neal A. Maxwell and Dallin H. Oaks, who tell her that "some aspects of the portrayal of Joseph Smith" are the problem. The month before, the book has won the best book award from the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association. It later co-wins the prestigious \$10,000 Evans Biography Award, sharing the honor with Richard L. Bushman. BYU president and future general authority Jeffrey R. Holland presents the award.

Linda feels particularly hurt by this decision because of what appear to be misrepresentations of cause. (Because the instructions are transmitted verbally, reports that reach her of what is said in various bishopric meetings vary widely.) One of the frequently repeated charges is that she "is going around peddling the book at sacrament meetings." In fact Linda has spoken at only one sacrament meeting (in the first week the book came out) and then decided it was crucial to speak only in settings where people could ask questions. As a matter of policy, she does not have copies of her book available for sale at the firesides she gives and asks those who introduce her not to refer to her as the book's coauthor. These instructions are not always followed.

The ban, which lasts for ten months, promptly triples sales.⁴⁷ The book is reprinted seven times by Doubleday. In 1992 the University of Illinois Press buys the copyright for \$5,000, reportedly the highest price Illinois ever paid for reprint rights.

23 June 1985. President Gordon B. Hinckley, second counselor in the First Presidency, speaks at a young adult fireside broadcast from Temple Square that is published as the First Presidency message in September 1985.

46. Chandler, letter and manuscript, 5-7.

47. Dawn Tracy, "LDS Officials Ban Authors from Lectures on History," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 June 1985, B-1, B-16; John Dart, "Mormons Forbid Female Biographers of Smith's Wife to Address Church," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 June 1985, Part II-5; "Co-author Says LDS Ban Her Talks on History," *Deseret News*, 30 June 1985, B-4.

He reviews some of the Hofmann documents, prefacing his remarks with the statement: "They are interesting documents of whose authenticity we are not certain and may never be," then continues, "I plead with you, do not let yourselves be numbered among the critics, among the dissidents, among the apostates. That does not mean that you cannot read widely. As a Church, we encourage gospel scholarship and the search to understand all truth. Fundamental to our theology is belief in individual freedom of inquiry, thought, and expression. Constructive discussion is a privilege of every Latter-day Saint."⁴⁸

10 August 1985. Speaking at the regional priesthood leadership conference in Winder Stake on 10 August 1985, Elder Packer says: "We are in a time when 'magazines' are available which defame and belittle the brethren. Authors are 'scratching out' articles which seek these goals—and some young people are following. . . . These people argue, 'i[f] it's true, then say it.' . . . There are those who are crying sin and falsehood about the brethren and the prophets—especially regarding the Manifesto and polygamy. They are 'offending little ones.'"⁴⁹ Michael Quinn interprets the statement as referring to him.⁵⁰

16 August 1985. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, speaking at BYU's Sperry Symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants, warns members of the church not to "criticize or depreciate a person for the performance of an office to which he or she has been called of God. It does not matter that the criticism is true."⁵¹

27 August 1985. Elder Russell M. Nelson, speaking at Brigham Young University, comments, "Some truths are best left unsaid. . . . Extortion by threat of disclosing truth is labelled 'blackmail.' Is sordid disclosure for personal attention or financial gain not closely related?"⁵²

18 September 1985. Stan Larson, a scripture-translation researcher in the LDS Translation Division, is suspended after his supervisor receives a copy of his paper, "The Sermon on the Mount: What Its Textual Transformation Discloses Concerning the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," from another ward member. Larson had compared the Sermon on the Mount in the Book of Mormon to the oldest known manuscripts, monastic documents, and

48. "Keep the Faith," *Ensign* 15 (Sept. 1985): 3-6.

49. Photocopy of typescript notes, taken by an unidentified person, in my possession.

50. Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and Its Aftermath)," 92.

51. "Elder Decries Criticism of LDS Leaders," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 Aug. 1985, B-1.

52. Russell M. Nelson, "The Truth and More," address delivered 27 Aug. 1985 at Brigham Young University; photocopy of typescript in my possession, 8-9.

papyri versions and found that Joseph Smith's translation contains errors which do not appear before the 1769 edition of the King James Version. Larson concluded that "Joseph Smith plagiarized from the KJV when dictating the biblical quotations in the Book of Mormon." He is given the choice of being fired or resigning with one month's severance pay. He resigns.⁵³

28 September 1985. Keith Perkins, chair of the BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, says that "officials have established their own symposiums because MHA wasn't allowing orthodox views to be presented. . . . Employees may attend MHA meetings but BYU no longer pays travel costs." Jerry Cahill attributes the policy change to "budget cuts." Two CES employees say "supervisors have questioned them about papers they've published." Stan Peterson, CES associate commissioner, says he knows of no supervisor questioning employees about published works. Bill Russell, for fifteen years a member of MHA and its 1982-83 president, counters with a letter to the editor that "I know of no proposal that has ever been rejected for being too orthodox" while, in contrast, "the program committee for the 1984 meeting, held at BYU, opted not to accept program proposals from four Mormons because of their liberal views."⁵⁴ Several BYU history department faculty members later attend the Mormon History Association annual meeting of May 1987 in Oxford, England, with department funding.

October 1985. President Gordon B. Hinckley, second counselor in the First Presidency, warns at general conference: "We are not under obligation to spend tithing funds to provide facilities and resources to those who have demonstrated that it is their objective to attack the Church and undermine the mission."⁵⁵

15 October 1985. Steven Christensen and Kathy Sheets are killed by homemade bombs. Mark Hofmann, the killer, is injured the next day by a third bomb but lives to avoid trial through a successful plea-bargain after an agonizing investigation exposes misrepresentations on the part of gen-

53. "Man Forced to Resign over Translation Issue," *Sunstone* 10 (no date given; printed after Oct. 1985): 38-39. He is now an archivist at the University of Utah's Marriott Library with responsibility for acquiring and maintaining the Mormon collection.

54. "Scholar Who Challenges LDS Beliefs Is Forced to Resign," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Sept. 1985, B-1, B-5; see also, "LDS Are Told They Need Not Fear Honest Research on the Book of Mormon," *Deseret News*, 29 Sept. 1985, B-3; William D. Russell, "Supports History Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 Oct. 1985; photocopy of clipping in my possession.

55. As quoted in John Dart, "Mormon Hierarchy to Cut Critics' Funds," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 Oct. 1985, II-5.

eral authorities and their representatives and leaves Mormon historians charged with gullibility.⁵⁶

2 April 1986. BYU's accreditation self-study document notes that "BYU administrators 'are advised not to publish in *Dialogue*, a *Journal of Mormon Thought*, nor to participate in *Sunstone* symposia.'" According to BYU's public relations director, Paul Richards, "The BYU decision came about because administrators 'may be viewed as attacking the general authorities of the University's sustaining church or the foundations of its faith,' according to the self-study." He adds that "the naming of the independent LDS journal and forum 'is one person's interpretation of a generic university policy.'" Richards does not identify who the one person is nor why a single opinion is allowed to represent university policy.

Eugene England criticizes this policy in the context of restrictions on the distribution of the *Student Review*, successor to *Seventh East Press*, on 12 April 1989. "Though other universities also restrict *what* their people say, I cannot find any that restrict *where* [they may publish] or prevent distribution of responsible publications. In addition, such policies offer a gratuitous insult to the many faculty and students who have written for *Dialogue* and *Sunstone* and *Student Review*, served on their editorial boards, or participated in the symposium . . . and they intimidate and silence faculty and students who might want to participate in the unusual opportunities to unite faith and creativity these forums provide."⁵⁷

27 April 1986. The ten-month speaking ban on Linda Newell and Val Avery is lifted. The story is carried by UPI and AP, and published in the *Tribune* and other major newspapers in the state with the exception of the *Deseret News*. Linda summarizes the experience: "If you're excommunicated or disfellowshipped, you know what the repentance process is and you get on with your life. But what do you do when you've been punished by people who are handing down decisions they didn't make? I thought a lot about the damage the whole incident had done to me, to the church, my friends, to my family, untold people who were distraught by it, and those who sat in judgement. I went back to my stake president and asked him to talk to Elders Oaks and Maxwell again about reconsidering the ban. I would be participating in a KSL's 'Talkabout' program discussing the

56. Linda Sillitoe, "Off the Record," 21, points out that Hofmann remained a member of the church during this process and was not excommunicated until six months "after he pleaded guilty to killing two people."

57. Dawn Tracy, "Despite Some Limitations, Y. Teachers Report They Have Academic Freedom," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 Apr. 1986, 2B; "BYU Receives High Marks in Reaccreditation," *Sunstone*, Jan. 1987, 45; Eugene England, "Reflections on Academic Freedom at BYU: Prior Restraint and Guilt by Association," *Student Review*, 12 Apr. 1898, 9.

upcoming Mormon History Association in England, and I knew, with audience participation, that someone would ask me about the ban. I hadn't been in a public setting for the whole ten months when people hadn't discussed it. I pointed out to my stake president the advantages to everyone of being able to say that the situation had been resolved. He said he'd see what he could do. The night before I was to tape the program, he called and said that I was no longer under any restrictions."

4 May 1986. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, speaking at the LDSSA Fireside in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, repeats his injunction for members of the church to avoid criticizing leaders—"it does not matter that the criticism is true"—then continues: "The counsel against faultfinding and evilspeaking applies with special force to criticisms of Church leaders, but this is not for the benefit of the leaders. It is to safeguard the spiritual well-being of members who are prone to murmur and find fault."⁵⁸

27 May 1986. LDS Historical Department officials announce that researchers must apply for admittance, be interviewed by an archives official, and sign a statement agreeing to abide by archival rules which include submitting a pre-publication copy of quotations and their context to the Copyrights and Permissions Office. A typical letter granting such permission uses the following language: "After reviewing your request, we have decided to raise no objections to your proposed use of the requested material." Physical remodeling of the facilities puts patrons using archival materials in a small glass-walled room.⁵⁹

Early 1987. D. Michael Quinn's exhaustively documented *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* is published. It details Joseph Smith's extensive involvement in folk magic without any reference to the Hofmann forgeries, although it contains a long summary of folk beliefs about "salamanders." Since the fall of 1986, Quinn, who has tenure ("continuing status"), is a full professor of history, has been voted outstanding professor by graduating history majors, and is director of the history department's graduate program, has been denied travel and research funds, even to represent BYU at conferences on non-Mormon topics. Some colleagues circulate rumors that he has been excommunicated and make vulgar personal remarks. On 20 January 1988 he sends the administration a letter of resignation, effective at the end of spring semester,⁶⁰ moves first to

58. "Criticism," LDSSA Fireside, 4 May 1986, 3, 5, 12; photocopy in my possession; expanded in *The Lord's Way* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), chap. 7. An "edited" version was published as "Criticism," *Ensign* 17 (Feb. 1987): 68-73.

59. "Church Archives Adopts New Access Policies," *Sunstone* 10 (no date, printed after May 1986): 43. Permission letter in my possession.

60. Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and Its Aftermath)," 92-94.

California, then to Louisiana, and returns to Salt Lake City in August 1992.

November 1987. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, when asked in an interview on KUTV about the place in the church of "so-called liberals who question doctrine," answers: "Whether one's a bricklayer or an intellectual, the process of coming unto Christ is the same: ultimately it demands complete surrender. It's not a matter of negotiation."⁶¹

March 1988. "The Andrew Jenson Society, a weekly Salt Lake brown-bag lunch group named after the early twentieth-century assistant church historian, where historians present works in progress, [is] denied permission after fifteen years to continue meeting in a room off the LDS Church Office Building cafeteria."⁶²

3 May 1988. David P. Wright, BYU assistant professor in Asian and Near Eastern languages, who ranks high in all three areas of tenure review—scholarship, teaching, and citizenship—is informed by a letter from BYU administrators that his contract will not be renewed because of his "unorthodox views" on "biblical scholarship, scriptural prophecy, and the Book of Mormon." The letter acknowledges that he does not teach these views in the classroom.⁶³

9 March 1989. Edwin B. Firmage, a grandson of Hugh B. Brown and a professor of constitutional law at the University of Utah, states in a lecture at the Salt Lake City Cathedral of the Madeleine, "I long for that time when four black people, three of them women, will sit on the stand as general authorities."⁶⁴

1-3 April 1989. Three general authorities at spring general conference include counsel to the intellectual community. Elder Dallin H. Oaks warns church members against listening to "alternate voices," noting that some are "the lost leading the lost" while others "are of those whose avowed or secret object is to deceive and devour the flock." Among responses are sociologist Armand L. Mauss's call to "endure to the end. The calling of 'alternate voice' is too important for us to allow ourselves either to be intimidated by the exercise of unrighteous dominion or to be silenced by our own fatigue."⁶⁵

61. "Apostle Answers Queries, *Sunstone* 11 (Nov. 1987; arrived 3 Feb. 1988): 45.

62. Sharee Hughes, "Sunstone Calendar," *Sunstone* 12 (Mar. 1988; arrived Aug. 1988): 49.

63. "BYU Professor Terminated for Book of Mormon Beliefs," *Sunstone* 12 (May 1988, received 1 Oct. 1988): 43-44.

64. Dawn House, "LDS Doctrine Can't Justify Ban on Women Priests, Firmage Says," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 Mar. 1989, B1-B2. He subsequently reported receiving death threats.

65. Oaks, "Alternate Voices," *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 27-30; Mauss,

Bishop Glenn L. Pace observes: Criticism "from within the Church . . . is more lethal than that coming from nonmembers and former members. The danger lies not in what may come from a member critic, but that we might become one."⁶⁶ Elder Russell M. Nelson comments, "Certainly no faithful follower of God would promote any cause—even remotely related to religion—if rooted in controversy, because contention is not of the Lord. Surely a stalwart would not lend his or her good name to periodicals, programs, or forums that feature offenders who do sow 'discord among brethren.'"⁶⁷

June 1989. A woman doing family research in the church archives is linked to a rumor that correctly predicts the banning of another individual from the archives and is called into a meeting with a church security official. The focus of the three-and-a-half hour "interrogation" is pressure to identify the supposed "inside source" who leaked the information. Only after repeatedly denying that she has any such source is she permitted to leave the building.⁶⁸

July 1989. Margaret Toscano, who had taught full time at BYU for four years and six years part time, followed by five years at the BYU Center in Salt Lake City, opens the fall catalogue to discover that her class is not listed. The month before, Margaret had participated in a Mormon Women's Forum panel on women and the priesthood, which also led to discussion on a television program. The director, when she asks if the cancellation of her class had anything to do with the panel, is "very embarrassed" but denies it and says she has been a good teacher.

In a follow-up phone call with Paul Toscano, the director says that enrollment is the reason (but since the class does not begin until late September, enrollment cannot be considered firm for any class) and that they are going to drop the class "for a couple of years" and then offer it again. The class is taught again in 1991 with a different teacher. "I think that the feeling of being lied to was even more painful than losing the job," Margaret comments.⁶⁹

"Alternate Voices: The Calling and Its Implications," *Sunstone* 14 (Apr. 1990): 7-10.

66. "Follow the Prophet," *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 25-27.

67. "The Canker of Contention," *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 68-71.

68. Notes on incident in my possession.

69. Conversation, 21 Aug. 1992. Notes in my possession. The director confirmed in the conversation with Margaret that she had been a "good teacher" and implied to Paul that the center would rehire her "in a couple of years." A friend taking a classics class at BYU reported that the teacher expressed concern about Margaret, who "had gone off the deep end" and also reported that another teacher "had something to do with getting her fired." These hearsay reports have

1 September 1989. Elder George P. Lee of the First Quorum of the Seventy is excommunicated "for apostasy" and "conduct unbecoming a member." Letters Lee releases to the press include criticisms of the church's neglect of Lamanites and incidents of personal discrimination against him by other general authorities. Deseret Book had issued Lee's biography in its ninth printing the week of the excommunication. A representative of the First Presidency orders KSL-TV news personnel to read the announcement with no contextual information, a ruling reversed only when the staff threatens to walk off the set "unless they were allowed to report the story according to their journalistic standards."⁷⁰

September 1989. Andrea Moore Emmett of Salt Lake City, active in the Mormon Women's Forum, is called to a two-hour meeting with her husband Mark by the bishopric. Assuming they are going to receive a co-teaching assignment, they are stunned to have the bishop announce, "This is not a court."

He explains that he is "concerned" about Andrea's association with the forum, is visibly taken aback when Mark assures him that he not only supports Andrea's feelings but is in "total agreement," and is thrown off balance to learn that Mother in Heaven is not a modern concept but dates to the Nauvoo period. Andrea calls it "a horrible, draining, exhausting experience to be judged so unfit as a person and member of the church just because we are . . . not like them." Mark is released as gospel doctrine teacher the next month. Andrea, the ward librarian, is released later. Their current callings are "to help with the activities in the ward, 'fold chairs and that kind of thing,'" as the bishop puts it. When Andrea volunteers to give a talk in sacrament meeting after a change of bishoprics, the new bishop says she will have to submit the text in advance. Andrea still cannot speak of the interview after two and a half years without tears.

Fall 1989. Paul Toscano's bishop tells him that he has received a telephone call from "someone at headquarters" informing him that he read his *Sunstone* paper, "A Plea to the Leadership of the Church: Choose Love Not Power," that the paper is "harsh and judgmental" but that Paul is not to be disciplined. Uncertain about the identity of the caller, the bishop gives Toscano the return phone number and the instructions, "You call back. I don't want to get into the middle of this." The caller is Elder John Carmark, area president, who eventually agrees to a lunch meeting with Paul. Paul describes the meeting as "amiable," even though "we didn't see eye to eye on a number of issues."⁷¹

not been confirmed.

70. "Press Coverage of Lee's Excommunication Ambivalent," *Sunstone* 13 Nov. 1989 (misdated Aug. on the contents page): 47-49

71. Toscano, Memo, 3-4.

10 April 1990. Changes in the temple ceremony that eliminated symbolic violence and somewhat broadened the role for women trigger articles by the Associated Press, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Time Magazine*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and many local papers. Mormons who are quoted include Rebecca England, Ross Peterson, then co-editor of *Dialogue*, Allen Roberts, Ron Priddis, Robert Rees, Keith Norman, various public relations officers, and me, all of whom make comments ranging from favorable to complimentary. Various former Mormons, including Sandra Tanner, make critical comments.

Acting on instructions, reportedly from President Hinckley, the area presidents of the quoted Mormons are interviewed by their stake presidents. (The single exception seems to be Beverly Campbell, church public relations officer in Washington, D.C., who tells Ron Priddis that she has not been called in.) My stake president says he has been asked "to call you in and see if you had violated any of your covenants of secrecy." Mine is a cordial meeting with a productive and mutually respectful discussion.

Other meetings are less cordial. Ross Peterson's stake president, Bill Rich, acting on instructions from the area presidency, Elders William Bradford, Malcolm Jeppsen, and Richard P. Lindsay, take away his (expired) temple recommend. In a follow-up meeting the area presidency threatens "further action" and refers to a thick file containing materials dating back to the 1960s on Ross, an active Democrat in Cache Valley for many years. It is only after a flood of letters and phone calls to church headquarters, plus individual lobbying of general authorities by Ross's friends, that Rich reissues a recommend in June. He does not require a prior bishop's interview.

Keith Norman presents a paper at the 1990 Sunstone Symposium in Washington, D.C., coincidentally the weekend that the temples are closed to effect the changes. He discusses the church's need to disassociate itself from violence, citing blood atonement and the ready public identification of RLDS cult murderer Jeff Lundgren in Kirtland, Ohio, with Mormonism as evidence, and suggesting that temple penalties have "outgrown their usefulness." In early August Bishop David Marchant "reluctantly told him that he had been instructed to deny Keith a temple recommend for one year, after which he could have a recommend if he had repented. When Keith asked of what he needed to repent, his bishop replied, 'I don't know.'"⁷² Marchant had read the *Sunstone* paper prior to delivery and found it unobjectionable. He also failed to identify problems in the quotations from Keith that appear in the *Los Angeles Times* article. When Marchant brings

72. "Comments on Temple Changes Elicit Church Discipline," *Sunstone* 14 (June 1990): 61; Keith Norman, "A Kinder, Gentler Mormonism: Moving Beyond the Violence of Our Past," *Sunstone* 14 (Aug. 1990): 10-14; see also "Comments on Temple," 59-61.

the matter up with Stake President Zane Lee, Lee responds, "The decision has been made. There is no further discussion." Keith, who currently has no recommend, conducts Sunday school song practice and instructs the deacons' quorum (which includes being a counselor in the Young Men's presidency and assistant scoutmaster). A calling as assistant high priests' group leader is first issued, then withdrawn. His wife Kerry, the roadshow director, is specifically told not to have Keith, who wrote the previous (winning) script, write this year's.⁷³

October 1990. *Utah Holiday* publishes an investigative report by Lynn Packer chronicling LDS-connected fraud, beginning with the Kirtland Safety Anti-Banking Society of which Joseph Smith was a founder. It included 1960s' accounts of burial estate ventures that implicated Elder Bruce R. McConkie (case settled out of court) and a trust company in which Marian D. Hanks was involved, in which the court rebuked all principals as "negligent."⁷⁴

4 November 1990. *Sunstone's* June issue comes out about mid-October, containing a summary of news stories about the temple changes. Elbert Peck's stake president, Herbert Klopfer, informs him that *Sunstone's* coverage is inappropriate and confiscates Elbert's temple recommend. Daniel Rector, the publisher, has his temple recommend revoked at the same time. His has since been restored at his request. Elbert has not requested a new recommend.

January 1991. Devery S. Anderson of Longview, Washington, organizes a quarterly study group, the Forum for the Study of Mormon Issues. He later learns that, at the request of Bishop Blaine Nyberg, ward member Bob Daulton attends the first two meetings and sends the bishop a negative report. Anderson meets once with the bishop and twice with Stake President Terry Brandon, who instructs him to stop holding the group. Anderson "welcomed the counsel" but pointed out that there is no churchwide prohibition on study groups, and hence the prohibition seems personal and arbitrary. Insisting that Anderson is "not supporting his priesthood leaders," Brandon confiscates his temple recommend on 22 July 1992.

16 February 1991. The *Arizona Republic* publishes a long article based on Lynn Packer's research documenting that Elder Paul H. Dunn, who was given emeritus status 30 September 1989 for "age and health" reasons, fabricated some of his most popular and most profitable war and baseball stories. Packer's teaching contract at BYU is not renewed. Elder Dunn first justifies his fabrications as "parables"; but about two weeks after *Sunstone's* thorough coverage, he publishes a letter in the *Church News*, acknow-

73. Keith Norman, Letter to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 18 Aug. and 18 Sept. 1991.

74. "History of LDS Fraud Chronicled," *Sunstone* 14 (Dec. 1990): 59.

ledging, "I have not always been accurate in my public talks and writings. Furthermore, I have indulged in other activities inconsistent with the high and sacred office which I have held. For all of these I feel a deep sense of remorse, and ask forgiveness of any whom I may have offended."⁷⁵

5 April 1991. President Hinckley warns Regional Representatives "to be alert" to "small beginnings of apostasy" and cites prayers to Mother in Heaven as an example.⁷⁶ Days earlier, a student had prayed to "Our Father and Mother in Heaven" at BYU commencement.⁷⁷

Spring 1991. An administrator in the Church History Department's archives tells two separate individuals that permission to use archival materials depends to some extent on "who the researcher is," whether this person is considered to be reliable, what approach the researcher will likely take to the material, and where the researcher plans to publish. If *Sunstone*, *Dialogue*, or Signature Books are potential publishers, the request receives "extra scrutiny."⁷⁸

July 1991. Deseret Book decides to stop carrying Avraham Gileadi's "briskly selling" *The Last Days: Types and Shadows from the Bible and Book of Mormon*, which it published in early June with a print order of over 8,649. Ron Millett, president of Deseret Book, says that the company "underestimated the amount of controversy and complaints" the book would garner and decided not to reprint it. He states that "there was no pressure from the general authorities of the LDS Church." Some "BYU religion" faculty apparently feel that Gileadi's interpretations of Isaiah contradict those of deceased apostles Bruce R. McConkie and LeGrand Richards. Deseret Book sells Gileadi the remaining copies. He sells them to Seagull Book and Tape which "exhausted the supply within days." The work is since reprinted by Covenant Communications.⁷⁹

23 August 1991. Two weeks after the Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, "the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles" issues a statement expressing concern about "recent symposia . . .

75. *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991); "An Open Letter to the Members of the Church," *Church News*, 26 Oct. 1991, 5. For a thorough treatment of Dunn's additional business ventures, see Lynn Packer, "Castles in the Sky: When It Comes to Business, It's All in the Family," *Utah Holiday*, June 1992, 41-50, 55-58.

76. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Cornerstones of Responsibility," address delivered at the Regional Representative Seminar, 5 Apr. 1991; photocopy of typescript in my possession.

77. William Grigg, Untitled review, *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, Mar. 1992, 6-7.

78. Notes in my possession.

79. Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 July 1991, Final Home edition, A-1, A-2"; "The Bomb of Gileadi," *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 72.

that result in ridiculing sacred things or injuring The Church . . . detracting from its mission, or jeopardizing the well-being of its members." Lowell Bennion, a Sunstone participant, comments, "We are asked to love the Lord with all our hearts and minds. It is a poor religion that can't stand the test of thinking."

Salt Lake City resident Christian Fannesbeck, who wrote a letter to the First Presidency saying he was "puzzled" by the statement, is called in by his bishop, acting on instructions of his stake president, Herbert Klopfer, and relieved of his church calling as a Blazer-B instructor. He is told the action is taken on instruction of "high church officials." (He has since been put in charge of scheduling the building.) Kim Clark writes a letter to the editor, published in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, commenting on the statement. His stake president calls him in and tells him that he is "undertaking an investigation that could result in disfellowshipment or excommunication."

At October general conference, Elder Boyd K. Packer refers explicitly to the joint statement and comments on "the dangers of participating in symposia which concentrate on doctrine and ordinances and measure them by the intellect alone. . . . There is safety in learning doctrines in gatherings which are sponsored by proper authority." Apostle Marvin J. Ashton says, "Some of us may be inclined to study the word with the idea in mind that we must add much where the Lord has said little! Those who would 'add upon' could well be guided by the anchor question of, do my writings, comments, or observations build faith and strengthen testimonies?" Elder Charles Didier of the First Quorum of the Seventy instructs Saints to build testimony "by asking your Heavenly Father in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Do not turn to public discussions and forums."⁸⁰

September 1991. The Mormon Women's Forum features a panel on Mother in Heaven that includes Carol Lynn Pearson, Rodney Turner, and Paul Toscano. President Gordon B. Hinckley repeats the Mother in Heaven section of his address at the women's general fireside in late September, a meeting transmitted by satellite to Mormon chapels around the world.⁸¹

14 September 1991. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reports that David Knowlton, a social anthropologist at BYU, was called in by his stake president "less than a week" after his presentation in Sunstone in Salt Lake City about why leftist terrorists in Latin America target the church. He protests the "intimi-

80. "Statement," *Deseret News*, 31 Aug. 1991, B-1; "Statement," *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 58-59; Peggy Fletcher Stack, "LDS Church Decries Sunstone Sessions, Calls Content Insensitive, Offensive," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 Aug. 1991, B1; Anderson diary, 4 Apr. 1992; "Church Issues Statement on 'Symposia,'" *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 58-59.

81. "How Shall We Worship Mother in Heaven?" *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter*, July 1992, 1-11; Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign* 21 (Nov. 1991).

dation" in writing to his academic officers with copies to President Ezra Taft Benson. Rex Lee, president of BYU, comments, "This is just not a BYU matter."⁸²

Ca. 22 September 1991. The long-awaited *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* appears. Such periodicals as *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, and *Exponent II*, though separately indexed, are discussed only in an article entitled "Societies and Organizations" (3:1387-90).

27 September 1991. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, speaking at the FARMS annual banquet, tells his listeners, "Joseph [Smith] will go on being vindicated in the essential things associated with his prophetic mission. Many of you here, both now and in the future, will be part of that on-rolling vindication through your own articulation. There is no place in the Kingdom for unanchored brilliance. Fortunately, those of you I know are both committed and contributive. In any case, ready or not, you serve as mentors and models for the rising generation of Latter-day Saint scholars and students. Let them learn, among other things, submissiveness from the eloquence of your example. God bless you!"⁸³

17 October 1991. At a B. H. Roberts Society meeting, David Knowlton discusses his situation, identifies the issues he feels are involved, and concludes, "It is simply a bad habit for authorities to engage in generalized intimidation. . . . We intellectuals should . . . stop looking over our shoulders to see if the Brethren are going to disagree with us, call us to repentance, hassle us, limit our access to information, or challenge us. In many ways that is their job—although it is indeed ours to critique all those actions, . . . to protect ourselves and argue for what we think important. We should act with security of purpose as thoughtful people who have a necessary role to play within the Church as community. . . . Some day people will quote with reverence the ancient texts from *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, the *Journal of Mormon History*, *Exponent II*, the Mormon Women's Forum, the B. H. Roberts Society, *BYU Studies*, FARMS, and the *Ensign*, among others."⁸⁴

Michael Quinn, presenting in the same meeting, explains that general authorities have "typically attacked the messenger" who brings "unauthorized exposure of Mormonism's checkered past. . . . These attacks have usually been harsher when the messenger was a participant in the uncomfortable truths she or he revealed about Mormonism." Tactics include

82. "BYU Professor Charges LDS Church With Intimidation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Sept. 1991, B-1, B-2.

83. "God Bless You!" Speech as quoted in "Elder Maxwell Speaks at F.A.R.M.S. Banquet of Consecration," *Insights/F.A.R.M.S. Update*, Jan. 1992, 5-6.

84. David C. Knowlton, "Of Things in the Heavens, on the Earth, and in the Church," *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 12-15.

"excommunication," the label of "apostate," and "character assassination." He cites both nineteenth- and twentieth-century examples.⁸⁵

September/October 1991. Maxine Hanks, a participant in the Salt Lake City August 1991 Sunstone, receives two messages on her telephone recorder from her bishop about her presentation. Her stake president, Paul Hanks, then presses Maxine to talk with him about her Sunstone presentation. In a series of meetings and telephone calls from the end of October to mid-December, he first presents himself as acting on his own initiative but later concedes that he has received "direction" and that a transcript of her presentation exists. The discussion on her presentation seems mutually satisfactory, but he advises her to send a letter to *Sunstone* retracting certain statements. She declines. In April, May, and June 1992, her stake president makes another series of calls requesting meetings. Maxine declines to meet with him again. He reports receiving an article "from a friend" that quotes her. At her request he sends her a copy. The article, an editorial in the *Provo Herald*, quotes out of context a single statement from an article in the *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter* over a year earlier.

November 1991. Brent Metcalfe, who has continued his research into Mormon scriptures and is editing a collection of essays entitled *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, is asked by his bishop if he has ever considered having his name removed from the records of the church. (Metcalfe was denied access to the Historical Department five years earlier on 8 January 1986.)⁸⁶ Metcalfe declines to submit such a request.

24 November 1991. John Sillito, a Salt Lake City Sunstone participant, receives a telephone call from the stake executive secretary, stating that his stake president, W. Bruce Woodruff, wants to meet with him "to get to know you better." John responds that he is aware that a number of people are getting calls from their stake presidents and asks that the request be put in writing. On 9 December John receives a letter from Woodruff requesting a meeting "to discuss your feelings with regard to sustaining our church leaders" on Sunday, 15 December. Sillito writes back saying he sees no benefit in a meeting and stating that he has done nothing in his ward or stake to cause any concerns. He adds that he cannot meet on 15 December because it is the 200th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights and, as a teacher of American history, he plans to spend "a portion of that day contemplating [the] guarantees" of "freedom of speech and conscience." During a follow-up phone call from Woodruff on 29 December, John repeats his preference for continuing future discussions in writing and

85. D. Michael Quinn, "150 Years of Truth and Consequences about Mormon History," *Sunstone* 16 (Feb. 1992 [mailed Aug. 1992]): 12-14.

86. Anderson diary, 7 Apr. 1992.

reiterates his belief that he has not done anything that legitimately falls within the stake president's area of concern. During the course of the conversation, Woodruff confirms that the issue was Sillito's *Sunstone* paper on excommunicated apostle Richard R. Lyman and further confirms that "somebody has brought this to my attention." When Sillito asks if it is someone in his ward or stake, Woodruff pauses, then says, "It was someone in our region." Sillito suggests that anyone who has a problem should consult him directly and that his number is in the phone book. On 31 March Woodruff again writes requesting a meeting about John's "lack of responsiveness" and querying, "Can I assume by your letter that you do not sustain the leaders of the church, since you have declined to meet with me?" On 1 April John writes back stating that he has fully discussed the issues during the telephone conversation. There has been no further ecclesiastical contact.⁸⁷

January-February 1992. Nancy Freestone Turley, of Mesa, Arizona, expresses strongly affirmative feelings about Mother in Heaven in a temple recommend interview with her bishop. Although sympathetic he feels she should not have a recommend until she talks to the stake president. The stake president reads President Gordon B. Hinckley's statement identifying prayers to Mother in Heaven as a sign of apostasy to Nancy, even though she heard it during the women's fireside broadcast, and says he will have to discuss her worthiness with the area president. (During the summer of 1991 he expressed concern that she subscribed to *Sunstone* and warned her that it was dangerous.) The area president refers the matter back to the stake president who, after "a lot of thought and prayer," grants Nancy a temple recommend.

In early spring 1992 an article Nancy wrote about Mother in Heaven appears in *Exponent II*. She had earlier sent a copy to Elder Neal A. Maxwell who, with her permission, passed it on to President Hinckley the week before the women's fireside in September 1991. In May 1992 the stake president calls Nancy's husband Kent, a former member of another stake presidency, into a meeting. The stake president has a photocopy of a draft of Nancy's manuscript, underlined in red, given him by "a concerned woman in the stake whose daughter had a copy of it." Kent says he is fully aware of Nancy's ideas and was the first to edit it. He also explains that it is inappropriate for the stake president not to discuss it directly with Nancy.

In a meeting between the Turleys, the bishop, and the stake president, held at Nancy's suggestion in the Turley home, the stake president tells

87. John R. Sillito, telephone conversation, 7 Oct. 1992, notes in my possession.

Nancy that she is not to pray to Mother in Heaven either in public or in private or to "proselyte." If she does he will have to consider church action. Nancy points out that she has already given assurances that she will not pray to Mother in Heaven in public but that even President Hinckley does not forbid talking about Mother in Heaven. When she expresses regret for the "confrontational relationship," adding, "I wish you could come to my house for dinner. I wish we could know each other as fellow Saints," the stake president replies, "I couldn't do that. If I ever had to take church action against you, a personal relationship might stand in the way." Kent offers to resign as stake Sunday school president if the stake president finds his and Nancy's service unacceptable. Although there is no follow-up or attempt to process the distress of that meeting from either the stake president or the bishop, Nancy is called in September 1992 to serve as secretary of the stake Activities Committee, a position which requires clearance from the stake president.⁸⁸

Spring 1992. An unidentified leader in Neal Chandler's Kirtland, Ohio, Stake makes photocopies of his article, "Book of Mormon Stories that My Teachers Kept from Me" (*Dialogue* 24 [Winter 1991]: 13-30) and distributes them to the stake's officers and bishops with instructions that Chandler is not to teach or speak or be "given a forum for his radical ideas." Chandler's bishop, Gary McMurtrey, reads the paper, does not "agree with everything," but also "didn't see anything terribly wrong with it." After Chandler, at his bishop's invitation, speaks in sacrament meeting, he learns that the interdiction originated in Salt Lake City. In mid-September 1992 Chandler is called to teach the thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds' Sunday school class for twelve weeks. On 17 October 1992 Chandler gives a paper, "Lucubrations on Un-American Religion: Being in Part an Unauthorized History of Persecution in the Mayfield Ward," at the first Sunstone Symposium in Chicago.⁸⁹

7 March 1992. Lynne Kanavel Whitesides, Margaret Merrill Toscano, and Martha Dickey Esplin present "A Three-Part Invention: Finding Our Bodies, Hearts, and Voices: A Response to Gordon B. Hinckley," at Sunstone West in Burbank, California, and at the Mormon Women's Forum meeting on 4 April 1992 in Salt Lake City. "In last fall's General Women's Meeting," they say, "President Hinckley warned women against praying to our Mother in Heaven. We will speak of patriarchy's attempt to silence the prayers and voices of women. Our supreme act of rebellion will be to speak with our own voices." All three women subsequently are called into

88. Nancy Turley, telephone conversations, 2, 29 Sept. 1992; letter to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 16 Sept. 1992. The article was "A Motherless Child," *Exponent II* 16 [delivered 9 Apr. 1992], 4:12-13.

89. Chandler, letter and manuscript, 9-11.

meetings with their stake presidents and bishops. The meetings are usually cordial ones ("He was gracious and kind. It was a meeting filled with love," says one). At least two cases involve more than one interview.

One of the women, who had not attended church since December, had earlier expressed feelings of alienation to her home teacher and had thought that the visit was a pastoral one until her bishop says he has been instructed to hold the interview by Loren C. Dunn, area president. Involuntarily, she laughs and then says, "You'll have to excuse me. I thought you called me in because you cared about *me*." The tone of the meeting thereafter becomes warm and supportive, she reports.

In another case, the bishop wants the woman to put her doctrinal beliefs in writing so that he, with a letter of "endorsement," can make it part of her file. When she refuses on the grounds that her beliefs have evolved over time and no doubt will again, he drafts such a letter and asks her to review and sign it. Again she refuses.⁹⁰

14 March 1992. All twenty members of BYU's sociology faculty sign a three-page letter to BYU president Rex Lee on 14 March affirming their support of the church and of BYU but protesting the ecclesiastical interrogations of some members about participating in scholarly symposia. Since a temple recommend is required as a condition of employment at BYU, ecclesiastical action can affect academic standing and job security. An unspecified number of "individual faculty members, department chairs, and groups wrote memos supporting the rights outlined in the sociology department memo," according to a follow-up article in *Sunstone*. Four days later the *Daily Universe* publishes an unsigned editorial by the Daily Universe Editorial Board," claiming that *Sunstone* is not an academic forum. According to *Sunstone*, the editorial is "ghost-written in part by a professor." Edward Kimball and Eugene England jointly write a letter to the editor defending *Sunstone* as both academic and professional. David Knowlton, whose remarks at B. H. Roberts Society (not *Sunstone*) were quoted anonymously in the editorial, also writes a letter of good-humored protest at the editorial's position. The next month the *Universe* publishes an article quoting three faculty members from religious education agreeing with the anti-symposium statement.⁹¹

90. Anderson diary, 9 Apr., 20 May 1992.

91. Vern Anderson, Associated Press, "BYU Sociologists Say They Fear Intimidation from LDS Leaders," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1992, A-10; "Sunstone Symposium Not an Academic Forum," *Daily Universe*, 26 Feb. 1992, 4; "Professors Respond to Sunstone: Symposium Is an Academic Forum" (Kimball/England letter); "Editorial Divides BYU Community/Meaning of Church's Statement Open to Multiple Interpretations" (Knowlton letter), *Daily Universe*, 4 Mar. 1992, 4. For the text of the Department of Sociology's memo, the

March 1992. "42 percent of [BYU's] faculty said they would not participate" in the August Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, according to a *Universe* poll.⁹²

30 April 1992. BYU announces a draft of a policy on academic freedom which states: "Academic freedom must include not only the institution's freedom to claim a religious identity but also the individual's freedom to ask genuine, even difficult questions. . . . Freedom of thought, belief, inquiry, and expression are crucial no less to the sacred than to the secular quest for truth." It also specifies "reasonable limitations" on academic freedom to prevent behavior that "seriously and adversely affects the university mission or The Church." Examples of restricted behavior fall in three categories. The behavior or expression (1) "contradicts fundamental Church doctrines or opposes, rather than merely discusses, official policies of the Church; (2) attacks or derides the Church or its leaders; and (3) violates the Honor Code because the behavior or expression is dishonest, illegal, unchaste, profane, or unduly disrespectful of others." Newspaper reports of the document include interviews with David Knowlton in the sociology department about recent statements and with Tomi-Ann Roberts and Cecilia Konchar Farr, two BYU faculty members who have taken anti-abortion but pro-choice positions. They report being "cautioned" that they are jeopardizing their jobs.⁹³

20 May 1992. Phi Beta Kappa, the national honor society for arts and sciences, rejects BYU's application for a chapter. Phi Beta Kappa's reasons for refusing the chapter application are that the "dogmatic religious assertion[s]" in its mission statements "preclud[e] other possibilities" and hence oppose Phi Beta Kappa's promotion of "a liberal arts education which . . . foster[s] free inquiry." The reason for the decision is not religion per se: Notre Dame, a Catholic-sponsored university, has a Phi Beta Kappa

editorial, and the Kimball/England and Knowlton letters to the editor, see also "BYU Memo Highlights Academic Freedom Issue," *Sunstone* 16 (Feb. 1992 [mailed in Aug. 1992]): 62-66.

92. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Despite Church Warnings, 1,500 Attended Sunstone Symposium," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 15 Aug. 1992, A-5, A-7.

93. "Statement on Academic Freedom at Brigham Young University," 30 Apr. 1992, 8-9; photocopy of typescript in my possession. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "BYU President Issues Paper on 'Freedom': Document Defines Limits of Academic Discussions," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1 May 1992, B-1, B-2; Peg McEntee, "BYU Tries to Juggle Faith, Free Thinking," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6 June 1992, C-1, C-2. The report of the draft statement in BYU's alumni magazine ("Faculty Considers Draft Statement on Academic Freedom," *BYU Today*, July 1992, 5-6) did not give the examples of limitations on academic freedom. See also "BYU Memo Highlights Academic Freedom Issue," *Sunstone* 16 (Feb. 1992 [mailed in Aug. 1992]): 62-66.

chapter.⁹⁴

4 June 1992. Eugene Kovalenko is tried by a high council court in Ventura, California, for apostasy. Part of the evidence against him is a transcription of a 1990 Sunstone presentation. During the question and answer period, Eugene said: "We have the right to sustain or not sustain our leaders. I believe that we have defaulted powerfully with that process. It's become a rubber stamp. . . . We deserve the leaders we have. If they are old, decrepit, and carrying on with stuff that's a hundred years old, that's our fault." Later at a stake conference, Kovalenko votes not to sustain general and stake leaders.

Rex Mitchell, a professional mediator, is allowed to accompany Eugene but not to supply information or ask clarifying questions. According to his notes of the almost-six-hour disciplinary council, "Pres. Bryce was the central player and asked at least 90% of the questions. . . . It seemed much like a professional police process, done skillfully—e.g., do extensive investigation; bring in the suspect into a tightly controlled situation in which he is at a numerical/logistical/emotional disadvantage; give a minimal description of the charges; interrogate the witness in great detail, going over the same material in several ways, gradually inferring by your questions that you have inside/intimate information from many sources that the suspect did not anticipate; do not go into detail about your sources and do not show any documentation; continue the interrogation long/late enough to produce fatigue and possibly mistakes from the suspect; assume that the suspect is not telling the truth and ask questions designed to demonstrate discrepancies between what the suspect tells you then and past actions (writings); alternate, as convenient, between extremely literal interpretation of the suspect's writings and stretched inferences from the writings—in each case asking the suspect to justify your interpretation; profess to be interested in the well-being of the suspect; conceal any reactions to what the suspect says (minimize verbal or nonverbal cues to the suspects); do not give the suspect any information before, during, or after the session re the process or what happens next." Three weeks after the trial, Kovalenko receives a letter from the stake president announcing his excommunication for "'not sustaining' the Mormon leaders, showing insufficient remorse, and disobeying his local leaders."⁹⁵

7 June 1992. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, in a BYU fireside address, delivers a

94. Vern Anderson, "Phi Beta Kappa Rejects BYU Chapter Again," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 20, 1992, B-1, B-3.

95. Eugene Kovalenko, "The Values Crisis," draft of 24 Feb. 1990, 10; and [Rex Mitchell], "Impressions of the 6/4/92 Disciplinary Council," 1-2; photocopies in my possession; Peggy Fletcher Stack, "LDS Intelligentsia Is Grouping to Fight Defamation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 June 1992, A-7.

twenty-point address entitled, "Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall." Among the strengths which, if excessive or unbalanced, become weaknesses are "unusual commitment to one particular doctrine or commandment, . . . a strong desire to understand . . . the gospel . . . past the fringes of orthodoxy, seeking answers to mysteries rather than a firmer understanding and a better practice of the basic principles"; the "strong desire to be led by the Spirit of the Lord . . . in *all* things"; a "willingness to sacrifice" that can result in susceptibility to "cultist groups and other bizarre outlets"; an excessive zeal for "social justice" that seemingly justifies "manipulat[ing]" others or alienation "from our church or its leaders when they refrain from using the rhetoric of . . . or from allocating Church resources" to such causes; the "charismatic teacher" whose popularity leads him or her into "priestcraft" or "gather[ing] a following of disciples"; workaholicism, male "dictatorship" in his family, female "attempts to preempt priesthood leadership," excessive "patriotism, . . . following the words of a dead prophet, . . . love[,] and tolerance." He concludes by encouraging listeners to cultivate "humility" to "prevent our strengths from becoming our downfall."⁹⁶

27 June 1992. A *Salt Lake Tribune* article by Peggy Fletcher Stack reports "ongoing intimidation of Mormon intellectuals," including hate mail received by Martha Sonntag Bradley, BYU faculty member and new coeditor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. That night the Mormon Alliance, organized by Paul J. Toscano and Frederick W. Voros to document and in some cases take action on instances of "spiritual abuse," holds its first meeting.⁹⁷ It defines spiritual abuse as "the persistent exercise of power by spiritual or ecclesiastical leaders that serves the interests of the leaders to the detriment of the members."

22 July 1992. During summer term various faculty members hear from friends or anonymous well-wishers that they are on a BYU Board of Trustees "hit list." From various reports the names on the hit list seem to be Cecilia Konchar Farr, Tomi-Ann Roberts, Martha Sonntag Bradley, David Knowlton, and Sam Rushforth. Provost Bruce Hafen denies that the administration received "a letter listing faculty members to be investigated" and explains that a complaint from the board is passed "down the

96. Dallin J. Oaks, "Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall," *BYU Today*, Nov. 1992, 42-43.

97. Stack, "LDS Intelligentsia Is Grouping to Fight Defamation," A-7; Paul and Margaret Toscano, Letter to Paul and Lavina Fielding Anderson, 8 June 1992. The Mormon Alliance was called the Mormon Defense League in this letter. It was incorporated 4 July 1992 to identify and resist "spiritual abuse" among other reasons. The initial trustees were Paul and Margaret Toscano, Janice Allred, Erin Silva, and Paul Swenson.

chain of command and it's 'responded to as appropriate.'"⁹⁸

22 July 1992. Paul Toscano, acting for the Mormon Alliance at the request of Eugene Kovalenko, submits to the Ventura Stake Presidency and to the First Presidency an appeal brief outlining numerous procedural errors and several doctrinal inconsistencies committed by the Ventura Stake disciplinary council.⁹⁹

5 August 1992. The 13th Annual Sunstone Symposium convenes in Salt Lake City with about 1,500 attendees. According to *Salt Lake Tribune* religion editor Peggy Fletcher Stack, who does not disclose her sources, "Several departments in the LDS Church Office Building threatened employees with dire consequences if they attended. But the Public Affairs Department sent six 'observers,' as they have for years." At least one BYU faculty member, Michael Allen, is "advise[d] against" participating. *Sunstone* editor Elbert Peck acknowledges that some BYU faculty "chose not to participate" while others "made a point of participating" and describes the impact of the 1991 First Presidency/Council of the Twelve statement as being "to make presenters much more thoughtful and careful than they have been in the past."¹⁰⁰

6 August 1992. I present a version of this paper at a Sunstone Symposium session. Eugene England, in the audience-response period, identifies as "the chief danger the group that is compiling the files . . . the Committee to Strengthen Members, an ad hoc Church group without General Authority standing but apparently great influence, headed by one William Nelson. . . . I accuse that committee of undermining our Church."¹⁰¹

8 August 1992. An Associated Press story by Vern Anderson quotes church spokesman Don LeFevre's acknowledgement that the "Strengthening Church Members Committee" "provides local church leadership with information designed to help them counsel with members who may hinder the progress of the church through public criticism." It also reports the experience of Omar Kader of Washington, D.C., formerly of BYU's political science department. Kader says a BYU administrator told him that Nelson, then Kader's stake president, kept a file on his political activities as a Democrat in Provo in the late 1970s. Nelson "categorically denied keeping a file on Kader" and also denied "knowing Omar and Nancy Kader."

98. Geoffrey M. Thatcher, "Academic 'Hit List' Rumor Untrue, Provost Assures," *Daily Universe*, 22 July 1992, 1.

99. Toscano, Memo, 4.

100. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Despite Church Warnings, 1,500 Attended Sunstone Symposium," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 15 Aug. 1992, A-5, A-7.

101. Audiotaped presentation of Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Dialogue Toward Forgiveness: A Documentary History of the Intellectual Community and Church Leadership," 6 Aug. 1992.

Nelson is director of the Evaluation Division, Church Correlation Department, which reports to Elder Boyd K. Packer, and was executive assistant to Ezra Taft Benson while Benson was president of the Quorum of the Twelve (1974-85).¹⁰²

9 August 1992. Elder Jacob de Jaeger, speaking in Salt Lake Whittier Ward priesthood meeting, identifies as one of six duties of the Latter-day Saints "to get along with everybody—and that includes those that read the *Ensign* and those that read *Sunstone*."¹⁰³

12 August 1992. J. Michael Watson, secretary to the First Presidency, returns the Kovalenko appeal brief, stating that Kovalenko's excommunication is a matter between him and his local leaders alone.¹⁰⁴

13 August 1992. The First Presidency issues a statement in response to "extensive publicity recently given to false accusations of so-called secret Church committees and files." The statement cites Doctrine and Covenants 123:1-5, which enjoins "the propriety of all the saints gathering up . . . the names of all persons that have had a hand in their oppressions" during the Missouri period of the late 1830s and then continues: "In order to assist their members who have questions, these local leaders often request information from General Authorities. . . . The Strengthening Church Members committee was appointed by the First Presidency to help fulfill this need and to comply with the cited section of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. This committee serves as a resource to priesthood leaders throughout the world who may desire assistance on a wide variety of topics. It is a General Authority committee, currently comprised of Elder James E. Faust and Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They work through

102. Vern Anderson, "LDS Official Acknowledges Church Monitors Critics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Aug. 1992, D-1, D-2. In follow-up news coverage 10 August by Channel 4, Kader repeated his assertions; Nelson was unavailable due to "surgery." In a *Salt Lake Tribune* article by Peggy Fletcher Stack and Michael Phillips ("Critics: For BYU's Good, Church Must Loosen Grip"), Kader felt the church should divest itself of BYU. Michael Allen, a professor of history at BYU, was quoted as saying that the church "should at least acknowledge that there is something fundamentally at odds between religious indoctrination and the classical university," while David Knowlton felt that the university has created "institutionalized paranoia," treating individual cases in such an arbitrary way that faculty are "looking over their shoulders." Scott Abbott of BYU's German department quoted a fall 1991 address by Elder Boyd K. Packer announcing, "The role of BYU will be determined by the board of trustees whose fundamental credentials were not bestowed by man" and pointed out that "a new paragraph in faculty contracts requires professors to 'accept, support and participate in the University's religious-oriented mission.'"

103. Anderson diary, 9 Aug. 1992.

104. Toscano, Memo, 4.

established priesthood channels, and neither impose nor direct Church disciplinary action." The statement counsels members with "questions concerning Church doctrine, policies, or procedures" to "discuss those concerns confidentially with their local leaders."¹⁰⁵

14 August 1992. Peggy Fletcher Stack's *Salt Lake Tribune* article reporting the First Presidency statement begins: "Mormon Church leaders say they have a scriptural mandate to keep secret files on outspoken members." Ross Peterson is quoted as saying that the statement "is 'stretching the scriptural justification. Comparing *Sunstone* and *Dialogue* folks to people who were shooting Mormons in 1839 Missouri is unfair.'" He described his own "grill[ing]" by his area presidency who "continually drew photocopied items out of a file and asked him about things he had written decades ago. The file was sitting on the churchmen's desk, but Mr. Peterson was not allowed to see its contents." "Files are a strange carryover from a paranoia that resembles McCarthyism," says Peterson. The article also cites unnamed "LDS Church employees" who tell the *Tribune* that William O. Nelson "shares President Benson's John Birch Society politics" and that "the church has kept files on outspoken members for decades. In the late 1970s a church librarian, Tom Truitt, told researchers in the LDS historical department that he was 'on a special assignment from the brethren' to read all LDS historical articles, underline 'objectionable parts' and send them on to the 'brethren.' His clipping system was influential in having the one-volume history of the LDS church, *Story of the Latter-day Saints*, removed from the shelves at Deseret Book stores and dropped from the reading list at LDS institutes." Linda Newell points out, "It's one thing to know who your enemies are. But it's quite another thing to label as an enemy church members who love the church, who work in the church, who pay their tithing, who go to the temple, and who only want to help the church."¹⁰⁶

14 August 1992. Jack and Linda Newell write to Elder Russell M. Nelson requesting "the opportunity to review [our] own files so that misleading or erroneous items might be properly challenged."¹⁰⁷

16 August 1992. David Knowlton and Linda King Newell appear on the weekly program *Utah 1992* (KXVX, Channel 4, Salt Lake City), moderated by Chris Vanocur and Paul Murphy. In response to questions, Linda relates

105. "First Presidency Issues Statement on Scriptural Mandate as Reason for Church Committee," 13 Aug. 1992, news release; photocopy in my possession.

106. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "LDS Leaders Say Scripture Supports Secret Files on Members," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Aug. 1992, B-1, B-2.

107. L. Jackson Newell and Linda King Newell to Russell M. Nelson, 14 Aug. 1992; photocopy in my possession.

the story of the banning of the Emma biography and David describes his encounters with his stake president. David asserts that the practice of keeping secret files "doesn't belong in a church that purports to represent Jesus Christ. . . . I'm ashamed, frankly, of a church that doesn't want to tell the truth. I'm ashamed of institutional lying." Then he asks, "Is there not a way that [orthodox] Mormons . . . can love me? Is there not a way that we can share the same space? realize that we are the children of the same father and mother?" Linda describes the "devastating" impact of receiving phone calls from all over the country based on such rumors as that she had been excommunicated for adultery and of going into an interview with two general authorities who had not read the book. "I have four kids," she says. "You cannot believe the impact this has had on them, and my husband. They'll never see the church the same way—ever. . . . It hurts so much. And it hurts so much to see it happening again and again. . . . I'm seeing my friends getting picked off one by one. . . . And it's ongoing. I'm blacklisted now, along with a lot of other good people." But when asked, "Do you ever think about leaving?" she responds, "No, why would I leave? It's my church. I chose it." David also answers, "These are the tests that try men's faith. . . . But the word 'testing' cannot possibly explain the agony, the pain in the stomach, the soul ache."

18 August 1992. Keynoting the devotional for the estimated 30,000 participants at BYU Education Week, Elder Neal A. Maxwell criticizes some intellectuals: "Exciting exploration is preferred by them to plodding implementation, as speculation and argumentations seem more fun to these few individuals rather than consecration, so they even try to soften the hard doctrines. By not obeying, they lack knowledge and thus cannot defend their faith, and a few become critics instead of defenders."¹⁰⁸

20 August 1992. David T. Cox, identifying himself "a lifetime member of the church in good standing," says he is "ashamed and terrified at the thought of a Mormon inquisition or LDS McCarthyism" and calls for church leaders "to destroy all non-statistical information" held by "the

108. "Knowledge Alone Is Not Enough, Apostle Says," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 19 Aug. 1992, B-2. In his October conference talk, he made a similar statement: "Still others find it easier to bend their knees than their minds. Exciting exploration is preferred to plodding implementation; speculation seems more fun than consecration, and so is trying to soften the hard doctrines instead of submitting to them. Worse still, by not obeying, these few members lack real knowing. (See John 7:17.) Lacking real knowing, they cannot defend their faith and may become critics instead of defenders. A few of the latter end up in the self-reinforcing and self-congratulating Hyde Park corner of the Church, which they provincially mistake for the whole of the Church" ("Settle This in Your Hearts," *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): 66.

Strengthening Church Members Committee.”¹⁰⁹

6 September 1992. Bryan Waterman, who had written a summary about the controversy surrounding Mother in Heaven for the *Student Review* in July/August 1992, is called in by his stake president, Allen Bergin, on the instructions of Elder Malcolm Jeppsen, who wanted Bryan interviewed immediately and also at the end of the semester. Bryan, who had already met President Bergin in interviews preparatory to his August marriage, finds the interviews very positive, appreciates President Bergin’s “personal concern and honesty,” and believes him to be “very sincere and genuinely loving.” President Bergin, who had been supplied with a photocopy of the article highlighted in yellow, asks Bryan and his wife, Stephanie, if they pray to Mother in Heaven, and, in the second interview, if the experience has created resentment toward the church. Bryan, who expressed some concern in the second interview about the creation of a file on him that contained only “narrowly focused” material on controversial topics, says that the experience has not been negative and that he does not feel he has “suffered organizational abuse” but does have “misgivings about the nature of the ‘confidential’ files” maintained on church members and also reports some new caution about the topics on which he chooses to write. He had written an earlier article for *Student Review* on Mother in Heaven to which there had been no ecclesiastical response.¹¹⁰

9 September 1992. A revised form for researchers at the LDS Church Historical Department Archives to sign alters the requirement to seek permission for all direct quotations from archival materials. The crucial

109. David T. Cox, “Church Dictatorship,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 20 Aug. 1992. He also points out the irony that the church has employed “tactics used by these twisted and defeated dictatorships” that have so recently collapsed in other parts of the world.

110. Telephone conversation with Bryan Waterman, 11 Dec. 1992; Bryan Waterman to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 24 Dec. 1992. The first article was Bryan Waterman, “In Search of . . . God the Mother,” *Student Review*, 13 Nov. 1991, 13-14. After briefly summarizing scriptural acknowledgments of the Mother’s existence and role, quotations from Eliza R. Snow, Linda Wilcox, and Klaus Hansen, and a summary of President Hinckley’s injunctions not to pray to her, Bryan acknowledged, “I know that this is a touchy subject. . . . I have only hoped to prompt the reader to ask why one believes what he or she does.” He concluded with the “ultimate hope . . . that none of us will become so dogmatic in our expectations that we fail to recognize the Mother when she reveals herself to us.” In “Who’s Afraid of Mother God? Student Responses to the Continuing Controversy,” *Student Review*, July/Aug. 1992, 3, 15, Bryan quoted President Hinckley at greater length and also summarized the April panel by Margaret Toscano, Lynne Whitesides, and Marti Esplin, then encouraged increased “communication between what are now two hostile forces.”

provision now reads: "Any publication, reproduction, or other use of archival material that exceeds the bounds of fair use requires the prior written permission of the Church Copyrights and Permissions Office, as well as any other individual or institution that may have rights in the material."

16 September 1992. Elders James E. Faust and Russell M. Nelson, in response to my August letter requesting to see my file, respond that they regard the files not "as secret but confidential." My second letter acknowledges the distinction and again requests to see it. As of mid-January 1993, there has been no response.¹¹¹

17 September 1992. Elder Russell M. Nelson writes to Jack and Linda Newell that the files of the Strengthening Church Members Committee are not "secret but confidential," pointing out that members should counsel with local priesthood leaders who may then "request advice from General Authorities through established channels of Church government," and suggesting that they "may wish to consult" their bishop. Jack and Linda transmit their request formally through their bishop on 18 September.¹¹²

17 September 1992. Richard Bryce, president of the Ventura California Stake, telephones Eugene Kovalenko, then living in Santa Fe, and reads him a letter from the First Presidency affirming the excommunication. Eugene writes to the First Presidency on 24 September requesting a copy of the letter, an inventory of the materials forwarded with the appeal record, and a description of the process of reconsidering his case. He also repeats an earlier request, made to the Strengthening Church Members Committee, to review his file.

19 September 1992. *Victims: The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case*, authored by Richard Turley, managing director of the LDS Historical Department, is published by the University of Illinois Press. Turley claims "unprecedented access" to church officials and "previously unavailable documents." He acknowledges that "a substantial amount of writing was done on church time."¹¹³

26 September 1992. Aileen Clyde, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, while conducting the general women's meeting welcomes them: "I am so pleased to join with you in this great congregation of Relief Society women and Young Women and leaders of our Primary children. It is good to have President Hinckley, President Monson, Presi-

111. Lavina Fielding Anderson to James E. Faust and Russell M. Nelson, 31 Aug. 1992; Faust and Nelson to Anderson, 16 Sept. 1992; Anderson to Faust and Nelson, Oct. 1992.

112. Photocopies in my possession.

113. Jan Thompson, "New Book on Hofmann Gives Perspective of LDS Church," *Deseret News*, 19 Sept. 1992, B-1, B-2.

dent Hunter, and other priesthood leaders with us tonight to symbolize the priesthood partnership we so value in the Church and in our homes." The version published in the *Ensign* reads: "It is good to have President Hinckley, President Monson, President Hunter, and other priesthood leaders with us tonight." One individual who had seen galleys of this address confirms that the "partnership" phrase was still there at that point.¹¹⁴

3-4 October 1992. Although not identifying specific issues, several general conference talks seem targeted at specific audiences. Possibly in response to right-wing survivalists, Elder M. Russell Ballard warns, "We must be careful not to . . . be caught up in extreme preparations" for the end of the world. President Gordon B. Hinckley, perhaps responding to right-wing beliefs of a "silenced" prophet,¹¹⁵ explains the "unique and tremendous system of redundancy and backup which the Lord has structured into His kingdom so that without interruption it may go forward, meeting any emergency that might arise and handling every contingency. . . . We have moved without hesitation when there is well-established policy. Where there is not . . . we have talked with the President and received his approval before taking action. Let it never be said that there has been any disposition to assume authority or to do anything or say anything which might be at variance with the wishes of him who has been put in his place by the Lord." Elder Boyd K. Packer adds: "There are some among us now who have *not* been regularly ordained by the heads of the Church who tell of impending political and economic chaos, the end of the world They are misleading members to gather to colonies or cults. Those deceivers say that the Brethren do not know what is going on in the world or that the Brethren approve of their teaching but do not wish to speak of it over the pulpit. Neither is true." Remarks possibly directed against intellectuals are made by Elders Russell M. Nelson ("Paul's warnings describe apostasy and other dangers of our day. Some of those perils are . . . championed by persuasive people possessing more ability than morality, more knowledge than wisdom. . . .

114. Videotape of General Women's Conference in my possession; Aileen H. Clyde, "Confidence through Conversion," *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): 88; Anderson diary, 18 Nov. 1992.

115. For example, Elaine Harmston, excommunicated in Manti, Utah, in October, was quoted as saying: "We support President Benson 100%. . . . He has warned us thoroughly. But there are some brethren who speak 180 degrees against him." Chris Jorgensen and Peggy Fletcher Stack, "It's Judgment Day for Far Right: LDS Church Purges Survivalists," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Nov. 1992, A-1. Joseph Stumph, whose business includes selling Ronald Garff's "Armageddon" tapes, stated, "I'm sure President Benson wouldn't approve of this hanky-panky." Chris Jorgensen, "Mormon's End-of-World Talk Could End LDS Membership," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 Dec. 1992, B-1.

Individuals with malignity of purpose often wear the mask of honesty”), Joseph B. Wirthlin (“Some in the Church may believe sincerely that their testimony is a raging bonfire when it really is little more than the faint flickering of a candle. Their faithfulness has more to do with habit than holiness, and their pursuit of personal righteousness almost always takes a back seat to their pursuit of personal interests and pleasure”), and Neal A. Maxwell (“... some who cast off on intellectual and behavioral bungee cords in search of new sensations, only to be jerked about by the old heresies and the old sins”). Elder Packer also includes in his remarks a warning to faculty members at BYU protesting strictures on academic freedom: “A Church university is not established to provide employment for a faculty, and the personal scholarly research [sic] is not a dominant reason for funding a university. . . . For those very few whose focus is secular and who feel restrained as students or as teachers in such an environment, there are at present in the United States and Canada alone over 3,500 colleges and universities where they may find the kind of freedom they value.”¹¹⁶

5 October 1992. Jim and Elaine Harmston are excommunicated in Manti, Utah, for apostasy. Their offenses include refusing the stake president’s instructions to refrain from “discuss[ing] the gospel in your own home with anyone except your own family” and conducting the true order of prayer outside the temple.¹¹⁷

13 October 1992. Avraham Gileadi teaches his regular Tuesday night class on the book of Isaiah, a class on-going since at least the spring of 1991 that has been attracting ever larger groups. Before the next class on 20 October, class members are notified by the director of the Hebraist Foundation, which sponsors Gileadi’s research, that the classes are “postponed indefinitely” at the request of Gileadi’s stake president, who has also instructed him not to lecture or write on scriptural topics. Gileadi obediently cancels the class and agrees to comply with the instructions not to write more, after completing two books now in progress.¹¹⁸

116. All in *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): Ballard, “The Joy of Hope Fulfilled,” 32; Hinckley, “The Church Is on Course,” 54; Packer, “To Be Learned Is Good, If,” 73 (“end of the world”), 72-73 (BYU statement); Nelson, “Where Is Wisdom?”, 8; Wirthlin, “Spiritual Bonfires of Testimony,” 34; Maxwell, “Settle This in Your Hearts,” 66.

117. Jorgensen and Stack, “It’s Judgment Day for Far Right”; “File Notes, 27 October 1992,” photocopy in my possession. At least one additional excommunication has been confirmed in Manti; Randy Dalton’s offenses included twelve years of involvement in home school and association with Jim Harmston. Anderson diary, 24 Nov., 1 Dec. 1992.

118. Anderson diary, Nov. 1992. According to Jorgensen, “Mormons’ End-of-World Talk Could End LDS Membership,” Gileadi “is also facing

20 October 1992. F. Michael Watson, secretary to the First Presidency, writes to Eugene Kovalenko explaining that the answer to his letter of 24 September had been sent to President Bryce, "apparently in error," and requesting Eugene's "current address, as well as the name of the bishop and stake president of the area in which you now live" so that Brother Watson could "forward to them the written confirmation which you seek." This letter is correctly addressed to Eugene's current address, a post office box in Santa Fe. Eugene writes Brother Watson on 27 October expressing reluctance to have information "of such a sensitive nature" sent to third parties whom he does not know and expressing pain at feeling "demeaned and patronized." In a response 2 November, Watson explains that the church has a "long-standing policy . . . that matters relating to disciplinary councils and appeals therefrom, be handled through authorized priesthood leaders" and affirms that "we would be pleased" to respond through these leaders.

27 October 1992. Scott Abbott, a member of BYU's German faculty and a Sunstone participant, is called in by his stake president, a BYU religion professor, for a "very cordial" meeting. Scott earlier circulated his Sunstone paper, "One Lord, One Faith, Two Universities: Tensions between 'Religion' and 'Thought' at BYU," to individual religion professors, several of whom were upset by its analysis of religious-education hiring practices. The discussion centers on what the stake president sees as the potential for apostasy in Scott's position. Scott "felt no threats. My job didn't come into it. He's seen me twice since then and has come over and put his arm around me, genuinely showing his love after the rebuke."¹¹⁹

29 October 1992. David Knowlton meets again with his stake president, Kerry Heinz, to discuss the Channel 4 *Utah* 1992 interview. Heinz has formed his impressions of David's remarks only from an incomplete transcript, highlighted in yellow, and states, according to David, that "the situation almost obliged him to call a Church court because, in his opinion, I was perilously close to apostasy as a result of what he perceived as a pattern of attacking the Church." Still, the meeting which begins and ends with prayer, is held in Heinz's home, is "more relaxed," and leaves David optimistic that they are working toward a shared understanding. At David's invitation, President Heinz meets the next week with David's department chair for an additional view of issues from an academic perspective.¹²⁰

1 November 1992. At the instruction of Elder Russell M. Nelson, Jack and

excommunication for his writings and lectures" but is working on only one book, not two.

119. Telephone interview, 19 Nov. 1992, notes in my possession.

120. Telephone conversations with David K. Knowlton, 18 Nov. 1992 and 4 Jan. 1993; notes in my possession.

Linda Newell's stake president, Ted M. Jacobsen, informs them that they may not see their files maintained by the Strengthening Church Members Committee.

Early November 1992 or earlier. Three separate lists begin to circulate in the Utah South Region. Apparently at least one, "Profile of the Splinter Group Members or Others with Troublesome Ideologies," was reportedly created by a stake president who had taken notes during a speech by Elder Jeppsen, added additional specifics to the list, and then circulated it among additional stake presidents, some of whom also added items. Harold Nicholl, one of six Sanpete County stake presidents, uses the first list "as a guide for excommunications." This list consists of twenty unnumbered points, including: "They follow the practice of home school. There is a preoccupation with the end of the world. . . . Many have John Birch membership or leanings. Many do not work and have no jobs. They study the mysteries, feeling that what is provided in our meetings today is superficial. They meet in study groups. They listen to . . . 'Bo Gritz' tapes and others about such topics as Armageddon. They are inordinately pre-occupied with food storage. They . . . teach that . . . the government is corrupt. . . . They feel that President Benson's counselors have muzzled the prophet. . . . They staunchly profess that they sustain the prophet and local leaders, but when asked to stop doing certain things . . . they tell you straight out they will have to take the matter to the Lord. . . . They read the books of Avraham Gileadi. . . . Many of these folks are on state welfare and others try to obtain Church welfare. . . . Plural marriage . . . continues to surface as a part of the belief structure of many. . . . Some have held prayer circles in full temple clothing outside the temple. . . . Some of these folks would linger in the celestial room of the Manti Temple for hours to teach one another."¹²¹

121. The first list is "Profile of the Splinter Group Members or Others with Troublesome Ideologies," n.d.; photocopy of FAX in my possession. The second list is "Dealing with Apostate and Splinter Groups," n.d.; photocopy in my possession. This second list is headed "A. Inappropriate and Questionable Activities," suggesting the existence of a subheading "B" and possibly other subheadings. It consists of fourteen rather generally phrased characteristics, such as "teaching false doctrines," "refusing to follow priesthood leaders' specific counsel and instruction in Church-related matters," and "teaching that individuals receive inspiration or have a higher knowledge or level of spirituality which gives them greater insights or abilities than ordained Church leaders." The third list is titled "Our Challenge to Keep the Doctrine of the Church Pure," n.d.; photocopy in my possession. It is a four-page typescript with two paragraphs of introduction to a nineteen-item, unnumbered list, followed by three pages of instructions to "you stake presidents and your bishops" to "watch for false doctrine being taught, and then bring it quickly to an end."

3 November 1992. John Tarjan of Bakersfield, California, a Sunstone participant, is called in by his stake president who has received a letter from Elder John Groberg, the area president, transmitting a letter from Elders Russell M. Nelson and James E. Faust accompanied by a copy of John's *Dialogue* article and the newspaper report of his August 1992 Sunstone presentation, "Lying for the Lord." Both have passages highlighted in yellow. The meeting, which lasts for an hour and a half, is "very pleasant. One of the nicest experiences I've had in church for years." The stake president is unclear about the previous summer's First Presidency/Quorum of the Twelve statement about symposia, does not know about the Strengthening Church Members Committee, and has received no specific information about what the "problem" was or why the interview was requested.¹²²

13-14 November 1992. Elder Malcolm S. Jeppsen, president of the Utah South Area, addresses the area priesthood leadership meeting. Elders Henry B. Eyring and Joseph B. Wirthlin are also in attendance. According to an attendee, Elder Jeppsen defines "a spectrum" of church members including "an increasing number . . . who still cling to their membership" but "are pursuing paths to apostasy." In the center are "the mainstream of the Saints, whose who follow the guidance of the latter-day prophets." To the right are four groups: "the priestcrafters who sell their services of gospel understanding for money, the latter-day gnostics who believe that they are endowed with special knowledge of the mysteries and that the veil has been rent for them, the doomsayers who forecast future events, and the cultists who practice polygamy or other doctrines that are not taught by the Church." To the left are "the feminists: those who advocate a mother in

Among the nineteen items are "The declaration that the millennium will begin in April 1993 with the advent of Christ at Adam-ondi-Ahman," "teaching others to have altars in homes, with prayers circles, etc.," "praying to a mother in heaven," "President Benson being a 'covered prophet,'" "'Dream Mine' and related long ago discredited stories," and such eschatological doctrines as "the mark of the beast," the "seven seals," and the "Davidic servant." The paper also contains a list of six unnumbered "concerns" caused by these doctrines: church members have "uprooted their families to move to Utah," "contention . . . in wards," "members cashing in . . . insurance policies to acquire food supplies," "missionaries being diverted from their work to study these speculations," and "Area Presidencies must spend an inordinate amount of time to counsel Church leaders and others." Jorgensen and Stack, "It's Judgment Day for Far Right," A-1, A-2.

122. Interviewed by Lavina Fielding Anderson, 18 Nov. 1992, notes in my possession. The *Dialogue* article is "Heavenly Father or Chairman of the Board: How Organizational Metaphors Can Define and Confine Religious Experience," 25 (Fall 1992): 36-55.

heaven and women holding the priesthood, the intellectuals who advocate a naturalistic explanation for the Book of Mormon and other revelations, and the dissenters: those who challenge the interpretation of the leadership of the Church." According to this report, Elder Jeppsen also characterizes Satan as "the great multiplier of perspectives in this earth" while "Jesus Christ is the great consolidator of all truth. . . He is asking us that we follow the brethren unquestionably [sic]." Also in the same priesthood meeting, one speaker (not identified) gives a list of fifteen "false teachings," including specific dates for the Second Coming, "praying to a Mother in Heaven," explicit preparations for attacks by Russians and others, and teaching where and when the ten tribes will return.¹²³

15 November 1992. Cecilia Konchar Farr is called into a friendly meeting with her stake president, who explains candidly that he is acting on instructions from the area president to interview her on her general faithfulness and report back. He is not aware of Cecilia's harassed situation at BYU, that other BYU professors have been called in, or the associated issues of academic freedom. Cecilia describes a talk on Mormonism and feminism she gave in sacrament meeting soon after the lengthy interview with her in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The stake president responds enthusiastically, "That's great with me. I'll report back that you're okay."¹²⁴

16 November 1992. In "a spirit of reconciliation," Eugene Kovalenko, now residing in New Mexico, contacts, first, Regional Representative Vern Payne, then stake president Paul Goodfellow. President Goodfellow expresses his willingness to review personal material that would acquaint him with Eugene's situation. Eugene describes his contacts with both men between 16 November and 7 December as "cordial." He also provides the office of the First Presidency with the stake president's name and address on 6 December 1992.

16 November 1992. The summer 1992 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies* (vol. 32, no. 3) arrives, including "a revision of portions" of Elder Maxwell's FARMS banquet address (see entry of 27 September 1991), and "the main part" of BYU Provost Bruce C. Hafen's address to the faculty in September 1992, "edited . . . for distribution to a wider audience." In it he warns "troubled" faculty, "Conscientious private communication may ultimately be of real help to the Church and its leaders, but public expression . . . may simply spray another burst of spiritual shrapnel through the ranks of trusting and vulnerable students." He adds, "The statement by the

123. "Rough Transcript" of taped remarks at a "stake general priesthood meeting" on 15 November 1992; photocopy in my possession. Many but not all of the fifteen points duplicate items on the "Profile of the Splinter Group members" list.

124. Anderson diary, 19 Nov. 1992.

First Presidency and the Twelve . . . counseling against *any* participation in certain kinds of symposia . . . is not primarily a BYU matter—but it clearly speaks to BYU people. It is written in nondirective, nonpunitive terms, but its expectations are clear to those with both eyes open. . . . If a few among us create enough reason for doubt about the rest of us, that can erode our support among Church members and Church leaders enough to mortally wound our ability to pursue freely the dream of a great university in Zion.”¹²⁵

18 November 1992. Devery Anderson of Longview, Washington, who earlier requested a meeting with his area president (Elder Joe J. Christensen), is called in for an unexpectedly “friendly” meeting with his stake president. The stake president, who forwarded the request to Elder Christensen with a cover letter of his own summarizing the situation from his perspective, tells Devery that Elder Christensen has requested that Devery write him a complete account directly. The stake president expresses willingness to return Devery’s recommend, if that is Elder Christensen’s decision. In response to Devery’s letter, President Christensen expresses his hope that continued efforts at understanding may lead to a satisfactory resolution. As of mid-January 1993, the matter remains unresolved.¹²⁶

19 November 1992. Timothy B. Wilson of Nephi, Utah, who is preparing *Mormon’s Book: A Modern English Rendering* for publication in 1993, is called in by his stake president (Pioneer Stake in Provo) and asked about his project and whether he knows Avraham Gileadi. Tim does not, although Gileadi’s wife is editing his book. His stake president also asks whether he would drop the project if he were so instructed. Tim has already received verbal confirmation from Church Copyrights and Permissions that his project does not infringe on the church’s copyright and is awaiting written confirmation at the time of the interview.¹²⁷ According to a *Salt Lake Tribune* article, Tim’s bishop (Pioneer Third Ward of Provo) told him that the First Presidency “objected to the format of his book,” which arranged the standard and modernized rendering verse by verse in parallel columns. Tim revised his rendering to a paragraph, rather than verse, format in an effort to resolve the problem. Inspired by President Benson’s challenge to “flood the earth with the Book of Mormon,” he has spent two years and \$20,000 on this project, which he hopes will make the Book of Mormon more

125. Neal A. Maxwell, “Discipleship and Scholarship,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 32 (Summer 1992): 5-8; the quoted portion added “consecration” to “submissiveness” but remained otherwise unaltered in substance. Bruce C. Hafen, “The Dream Is Ours to Fulfill,” *ibid.*, 11-25. The quotations are from 17, 22-23.

126. Telephone conversation, 19 Nov. 1992, notes in my possession.

127. Anderson diary, 23 Nov. 1992.

accessible to millions of readers.¹²⁸

29 November 1992. A front-page *Salt Lake Tribune* article reports a "massive housecleaning" of "hundreds of Mormon dissidents who church officials say are preoccupied unduly with Armageddon." Although it gives no figures, the article uses the term "purge," compares it to the 1850s reformation, and identifies Mormons who have been excommunicated or "threatened" in Nevada, Arizona, and Idaho. This attack on "'super patriots' and survivalists" is the first conspicuous public action taken against the church's right wing since the official distancing of the church from the John Birch Society during the 1960s and 1970s. Ezra Taft Benson, then an apostle, was vocal in his public support of the anti-Communist group. Much of the agenda of those receiving church discipline revives concerns of those days: concern with the apocalypse, fleeing "to the tops of the mountains," serious attention to a food supply, John Birch Society "leanings" (which usually translates into a mistrust of government, including the United Nations), and an interest in the events preceding Christ's second coming.¹²⁹

A related *Tribune* article analyzes the appeal of Mormon convert Colonel James "Bo" Gritz as a "military hero and messiah of the new Populist

128. Telephone conversation with Tim Wilson, 23 Nov. 1992; notes in my possession; and Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Translating Book of Mormon to Modern English Brings Complexity, Controversy to Wordsmiths," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Nov. 1992, D-1, D-3. The article mistakenly states that Tim's bishop was in Nephi. The article included a lengthy interview from Lynn Matthews Anderson of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who has already produced her own modernized version, available in electronic format on Mormon-L. She has received no pressure not to publish. A sidebar gave sample passages from the original Book of Mormon with the parallel passages from the modernized versions.

129. Jorgensen and Stack, "It's Judgment Day for Far Right," A-1, A-2. For the church's official attempts to disassociate itself from Elder Benson's hard-driving rightist politics, see D. Michael Quinn, "Ezra Taft Benson and the LDS Church Conflict, 1950s-1980s," *Sunstone Symposium*, Aug. 1992; audiotape in my possession. (An expanded version of Quinn's essay will appear in the summer 1993 issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*.) According to the Jorgensen/Stack article, Jim and Elaine Harmston of Manti were apparently excommunicated primarily for holding a temple-type prayer circle in their home; but Larry Garmouth, a security guard at the Manti temple, was apparently punished for attending a study group at the Harmston home. His stake president warned him to avoid the Harmstons; then he was demoted to groundskeeper on suspicion that he "was letting apostates into the temple after hours to perform clandestine religious rituals." Garmouth denied the charge. Another lifelong member in Fairview was reportedly "threatened with excommunication for having too much food in storage."

Party" and leader of the American First Coalition, "dedicated to such goals as abolishing the IRS, eliminating foreign aid, prohibiting foreign ownership of American soil[,] and opposing global government." Gritz joined the LDS church in 1984 and sees his patriarchal blessing, received in 1985, as foretelling his leadership role. He reported: "It said you will have a gift of discernment. You will be given an ability to explain in words people will understand. You will have multitudes that will follow you. They will have no allegiance to you. They will only have allegiance to what it is you stand for." Twenty-eight thousand Utahns voted for Gritz in the November presidential election. Gritz concedes that he has been "warned by church leaders to be careful about what he teaches" and "listening to Bo Gritz tapes" appears on the "Profile of the Splinter Group Members" list of twenty items being used by some stake presidents in the Utah South Region to interview suspected dissidents and apostates.¹³⁰

2 December 1992. Ronald Garff, of the Utah South Area, is instructed by his stake president, Leland Wright, to stop selling his popular series of videotapes, "Today through Armageddon," which dates the second coming of Christ near 6 April 2000. The lifelong member protests, "I'm not speaking for the church. I never have." Wright counters: "He quotes from the prophets, but his evaluations lead people to believe the ideas are from the church" and admits "put[ting] his membership on hold."¹³¹ Apparently the same day, church spokesman Don LeFevre issues a statement announcing that "disciplinary matters are . . . strictly between the individual and . . . local ecclesiastical leaders," stating that Elder Jeppsen "said he had never provided any such list," denying that high church officials are "sedating" Ezra Taft Benson, and denying that there has been "any increase in the number of people excommunicated from the Church."¹³²

7 December 1992. Bo Gritz, speaking to a reporter, comments: "Home

130. Christopher Smith, "Hero-Turned-Heretic? Gritz May Be Leading LDS Flock into Wilderness," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Nov. 1992, A-2.

131. The article did not give the date of Wright's ultimatum. Chris Jorgensen, "Mormons' End-of-World Talk Could End LDS Membership," *Salt Lake Tribune*, B-1.

132. LeFevre is quoted in "Survialists [sic] Views Need to Be Balanced," (editorial) *Daily Universe*, 3 Dec. 1992, 4. Bruce Olsen, managing director of LDS Public Affairs, also declined to give exact figures, said reports of survivalist excommunications were "grossly exaggerated," described "discipline" as occurring only "for totally unacceptable practices" such as performing temple rituals in private homes, and insisted the church "has no policy regarding the John Birch Society, scripture-oriented study groups or the reading of material unapproved by the church, [or] home schooling." Peggy Fletcher Stack, "LDS Deny Mass Ouster [sic] of Radicals," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 Dec. 1992, B-1, B-2; "LDS Church Downplays Reports on Discipline," *Deseret News*, 4 Dec. 1992, B-1.

schooling, the 'New World Order,' government conspiracy—if this list is true, geez, it sounds like . . . I'd be one of the first to be excommunicated." In 1989, his former stake president, Lewis Hildreth of Las Vegas, received a Bo Gritz video and letter from an apostle in Salt Lake City asking him to review the tape. Hildreth did and found nothing objectionable, according to Gritz, but warned him not to hold meetings in church buildings or present his position as the church's position. Gritz complied with both. His comment on the possibility of being disciplined is: "If I had been born in the church under the covenant and raised by a Mormon family, then maybe I would feel my entire salvation hinged on my status within the Church. But . . . in the end, when it comes down to the day of judgement, you're not going to be able to say, 'Well, it was my stake president who told me to believe this,' or even the bishop or the prophet. . . . A lot of folks, they would die if their bishop were to criticize them or if their membership were threatened. To me, it's more important what my personal relationship is with the [S]avior."¹³³

2 January 1993. Three Nevada stake presidents are quoted in the press as saying that they know of no excommunications in their areas for "political activities." The newspaper report does not say if these stake presidents were asked about disciplinary councils held for apostasy, the reason given in most of the central Utah excommunications. However, one stake president reportedly says the church "becomes concerned" when "you start teaching principles that are contrary to the accepted principles of the Church."¹³⁴

2 January 1993. William O. Nelson, director of the Evaluation Division, Correlation Department, identifies as significant "doctrinal developments by the First Presidency under Priesthood Correlation" after 1990 the "statement of the First Presidency on symposia—public versus private discussion of sacred matters" and the 1992 First Presidency statement affirming "the King James Version of the Bible as the official text in English."¹³⁵

That brings us up to date. I have omitted many incidents and barely mentioned many that cry out for fuller exposition, among them the

133. Christopher Smith, "Ultraconservative Gritz Remains as Bold as Ever," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Dec. 1992, B1, B2.

134. Associated Press, "Nevada LDS Church Officials Say Reports of 'Political' Purges Exaggerated," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 Jan. 1993, D-1, D-2.

135. Nelson, "An Overview of Selected Doctrinal Revelations in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times," *Church News*, 2 Jan. 1993, 9. Neither statement had been previously designated as "doctrine" except to the extent that all public pronouncements by the full First Presidency are considered authoritative.

existence of a “blacklist” prohibiting some people from writing articles for the *Ensign* or speaking at BYU functions, and the policy at Deseret Book, also shared by church manuals or CES materials, of not quoting certain authors.¹³⁶ But what is here is enough to outline the general contours of the present situation. And now what can we do about it? I have seven proposals.

First, we must speak up. We must stop keeping “bad” secrets when our church acts in an abusive way. We must share our stories and our pain. When we feel isolated, judged, and rejected, it is easy to give up, to allow ourselves to become marginalized, and to accept the devaluation as accurate. If we silence ourselves or allow others to silence us, we will deny the validity of our experience, undermine the foundations of authenticity in our personal spirituality, and impoverish our collective life as a faith community. During the 1970s and 1980s I was an observer and occasionally a co-worker as a handful of modern women scholars discovered Mormon women’s history. They did it from the documents. No living tradition had survived of the spiritual gifts and powers of Mormon women, of how they saw themselves, of their vision for women of the church and the world. By failing to perpetuate the past as a living tradition, the women and men who were its guardians had erased it. I cannot adequately express how much this hurt me. I learned for myself that silence and self-censorship are terrible wrongs. Reducing the diversity of voices in a community to a single, official voice erases us. We must join in the on-going dialogue between individual and community out of necessity and also out of love.

Second, we must protest injustice, unrighteousness, and wrong. I pay my church the compliment of thinking that it espouses the ideals of justice and fairness. I am confused when leaders confiscate temple recommends of members who publicly praise the church’s actions. Blacklists, secret files, and intimidation violate my American sense of fair play and my legal expectation of due process. They violate the ideal that truth is best served by an open interchange, that disagreement can be both courteous and clarifying, and that differences are not automatically dangerous. Most

136. While I was at the *Ensign*, the magazine’s blacklist was a 3x5-inch card kept in the desk of Sharon Kirwin, secretary to the editor (usually a general authority). Over the years it included Reid Bankhead, Hyrum Andrus, Paul Toscano, Eugene England, Gordon Thomasson, and Lowell Bennion. An individual on a planning committee at Brigham Young University explained to me during the early 1990s that I was “on the [university’s] blacklist” for the annual women’s conference (and presumably other events as well). “Uncitable” books include but are probably not limited to *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* by Linda Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* by James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, and the works of D. Michael Quinn.

importantly I am dismayed when the organization that teaches me to honor the truth and to act with integrity seems to violate those very principles in its behavior. I am bewildered and grieved when my church talks honorably from one script and acts ignobly from another. Some of the incidents I have mentioned make me cry out with James: "My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).

Third, we must defend each other. It was heart-warming that fourteen friends, acquaintances, and former ecclesiastical leaders attended Eugene Kovalenko's trial, even though only four were allowed to make five-minute statements. Some official actions are obvious attempts to marginalize and punish intellectuals and feminists. Although some intellectuals and feminists may well be bitter, those I know personally are not trying to undermine the faith of others, do not hate the church, and are not cynical about their personal faith. To the extent that there is anti-intellectualism and anti-feminism in the church's response, it is unfair. Also unfair are any malice and irresponsibility in the activities of intellectuals and feminists. We need to provide honest feedback to each other, as well as express caring and concern for each other. If I am saying excessive, irresponsible things, I need to know it. And I will hear it most clearly from my friends. We must sustain and support individuals who are experiencing ecclesiastical harassment. Such support will help prevent overreactions and speed the healing process in the survivor. Supportive observers may also help prevent some ecclesiastical abuse.

Fourth, we must protest, expose, and work against an internal espionage system that creates and maintains secret files on members of the church. If there were some attempt to maintain a full and complete record—including the record of church service, the lives influenced for good, and the individual's spiritual strength—I might feel differently. I might also feel differently if individuals had access to their files. But they are secretly maintained and seem to be exclusively accusatory in their content. I find such an activity unworthy in every way of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Fifth, we must be more assertive in dealing with our leaders. I have had good experiences with my stake president. But I am repelled by reports of puppet interviews, where a stake president or bishop is ordered to interview and/or punish a member on information secretly supplied by ecclesiastical superiors. Such a procedure does not uphold the ideal of confidentiality. Rather it violates the trust that should exist between member and leader, and we should say so. Furthermore the stake president, not the offended general authority, is required to deal with the offender. This process short-circuits the scriptural injunction of face-to-face confrontation, including "reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love" (D&C 121:43). Perhaps more importantly such a system isolates and insulates

leaders from members. These leaders create hostile stereotypes of members who are "evil" and "deserve" to be punished and excluded. Similarly members judge and stereotype faceless and voiceless general authorities who are known to them only through punitive intermediaries. Both behaviors are equally damaging.

Sixth, we need to support, encourage, and sustain ecclesiastical leaders who also value honesty, integrity, and nurturing. Michael Quinn's stake president is one heartening example. In March 1992 David Knowlton movingly told a large audience at Sunstone in Washington, D.C., how, after repeated abrasive encounters with his stake president, he went to his bishop who listened, asked him how he felt, and gave him a blessing. David reported that he could not stop weeping during this interview, which did much to heal his wounds. When Garth Jones in Anchorage, Alaska, used a Bible translation other than the King James Version in his Sunday school class, a visiting high councillor informed the stake president, who instructed the bishop to release Garth. The bishop said he would fast and pray as he considered the stake president's "advice." After doing so he reported that he felt his initial inspiration in calling Garth to that position was still valid and declined to release him. "This bishop is not a liberal man," observed Garth. "He's a righteous man." We need more such models of nurturing leaders.

And seventh, we must seek humility as a prerequisite for a more loving, a less fearful, community. The apostle Paul queried, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16) Oliver Cromwell pleaded, "I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken."¹³⁷ These are questions we must ask ourselves, as well as posing them for others. My prayers for the church's ecclesiastical officers have never been more sincere than during the past few months, even when my sorrow and anguish have been most intense.

I consider myself to be simultaneously a loyal Latter-day Saint, an intellectual, and a feminist. My identity involves all three elements. I cannot truncate my life by excising one or more elements in a misguided search for simplicity. In Nauvoo black convert Cathy Stokes changed my life forever by telling me, "When I went to the temple, I consecrated all of me. That included my blackness. If the Lord can use it, it's his." She set me on the road to realizing that the Lord wanted all of me, even the parts that the church did not want and could not use. With the utmost reverence I declare that I have tried to make a full consecration.

Consequently, as I hope for forgiveness, so must I offer it. And I do. We

137. In C. Robert Mesle, *Fire in My Bones: A Study in Faith and Belief* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1984), 204.

must mutually acknowledge our pain, whether intentionally or unintentionally inflicted. We must ask for and offer forgiveness. We must affirm the goals of charity, integrity, loyalty, and honesty that are foundational in the gospel. Such forgiveness, such acceptance hold the promise of movement toward a Christlike community.

Becoming a Writer

Derk Michael Koldewyn

Early on, in class, the smooth new pencils,
the ice-white paper, copper-bladed rulers,
all spoke order, a progression of lines.

Until, with our clumsy hands
we smeared on layer after viscous layer
of black, yellow, red, blue acrid paint.

Later, playtime over, art an elective,
we learned perspective: one-point,
two-point, lines meeting in infinity.

The gray-black boxes made buildings,
the buildings made cities, all too
sharp, too straightly perfect for our experience.

Much later, freed by experience to shape
irregular lines, experiment with color,
shading, the talk turned to intent, to meaning.

What I made once with my own hands
has smudged, smeared lightly by an
index finger across an ice-white sheet

trying to get the shadow right



into mortal
death descend
in flesh
brightness of the veil
to see the greater side

Dialogue Toward Forgiveness: A Supporting View— A Response to “The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology”

Richard D. Poll

MINE IS THE INTERESTING CHALLENGE to comment on “The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology.” The bill of particulars that Lavina Fielding Anderson has presented is comprehensive and disturbing, her recommendations are intriguing, and her closing appeal is profoundly moving. Before commenting on her proposals, I wish to offer another set of recommendations—another alternate voice.

The phrase “alternate voice” entered the LDS vocabulary in an April 1989 general conference address by Elder Dallin H. Oaks.¹ The sermon recognizes a category in which many Mormon “intellectuals” can feel comfortable: “Some alternate voices are those of well-motivated men and women who are merely trying to serve their brothers and sisters and further the cause of Zion. Their efforts fit within the Lord’s teaching that his servants should not have to be commanded in all things, but ‘should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness’” (D&C 58:27).

Because the sermon also identifies alternate voices with less laudable motives and cautions members, particularly “church leaders,” against

1. “Alternate Voices,” *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 27-30.

participating in unspecified unauthorized activities, the term has taken on a mildly pejorative flavor. I use it, however, because no semantically neutral term describes the gatherings and writings of today's LDS intellectual community. "Unofficial" and "unauthorized" present problems, because even the writings of the general authorities contain such disclaimers as "This book is a personal expression and is not an official statement of the doctrines or procedures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."²

A chronology of the troublesome interface between the two paths to knowledge prescribed in D&C 88:118—study and faith—can be projected backward to the founding generation of the church. Difficulties have arisen and will continue to arise because the instruments of study—reason, research, and experience—and the instruments of faith—the law, the prophets, and the Spirit—do not always produce compatible products. And no universally accepted system of priorities guides the choices that may need to be made in such cases. I emphasize the phrase "may need to be made" because *many* controversies have involved questions about history, science, metaphysics, cultural traditions, and other matters with little or no bearing on individual righteousness or building the Kingdom of God. The Anderson catalog would be a lot shorter if both intellectuals and authoritarians were less insistent on defining "right answers" in such cases.

In 1954 when I was about half as old as I am now, I was involved in a memorable episode that may be already known to many readers. Having criticized a book, *Man: His Origin and Destiny* (1954), in a public setting, I was invited to meet with the author. The result was back-to-back sessions in which my wife and I met alone with President David O. McKay and then Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, the author. They gave contradictory answers to the question, "Is the concept of evolution compatible with the gospel?" But each said that he expressed a personal opinion. Indeed Elder Smith described a conversation in which scientist Henry Eyring reportedly would not let him "get a word in edgewise."³ The encounters left us with two impressions that have been strengthened by subsequent relations with other general authorities: they do not always agree, and they are less oracular in private than in public.

In 1968 after my Liahona/Iron Rod essay appeared in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* and reprints began to be distributed in some LDS seminaries and institutes, I was invited to meet with my stake president. It

2. Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord's Way* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), x.

3. Handling "Evolution" was still difficult for the authors, editors, and overseers of Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 2:478. See my review in *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Fall 1992): 205-13.

did not occur to me that he might have been assigned to check on my testimony; having language from the article later quoted in a conference address by the president of the church suggests the possibility.⁴ In any event the conversation was amiable and I remained a recommend-carrying, third-Sunday-preaching BYU stake high councilman. If the interview *was* by appointment, then the incident belongs in the Anderson chronology, and it illustrates how the handling of the challenge of intellectualism has changed in the last generation.

Two innovations are obvious, at least to me. One is a by-product of the increasing emphasis on unity and obedience. None of our leaders will answer "Yes" to the question, "Should all Latter-day Saints think alike about gospel-related subjects?" Yet they are uncomfortable—some more than others—with differences of opinion, and the discomfort increases when divergent views are publicly expressed. Unanimity being unattainable, even among the faithful, the suppression of dissonant voices is seen as protecting those members who find security in the formula, "When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done."⁵

The second change reflects the growth and bureaucratization of the church. Time constraints and managerial concerns require the general authorities to delegate tasks to subordinates among the headquarters staff and full-time and volunteer leaders in the field. This particularly complicates handling sensitive issues that impinge on intellectual free agency.

In the spirit of Anderson's recommendations, I now address the "Church Leadership" dimension of the problem before directing most of my advice and counsel to the LDS "Intellectual Community." I speak only to the policy of discouraging dissonance and some methods used to implement it. I intend no criticism of either church doctrines or individual leaders.

4. In April 1971 President Harold B. Lee warned against those who "profess to be religious and speak of themselves as Christians, and according to one such 'as accepting the scriptures only as sources of inspiration and moral truth,' and then ask in smugness: 'Do the revelations of God give us a handrail to the kingdom of God, as the Lord's messenger told Lehi, or merely a compass?'" The same sermon contains this definition: "A liberal in the church is merely one who does not have a testimony" ("The Iron Rod," *Ensign* 1 [June 1971]: 7).

5. "Sustaining the General Authorities of the Church," *Improvement Era*, June 1945, 354, as quoted in "A 1945 Perspective," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 19 (Spring 1986): 36. Asked to comment on this "Ward Teachers Message for June 1945," church president George Albert Smith replied, "I am pleased to assure you that you are right in your attitude that the passage quoted *does not express* the true position of the Church. Even to imply that members of the Church are not to do their own thinking is grossly to misrepresent the true ideal of the Church" (Smith to J. Raymond Cope, 7 Dec. 1945, *ibid.*, 38).

Certain tactics employed to discourage and suppress the expression of unauthorized ideas and constructive criticism are morally dubious. People under investigation or reproach are not confronted by their accusers, and sometimes they are inadequately informed of the grounds for being investigated or called to repent. Files of information, including untested allegations, are apparently maintained indefinitely. Bishops, stake presidents, and other line officers are sometimes given assignments that they do not understand or agree with, as several of the Anderson examples show. When they are asked to conceal the source of their assignment they are doubly misused. When the inquiry, reproof, or disciplinary action originates with one of the general authorities acting on his own or on a novel interpretation of an official assignment, the moral ambiguities proliferate. Enough of such actions have been reversed on appeal to show that no church calling exempts or insulates from errors of judgment. When the fair judgment of a dissonant sound—an alternate voice—requires that intent, context, and many other circumstances be taken into account, bureaucratic methods have severe limitations.

Particularly questionable, in my view, are cases in which temple recommends are recalled or jeopardized because of statements or other actions that have no conclusive relationship to temple worthiness. Having a recommend does not prove that one person is more virtuous, orthodox, or obedient than another. But it does demonstrate that church membership is important to the recommend holder, and it carries with it a right, within the stated criteria of recommend worthiness, to enjoy the freedoms extolled by President Gordon B. Hinckley in this admonition: "I plead with you, do not let yourselves be numbered among the critics, among the dissidents, among the apostates. That does not mean that you cannot read widely. . . . Fundamental to our theology is belief in individual freedom of inquiry, thought, and expression. Constructive discussion is a privilege of every Latter-day Saint."⁶

Because the withdrawal of a recommend ordinarily implies that unworthiness has been established by confession or ecclesiastical due process, the use of the recommend as a coercive instrument is inappropriate.

Moreover, the policy of inhibiting research, analysis, and expression, to the extent that it succeeds, deprives the church of a valuable resource. Many improvements in policies, programs, and even doctrinal understandings have come in response to ideas and activities born at the grass roots level. To discourage thoughtful and technically-skilled Mormons from applying talents and curiosity to church-related subjects, except when they have church callings to do so, is to obstruct a conduit by which the

6. Fireside address to young adults broadcast from Temple Square on 23 June 1985, quoted in the Anderson chronology.

oxygen of insight and inspiration flows to those who bear the responsibilities of institutional leadership.

Furthermore the policy of trying to discourage or suppress dissonant voices is in my view counterproductive. A church that encourages its adherents to seek knowledge by study and faith is unlikely to achieve homogeneity of thought or utterance, and repressive tactics simply elicit sympathy for, interest in, or hostility toward the targets of such measures. As the church grows and the leaven of the doctrine of free agency works among converts of many cultures, the number and variety of alternate voices is inevitably growing also. The recent appearance of the Lia-hona/Iron Rod article in a Japanese language publication is evidence.⁷

A second consequence of the antidissonance effort involves the understandable institutional concern about public image. When the misspelling of "potato" can generate headlines, anything that smacks of suppressing freedom of thought is bound to make news, particularly when individuals with solid professional and church credentials are involved. Illustrative is the media brouhaha generated by the public acknowledgement of the Strengthening Church Members Committee and the curious First Presidency statement of 13 August 1992 that cited D&C 123:1-6 to justify the committee's activities.⁸

In summary for both ethical and practical reasons, I stand with Anderson in urging a thoughtful review of the current institutional handling of alternate voices. When people are believed by those with pastoral responsibilities to be engaged in activities threatening the well-being of themselves or others, direct pastoral counseling is not only appropriate but mandated by church doctrine. But to the pursuit of knowledge, the exploration of ideas, and the exchange of findings in a nonconfrontational manner, the case of Peletiah Brown is still relevant. As the prophet Joseph said in 1843: "I did not like the old man being called up for erring in doctrine. It looks too much like the Methodist, and not like the Latter-day Saints. Methodists have creeds which a man must believe or be asked out of their church. I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please. It feels so good not to be trammelled."⁹

I turn now to the "LDS Intellectual Community." I will identify several components of that community, make a few specific observations and recommendations, and conclude with advice for all of us. The perspective

7. *Mormon Forum* (Yamaguchi, Japan: N.p., 1991), 6:22-29.

8. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Aug. 1992, D-1, and 14 Aug. 1992, B-1.

9. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), 5:340. Brown's views on the beasts "full of eyes before and behind" (Rev. 4:6) apparently produced a high council trial in Nauvoo.

derives from a long and fulfilling life as a meeting-attending, calling-accepting, testimony-bearing Mormon academic. It has persuaded me that we eggheads are partly responsible for the suspicion with which some Latter-day Saints—leaders and followers—look at us and that we can and should do something about it.

Academic, professional, and other intellectuals whose contributions to journals, symposia, mass media, college, and church classes sometimes disturb “Church Leadership” have sorted themselves into three groups:

1. Those who voluntarily qualify for temple recommends and at least occasionally use them.¹⁰

2. Those who are involved in the programs of the church but voluntarily elect not to seek temple recommends.

3. Those who identify with (and may know a lot about) Latter-day Saint culture but play no part in church programs.

We are also classifiable by self-perception and motivation:

1. We see ourselves as constructive critics, seeking to influence the content and direction of institutional change.

2. We see ourselves as disinterested observers, seeking to understand and describe the church.

3. We see ourselves as opponents of the church, seeking to undermine its influence and growth.

We may see ourselves as disinterested observers while seeking and sharing knowledge about church-related subjects and as constructive critics while using that knowledge to influence institutional change. My perception is that most church-involved Mormon intellectuals see themselves in this double role. That some representatives of the institutional church do not share this perception is clear from the Anderson paper.

Finally we are classifiable by the treatment we may expect from the institutional church and its leaders if our deportment is consistent with our status and intentions:

1. If we are hostile voices, we may and should expect to be opposed. This area of confrontation is outside the scope of this response.

2. If we are disinterested observers with unsanctioned messages, we may expect a different institutional response if we are or have been Mormons than if our pedigrees are non-LDS. Individuals in the latter category are likely to be ignored or treated with respect. They may even be quoted in church publications.¹¹ In contrast Latter-day Saints with this motivation

10. Individuals whose temple recommends have been withdrawn or withheld for the kinds of intellectual nonconformity described in the Anderson paper belong in this category.

11. See Jan Shipps, “Mormonism: An Independent Interpretation,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:937–41.

become suspect when they make dissonant sounds and particularly when they become favorite media sources. In my opinion it is very difficult for intellectuals with Mormon roots to be truly disinterested observers. A desire to defend the church or to legitimize criticism almost inevitably colors how observations and opinions are expressed. One sees it in both the Anderson paper and this commentary.

3. If we are or aspire to be constructive critics, then our reception will depend in part on our not gratuitously offending those within the church—followers as well as leaders—whom we seek to influence. Since any critical analysis, however circumspect, implies imperfection somewhere, the present institutional leaning toward concepts of prophetic infallibility, scriptural inerrancy, and obligatory conformity makes the pathway hazardous for even the most well-meaning alternate voices. Christ's advice to his disciples is fitting: "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

We validate our right to the exercise of freedom *within the church* by demonstrating that we value the church, the gospel, and the fellowship of the Saints. We accept callings in the Primary or Aaronic priesthood, whose only drawback is that we would rather do something else. We act as though we care. Herein lies one of the great values of a temple recommend. Almost all active Latter-day Saints adapt church doctrines and programs to their own needs, opinions, and lifestyles without becoming alienated from the church or from other Mormons. But eligibility for a temple recommend being currently the trademark of "good Mormons," we must decide how our remodeling plans bear on this fact. We will discover that this decision has far-reaching ramifications.

The Anderson cases illustrate one of these ramifications. Because of the presumptions associated with a temple recommend, dissonant sounds from recommend holders are especially perplexing, even threatening, to some church leaders. But those same presumptions make arbitrary treatment of such alternate voices especially troublesome and counterproductive, for the reasons discussed earlier. Arbitrary action does occur, as it has in previous generations, but what Anderson describes as the institutional commitment to "ideals of justice and fairness" increases the probability that her more egregious cases will be corrected in time if they have not been already.

I am not suggesting that a recommend should be seen as an insurance policy, either for this life or the next. Indeed my advice to anyone who now holds a recommend only because his job requires it is the same as my advice to anyone who would participate in Sunstone activities or write for *Dialogue* if her employer did not discourage it: look for a more compatible job.

What I *am* suggesting is that intellectuals who have meaningful ties with the church and aspire to combine the knowledge-seeking role of

disinterested observer with the participatory role of constructive critic should consider the relevance of a recommend to their own lives. When I consider what the church has meant to me and my loved ones and how the gospel—as I understand it—puts these lives in eternal perspective, my recommend is worth its price. Furthermore, obtaining and using it confirms *in my own conscience* the right to be a constructive critic—an alternate voice.

Now some specific advice on how to make your alternate voice more acceptable among church members—followers and leaders—who are now skeptical, even hostile.

I endorse Anderson's seven recommendations with these caveats:

1. The third, "We must defend each other," waves a red flag. We should not impulsively rally at every cry of persecution. I am convinced that most disciplinary actions for apostasy stem from behavior sufficiently aberrant to provide a weak foundation for a Mormon Dreyfus case. Furthermore, assailing the institutional ramparts is usually at cross-purposes with converting the defenders of the walls. Nailing 95 theses to the Wittenberg church door produced not reform but schism, and in his later reaction to the Peasants Revolt, Martin Luther demonstrated that he too could err in judgment.

2. The fifth, "We must be more proactive in dealing with our leaders," directs us to an insufficiently used option. One can understand why Latter-day Saints are encouraged to take their personal problems to their local leaders and still assert the right to direct questions and suggestions to those within the institutional hierarchy who have the power to evaluate and adopt worthwhile ideas. In his thoughtful analysis of "Criticism," Elder Oaks acknowledges the option "to communicate with the Church officer who has the power to correct or release the person thought to be in error or transgression."¹² The same option must surely be available when the error or inadequacy is thought to be in a policy, program, or doctrinal interpretation.

We spend too much time talking to each other, and our ideas reach beyond us through media accounts that understandably focus on the sensitive, the controversial, and the bizarre. We should respectfully and quietly add our messages to the informal feedback that undeniably affects the tempo, direction, and content of institutional change.

The other Anderson recommendations and conclusion lead directly to these closing suggestions:

We intellectuals should avoid giving the impression that we are obsessed with aspects of the church that need changing. For the sake of our own mental health as well as our public credibility, we should be aware of developments that show the dynamism, the competence, the diversity, and

12. *Ensign* 17 (Feb. 1987): 72.

the Christian caring that abounds at the ward, stake, mission, and general church levels. I find a lot of encouragement in the *Ensign*, which I read as thoroughly as I read the alternate voices. It shows that even the bureaucratic overreaction to Anderson's mistake did not homogenize the editorial staff or list of contributors. It also reminds me that people whose experience and temperament sustain relatively question-free testimonies find a lot of happiness and do a lot of good in and through the church.

We should avoid the dogmatism that we find offensive in some whom we criticize. Having doubts or questions about a church doctrine or policy is not the same as denying or rejecting it, nor does one inevitably lead to the other. Our academic mentors taught us that absence of proof does not constitute disproof, and our scriptures are full of reminders that we all "see through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. 13:12). Our documents and our data may require that we question, even discard, some of the institutional myths cherished by some of our brothers and sisters, but they do not justify arrogance or intolerance.

Finally, we should avoid giving the impression that we are smart alecks. "We . . . expect," says the program for the annual Sunstone symposium, "that everyone will approach all issues, no matter how difficult, with intelligence and good will." In my view too much intellectual discourse is deficient in the latter quality. We antagonize many who do not share our insights and perspectives by taking cheap shots for the sake of laughs. Mormons *are* a peculiar people, and our ability to laugh at ourselves is one of our collective strengths. But some of our humor is tinged with condescension, even malice. We make light of sacred things and dutiful people. Church leaders neither desire nor deserve our awe, but they are entitled to our respect. Unless we manifest good will, we cannot expect that our right to speak will be acknowledged or that what we say will be listened to.

Encouraged by the apostle Paul's observation, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:6), let us respond to Anderson's appeal for mutual repentance. Thus we may help to produce a Mormon chorus in which all of the singers hear the dissonant sounds of the alternate voices as polyphonic enrichment of the message of the music.



Snowy Night

Lisa Bolin Hawkins

Whose poem this is, I think I know—
New England bard of spring and snow,
But eighth-grade teachers don't explain
The depths to which the poets go.

They speak of symbols and of sleep
And cheerful promises to keep,
But not of ample-bosomed banks
Of snow to rest in, lovely, deep.

With one slap you might send to farm
That jingling horse—he'd meet no harm—
Then walk the woods midst downy flake,
Tense, shivering, then relaxed and warm,

And then you might lie down to sleep—
Give promises to stars to keep.
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.

Notes for a Son, 19, Living Abroad

Dixie Lee Partridge

Often when entering sleep
I start awake, your form having drifted
into vision, your name embedded
in the thickness of my tongue.
Recurring dreams move me through foreign streets
where I spot you in alleyways
and turn back to find you.

Sleep becomes a hard labor
toward things unsettled between us,
until what we never did
becomes more real than what happened.
I tell no one that each morning
my body has more weight, enters stark light
moving with the terrible caution
of the infirm, walks through the day's tasks
expecting my hands to move through
the cup or the desk-top
as though they were dreamed there.

At last a routine in your absence
takes hold; things seem solid again
in their places.
But the house tries to resurrect
more of your presence.
The piano stays tuned
for the classic and ragtime fortissimo
of your style.

To telephone voices that inquire
for you, I want to explain both
that you are gone, and that something of you
remains, waits for your body light
to enliven what's real
and make it whole.

Liberal Spirituality: A Personal Odyssey

L. Jackson Newell

The broad ethics of Jesus were quickly narrowed to village theologies, which preached an election or favoritism. . . . So far as a man thinks, he is free.

—Emerson

Now let us frankly face the fact that our culture is one which is geared in many ways to help us evade any need to face this inner, silent self.

—Thomas Merton

“LIBERAL SPIRITUALITY” IS THE TITLE and theme of this essay. A double entendre is intended—suggesting the interdependence of a *free* and *abundant* spiritual life. My aim is to explore the nature and possibilities of liberal spirituality by reflecting on some of the key experiences and major ideas that have shaped my philosophy. I am concerned here with the essential values at the core of religious experience, a state of mind and an approach to life. The Mormon church has been but one of the anvils against which I have forged my identity.

CONTRASTING LEGACIES

A Latter-day Saint heritage—family and church—can be powerful and good. Temple-centered, missionary-disciplined, and authority-anchored, there is a vision and structure to it that often gives meaning and strength to peoples’ lives. Our son Eric, a missionary in Louisiana’s bayou country, is seeing the transformative power of this theology and culture as he works with prospective members and new converts to Mormonism there. “The

church is certainly different here than it is in Utah," he writes, "people change so much when they find some direction for their lives." He notices joy in eyes that seemed vacant only weeks or months before.

Among my Utah-born, Mormon-bred friends, I see the blessings of such conversions generations back down the family tree. Some of them represent Mormon traditions and culture at its best. In their lives I see generosity of spirit, devotion to the well-being of others, self-discipline, loyalty to the church, and much more. It is all there, it is all tied together, and it springs from a noble (for the most part) pioneer legacy. This way of life is often reinforced by a powerful family ethic. I recently wrote such a friend, our pediatrician and now our bishop, Ted Evans: "Whether up a generation or down a generation, people like you make the Mormon community work. You inspire me, you have blessed our family in many ways, and you make the world a better place. I owe you a great debt." I know this culture well—after thirty years it is mine too—and I love and respect it.

I sprang from a very different heritage, but a similarly powerful and good one. Mother's family was largely Catholic, Dad's mainly Protestant, and our Ohio home was the gathering place for scores of Wahlenmaiers and Newells scattered across the midwest and beyond. Mother and Dad welded them all together as one big, loving family, and we children were taught—by example and by precept—to judge others by the content of their character, not the contour of their theology.

My school and community reflected the religious diversity within my family. One-quarter of my classmates were staunch members of the Church of the Brethren or Dunkard Brethren (akin to the Amish), while some were Catholic, and many were one sort of Protestant or another. We were among the latter; that is, sort of Protestant. There was no dominant religion among my classmates, nor were there divisions among children based on church affiliation.

Dad's father earned his Bachelor of Divinity degree from Bonebrake Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and was ordained a Methodist minister there in his late thirties. Shortly thereafter, doctors concluded that Grandmother had tuberculosis and, in the interest of her health, they advised the young family to go west. Within weeks my grandparents pulled up stakes and moved with their four young sons to Colorado. In the autumn of 1902 no Protestant church near Denver lacked a pastor, so Granddad resumed what he had known best as a youth, carpentry and farming.

Shortly before Grandmother died in 1907, Granddad homesteaded in the Rockies in the shadow of mighty Longs Peak. She had chosen the place. Granddad built a successful ranch and farm operation, raised his four sons alone, and for many years preached as a Sunday circuit rider in remote

frontier settlements. Thomas VanBuren Newell died with his boots on at age 95. I was in college at the time, and I revered him.

Dad emerged from this heritage, hopped the Burlington Express Railroad to Ohio in 1919, and enrolled at Otterbein College. He later studied medicine at Ohio State University and practiced medicine in New York and Dayton for fifty years. Three of Dad's six siblings (two brothers and a sister were born after Granddad remarried in his sixties) also earned doctoral degrees. This is the Newell family saga, just like the handcarts belong to many of you.

Mother's influence was equally compelling. Her mother was Catholic; her father, Protestant. Grandmother died when Mother was seven. On her deathbed, responding to the competing pleas of Catholic and Protestant kinfolk to let them raise Mother according to their religious persuasions, Grandmother stated flatly: "I don't care what religion Henrietta follows, I just want her to grow up to be a good woman."

Protestant Grandfather deferred to the wishes of his in-laws, and Mother agreed to attend the Catholic church at least through catechism—the course of doctrinal study then completed a youth's early teens. Mother made good on her end of the bargain, but, following her Catechism passage at thirteen, she declared her religious independence and forged her own faith. Weary of doctrinal contentions, she opted instead for a deep personal spirituality that exuded reverence for God, for life, and for learning.

Mother earned a bachelor's degree at Ohio State University, took a master's from Stanford University in 1927, and returned to Ohio as a school teacher and clinical professor. A seemingly universal acceptance and unselfish service to others defined her personal and professional existence. When Ohio State initiated its Distinguished Alumni awards in her college in 1952, Mother was the first to receive that honor. This is my Wahlenmaier heritage.

From both sides of my family, then, I inherited a passion for freedom, a love of education, and a sense of obligation to enhance the dignity of human life. My liberal spirituality, and that of my family, arose primarily from a love of noble ideals—justice, mercy, forgiveness, equality, and truth—rather than from religious doctrines or church leaders.

Obedience to authority was never held up as a value, though respect for others, including authorities, surely was. Where an LDS child typically grows up with "Follow the brethren!" I grew up with "Do what you believe is right!" These are sharply contrasting principles.

Mother, my two sisters, and I went to the local Methodist church almost every Sunday, but it was the inspiration of great hymns, the camaraderie with good friends, and the insights from an occasional fine sermon that kept us going. At home, we talked about ideas and principles over dinner and noted how they affected the actions of public figures, neighbors, and

friends. We had a keen sense of gratitude for what we knew and how we lived, despite our share of tragedies. Tears of joy were natural among us; tears from grief the same. Stoic Dad excepted.

The distant heroes in my childhood home were Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, Helen Keller and Eleanor Roosevelt, Douglas MacArthur and Mohandas Gandhi (now there is diversity). The intimate heroes were my grandparents, several aunts and uncles, and . . . professors. Mother and Dad both told splendid stories about the professors who had inspired them with a love of truth and a concern for the human condition.

I had similarly powerful experiences as an undergraduate, first through the self-governing and self-sufficient community of unique Deep Springs College, then as a senior at Ohio State University in Harold Grimm's history courses on the European Renaissance and Protestant Reformation. Professor Grimm raised my sights and fired my imagination. I walked out of his classes knowing who I was and what I wanted to become.

Given my background, my choice of profession may not surprise you, though my conversion to the LDS church as a Duke University graduate student might. But it shouldn't. Joining the Mormon church was a natural outgrowth of a youthful search for truth, a college roommate, Richard Haynie, whose Mormon home had been much like my own, and an LDS church presidency that included a vigorous David O. McKay and Hugh B. Brown. It all fit together: I was religiously liberal (though politically conservative at the time) and so were the Mormons I knew best—as well as those who spoke for the church. That was thirty years ago.

SEARCH FOR MEANING

I turn now to another stream of thought and experience that has influenced my perspective on contemporary culture and lent strength to my notion of liberal spirituality. Having taught college students for twenty-eight years—through the Great Society, the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement, Watergate, Reaganomics, and the Gulf War—I have seen (arranged alphabetically) altruism, cynicism, hedonism, idealism, radicalism, and every other “-ism” on the faces and in the actions of my students. Through my students, as well as through the history, education, and human values we study together, I have seen the twentieth-century crisis-of-confidence across a wide spectrum. That modern culture is, to an alarming degree, mired in materialism and spiritually starved, I have no doubt.

No, I do not look back to the halcyon days of an earlier and better time, nor, with Walt Whitman,¹ do I believe that human nature changes for the

1. From “Song of Myself” in *Leaves of Grass* I have often found perspective

better or for the worse. For one thing I see inspiring examples of community-mindedness and love-for-others every day, often among my students—representing a wide range of religious and nonreligious beliefs. But we in our time are struggling mightily to comprehend our place in the universe after several centuries of revolutionary advances in knowledge, technology, and economic production.

Who can look around this nation or the globe today without seeing the growing chasms between rich and poor, illusion and reality, spiritual values and socio-economic facts. Some scramble for fortunes, others simply to survive, but few are spared the ache of doubting their worth, their direction, or our collective future.

Rapid change and social instability frequently precipitate a flight to the extremes of religious fundamentalism and political fanaticism on the one hand, and of cynicism and alienation on the other. Evidences of both of these polarities are everywhere within the LDS leadership and membership, just as they are everywhere else.² Abandoning the middle ground of *reason, trust, and hope* augers ill for human dignity, democratic institutions, and genuine spirituality.

Many scholars and social critics have tried to make sense of contemporary affairs. Among them, two have offered ideas and perspectives that provide especially useful insights to me as a teacher and as a person. What follows is a short ramble through the works of Joseph Campbell and Ernest Becker, with references to related thinkers and illustrations from my own experience. Campbell and Becker are important to me not because their logic or evidence are airtight but because they continue to stimulate my thinking and raise questions I like to ponder.

LIFE AS HEROIC JOURNEY

Having read Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* several times (and other books by and about him), I am increasingly impressed with the sweep of his knowledge and the power of his insights concerning human nature.³ Joseph Campbell died in 1987, in his early eighties, ac-

in these lines: "There was never any more inception than there is now, nor any more youth or age than there is now, and will never be any more perfection than there is now, nor any more heaven or hell than there is now."

2. A friend read a draft of this essay and remarked that church *leaders* are not found on the cynical side of this divide. I disagree. For example, naming an official (but secret) group charged with collecting personal information and keeping secret files on liberal members of the church "The Committee to Strengthen the Membership" is an unmistakably cynical and ironic act.

3. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton

claimed as the world's foremost authority on the myths and tales of human civilizations. Throughout history, Campbell claimed, myths have cropped up all over the world about the origins of life, the nature of our existence, and the struggle to find meaning in our individual lives. These myths reveal a surprisingly common vision of the purpose and meaning of human life. They have instructed us as individuals, and they have bound tribes and societies together. These culture-conveying stories appear in the oral traditions of "primitive" tribes, in the teachings of the prophets of the world's great religions, and in the celebrated literature (including sacred scriptures) of every society. Campbell regards the common insights at the core of these myths as "messages from the cosmos." In this regard, his conclusions parallel those of philosopher Huston Smith who wrote the classic comparative study, *The Religions of Man*.

What are these seemingly universal myths, and what messages do they convey? They tell us that life in this world is full of dangers and opportunities, that it is temporary, that "another world" (lasting and spiritual in nature) exists beyond this one—and that we get to it by mastering challenges we face here. If we attain the highest consciousness possible in this life, which we might call wisdom, then we get a glimpse of the world beyond.

Joseph Campbell also believes, with Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung (especially Jung, who saw dreams as messages that our subconscious sends forth to help us comprehend our problems), that our subconscious minds harbor versions of eternal archetypes for living—images that are distorted by our unique personal experiences since birth. The role of myths and theologies, therefore, is to provide more pure versions of the universal archetypes that lurk foggily in our minds. (Plato would, no doubt, be pleased.)

At the moment that our personal visions snap into focus and synchronize with the "true forms," we transcend our individual and parochial limitations and gain an unbounded consciousness. This is "the moment of release" from our individualistic imprisonment into universal experience. Campbell describes this experience as "moving from the morals of one's time to the morals of one's art." Campbell continues, "Where we had thought to be alone, we will be with the whole world . . . life is henceforth enjoyed as the encasement of eternity."

Others, too, have captured this exquisite idea. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his 1841 essay, "The Over-Soul," about "that Unity . . . within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all others; that common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship,

University Press, 1972). Also see Campbell's *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1988).

to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains everyone to pass for what he is, and to speak for his own character and not from his tongue."⁴ Catholic mystic Thomas Merton, in his essay "Love and Solitude," claims that "He is truly alone who is wide open to heaven and earth and closed to no one." Yet "our projects, our exploitations, and our machinery" have alienated us from both heaven and earth.⁵

Whatever the words used or the explanations offered, the peaks in our consciousness that transcend our mental and physical boundaries are the essence of spirituality, and those who experience them—be they Christian or Jew, Muslim or agnostic—describe a reordering of their values and priorities and a feeling of freedom beyond freedom. Where and how are such epiphanies achieved?

According to Campbell, each of us embarks on a life journey that is all our own. But our separate journeys have common steps. The world's great myths all describe these steps by telling of heroes' lives. The stories may be about real people (Mohammed or Brigham Young) or fictitious characters (Greek gods or characters in novels), but they all reveal the elements of a successful life in a similar way. The insights contained in these myths are the "messages from the cosmos" bearing moral truths; they are the substance of wisdom. Campbell uses the phrase, "the hero with a thousand faces," to remind us that every human being dreams dreams for her future and faces challenges and fears in his life that are unique. Yet each of us faces tasks that demand courage and perseverance, and each of us may negotiate our journey successfully. Agony and grief, Campbell claims, "is being without an inner call or an outer doctrine."

How do we avoid such misery? What are the elements of a successful life journey? This is how Campbell and others describe the milestones along the trail:

Loss of Innocence. At this initial stage, we discover that the world is not as it should be, that no one is perfect, and that life isn't fair. We encounter unanticipated ambiguities, paradoxes, and ironies. Insecurity, fear, and terror enter our lives, starting with early childhood and mounting in scope. Fears of death, injury, failure, humiliation—they all haunt us. We lose our bearings and our confidence wanes; we are "out of synch." Accidents happen. Our subconscious harbors these demons, seeming to hold onto them even as our conscious mind treasures our cherished memories. We have nightmares, anxiety attacks, and turn to various, often self-destructive

4. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1982), 206.

5. Thomas Merton, *Love and Living* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985).

tive, means to escape our discomfort. William Perry has traced this slide into the pit with unusual insight.⁶

The Summons or Call. Sooner or later, we hear a call from within ourselves to “venture into the dark forest,” to carry out our dangerous mission or do a specific and difficult piece of work. This inner summons urges us to reach beyond our safety zone, our comfortable limits. If we take courage and accept the challenge, the gods will assist us. Refuse the call, and we become victims. If we falter, opportunity will pass—perhaps never to return. Growth and wisdom will escape us.

As Emerson and Merton reminded us, when we are most completely in solitude we suddenly become aware of our connectedness to everyone and everything else in the universe. But you have to get beyond the clatter of this world to hear these voices and sense these connections. One’s summons or call ushers from within, but some believe it is prompted by ethereal contacts between our minds and the larger consciousness. If we answer the call, our heroic journey begins.

The Threshold, the Battle, and the Initiation. Demons await us in the forest, and the guardians of the deep lurk behind obstacles. Armed with courage and knowledge, we cross the threshold and challenge these monsters—whether they be real or imagined. Now in harmony with the forces of the cosmos, we discover that “hidden hands assist us” and we find a way to prevail, though the battle may be long and pitched. Our enemies the demons finally recognize our heroic qualities, come to respect our courage and perseverance, and accept us. We are then initiated into a new world, a higher level of experience.

The Triumph. Having successfully negotiated the dark forest, we are reborn and “released” to move freely and without fear to explore and understand the world beyond our previous horizons. This is a peak experience, an atonement, in that we become “at one” with the universe. The former self, racked with anxiety and preoccupied with conflict, “dies,” and the new self is born. This emerging hero surrenders herself or himself humbly to truth and love, and gradually ceases to struggle with the dualistic conflicts that, until now, loomed so prominently in life.

Asian religion and philosophy offer insights here as we overcome the Cartesian dualism (the split between mind and matter, facts and values) on which the Western World built its scientific and technological mastery. Merton described the epiphany one experiences when basic polarities are resolved as an “explosion which happens as all opposites clash within oneself.”⁷

6. William G. Perry, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

7. Merton, 10.

A CREDO OF LIBERAL SPIRITUALITY

The “explosion” Merton describes creates a new spiritual and mental synthesis that defines the credo of liberal spirituality:

- Life and death are interrelated, each leading to the other.
- The divine and the human are no longer separate, but divinity can dwell in every soul.
- Work and play lose their distinction as our work becomes our pleasure.
- Leading and following are inseparable acts (the master must be the servant).
- Freedom cannot be attained without self-discipline.
- Stability is not possible without reasonable change; reasonable change is not possible without stability.
- Communities cannot be healthy unless their members are genuinely free and individuality is respected.
- Loyalty may demand criticism; criticism may be an act of loyalty.
- Liberty and equality, seemingly opposites, must be joined in the interests of justice and mercy.
- Terror can be the precursor of joy.
- Teaching and learning are inseparably connected.
- The child returns to live in the adult, as wonder and awe return to the soul.
- Blessings may come disguised as curses.
- Our body, mind, and spirit are no longer at odds with one another, but in each other’s service.
- Other human beings can no longer be classified easily as educated or ignorant, friends or foes, good or bad—though there are certainly good and evil acts.

When this mental and spiritual transformation occurs, heaven and earth are joined, our inner and outer worlds merge, we are in harmony with the universe. Reaching this understanding is the triumph.

The Return. To know and to understand are not sufficient: wisdom joins truth with action. The hero’s final task is to return to the world as it exists, but to live in it according to his or her wisdom. Personal integrity requires living among—and loving—people who accept other assumptions and rules, but fully honoring your own principles, your hard-won understanding. Whether this return brings anonymity or fame is now beside the point; success is internal, joy is internal, and the hero has completed his or her journey.

The returned hero will “make his or her offering” (make a difference), whether it is widely recognized by contemporaries or not. Mother Teresa is famous, Otto and Rosa Schloss (my ninety-year-old neighbors who

sponsored seven refugee families on custodian's wages) are not. Each has changed the world for the better, neither measures success by what others notice. The hero may fear dying, but not death. The universe is a friendly place; another world awaits.

LIVING IN OUR TIME

How do these notions inform our lives and our times? How do we know today, in this era that has so discounted and discarded myths, what our journey entails? Where do young people learn what a good life will require of them? In the past, theologies and cultural myths provided the patterns and taught essential moral truths—though each child faced unique struggles and was ultimately left alone to hear the summons and find the courage to make her journey.

The rise of science, the coming of technology and industrialization, and rampant hedonistic individualism have stripped us of our life-orienting myths and cut twentieth-century humans adrift without compass or chart. As a result, our fears and anxieties loom larger, while we lack the truly heroic images that once offered courage and hope. "God has nowhere to hide," Campbell asserts, due to our excessive trust in sensory knowledge and rational methods.

Without archetypes for living nobly—real or mythological heroes—our subconscious minds ramble out of control without means to school them, and fanaticism has a field day. Faced with changes, conflicts, and perils that we cannot easily understand, contemporary humans are attracted to nazism, fundamentalism, and other extremist ideologies in our desperate quest for stability. And we flock to psychoanalysts to purge our demons. The modern world has created for some a precarious material paradise that is locked within a mental and spiritual hell.

How does this view differ from twentieth-century existentialism? Campbell is like the Christian existentialists, but he goes further—believing that the universe is purposeful and that the cosmos (God) instructs and supports human beings in their life struggles. The great myths conveyed these larger truths, he says, but we have destroyed their vehicles and they no longer reach inner lives.

A cultural and personal transformation is needed to restore our spiritual equilibrium. The great nation-states cannot lead this reformation, they have bought the technological panacea completely. Authoritarian churches cannot do it, they have become religious corporations—seeking secular power and defending ideological territory, striving less to liberate than to control the faithful. Psychoanalysts cannot, they deal chiefly at the individual level, and then generally as a cure rather than a preventive.

SEEKING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

What does Ernest Becker, author of *The Denial of Death* and *Escape from Evil*, add to this sobering conclusion?⁸ In this Pulitzer Prize-winning 1973 book he tries to make sense of the knowledge-explosion of the last two centuries. Becker's work is especially pertinent here, because he takes up just where Campbell left off—by examining the works of the social scientists whose research and ideas have well-nigh destroyed the mythological traditions around the globe.

Having dispatched the myths, Becker claims, we have been left without a context to understand death. Unsure of an afterlife, we are preoccupied with death and the prospect of eternal anonymity or oblivion. Modern humans, therefore, are pathetically beset with anxiety and obsessed with symbols that might assure our personal endurance. To fill the breach, we have turned to *psychoanalysis*⁹ to deal with our fears, to *materialism* to validate our personal significance, and to *fame* to perpetuate our individual achievements. Fearing death, we have lost our joy in living. Fear without solace, materialism without conscience, and individualism without community—these are the tragedies of our modern human condition.

In our crises, personal and societal, we are now lured by “-isms” or ideologies (political and/or religious) because they appear to offer pre-packaged sources of knowledge and power into which we can tap. Yet the longer we rely on these ready-made ideologies and borrow meaning and energy from their doctrines, the less likely we are to develop a vital, personal spirituality. Becoming comfortable with a form of spirituality structured and defined by others, we gradually lose the capacity to develop a rich and textured spiritual life of our own. Fearing to venture out, to trust our own experience and powers, we may never become truly ourselves or fully secure with life. We remain perpetually vulnerable to the fortunes of

8. Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1973); also his *Escape from Evil* (New York: Free Press, 1975).

9. Several readers of this essay noted that I seem critical of psychoanalysts. Actually, I have great respect for what they do and the contribution they make to our society. My point, and Becker's, I believe, is that other institutions like family and church, and simple lasting friendships, are not providing the psychological support they once offered to individuals. Coupled with the loss of mythology, this downward shift in life-sustaining relationships results in painful loneliness and anxiety. Psychoanalysis is an important and legitimate response to these conditions. Further, of course, there are now and always have been short-term and long-term personality disorders that no amount of friendship or community support is capable of addressing. Professional counseling or psychiatric treatment can be of great benefit to individuals and to society in these cases.

an institution and our relationship with it—with all the ups and downs of church policies, politics, personalities.

Becker's own journey was punctuated by a "terrifying interlude" in his thirties when he recognized that he was "living on second-hand knowledge" of the essential things. He finally accepted the necessity of shifting to the development of, and reliance upon, his own relationship with the universe. In the end, Becker concluded that God exists, that "there are tremendous creative forces in the universe," and that we must "give ourselves up to these larger forces." This he repeated on his deathbed at the age of forty-nine. Gaining a receptiveness to God and accepting natural forces in our individual lives is what Becker calls "genuine religiosity." It ushers from within us, though it has been inspired from without.

In contrast, Becker explains, fundamental and evangelical religions breed dependence on authorities and doctrines, and cause their believers to experience a restricted spiritual life, orchestrated for purposes of control by others rather than to encourage a healthy and complete relationship with God. Love and community are spontaneous manifestations of the individual soul when genuine religiosity is present. In fundamentalist contexts, however, these qualities must be documented as the price a believer pays for salvation. The first is anchored in love, the second may be anchored in fear.

In sum, Becker analyzes in much greater depth what has happened since humans have been left without their life-directing, meaning-giving myths. Campbell struggles to tell us what we had and how we let it slip away. Becker tries to explain how we have coped after the loss and why we act as we do now. Both agree that contemporary humans are in grave danger of self-destruction, but each also believes that higher forces are present in the universe.

The question is whether or not we can clear the clutter from our lives (the projects, the electronic noises and images, the incessant trivialities around us that Merton enumerated) long enough to regenerate a free and abundant spirituality. A spiritual life that recognizes our connections with one another, with nature, and with God . . . a spirituality that springs from within (even as it may be inspired from without), that cannot be schooled to fit institutional boundaries, and that places ends before means.

IDEAS AND EVENTS CONVERGE

It may be tempting for a Latter-day Saint (or any other believer) to respond to these ideas with a confident shrug. "We don't doubt our worth, we're children of God." "We have heroic archetypes in our theology and sacred scriptures, and they seem to be just what others have lost." "We know God like no others do!"

But look at the evidence if you think we are spared the doubt and malaise of those around us. Consider Becker's three manifestations of spiritual distress: LDS people seem to need psychotherapy at about the same rate that others do, materialism thrives in Zion like everywhere else, and Mormons seek and celebrate fame and power as though there were no tomorrow.

Sure, Mormons are made of the same stuff as everyone else (back to Walt Whitman), and we are subject to the same forces and problems. But if our religion provided the answers that many claim it does, or if our spiritual health were what we think it is, or wish it were, then it ought to show more than anyone can reasonably claim it does.

One element of this problem, I believe, is that the Mormon church has so limited its definitions of spirituality, service, loyalty, and even the manifestations of deity, that it often stifles the natural religiosity of its members, while at the same time making it increasingly difficult for others to call it home at all. Echoing the flight from the center that I described above, more members than ever are becoming "church-broke fundamentalists," while others are increasingly alienated and forced to the sidelines, taking their talents and insights with them. These twin tendencies signal an unhealthy community life—both within the church and as we influence the larger American and global cultures. This polarization is, in truth, a dangerous omen.

The lack of widespread LDS protest over the church's escalating attempts to squash *Sunstone*, *Dialogue*, *Exponent II*, and other independent voices should not be misread by church authorities. Indeed, some members are *giving in* to the church's attempts to bridle their curiosity and restrict their freedom to read and think widely. But increasing numbers are also *giving up* on the church because it seeks to narrow their horizons. A decade or two ago LDS college students who entertained creative or unorthodox ideas sought to express their views and to find ways to reconcile them with the church's teachings and practices. These were acts of courage and fidelity. Now, increasingly, I see these students simply disengaging and wandering off.

I have many LDS friends who have known a religious heritage much like my own, and who see the world much as I do. I'll be brash: The Mormon church needs people like us—on the edges, nonconforming, Dialoguing, Sunstoning. We *are* the reasonable middle ground. Spiritually liberal. Liberally spiritual. I like those two words together. They belong together. And they belong to the human race.

My world view, and my four-generation family legacy of liberal spirituality, once found room and even nourishment within the LDS church. But as today's Mormon leaders hammer their iron ring of orthodoxy ever

tighter, I no longer slip within its hoop—wet or dry. My beliefs and experiences not only spill over the edges, they take other shapes.

Night Myths

Dixie Lee Partridge

Sleepless with fever,
under one small lamp you stared
at a cherrywood cabinet, dark whorls
spiraled like galaxies and polished
to hold any light.
What your eyes saw and what they imagined
became equal in that space, circled
in immense night by the lamp's halo.

In the six-foot span of wood
you found no seams or scars,
though surely they were there,
part of elf faces and falling streams,
cliffs shaggy with moss.
It didn't matter whether visions
came from fever or from some code
tapped in the wood grain—
they floated you through wilderness droughts
of childhood, where lodgepole and aspen
grew thinly upon slopes;
near forest flowers
that bloom for one day only,
whose pale names you could not recall.
They rose even from the patchwork:
Grandmother's scraps seamed
into oak leaves—calico cotton.

You know about conceits, the ego
seeing itself linked
with plants. So those nights
as you moved into wood after wood
you repeated words like ritual:
Arms are not limbs, emptied.
Blood is not sap
relearning the climb. Fallen trees
leave no bones
dissolving into forest floors.
You are only an ill mind straining at blackness
under a small, incandescent light.

A Plea to the Leadership of the Church: Choose Love Not Power

Paul James Toscano

ONE OF THE IRONIES OF MY LIFE is that I decided in 1963 to leave the Catholic church as it was becoming more open to join the Mormon church as it was becoming more closed. This irony has been brought home to me repeatedly during the past several general conferences. We have been told again and again by prominent general authorities that members who think or discuss unapproved or controversial religious ideas or who disagree with or dissent from the official church position, whether individually or in groups, are being contentious and should not be encouraged by church leaders at any level. We have also been told that criticism of leadership, however valuable in a secular context, is not to be tolerated within the church where leaders are chosen by God, speak for him, and can be trusted over alternate voices to impart the truth about doctrine, church governance, and the way to live in order to obtain the rewards of the celestial kingdom.

As I have listened to and later read these messages, I have concluded that the cumulative effect—whatever individual motives may be—is to facilitate exercise over the Saints of the very control, compulsion, and unrighteous dominion God forbids in church revelations (see D&C 121). In fact I felt more and more convinced that such ideas must be corrected or at least questioned. So I began making notes for this essay. As I did so I thought at first that I should address myself to all Mormons. For we are all—and I especially include myself—subject to the subtle, dangerous, and widespread temptation to control, coerce, manipulate, dominate, and compel others. But as I considered again the statements made in general conferences, I decided to address my remarks specifically to the Brethren—the general authorities of the church—as a group rather than as individuals. In doing this I speak principally for myself and possibly for those who feel as I do.

Brethren, I assume that my words will somehow be brought to your attention and that you will eventually read this plea. I know it is unusual for a lay member of the church to address you directly in public. I understand too that you may feel I am being presumptuous, inappropriate, and impertinent—though I do not wish to be. You may even be tempted to discipline me. Or you may decide to ignore me and relegate me to the ranks of those whose “basket shall not be full” and whose houses and barns “shall perish” (D&C 121:20). I fervently hope, Brethren, that you will do none of these things—even if what I say wounds your feelings or embarrasses you or causes you to feel anger. Please try to accept that I and others have had our feelings hurt by you, have been embarrassed by you, have been angered by you. Yet in spite of this, we continue to listen to you. Please listen in return. The time has come for us to stop talking past one another and to communicate directly with one another.

I am also aware, Brethren, that you are likely to brand these remarks, or even my desire to be heard, as contentious. Contention, you have repeatedly warned, is of the devil and should be avoided. But this is not really true; contention is not always evil. The apostle Paul writes, “at Philippi, we were bold . . . to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention” (1 Thess. 2:2). The scripture says that Michael the archangel contended with the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 1:9). To Isaiah the Lord said, “I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children” (49:25). And in D&C 90:36 we read: “I, the Lord, will contend with Zion, and plead with her strong ones, and chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me.”

Contention is not evil if it means to plead, to argue, to bring forth strong reasons, or simply to contradict. This type of contention is an inevitable part of growth, of working through differences, of approaching harmony and truth. What the scriptures condemn as contention is not verbal disputation but physical violence or the creation of schisms in the church. In the Book of Mormon, “contention” usually means an armed skirmish or battle. We are told, for example, that Alma and “his guards, contended with the guards of the king of the Lamanites until he slew and drove them back” (Alma 2:33). Here contention means “combat” not argument. This is why it is so often coupled with “war,” as in “wars and contentions” (48:20). Jesus warns against the outbreak of such contention—or “conflict”—as a result of doctrinal disputes (3 Ne. 11:28-30). Doctrinal disputes should not lead to violence or divisions in the church. The point of Jesus’ teaching is that even if we cannot agree on doctrine or on the interpretation of scripture or on church policy or governance, we can at least avoid renouncing or rejecting or alienating those who disagree with us.

Contention aimed at uncovering truth or struggling toward unity is good, just as constructive criticism is good. It may involve hard words and

emotions and may necessitate cooling-off periods, but its purpose is benevolent. Contention aimed at dividing the church, at renouncing and rejecting as evil those who disagree with us, at rendering our opponents powerless, at dismissing them as inferior or worthless, or at inciting people to violent acts is not good, just as destructive criticism is not good. No matter how calmly and courteously it is advanced, its purpose is malevolent.

Brethren, before you judge those you think are contentious, ask yourselves if you are not also contentious? Who has divided the church into leaders and followers, intellectuals and mainstream members, believers and liberals, true voices and alternate voices, active Mormons and inactive Mormons? To label, renounce, stigmatize, or reject your fellow Saints because we disagree with you or cannot accept all you want us to accept is the kind of contention and divisiveness Jesus warned against. And not Jesus only. Joseph Smith said: "I will give you one of the Keys of the mysteries of the Kingdom. It is an eternal principle, that has existed with God from all eternity: That man who rises up to condemn others, finding fault with the Church, saying that they are out of the way, while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly, that that man is in the high road to apostasy; and if he does not repent, will apostatize, as God lives."¹ This famous statement, made by the prophet on 2 July 1839, is often quoted to members who are critical of you as a warning that criticism can lead to apostasy. But this twists the original meaning and purpose of the statement. Joseph Smith did not say these words to church members who were critical of their leaders. He said them to church leaders—to apostles and seventies—who were critical of church members. He warned leaders of the church not to put themselves above others, not to condemn others, not to find fault with the church, not to say that members are out of the way while leaders are righteous.

Brethren, you ignore this warning whenever you create, maintain, or reinforce categories of church membership or attempt to classify people as intellectuals, liberals, or dissidents. We all do it whenever we believe there are people whom we esteem as less valuable than ourselves, whose voices we do not have to hear—people who must listen to us but who have no right to be heard. We violate Joseph Smith's warning whenever we insist on the use of titles to distinguish leaders from followers. Did not Jesus instruct us not to call each other by titles? We are brothers and sisters, children of Christ. We are equals and our relationship to one another arises out of love not power. This is true even of our relationship to God, to whom we pray not by any title but in the name or by the name of Jesus.

We have been told to esteem our brothers and sisters as ourselves. This

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 156.

type of equality lies at the heart of the golden rule. Unfortunately, my experience in the church causes me to wonder: Do you Brethren believe the golden rule applies to you? Do you treat others as you would wish to be treated? Do you accord others the scope and privileges you claim for yourselves?

Brethren, please do not avoid these questions and admonitions simply because they may be couched in critical terms. Jesus did not put himself above his critics. Is it not a form of tyranny for you to forbid us from complaining about the quality of your leadership? Yes, we should not speak evil of you falsely. In fact we should not speak evil falsely of anyone. But I believe I have not spoken falsely of you—even if I have spoken bluntly. My criticism is meant to help rather than to harm you. In spite of this, I know that some may feel that these remarks are damaging—to my faith and to the faith of others. After all, you will say, if all this needed saying, we have a prophet to say it. The Lord would speak through his prophet and not suffer us to be lead astray. But, Brethren, this only means that the Lord has promised to remove a prophet who attempts to lead the church astray. It does not mean that we cannot go astray on our own, without being led. It does not mean that church leaders are always right and on the right course. It does not mean that we can be complacent, that we can simply turn the church over to a few men and never worry about it again. It does not mean that our leaders are above making mistakes and falling into errors and temptations. Prophets can be and have been wrong. Though Aaron was called by God, was it not he who built the golden calf? Did not Moses also make mistakes? He not only murdered an Egyptian and sought to govern Israel as an autocrat but was later forbidden to enter the promised land because he and Aaron had failed to trust in God in the wilderness of Zin (Num. 20:12; 27:13). Remember too that Peter, the chief apostle, not only denied Christ three times but could not find the courage to send the gospel to the gentiles for nearly twenty years after the Lord had told him to do so. Eventually the Holy Spirit, no longer willing to endure the intransigence of the church leadership, set apart Paul and Barnabas to commence this work. More recently Spencer W. Kimball and other general authorities failed to recognize that the “Salamander Letter,” the Joseph Smith III Blessing, and several other historical documents were forged.

My point is simply that prophets do not always speak as prophets. They can be wrong. This means that you cannot lay claim to infallibility. Nor can you forbid members from criticizing you, for that is tyranny. Nor can you claim superior spirituality or righteousness, for that is the kind of arrogance against which Joseph Smith warned. Nor can you claim to be those whom God will speak to first about important religious doctrines. When it came to the resurrection of the dead, undoubtedly the most important doctrine of the church, Jesus announced it first not to those who were the acknow-

ledged leaders but to women. This does not mean that you are not true prophets, only that you cannot claim to be unerring or preeminent among the Saints.

What you *can* claim is responsibility for watching over the flock of God, not as “lords over God’s heritage, but as examples to the flock” (1 Pet. 5:3). You can be first in love, first to teach the gospel, first to reveal the ordinances of salvation and exaltation, first in the spiritual gifts, first to make open disclosure, first to confess sin, first to admit pride, first to hold out hope of salvation for the oppressed, the helpless, the weak, and the lost.

This is not the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Leaders. It is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The leadership of the church is not the church. It is an important part of the church—even an indispensable part. But so are the Saints. The scripture says that the head should not say to the foot, “I have no need of thee.” But this is what the church institution says every time it asserts that leaders are more important, more valuable than non-leaders. It is the message we get from the way the church functions: leaders sit in council, preach in conference, lay down rules, while we members are there to soak it all up—and if we do this long enough and well enough, then perhaps we too, if we have been prudent and wise and male, may become leaders.

But the church should not be divided in this way. It should be a community of believers, a repository of spiritual gifts, where we rely on each other. When you do not rely on the spiritual gifts of members, you effectively deny those spiritual gifts. You do not deny their existence, of course, but you deny their operation as the driving force of the church. This happens when you refuse to accept the operations of the spirit that lie outside your control, as they are manifest among the members in their work places, in their study groups, and in their forums and symposia too. It happens when you reject the spirit as it shines through the unofficial publications to which members contribute.

The revelations teach that anyone who speaks when moved upon by the Holy Ghost speaks the mind and will of the Lord (D&C 68). This means that revelation does not come solely to those who sit in the church’s highest councils but to those who meet together to comfort one another, support one another, love one another. Jesus said that where two or more are gathered in his name, he is in their midst (Matt. 18-20). He did not say that he would be only with two or more of the priesthood or of the righteous or of the mainstream. His statement is unqualified. People who gather in Christ’s name are the people of Christ. This is the church in its most comprehensive sense. It may not be the divinely authorized church institution. But it is the Church of Jesus Christ, in any case, because he is in the midst of it. If this is so then Christ is with those of us who attend the Sunstone symposium in spite of our struggles, our doubts, our questions,

and our sins. He is with us every bit as much as he is with you Brethren in your councils, in spite of your struggles, your doubts, your questions, and your sins. And if God is for us, who can be against us? Who can say to the people of Christ, "You should not meet together or speak or question"? Such a prohibition seeks both to rob us of our freedoms of conscience, of religion, of speech, and of peaceable assembly—rights vouchsafed to us by God through men and women raised up and inspired for this very purpose—and it seeks to deny us the exercise of our spiritual gifts, whose existence and expression are crucial to the vitality of the church. As a friend of mine says, baptism washes away our sins not our rights. Nor in my view does it wash away our doubts, our questions, or our concerns. To proscribe such rights and blessings is to deny the power of God manifest in ordinary members.

Though the distinction between leader and member may help us to see our different functions in the body of Christ, they should not be used to determine our individual value to God or to the church. We are each equally valuable to God. And the value of each of us has been set by God in the person of Jesus Christ. He died for each of us. This means that each mortal is as valuable as God himself. We must deal with others as if each person were as valuable as our own person, as valuable as the person of God. This does not mean that we are to pretend to be equal in experience, understanding, wisdom, authority, health, agility, intelligence, or talents and gifts. But it does mean we are equal in value and dignity. No person, no matter how powerful, should treat another person, no matter how weak, any differently than he or she would be treated, any differently than she or he would treat someone he or she values and respects.

In my view the key to understanding Christ's admonitions about human relationships is to understand this concept of mutual and reciprocal esteem and dignity. Brethren, this means that it is not enough for you to say that you love us. People love their pets. They love their property. They love their slaves. What Christ requires of us is that we love each other as equals. He said, "A new commandment I give unto you that you should love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another" (John 13:33-34).

How did Christ love us? He made himself equal to us, so that we could be made equal to him. The problem with us is that we are not equal. We are not equal in earthly things, so how can we expect to be equal in heavenly things? The gospel is the supreme message of mutual, reciprocal, symmetrical, divine love. The greatest makes himself or herself equal to the lowliest. Eve did this. Adam did this. Christ did this. Christ poured out his life for the least of his creations. He was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bore our iniquities and chastisement. With his stripes we are healed. He asks us to love one another as he loved us—not

counting himself more valuable than the least of us but esteeming the least of us as worthy to die for.

Brethren, do you love us as Christ loves us? Yes, you do love us. But too often there are strings attached to that love. I know you will be tempted to dismiss my words because of what you may call my "anger." But anger is not evil unless it is coupled with the desire or intent to do harm. My anger and the anger of other loyal Mormons is not motivated by hostility but by grief, sorrow, depression, helplessness. Our anger flares sometimes because it makes us feel less helpless and overwhelmed. But you must understand that both our anger and our depression are the same. They are both manifestations of our fear.

What are we afraid of? To tell you the truth, Brethren, many of us members are afraid of you, afraid that we will never be acceptable to you no matter what we think or say or do, no matter what we suffer or how deeply we believe. We are afraid you will never accept us or our sacrifices because they are not the ones you want. In other words we fear your conditional love. We want you to love us unconditionally. But you seem so reluctant to do this. The message of your conditional love is in nearly every speech you give. In our hearts we know that we can never meet all your conditions, all your standards, and also be true to our own spiritual experiences. We are afraid because we have been made to carry the burden of your narrow assumptions and inflated expectations. Believe me, Brethren, there are many who feel this way. Our anger rages quietly beneath a veneer of obedience and respectability. I believe Joseph Smith when he said, "There is one thing under the sun that I have learned and that is that the righteousness of man is sin, because it exacteth over much; nevertheless, the righteousness of God is just, because it exacteth nothing at all, but sendeth the rain on the just and the unjust, seed time and harvest, for all of which man is ungrateful."² Brethren, we are afraid because we feel that too often you have preached and imposed not the righteousness of God but your own righteousness.

Why must you exact from us "over much"? Why do you not love us unconditionally? Why will you not attend our gatherings and symposia? We do not want to attack you or ask you to endorse us. We need your love just as you need ours. Why divide us from you on the basis of who is in charge or who is right? Neither righteousness nor rightness nor authority can serve as the unifying principle of the church. The Pharisees believed that the people of God could be united on the principle of purity and righteousness, but this view led to elitism and intolerance. Catholics insisted that all Christians should unite around the authority of the Bishop of Rome, but this created the split between the Roman and Orthodox

2. *Ibid.*, 317.

churches. Protestants insisted that Christians unite around the right interpretation of scripture, but this only resulted in a scandal of schisms. Must we make the same mistakes? Christ revealed that the true unifying principle of the church is charity.

Though we have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though we have all faith so that we could remove mountains, without charity we are nothing. We could give everything to the poor, but without charity it is an empty gesture. Charity is patient and kind, it does not envy, it does not strut or boast. It is not rude, self-serving, easily provoked, threatening, or malicious. Charity gives us unity and covers us. Brethren, no matter how we may disagree on doctrine, no matter how we may struggle with power and authority, we are one body. This means that in spite of our differences, we must love one another and hang on to one another and resist the temptation to renounce, reject, or alienate one another.

You may ask: Shall we not excommunicate dissidents and apostates? My answer is that if it can be proved by good evidence that someone is deliberately, willfully, and maliciously seeking to do palpable injury to a church member or to church property or to specifically defined relationships in which church members or church institutions are a party, then excommunication *may* be appropriate. But it is clearly wrong to oust or punish members just because they dissent or disagree. The church is no longer an infant. It has survived and will continue to survive differences of opinion.

Besides we all make mistakes. We all disobey. We are all sinners. The church is a hospital for sinners. It is not a museum for saints. You Brethren should not expect people to be perfect before you give them your love. We must love each other first, unconditionally, so that we can have the strength and courage to be made perfect. Some of you Brethren may not like this idea. You may feel it is not fair for sinners to be loved in the same way as the righteous. You are not happy that those who have labored eight hours get the same wage as those who worked only for a half an hour. So you are keen to create justice. You want to punish sinners so that they understand the gravity of their sins, so they know they cannot have the fun of sinning and then the reward of righteousness. But people who sin and recognize their sins know already that sin is not fun—it is terrible. Most of them are crying for a way out. The only people who do not understand the awfulness of sin are the self-deceived, the self-righteous, and the deranged.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that criminals should not be punished according to just laws and due process. But why punish sinners who are not criminals? Their sin is their punishment. Why not accept the fact that Jesus was punished for our sins and leave it at that? The great judgment has already taken place on Golgotha. Continuing judgment

can only alienate people seeking God's grace. Unity in spirit comes only through loving one another in spite of our sins. True we must all repent. But what we must repent of most is the sin of withholding our love from people we do not approve of. Of course we cannot be saved in our sins. But we can be loved in our sins and we can love in our sins. God who is sinless loved us while we were yet sinners. He loved the sinful world so much that he sent his own son into it to establish that each sinner is as valuable to God as Jesus Christ himself.

Brethren, why have you been so harsh with your conditional love? Never has the church had more obedient, faithful, tithe-paying members. Never have you had more respect, prestige, and power to do good. Why then are you not satisfied? You have been told that it is the weak things of the earth that shall break down the mighty. Can you then not rejoice in our weaknesses? Do you not realize that our weaknesses and our strengths are the same? It is our intelligence that makes us question. It is our love of freedom that makes us unmanageable. It is our passion that leads us to sin. It is our yearning for something beyond this world that makes us indifferent sometimes to convention. God has given us these weaknesses to make us humble. Why deplore them? Why despise us?

You seem not to trust us. But you want us to trust you. You want us to trust the bishops, stake presidents, mission presidents, and other leaders you have chosen. You want us to believe that you could and would do no wrong. If ever there is a dispute between a member and a leader, you believe that it is the leader who is right. But the truth is that you leaders are really no better than we Saints. But you seem not to accept this. And you continue to treat us as if we had no stake in the church at all.

Why do you hide information from us? Why do you keep from us the books and records of your dealings and minutes of your councils? Why do you tell us only those facts that make you look good? Why do you tell us only the success stories? Why do you not show us the liability side of your ledgers? Why do you refuse to tell us how much money the church has, how it is spent, and the nature and amount of losses and gains? How can you expect us to be open with you about our lives and finances, when you are not open with us about yours?

Why does the church have to have so much money? So much land? So much invested with the world? Is it because of your fear? Do you want the temporal power and influence of the church to shield us from the reproach of the world, to prove to our detractors that we are worthy of their praise? We were persecuted and driven out of seven states. Do you want to make sure it does not happen again? Is this why you want money in the bank, realty free and clear, stores of supplies, and friends in Washington, D.C.? But is it good to have so much of a stake in this world? Was it not God who allowed us to be persecuted? He could have stopped it. He can start it up

again at any time. His chastisement could have made us pure had we accepted it. But it hurt so much that we have vowed never to let it happen again. Because of the pain of the past, you seem determined to cut us off from our history, from Joseph Smith, from the nineteenth century with all of its doctrines and doings. You seem determined that we should assimilate completely into our modern American culture. I doubt that we have ever truly healed from the wounds of persecution, truly forgiven our persecutors, or truly forgiven our God for allowing these abuses to befall us.

Brethren, neither you nor we are blameless in this. We have all been too anxious to succeed in worldly terms. You should have corrected us. Instead you seem to promote our worldly success because you believe it reinforces the good image of the church. But a church with a good image is not the same as a good church. Your emphasis on earthly achievements, your infatuation with power, the fact that you see money as a sign of spiritual election, the church as a business, yourselves as its board of directors, and its product as a respected and respectable people—these are all signs of bad judgment. I know you do not like to have your judgment questioned. You like to think your judgment is the judgment of God. But it is not. You are flesh and blood as we are. And we have been told not to trust in the arm of flesh—even your flesh.

You may be thinking that I am ungrateful, that I do not understand the sacrifices you make and have made as general authorities, including the toll these callings have taken on your personal lives, your families, your opportunities, your personal wealth. After all, you say, “Why blame us? We didn’t call ourselves.” No, you did not call yourselves and, yes, you have made sacrifices for the church. You have sacrificed a great deal—but not your power, or your status, or your respectability. You project an image of yourselves as men who are perfect, while we are imperfect. You call the Saints to account, even publicly, but you rarely call each other to account and never publicly. You admit no mistakes. You seem never to repent. And you are not known to forgive often. You seem unable to accept the fact that you cause some of us pain. And you are tempted to punish those of us who cry out.

You yearly deliver patriotic speeches, but you do not provide any means whereby we may express our dissent. You do not take seriously or accept alternate voices. You do not let us participate in church governance unless we have been carefully screened and correlated. Nor do you account to us for your stewardships. You do not believe the high are accountable to the low. But Jesus did not teach this. He made himself accountable to his creations. He let himself be judged before he would judge.

The truth is that you are as afraid of us as some of us are of you. You think we will despise you because you are not perfect prophets, just as we fear that you will despise us because we are not perfect Saints. So we hide

behind a cloak of activity and respectability, while you hide behind walls of granite and move about in underground tunnels.

These are the signs of mutual fear not mutual love. This situation is our fault as much as it is yours. It is our fault that you are afraid to be real, personal, human. We have made you unapproachable. We have done this by sinning against you. Our sin is that we do not love you unconditionally. We expect you to be perfect, to always have the right answers, to never make a slip. If ever you do we lose our testimonies and make you feel responsible. But you are not responsible for what we believe, say, or do. You are only responsible for what you believe, say, or do. You should call us to account for our conditional love, even as I call you to account for yours.

Brethren, please, do not hide, do not threaten, do not punish, do not breathe out cursings. Do not hold secret councils or keep secret files. Do not look for scapegoats or resort to the silent treatment. Do not exercise control, compulsion, or unrighteous dominion. These are not answers. The answer to our mutual dilemma of conditional love is for all of us to repent, to forgive, and to love one another as Christ loves us. God is humble and meek. We know this because on the cross he showed us that he deals with us out of the divine weakness of love rather than out of the earthly strength of power. He wants us to be humble and meek too. To be humble is not to be subservient. It is to be unimpressed with oneself, one's calling, one's achievements, one's image, one's power, one's career, and one's future. To be meek is to see ourselves as we really are without our masks of respectability, infallibility, invulnerability, invincibility. But we are not meek. We are not humble. And you Brethren are partly responsible because you have not made these things clear.

My advice, Brethren, is this: Choose love not power. Do not hide behind your authority or your masks of solemnity, severity, and composure. Do not cling to your privacy. It is not healthy for you to have both power and privacy. Lay aside worldly prudence and wisdom. Do not group think. Do not group speak. Do not repress your best spiritual instincts in order to be good team players. Do not calculate so much or rely so much on statistics. Do not flatter or succumb to flattery. Reveal yourselves. Do not be ashamed. His grace is sufficient to cover you. And especially do not be ashamed that your revelations and contacts with God are no better or more frequent than our own. Do not be afraid of women or of their claims. Recognize that they are your equals in every way. Do not clone yourselves by picking leaders who are identical to you in the way they think, speak, dress, and view the world. Do not concern yourselves with being respected or respectable. These are not the same as holiness. True religion has never been respectable. If you are laughed at, laugh along. If you are criticized, search your souls.

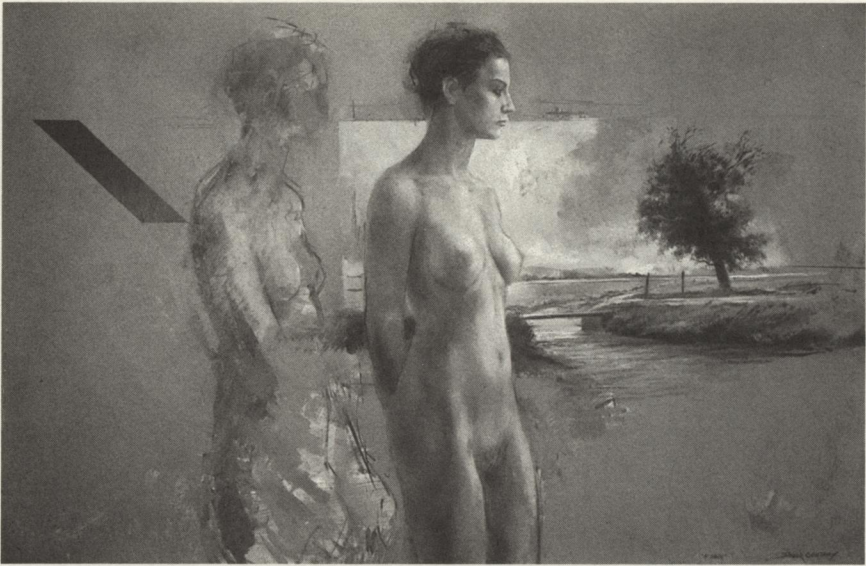
Jesus did not say, "count my sheep." He said, "feed my sheep." Do not shun the needy, the weak, the oppressed. Love the wretched, the idle, those

who are not like you. Exalt the poor. Live with them. Give away more. You need not agonize over whether the resources of the church will be exhausted by all the poor, the irresponsible, the unwashed. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. He will provide. Be generous and you will find your baskets full of fish and loaves and grain, and hidden in the grain will be gold besides. Do not be afraid of the unworthy. They are more like you than you think. Remember if your enemy asks for your cloak, give her or him your coat also. If he or she wants you to go a mile, go with him or her two miles. Do not think about what you will eat or wear or how your families will be provided for. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not neither do they spin. Yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed as one of these. These words, as you know, were not spoken to all the disciples, but they were spoken to the twelve, to the seventy. Accept them.

Brethren, you possess the keys of the kingdom. They were given to you to hold in trust for us, not only for the Saints of the church but for the people of the Lord everywhere. Use them for our sakes. With them open the doors of your councils. Open the archives of the past. Open the records of your dealings. Open the treasuries of the church. Open the scriptures and expound them. Open your mouths in blessings. Open your hands in generosity. Open your eyes. Open your ears. Open your minds. And above all open your hearts.

I have been both blunt and bold, but I am not without respect. That I have addressed you directly means that I believe you will receive bravely what I have said without rancor. With God's grace we can all begin to appreciate each other's differences, accept them, even celebrate them, and, without obliterating them, transcend them. It is not too late to rid ourselves of narcissism, elitism, exclusivity, superficiality, rigidity, pride, authoritarianism, self-righteousness, and fear. The church will not be overthrown by the revelation of our weaknesses. It will be strengthened by it. The weak through love shall conquer the strong. The church will endure. It is not too late to make the church a refuge, a "safe place," where every Saint is a leader and every leader is a saint, a place where we may all put off our masks of pretense and live in openness, in vulnerability, in health, in wholeness, in peace. This is the end and purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its restoration through Joseph Smith.

Why then should we tarry? Let us get on with what must be done. Let us repent and forgive. Let us be fearless. Let us be full of faith, hope, and charity. And let us ever bear in our hearts the conviction that if we will but love all people without pretense, without fear, without condition, with perfect, symmetrical, and reciprocal esteem, the church will never fail. And the gates of hell will not prevail against us.





A Response to Paul Toscano's "A Plea to the Leadership of the Church: Choose Love Not Power"

Elbert Eugene Peck

WHEN I FIRST READ PAUL TOSCANO'S JEREMIAD I thought it was too harsh and angry. But on revisiting it three years later I say, "Yes!" to many of his points; for the ones I quibble with I am grateful for the fresh examination they elicited in me.

In the spirit of Isaiah and Ezekiel, Toscano's essay is a prophetic call to all of the church—members and leaders—to repent. There are many provocative and constructive ideas and insights. Toscano is a creative theologian who calls us to revisit old values in new ways that disturbingly rearrange our theological systems and religious traditions. This is a helpful, if one-sided, treatise. It demands us to confront some of the troubling contemporary issues that challenge the church. I hope individuals photocopy and discuss this paper in study groups because it will engender a lively discussion of crucial issues concerning institutional abuse, Christian leadership styles, and the dynamic among one's individual spiritual life, the community, and the church, and it will make you feel guilt over your past organizational sins. Few works on church government do all those things, the closest being perhaps Hugh Nibley's "Leaders and Managers."¹

Toscano's is a wild, passionate thought piece, not a systematic church government manual. Some points that struck me include:

*The destructiveness of labelling Saints into acceptable and unacceptable classes, when we should love all into a supportive community.

1. Hugh Nibley, "Leaders to Managers: The Fatal Shift," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Winter 1983): 12.

*The elitist use of titles versus the call to esteem others as ourselves in "mutual and reciprocal" and equal relationships.

*Priesthood authority can become an idol that keeps us from Christ.

*The democratic equality of members and leaders: leaders must listen, adopt, and repent in their roles as leaders as well as counsel, rebuke, and proscribe; empowered members can act with the Spirit within church channels but also independent of the hierarchy.

*Anger must have place in the community and in spirituality.

*False unifiers (righteousness, authority, scriptural interpretation, doctrine) are exclusive and can create schism in the body of Christ. Love is the true unifier.

*The need to avoid alienating others by withholding love and acceptance until they change their behavior.

*Our weaknesses and strengths are the same things.

*The church may have too much of a stake in the world and its things and customs.

*The hierarchy should be open and accountable to the general membership.

Toscano's use of scripture is exciting and occasionally creative. Since he frequently refers to scripture as the authority for his positions, it would have been helpful had he cited in the text even the ones to which he briefly alluded. On numerous occasions I took the time to locate a scripture reference and read it in its context. In addition to this stylistic criticism, there are also points with which I disagree. Here is a brief list of some:

*If one of the lamentable effects of contention is the polarization that results in hardened positions and a decrease in ability to communicate, then Toscano's choice to address his paper to the Brethren is ill-advised because of its us/them dichotomy. Truly the faults described here are in all of us, not just the Brethren, for almost all members succumb to the same temptations when placed in similar circumstances. A more inclusive indictment would have been more helpful.

*Toscano is obsessed with the entrenched, upper hierarchy of the church, when in fact the church most experienced by members is the local ward community. There most find loving support from rotating member-leaders and little excommunication or censure. In fact, within wards the most inclusive, unconditional-loving individuals are often bishopric members and Relief Society presidents, and frequently the most destructive judging and exclusion come from *other* Saints.

*Toscano needs to better separate outcome from intent, a process that allows increased charity. Almost all leaders who succumb to temptations of their office are well-intentioned individuals who try their best to serve God with their finite abilities and often are not aware of the unintended and harmful consequences. For example, a more charitable and genuine

explanation for the church's extensive real and monetary resources is the Lord's command for the church to "stand independent above all creatures" (D&C 78:14), a command LDS leaders take seriously. I agree with Toscano's assessment that we as a church are too caught up in the praise of the world, but the diagnosis and remedy is more complicated than the simple sin of fear. To a large extent, charity means a patient, engaged relationship with another based on an understanding of how a person's life is constrained by his or her intentions, limited choices, experiences, education, weaknesses, disabilities, cultural categories, and world view. In this essay, Toscano doesn't work very hard to understand where the Brethren are coming from; indeed, the opposites of charity that he cited could apply to this paper—unkind, envious, strutting, rude, self-serving, easily provoked, and malicious. In a call that extols love, Toscano is often not charitable or understanding of church leaders' intentions and limitations. Incredibly, he accuses them of not noticing the poor, and also asks, "Do you Brethren believe the golden rule applies to you?" Of course they care about the poor and apply the Golden Rule to themselves as well as any of us do.

*When Toscano asks the Brethren not to be judgmental—to abandon schism-making fixations on doctrine, practice, interpretation, and behavior—and to just cultivate inclusive love, he adopts the dangerous position that potentially sets himself to be a law unto himself in these areas that apparently are now off-limits to the Brethren. He becomes independent of the standards of the community and leaders.

*Finally, who really argues that prophets and other church leaders cannot be wrong?

My primary response to Toscano's essay is that at the same time it makes and misses a central point in church governance. He accurately notes that we are "all subject to the seduction to control" through unrighteous dominion, that the Brethren are "as contentious as anyone else," and that "you leaders are really not better than we Saints." But his solution seems to set aside this fact of our near universal sinfulness and demand the Brethren to be better than the rest of us—he wants them to love us as Christ loves us, unconditionally, with no strings attached. Toscano asks too much of our leaders; he wants them to truly be the superhumans that their false image claims. Only superhumans can possess all the Christ-like attributes Toscano asks of our leaders. In truth, the church will never be much better than its members, almost all of whom will at least sometimes, because of expediency, greed, or vanity, choose power over love. While we should hold up Toscano's democratic ideals to every Saint, both leader and member, the organization should not be so constructed as to *assume* their possession. Given the ubiquitous and inevitable human desire to control, a more realistic solution would be to lower the expectations of

leader-Saints to the average church-involved member and reform our organizational procedures to check the inevitable unrighteous dominion and to compensate for the human limitations, some of which Toscano proposed.

Part of the cause of Toscano's intense frustration (and also of his insights) is that his expectations equal his ideals, and when they are unrealized he is angry. Occasionally, there is a tone in the paper that echoes a teenager's impatience with his parents' injustice, favoritism, ignorance, or lack of understanding. Teenagers often expect their parents to be perfect, are disturbed when they are not, and blame their parents for their own mistakes. It seems to me that part of becoming an adult is learning to forgive one's parents for not being perfect, to acknowledge that they were doing the best that they knew how as they tried to be adults and parents for the first time, and to develop an adult relationship with them that acknowledges their strengths and weaknesses and celebrates and compensates for them. Sometimes parents do not let their children grow into adulthood. They continue to treat their adult-children as children, thus causing friction between the insisting adult-child and the reluctant, overly protective parent. Nevertheless, the task for the adult son or daughter is to love their parents, engage in a healthy relationship with them, and yet determine their own lives.

Our relationship to the church is similar. It is not solely out of respect that Catholics refer to their church as their mother; the same parent/child-adult dynamics apply to the relationship between individuals and our church. Sometimes our expectations of the nurturing ability of the church and its leaders are too high. We become insistent and angry at the church for being something it can never be. Other times we experience the church as too paternal and demand that it treat us as mature spiritual adults. The task for the adult Saint is similar to that of the adult son or daughter toward their parents: to love and forgive the church and its leaders; to be engaged in a permanent, productive, mature relationship of mutual growth; to have realistic expectations of what it can and cannot (and should not) provide; and to assume responsibility for one's own spiritual life.

Hence, the first check on organizational abuse is to empower individuals with the responsibility and the ability to say "no," to regulate their relationship and involvement with the church, and to transcend the organization. That will not only prevent some organizational abuse, but will make members actual citizens in the household of God whose participation matters (citizens vote!), and that participation will bring increased spirituality. That attitude involves both accepting personal responsibility and lowering expectations of church leaders. As Brigham Young University professor of organizational behavior J. Bonner Ritchie constantly affirms, ultimately "you cannot make any organization safe, you can only prepare

people so they can safely function in the organization."² Sometimes Toscano seems, naively, to want to make the church safe for individuals.

However, the lowering of expectations can simply be a cynical response to human endeavors. Fortunately, Toscano's essay calls to the voice in me that whispers, "Yes, we can be better than we currently are, especially you, Elbert." In part, it is Toscano's idealism that engenders the sorrow and pain and occasional bitter anger in his paper. The challenge for the idealist is to keep hope in a vision of a more perfect church while not becoming disillusioned with the current situation and judgmental of God's Saints. I am not sure if Toscano keeps well that delicate balance.

Since the changes Toscano advocates will at best take a long time to be realized, individuals in pain, like himself, may be the first ones to learn how to safely function within the organization before others do, simply because they have to. That pain-based knowledge, however, can either lead to an arrogant individuality or to service within the community. Anger is a legitimate feeling; it comes from genuine pain. We should not try to act as if there never was pain, nor attempt too early to anesthetize the part of the body that is hurting. The body of Christ needs to know which members hurt and why so that it can relieve the pain and address the causes. That is one reason why this paper is important—the church hath need of every member! But the individual member who hurts should not wait for the entire body to act before it addresses its own pain. Something is wrong with a theology that makes one's peace so dependant on the uncontrollable actions of others. In prolonging your agony you dangerously separate yourself from being connected with the other members of the body. In a real sense, such continued anger prohibits one from loving others now, thus making one's own love conditional. Toscano rightly states that we must learn to love each other in our sins. Anger is a legitimate starting point for an institutional dialogue, but we must learn to move beyond it in one-to-one relationships rooted in a love that transcends organizational abuse, including unequal status. How else can one comprehend the apostle Paul's counsel to slaves to remain in their subordinate status, but to be Christian slaves. A similar message is preached in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, where the proper response to even the institutional Christian abuse of the Grand Inquisitor is simply an angerless, opposition-free kiss. Ultimately, the religious life is independent of and transcends the imposed social structure, but it is never independent of our social connectedness, for it calls us to love even our enemies.

2. J. Bonner Ritchie, "The Institutional Church and the Individual: How Strait the Gate, How Narrow the Way?" *Sunstone* 6 (May-June 1981): 35. See also his "Let Contention Cease: The Limits of Dissent in the Church," *Sunstone* 16 (Aug. 1992): 45-53.

Anyone who has the slightest acquaintance with church callings (or parenting) understands the temptations to misuse one's position: sometimes for simple reasons like efficiency, expediency, and rampant stupidity, and other times for the more sinister motives of vanity, pride, and selfishness (which can include the choice to grow from a worthy experience rather than to allow someone else to). For me, I have occasionally been able to transcend my organizational indiscretions with love when I have been forced by others (another reason for this paper) and my own conscience to confront and analyze my personal acts of wicked and well-intentioned unrighteous dominion. Sometimes I have also learned from observing the follies of others close to me. In those cases, I have been able to forgive the person and compensate for their misdeeds because I knew the goodness and faith of the person as well as the flaws: "Yeah, he shouldn't have done that, but, doggone it, he's a good person anyway." I have been able to not judge ("he's evil") and still honestly evaluate and act constructively. On rarer occasions, I have been able to transfer that charitable perspective to church leaders I do not personally know. It has allowed me to similarly acknowledge that they are good people who struggle to do the best with their difficult tasks and limited knowledge and abilities. That is learning to love others as you love—and forgive—yourself. Interestingly, my critique of their actions and my love of them both increase.

Obtaining this ability to individually transcend circumstances through love and forgiveness, however, does not mean that there are not serious systematic problems in church administration. Toscano pointed out some needed reforms that will reduce the temptations to unrighteous dominion, or at least check their implementation. He basically argued for increased openness and democracy in church government. I agree. This makes sense theologically (what else is a kingdom of priests and priestesses where all should be prophets but a participating group of equals) and practically (collaborative decision-making cannot only produce better decisions from more information, but through increased public discussion and involvement the deliberations boost motivation, vision, education, and implementation).

Most of Toscano's reforms are changes in attitudes and social norms rather than changes in procedures. Hard things like treating each other equally, listening more, being open and receptive to criticism, not labelling and rejecting, embracing the marginal members, and confessing as well as hearing confessions—things you cannot program with a handbook. They will be difficult for us as a people to embrace, no matter how many general conference talks and *Ensign* articles preach their importance. We have a hard time with the simple observable behaviors we currently promote and monitor—the Word of Wisdom, parenting, missionary work, tithing, chastity, stopping spouse and child abuse—all of which would be enhanced by

a greater theology of equality. Nevertheless, in the short term we would have no more success in changing to Toscano's proposed attitudes and norms than we do with preachments on meekness, antimaterialism, coveting. It does not mean we should not try, just that we should not plan on it. Our collective progress will be slow.

There are, however, some specific process reforms I think we should consider to check our tendencies and to reflect Toscano's theology of openness and democracy. Overall, Mormonism would be strengthened by some *glasnost* and *perestroika* (openness and restructuring). Two concrete changes could make a lot of difference:

*Have all major policy, program, and budget decisions on the ward and all-church levels depend upon the informed common consent of the Saints. Before each vote, have presentations and discussions of published proposals in the quorums of the priesthood and Relief Society that may refine the leadership's proposal and make for a more intelligent and whole-souled vote. This implies, as Toscano proposed, that information—statistics, budgets, minutes—be open and aggressively shared.

*Rotate individuals through all general authority offices the way we now do the Second Quorum of the Seventy and all local offices. This reduces the abuses that come from permanency in office, which include isolation, rigidity, programmatic narrowness, and assuming that your thoughts are God's thoughts.

There is danger in these proposals, too. Primarily, in opening up church decision-making we make the human/political aspects so prominent (they always were there) that we slight the role of the Spirit and God in church ministry. We might then play church politics too much and become fractionalized in our policy debates and diverted from the spiritual values the deliberations were meant to engender. We can become so democratic that we in fact ask our leaders to abdicate their prophetic responsibilities. We will always need prophetic leaders on all organizational levels to teach, preach, propose, chastise, call to repentance, and forgive, as well to accept criticism, counsel, feedback, and anger. That no one person can flawlessly possess and minister all these attributes calls not only for collaboration at all levels (something we already value in presidencies and councils), but also calls for a check on group-think through openness and a celebration of nonhierarchical revelation.

Toscano's essay does not propose the radical exalting of an individual's charismatic gifts over the institution (and in that sense his reforms are moderate if not conservative), but these issues do raise that age-old tension between individual spirituality and the need for institutional order. In spite of the importance of individual initiative, personal revelation, and the equality of all, we also must always have authority, structure, and—gasp—some hierarchy (however benevolent). A religious institution needs some

individuals to have power or watchcare over others—there are lost and weak sheep that need shepherds. And this, unfortunately, means that many of the things that inevitably come with organizations (doctrine/ policy and other community boundary issues) that Toscano laments will continue to exist to some degree however widely his reforms are instituted. I concluded this after reading Raymond E. Brown's *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*. He analyzes the texts of the New Testament gospels and epistles to gain insight into the first-century Christian communities that produced them. The predominance of Jesus' revelatory spirit within each individual over the structure and authority of the church was confronted by the community of the disciples of John, which produced both the Fourth Gospel and the epistles of John:

Perhaps the most serious weakness on Johannine ecclesiology and the one most apparent in the Epistles centers on the role of the Paraclete. The thought that there is a living divine teacher in the heart of each believer—a teacher who is the ongoing presence of Jesus, preserving what is taught but interpreting it anew in each generation—is surely one of the greatest contributions made to Christianity by the Fourth Gospel. But the Jesus who sends the Paraclete never tells his followers what is to happen when believers who possess the Paraclete disagree with each other. The Johannine Epistles tell us what frequently happens: they break their *koinonia* or communion with each other. If the Spirit is the highest and only authority and if each side appeals to him as support for its position, it is nigh impossible (particularly in a dualistic framework where all is either light or darkness) to make concessions and to work out compromises.³

Brown then chronicles the breakup of the Johannine communities evident in the epistles, each claiming to be taught by the Spirit that is "true and free from any lie" (1 John 2:27) and condemning the others, and then he noted: "In my judgment there is no way to control such a division in a Paraclete-guided community of people. The Johannine community discovered that, for it split up and went out of existence. . . . Johannine ecclesiology is the most attractive and exciting in the New Testament. Alas, it is also one of the least stable."⁴

In contrast to the communities of John, the early Christian church that produced the gospel of Matthew recognized church authority and the power of leaders to bind on earth and in heaven, although Matthew greatly emphasizes forgiving over excommunicating to check already evident institutional abuses (see Matt. 18). Brown then concludes:

3. Raymond E. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 121-22.

4. *Ibid.*, 123.

To survive in the world after the death of the apostles the church has had to be a society existing among other societies. . . . The great anomaly of Christianity is that only through institution can the message of a noninstitutional Jesus be preserved. . . .

Even if that Gospel [of John] cannot be the only guide for the church catholic, and even if alongside the Beloved Disciple (and indeed over him) have been placed the apostles, such as Peter and Paul, the community of the Beloved Disciple continues to bear warning witness that the church must⁵ never be allowed to replace the unique role of Jesus in the life of Christians.

Thus we need the institutional church to be the custodian of our faith and to pragmatically create and conservatively sustain the community that we prodigal individuals must wander from, return to, act against, and in concord with in our spiritual journeys of individuation and revelation. Inevitably, the abuses the human individuals in the organization will misuse the very powers that sustain the organization. As a compliment, we also need major and minor prophets to continually call us to the underlying life of the Spirit with its equalitarian, anti-institutional message that transcends the structure. The tension between the institution and the chaotic charisma of the individual with which Toscano dances in his essay will always exist, but it can be mitigated and made a healthy dialectic through the gift of love he celebrates.

Partly due to this paper and partly due to occurrences in the Mormon intellectual community, I have frequently pondered the relationship between power and love. As Toscano pointed out, Doctrine and Covenants 121 teaches that “no power can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood.” I assume that means you do not have control because of your position: you cannot say, “I’m the quorum president, so do it.” Priesthood (position) does not grant that kind of tyranny. Power comes only from the principles of righteousness, which seem to have a high regard for individual agency and autonomy because no power or (even) influence can or ought to be maintained except by persuasion, gentleness, long-suffering, genuine love (no gimmicky imitation), kindness, and knowledge (D&C 121:41-42). Those definitions describe an engaged relationship between leader and member, one of on-going dialogue where hearts and minds meet in order for action to occur. They call to mind the attributes of love listed in 1 Corinthians 13. Love is relationship, priesthood power is relationship. That describes God’s dealings with us—a loving, non-coerced, patient, conversational, persuasive friendship. That is how we are called to act with others. As the author of 1 Thessalonians wrote, “although as Christ’s own envoy we might have made our weight felt; but we were as gentle with you

5. Ibid., 145, 123.

as a nurse caring for her children. Our affection was so deep that we determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but our very selves; that is how dear you had become to us!" (1:7-8, Revised English Bible) So I am saddened when general authorities instruct local leaders to chastise or discipline Saints and no relationship of persuasion, listening, or patience occurs. Whereas faith without works is dead, so is love without relationship. It is a vain love to rebuke someone and then not to engage in an intense relationship. If a leader censures you and says, "I love you," but does not continue in persuasion and discussion, it is not love. That is the hypocrisy of "courts of love" that excommunicate and diminish relationship rather than increase it. With lesser disciplines, I am sure church leaders feel that they have been very patient with some of the more vocal and public dissenters in the church, but patience and long-suffering are only truly loving virtues in the context of a relationship of face-to-face conversation; otherwise, the supposed distant patience can polarize rather than heal. Happily, many individuals who were recently called in and talked to by their stake presidents by anonymous general authority assignments report that the conversations were warm, noncoercive, and friendly and only the beginning of an on-going dialogue. Individual members and leaders can and do transcend destructive institutional systems of intimidating power through love.

This essay has called me to think about, and to more often than before choose, love as the motivation for my interpersonal and institutional actions. As a result, I have recoiled at seeing the countless innocent acts of violent domination I do daily. I hope it has the same peace-making effect on all Saints in the Latter Days who read it.

Beth-lehem

Richard Tice

But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

—Micah 5:2

Jacob and Rachel

But a little way to come to Beth-lehem,
and the pains came hard upon her. She heard,
“Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.”
She called him Son of My Sorrow as she died;
Jacob, already grieving, wanting no thought of death
in his son, called him Son of My Right Hand—
Benjamin. He marked Rachel’s grave with a pillar.
Decades passed, and he lay sick upon his deathbed,
remembrance still keen upon him. Joseph,
brother to Benjamin, brought him grandsons,
to be named new tribes in Israel. Jacob’s words,
halting, “Rachel died by me in Canaan,
when yet there was but a little way
to come to Beth-lehem.” Yea, though a sword
pierce your souls, he shall wipe away all your tears.

Ruth and Naomi

All Beth-lehem wondered when they saw her:
“Is this Naomi?” Ten years of famine
they had suffered, but she had lost more,
a husband and two sons. “I went out full;
the Lord has brought me home again empty.”
Not empty, for Ruth followed her still,
Moabite daughter-in-law choosing a new God.
Yet, no men to work the dead husbands’ land.
In Beth-lehem—house of bread—others harvested
barley and wheat, while Ruth gleaned, picking kernels
among the sheaves. She found kindness in Boaz.
Near kinsman, he could redeem the dead men’s land,

raise children to their name, that the family
not die with their deaths. In the city gates,
he asked for Ruth the widow, before other kin,
before witnesses, to take her to wife.
To them was born Obed, father of Jesse,
father of David. And Naomi, holding
the newborn in her arms, heard the women say,
"Blessed be the Lord. The babe shall restore
your life, nourish your old age, for your daughter,
who loves you, has borne him." Eternal king
shall be his name, and in him you shall live.

David and Samuel

He led a heifer and held a horn of oil,
yet the elders of Beth-lehem trembled.
"Are you come peaceably?" they asked.
"Peaceably," he answered, "to sacrifice to God.
Now sanctify yourselves, and come with me."
Samuel called for Jesse. Seven sons
passed by him. But, "the Lord has not chosen these.
Are all your children here?" So Jesse sent
for the youngest, keeper of his sheep.
And God said, "Arise, anoint him: for this is he,"
David the future king. Through years of exile,
the promise waited. Hunted by Saul, David
fled to the desert. At harvest time, in his cave,
he longed for home. "Oh, to drink the water
of the well by the gate of Beth-lehem."
Philistines held his town. Three of the mighty
broke through the host, drew water, brought it
to David. "This is the blood of men who went
in jeopardy of their lives," he said, then poured
the water on the ground, for the Lord.
When Messiah comes, the Anointed One,
he will give you water that will be in you
a well springing up to everlasting life.

Dissent in the Church: Toward a Workable Definition

James E. Chapman

THERE ARE MANY IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST of Latter-day Saints who believe we need a workable definition of religious dissent in order to help make way for more serious debate over its legitimacy within the gospel process. Sincere and successfully waged dissent has long been an illegitimate facet in Mormon life but appears today to be thriving as never before. It is not surprising, however, that few have tried to operationally define it.

Most persons whom I have known who have sought to reconcile what the church is in our time with more democratic principles and practices such as dissent have pulled away in frustration resolving to leave the question expectantly with others. Hence, short of clichés, there is little dialogue on dissent which is friendly to its subject and inoffensive to church members. The matter seems to be in limbo.

For reasons to do with my longing for some eventual validity of dissent in the church, I begin this essay by repeating a comment by President Joseph F. Smith published in the *Improvement Era* in December 1917: "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the most democratic institution in the world" (100). Although some subsequently have taken the position that he did not mean what he said or that he really did not know what he was talking about, the statement was published again by the First Presidency, without commentary, in the 1970-71 course of study for the Melchizedek priesthood quorums (103). In raising the issue with both my bishop and stake president at the time, I was encouraged to teach it as a literal fact to my elders quorum even under personal protest.

I have long struggled with this declaration, knowing it contradicts the generally held perception of the church as a rigidly authoritarian, contra-democratic system. But I know that the Lord has placed language completely out of context with the reality of the times in the mouth of prophets

in the past and that such language has subsequently been reevaluated as profoundly prophetic. For this reason I will take the prophet at his word, however prophetic and "yet-to-come." My essay depends on this affirmation. I believe with guarded optimism that our future church will be neither rigidly authoritarian nor culturally autocratic but truly "the most democratic institution in the world." And I believe that we must think more courageously about how this democratic church would function.

In a narrower sense then I am addressing the most universal tenet of democratic life: its commitment to free inquiry and open promotion (frequently organized) of opposing opinions. And more specifically I am addressing the legitimacy of responsible dissent in a democratic Mormon community. In this context I will attend to the value of certain democratic principles, outline how I perceive responsible dissent operating, and respond to traditional arguments (criticism) against dissenters.

I know that my statement will be received by some as frighteningly heady. This is true for those modern Mormon pioneers who are at the cutting edge of needed change, walking that delicate but precipitous fence between legitimate Mormon life and the abyss of "heresy." But such risk is inherent to the apologetics for dissent.

I willingly accept this risk. But I strongly believe as well that my simple perspectives can stimulate increasingly open debate on the question of dissent in the loving gospel kingdom. As a religious people we are maturing and growing ready for this debate. My guiding assumption is that eternal truths are more likely to be discovered by all when we tolerate diversity of opinion and rigorously respect the right of individuals and groups to express and promote their considered convictions. I also believe that unless we legitimize such dissent, real democratic processes cannot be planted or sustained in Mormon life.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

As we all know, the essence of democracy is the participation of the governed in the governing process. Whether direct or indirect, democracy is self government. Democratic participation refers to the process by which individuals and groups influence or control those who make decisions affecting them. But until World War II democracy as a way of life had existed only in a relatively small portion of the world even though democratic ideas and practices went back about 2,500 years. Democracy then can scarcely be called "natural." On the contrary, the democratic way of life is probably the most difficult and unnatural. It does not emerge spontaneously or by accident but through deliberate thought and action to correct what is all too natural in human behavior. Participating in real democratic processes can be very frightening. Participants must be informed on issues

and personally involved in community decision making, but the natural (and safe) inclination is to avoid troubling information and to insulate against spirited contentions.

Dissent is deeply rooted in the governing activity of any truly democratic community. Responsible dissenters, however few in number, know that where people are free the majority will always rule, but dissenters also know that the majority must never be allowed to silence dissenting minority voices. The protests of minorities about every conceivable subject involving administrative and program systems of a democratic community are basic to maintaining the communities' social and spiritual health. Such dissent follows from a faith that in an open marketplace of competing ideas, truth defeats error. For these reasons leaders ought to protect and encourage vigorous dissent, and legitimize and honor negotiated consensus.

Freedom to dissent thus occupies an exalted position in democratic life because of high service given. Airing ideas and opinions releases pressures which otherwise might become destructive. Full and free discussion even of ideas we hate encourages a testing of those prejudices and preconceptions and tends to liberating the creative mind. Such release and testing mechanisms keep a society from becoming stagnant and unprepared for the stresses and strains working to tear all human groups apart. Not surprisingly then full and free discussion has been the first article of American democracy. We in the United States have founded our political system on such discussion. We have counted on it to keep us from embracing what is corrupt and crude. We have trusted the common sense of our people to choose the doctrine true to our needs and to reject the rest.

This tradition of dissent and discussion has made American institutions the prime symbol of freedom and equality. We have thus deemed it more costly to liberty to suppress universally despised minorities such as the American Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan than to let them vent their anger. We have above all else feared the political censor. We have wanted a land where our people can be exposed to all the diverse creeds, ideas, and cultures of the world and can then select those truths which are most workable in our hearts, lives, and living systems.

As real democratic societies are characterized by a considerable dispersion of power, no single clique would have the exclusive right to define the common social good or to determine what methods should be used to achieve it. Conflicting opinions, appropriately negotiated, enable people to clarify issues and to support proposals for change. Without the liberty to dissent, most are powerless to produce change, and special advantages of the dominant few become more deeply entrenched. When relevant information is freely disseminated and inequities are revealed, positive conflict surfaces and pressures for needed action. The function of dissent then is not so much to directly produce change (or keep it from happening) but to

enable a community to recognize new social realities and address those conditions which are often accepted as unalterable.

This would also be true in the church. It is ironic that today's church exists in an environment where democratic groups thrive because of intelligent dissent. Many Latter-day Saints seem ill prepared to understand or accept such dissent or to cope with it in ways maximizing the values of a free and pluralistic people. We think of dissent as inherently destructive and hold up conformity and sameness as hallmarks of the good society. However, dissent is not our problem but rather our inability to accept dissent as inevitable and essential to free religious practice.

Still a growing if small number of Latter-day Saints knows that major change within the church rarely appears without dissent of some sort. Major change is caused. It comes through the tireless efforts and courageous commitments of church members willing to risk themselves, to strain at the paralyzing chains of conformity and sameness, to embrace innovative action as essential to addressing our many festering issues. Without these dissenters the majority would resist change until "history" moved rudely in upon their world, damaging spiritual underpinnings and precious souls.

DEFINING DISSENT

Responsible dissent within our church might be defined as individual or organized group effort to bring about change or to prevent change through education and intelligent pressure on behalf of objectives believed by the individual or group to be socially and spiritually desirable. In other words an individual or group might propose change or resist such a proposal. Dissenters make their own decisions about goals, objectives, and strategies accepted as desirable and effective. This attempt to convert, persuade, or pressure someone believed to have the power to effect change can be lovingly waged in accord with the higher principles of the gospel. Responsible dissent does not include violent physical coercion or compulsion, although violence may be enacted upon the dissenters by the larger system. Indeed dissenters are always at risk of being injured, perhaps even excommunicated, dropped from membership in the church.

For committed Latter-day Saints, dissent never seeks to destroy or destabilize the church but rather to consolidate a base of influence and to employ this influence to promote democratic change. The primary functions of dissent are always educative ones. Responsible dissent is seldom a negative phenomena. Its corollary will normally be growth. However, gains are rarely made without the pressures of confrontation. Dissent seeks to dramatize those selected issues which cannot be ignored and to establish

creative tensions requiring church administrators to honestly confront the issues.

TACTICAL FOCUSES OF EFFECTIVE DISSENT

The dilemma for faithful but seriously disappointed Latter-day Saints is always how to target a campaign of dissent at church leaders. How do we wage effective dissent, and how do we prevail? Specific tactics of dissent must necessarily remain unique to the shifting facts of each situation and encounter. But theories focusing on the broader issues engaged when crafting tactics have been around for decades.

The first principle of dissent is the hardest psychological hurdle for most Latter-day Saints: no one can negotiate in confrontations with church administrators without the power to negotiate. You do not negotiate "by permission" but from a base of influential power. Operating out of a posture of compliant goodwill rather than from a base of powerful influences and incentives rarely works. A deeply entrenched bureaucracy will always act in its own biased self-interest. Dissent means conflict, often public confrontation of competing powers. Thus issues of conflict must be carefully selected and developed.

The second principle requires involving church members (and where appropriate the larger public) in the issues at hand. Leaders of the church strive to create the impression of mass unanimity; no real legitimate opposition to their example exists in the church. The more this impression appears true, the less worthwhile it seems to growing numbers of church members to cherish even the thought of opposition. In other words the normative objective of church leadership is to create a climate where individuals have no choice but to conform. This means then that no reform can come without developing strong public and systemic issues. Unless open controversy exists, church members will not be concerned enough to act. The first step is capturing their empathetic attention.

The aggressive Mormon dissenter raises issues, interprets and promotes them vigorously, stirs up and personally involves other church members. A sense that a genuine opportunity to act for change exists must come first before people can think in terms of success, become optimistic, band together, seek special information, look for ways and means, act.

The third principle requires that successful Mormon dissenters start where the church is and not from where they believe the church should be. That we accept the church as it is does not weaken our desire to change a part of it into what we believe it should be. But accepting the church means working as a catalyst for encouraging change within the system and at its own pace or cadence.

For example, if you are one who advocates bestowing priesthood on

worthy female members, you would probably begin by encouraging their admission without priesthood to bishoprics, stake presidencies, high councils, and other administrative bodies of the church, where women's talents will prove that they can lead as effectively as men. Since female temple workers already receive a dispensation of priesthood in order to administer temple ordinances to their own gender, a precedent has been established which may some day allow for greater dispensation of priesthood.

A fourth principle of dissent dictates that all issues need to be morally polarized. One acts decisively in the conviction that all the good guys are on one side and all the rogues are on the other (however irrational such a conviction may ultimately be). Therefore, the real target of action will be a specific person or group who has the power to make change happen. Appropriate personalities must be specifically identified then for successful dissent. Their vulnerable statements and positions on the targeted issues coupled with countering arguments would be publicized widely in order to legitimize allegations and goals of dissenters.

The fifth principle, probably the main premise for strategic tactics in dissent, requires developing operations which maintain intense and constant pressure on the opposition, remembering that power is not only what you have but what the opposition thinks you have. In the extremes of encounter, the threat of a successful tactical action is often more terrifying to church leaders than the thing itself. It is when the other party feels substantially troubled that he or she will appropriately listen. In the arena of action, an independence becomes almost a precondition to communication. This is particularly so when the encounter places at risk the church's public image (its "Achilles Heel") or appears to threaten its growing economic power.

The sixth principle: real action is often in the opposition's reaction. Properly manipulated and guided in its reaction, the opposition can frequently be the dissenter's major strength. The opponent's reaction may deliver the variable tactics for the dissenters' campaign. This means tactics require flexibility enough to move and change with action which may be unpredictable from one day to the next. After a well-crafted campaign of dissent is launched, most day-to-day pressure tactics will be determined after considering the new movements of the opposition. Long-range tactical planning is of little value after initial campaign thrusts.

Good campaign tactics will be among those behaviors fellow church members can enjoy. But dissenting organizers must never go outside of the experience or ethical commitments of their supporters as this will lead to confusion, fear, and retreat. On the other hand they would gleefully try to go outside the experiences and anticipations of their religious opponents. Here they want to cause grave concern, willingness to honestly listen, and

desire to negotiate, and they may effectively do so if what is performed tactically has not been experienced before by church administrators.

Seventh. To win in the end, responsible dissent needs to be ethical. That is, whatever is done will always be appropriate to the intelligent and just requirements of its unique situation. The practical rule connecting ethics, means, and ends in dissent is that you do what you can with what you have and clothe it all with genuine ethical garments. Ethical rationalism is indispensable at all times of action. Workable means require the passport of ethics: you do what you do because you can ethically justify it.

Means and ends are viewed in pragmatic and strategic terms—of ends, only whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of means, only whether they will work and are legitimate to the ends. In the special case of Mormon dissent, the facts of any campaign or encounter must conform to the ultimate values and purposes of the gospel. Even so dissenters will need to prepare themselves for painful allegations from church leaders (and members) that they are out of step.

Eighth and finally. Every effort should be made through the use of comic satire to cause church administrators to live up to their own book of rules. It is almost impossible to counteract well-placed satire, particularly when most of its elements are true and onlookers know it. Dissenters should carry a keen sense of humor into all their skirmishes and dealings. When humorously prodded by knowledgeable dissenters, the larger system can no more obey its own book of rules than a fish can turn into a bicycle. Satirizing an obstinate and headstrong opposition is especially devastating (and fun) because of the broad inconsistent gap between the soaring religious platitudes and the primitive and raw authoritarianism of statements to dissenters and the public.

ANSWERING CRITICISM AGAINST DISSENT

I now want to address some of the general criticism we hear so frequently lodged against dissenters in the church. These allegations or criticisms seem almost universally held in one form or another by those who would suppress dissent. However, the first criticism is fairly unique to Mormonism, although I have seen it in other religious movements claiming to be led by a person who speaks directly to God.

First criticism: How can you justify dissent in the church when faithful members know that God speaks directly to the prophet at the head of the church in important matters of church policy? Doesn't the dissenter believe that the president of the church is a prophet of God?

Response: Committed Latter-day Saints who wage responsible dissent certainly do believe a prophet of God stands at the head of their church. In their dissent they strongly rely on that belief. In fact their religious convic-

tions are often deeper and more profound than are those who criticize them. But what of their dissent? How is it justified?

I think it is logical to believe that within the present design of things, the Lord in his unconditional grace can seldom overstep or outdistance our readiness for social and religious change without usurping to some degree and in some significant nature our inherent free agency. To force change on an organized group of people who are not ready to receive it has always been to threaten the destruction of the group.

So the Lord waits. He waits until we are ready to change.

In this sometimes lengthy process, there are always those few who clearly sense the need for change or the coming readiness for it and who speak out on behalf of it as if the issue was a special internal calling which they cannot deny or surrender. They are those who see and feel important truths "before their time," who acquire the enthusiasm for these truths early on and aid us to hear, feel, and see them empirically before they become popular.

Generally it is found that these "John the Baptists" are well qualified to be at the cutting edge of the issues they embrace. They become the advance guard in the church for new consciousness and sensitivities. They define the need and give examples of leadership necessary to mass awareness of the new truths straining to be born. In looking back through Mormon history, one is easily impressed with the fact that their dissenting function generally preceded and became critical to the success of new revelations.

When their work is done and church members see and feel the inevitability of change, the Lord then moves officially through the prophet and in the hearts of the members so they will know the necessity of the change and pursue it with great resolve and application. There is in this process no real gap between God, prophet, and disciples. God is not a fascist, and we his followers are always required to use our own intellect, intuition, and drive in quest of truth. New revelation from a perfect administrator would come this way. It has in the past and will continue to do so today and into the future.

But God help the dissenters, the lonely forerunners, in all their hang-ups and human frailties, who herald the need for change, giving example and leadership. For within the sound of their lonely voices, there will probably be few around at the beginning who will know and support what is happening.

Second criticism: The practice of dissent defeats its own purposes. Even when its goals are honorable, the deliberate contention it causes creates in the minds of onlookers a widespread feeling of resentment and anger. By making enemies rather than friends and by causing people to become upset,

the dissenter produces an adverse reaction to her quest and undermines larger objectives.

Response: The claim that dissent defeats its own purpose must be examined with a clear understanding of what the dissenter hopes to accomplish through her actions. She does not normally expect the immediate enactment of the change she seeks. In the purist sense her strategy is not aimed at making friends or causing people to like or admire her and thereby coaxing them into giving her their support. Her track is an entirely different one.

Her immediate objective is to force public attention to what should be a grave concern of church members. She may accomplish that objective regardless of the ensuing attitude of members to her person. Even a wave of resentment may do more to raise social and religious consciousness than can anything else. She may reason, perhaps correctly, that the only hope for a long-term remedy is group action arising out of reflection.

Moreover, the dissenter may further her long-range objectives even while becoming herself despised, if in doing so she also forces her opponents to acknowledge their support of an injustice or a religious anachronism. The dissenter cannot by herself effect the desired change. But she may succeed in exposing the need for change, identifying those who seek to block such change and their questionable reason for doing so.

That done, she may rely on the conscience of the church at large, suffering quietly the harsh ridicule and harassment that may befall her as a result of her efforts to stir this conscience. When the dissent is direct, the infraction nonviolent, and its consequence involves little injury, the general reaction of church members is likely to be one of reflection, making the probability of success in achieving a worthy objective reasonably high.

The long-range goal of Mormon dissenters is the achievement of needed action brought about by arousing the conscience of the larger system. To this end they dramatically exhibit their own deep personal concerns and their moral repugnance toward a continuing or pending injustice. Open dissent may be reasonably effective in communicating this concern and repugnance and in prodding others until they also share those feelings (providing that the depth and sincerity of a dissenter's commitment is beyond doubt or dispute). Demonstrating a deep commitment may bring an apathetic church, or part of it, to begin to reflect about the issues at hand and to act on the basis of this new awareness.

Third criticism: A church member who openly dissents is acting out of his own selfish and insensitive interests with a callous disregard for the interest of other church members.

Response: This criticism assumes the act of legitimate dissent to have a character it does not have. It supposes that the dissident church member does not really care what the church and the Lord require of him, when in

fact he usually cares very much. It also suggests that the dissident hopes to defy the rules without punishment if he can get away with it—which is false. Real dissent is always a public and sacrificial act.

Mormon dissidents place most of their private interests on the line in the course of their actions. They do not further their private interests at all. In fact many of their immediate private interests are seriously damaged.

They are publicly condemned and embarrassed by church leaders. Their daily lives within the church are thrown into turmoil. They cannot be given responsibilities of trust since they are “out of step.” Certain of their customary privileges may be officially withdrawn or denied. Their families can be seriously disrupted. They become alienated from other church members and experience the withdrawal of some of their closest friends.

They are besieged with feelings of guilt, fear, depression, and grief. Worst of all, their personal convictions may cost them their membership in the church and the daily pleasures and fulfillments built on that membership. If not ostracized completely, it is probable they will never again be included in the inner circles of intimacy and trust. For throughout their lives they will be required to carry a permanent burden of a questionable record and be obliged to explain the penalties and indignities laid on them and their families.

These are the probable consequences of an effective protest, and informed Mormon dissidents understand them very well. It would be far safer to personal interests to remain quiet and in conformity with established expectations of the church.

Fourth criticism: The general authorities have instructed us that there is no legitimate place in the church for nonobedience to their direction, that to publicly promote dissenting religious opinion is tantamount to waging war on God and the church, and that dissenting “alternate voices” may even be regarded as enemies. It is morally wrong for individual members to decide for themselves which procedures and policies of the church they can accept. To dissent is to take the law of the church into your own hands and to undermine God’s work on the earth.

Response: Essentially this argument denies the claim that a church member has under any circumstances the right to personally choose to obey or disobey the established practices of the church. To permit such choice, it is held, is to give so much power to rank-and-file members that all church authority will be undermined. But this is false.

If every edict must be emphatically obeyed in every situation, without exception, the principle of obedience is then changed. True obedience is an informed, reflective, and deliberate act of loving conscience. One obeys because he or she knows that obedience supports a higher principle of the

gospel. Conversely to obey only because one is commanded to obey generally destroys the inner commitment to moral and ethical life.

If millions of Mormons obey only because they are commanded to obey, then there is religious life without a reasoned moral or ethical core, and something is terribly wrong.

To demand blind and unquestionable obedience in given situations is to drastically reduce the sphere of genuinely Christian behavior within the church, to create human beings who have little inner capacity for moral decision making and who have a diminished social conscience (a thing for which Mormons have historically been criticized).

Church authority should be obeyed only because one understands the results of that obedience and regards it as Christ-like. To do differently is to compromise one's sacred personal integrity. In actuality Mormon dissidents seek to change certain codes and practices of the larger system which they regard as unethical, irreligious, harmful, or impractical. They are not selfishly striving to arbitrarily exempt themselves from the enforcement of these codes and practices.

Fifth criticism: Dissent with the church implies personal contempt for the church.

Response: Although the posture of some Mormon dissidents is certainly defiant, their dissent is more a manifestation of respect for the church than of contempt for it. Realizing that the rules and conventions they bridge apply equally to them, they violate them knowingly in an effort to correct what they believe to be a wrong in the church infinitely worse than the commotion committed through their dissent. They understand that such deliberate violation of established norms will be met with punishment, and generally they do not seek to evade that outcome. Purposeful dissent is essentially a process aimed at effecting or blocking changes through deliberate public sacrifice.

Because dissent is always political (an effort to manipulate social power), dissidents may expect that punishment will be severe. Suffering this punishment, accepting humiliation and probable maltreatment, are essential parts of protest. Dissenters demonstrate respect for the church, a church they seek to improve and strengthen not subvert, a church where they choose to remain.

Sixth criticism: Dissent undermines respect for order in the church. It cannot be justified when "lawful" channels of communication remain open and available to anyone who feels a need to complain or advocate change.

Response: I am sorry, but historical evidence does not support these claims. It is true that social disorder in the church has sometimes followed or accompanied a period of dissent, but it cannot be inferred that dissent was the precipitating cause of the disorder. More likely both the dissent

and the disorder were products of social and religious conditions that for many became intolerable.

On the whole the Mormon tradition is greatly indebted to grieving members who advocated needed reforms under various circumstances and to courageous leaders who relied on such appeals to justify their legitimate contesting for a better church. In both theory and practice, responsible dissent, although sometimes badly managed, has been for the most part the instrument of persons or groups with noble and spiritually desirable objectives, objectives which in due time have been willingly embraced by the church. Dissent in these issues has most often brought not chaos but an improved social and religious order.

As for "lawful" channels for publicly promoting considered differences of opinion in the church, they rarely exist. The problem is that these channels, once so plentiful within its bosom in the early days of the church have mostly been abolished. How does a Latter-day Saint legitimately contend with leaders of his church? He does not. The democratic mechanisms are not in place.

Even if there were lawful channels for publicly registering dissent, it does not follow that using them will be (or could be) as effective as the far more dramatic protest of "illegal" dissent. Alleging that lawful protest is possible, therefore, cannot clearly establish that disobedient protest is unjustifiable. What would have to be demonstrated is that some approved format of protest would be equally effective in accomplishing objectives. Disobedient protest frequently has a spirited and public effectiveness that "approved" protest cannot match.

Seventh criticism: When church members do not agree with the way the church is conducted, they should get out of it and go some place else where the standards are less demanding and where they will be able to cope. If they don't love the church the way it is, they should leave.

Response: Let us be clear about the extraordinary claim of our church. Mormonism is not just another church, another voluntary organization where you join and participate because of the personal gratification you get. It is not a club, fraternity, or group of "good old boys." It is the very restored gospel of Jesus Christ and earthly kingdom of God. It encompasses all that exists and all that God will yet create, belonging in equal measure to each of those who love and will follow God's example.

To tell a Mormon dissident to love the church as it is or leave it would be like saying if you disagree with the way the world is today you should commit suicide. How unintelligent and insensitive. It would be as if such spokespersons do not understand the claim of the restored gospel.

If it really did not matter which religious group you belonged to, then those in dissent might be encouraged to move on to a church less at odds with their expectations. Those who stay with the church but are in some

dissident position are likely to have powerful testimonies of its divinity. They may be the most loyal to the church. Those who stay and fight for progressive change in the church may just be those who love her the most. Those who take the greatest abuse because of their nonconformity may have the greatest fidelity towards the church. Their love for the church could be the greatest of all.

CONCLUSION

I have tried in this brief essay to suggest some beginning perspectives toward an operational definition of dissent in the church. I intend that others may find their own relevance in these principles and arguments within both historical and contemporary contexts. The task will probably not be an arduous one for those who know their church history and have been involved in modern streams of Mormon change. There is very little written anywhere in the church on this long-standing but most contemporary phenomenon. Dissent is yet an undefined term for the Latter-day Saints, and many grieve over the fact that it is considered an inexcusable taboo rather than a force for truth seeking.

Although I cannot see it now even dimly, I want to believe with President Joseph F. Smith that our church is truly destined to become "the most democratic institution in the world." But before we even begin to perceive of ourselves as democratic, we must first prevail over this fearful mindset against dissent. To do so will take years of courageous dialogue and debate, perhaps continuing far beyond this generation of church members. What is now important is to place the issue on today's discussion agenda and to keep it there.



On Spectral Evidence

Eugene England

And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. . . . And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Matthew 24:10-12

Though I admitted in my feelings and knew all the time that Joseph was a human being and subject to err, still it was none of my business to look after his faults. . . . It was not my prerogative to call him in question with regard to any act of his life. He was God's servant, and not mine.

Brigham Young

OCTOBER 3, 1992, THE FIRST DAY of the 162d semiannual LDS general conference, was the 300th anniversary of the action that finally stopped the Salem witch trials. Those trials, perhaps the greatest blot on American religious devotion, had resulted in the deaths of twenty people, all of whom vigorously proclaimed their innocence to the end.

On October 3, 1692, Increase Mather ended the murders by circulating an essay, *Cases of Conscience*, in which, drawing on his authority as the most prestigious minister in New England, he unequivocally condemned the use in the trials of what was called "spectral evidence." The governor of Massachusetts, Sir William Phips, at last accepted his duty, excused the court, and annulled the warrant that had been signed for eight more deaths.

On October 3, 1992, in remembrance of what can happen when suspicion and criticism based on spectral evidence runs wild—and in contrition for my own sins in that regard, I fasted and, between sessions

of conference, reread Perry Miller's account of the trials and their causes.¹ I also read again Nathaniel Hawthorne's story "Young Goodman Brown," his own act of remembrance and contrition (his ancestor, John Hathorne, was one of the Salem judges).² That story tells of a young Puritan in Salem who enters the Devil's territory by accepting spectral evidence; it powerfully shows the loss of faith, of joy, even of life, that usually follows such acceptance.

"Spectral" was the term for evidence based on the commonly held Puritan doctrine that once witches covenanted with Satan they were rewarded with a servant devil, a specter, who took on their likeness and did their bidding, especially in hurting their enemies. Thus, if the specter was seen by such an enemy, that constituted a fair presumption of the witch's guilt. Some seventeenth-century New England thinkers and leaders of course recognized the danger in such a doctrine: that a specter of a person might well be *imagined*, especially by an enemy, or even that Satan might himself create a counterfeit specter of an innocent person as a way to bring damnation to their credulous accusers. But the Salem Village court, despite objections by some ministers, took the position that God's providence would not allow an innocent person to be represented by a specter and proceeded to condemn and kill people mainly on the basis of testimony by their enemies that specters of the accused had afflicted them.

Increase Mather's son Cotton, another of the colony's most prestigious thinkers, had warned against the use of spectral evidence fairly early in the trials, which began in March. On May 31 he had begged the court in a letter not to depend too much on such testimony: "It is very certain that the divells have sometimes represented the shapes of persons not only innocent, but also very virtuous." Cotton prophesies in the letter that if credit is given to such representations by the Devil, "The Door is opened!" and Miller comments, "Had the court heeded his recommendation, there would have been no executions; if, having made it, he had thereafter kept his mouth shut, he would be a hero today."³

Miller then traces the tragic record of a man of correct insight and a good heart whose fear and ambition, and especially his confusion about loyalty to the civil authority of the court rather than to truth and to persons, led him later to equivocate his earlier good counsel. Cotton Mather thus contributed to the scapegoating—for which he in turn became a major scapegoat in popular world memory. He did not, as many continue to

1. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961).

2. Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown," in *Great Short Works of Hawthorne* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).

3. Miller, 194.

assume, himself condemn or burn witches. But when Governor Phips, in the face of growing doubts, on June 15 asked the association of ministers for advice, Mather authored for them *The Return of Several Ministers*. Despite restating the ministers' rejection of spectral evidence as adequate to condemn, he ends that document by reinforcing the traditional Puritan position that civil authority should vigorously punish those the devil had led astray. The court took that latter advice, ignoring the warning about spectral evidence, so the killings continued until Cotton's father read his emphatic essay to the ministers on October 3.

Clearer vision and greater courage by the ministers might have stopped the trials in June, before any deaths. Without their intervention, in Miller's words, "a reckless use of spectral evidence gave rein to the seething passions and festering animosities of New England. Prisons became crowded, every man's life lay at the mercy of any accuser, brother looked sidewise at brother, and the friend of many years' standing became a bad security risk."⁴

No wonder Arthur Miller was able to set in the midst of that madness his powerful drama of frenzied suspicion and imitative violence, *The Crucible*. The play was written as a parable, an indictment of the McCarthyism of the 1950s but universal in its haunting relevance to every period and place when multiplying fears during a time of great change or external threat suddenly focus on one person or group—a scapegoat—and, on the basis of spectral evidence, people condemn, exclude, and even kill each other. It happened in Missouri when the old settlers turned on the Mormons; it happened after the Civil War when Southern whites turned on the blacks; it happened to the Jews in Germany and the Kulaks in the Soviet Union. I believe there is danger of some of it happening right now to a number of groups in our church.

As I listened to conference and watched the priesthood session on television at a stake center I thought of the increasing passions and anxieties, jealousies and name-calling, low morale and scapegoating, an increasing tide of judgments and even punishments based on spectral evidence I have seen in the church lately—mainly at Brigham Young University and along the Wasatch Front but beginning to extend elsewhere. Obviously I mean by "spectral evidence" something somewhat different than the Puritans but similar enough that the parallel is instructive: We are too often making judgments of other human beings based on static, partial, even merely reported images of them that we take to represent their whole beings and therefore to constitute a fair presumption of their evilness or guilt which we and others must act upon. When we do so we are using evidence as spectral and devilishly dangerous as that which condemned

4. Ibid., 195.

the Puritan “witches.”

When church members write to the First Presidency complaining about an action of their bishop or a speech by a high councilor, they are, I believe, using something like spectral evidence—and the letter is rightly sent back to them. When BYU students or their parents complain to church or university leaders because they are offended by one of their professors rather than discussing the offense directly with them (or their immediate supervisor), that is also, I believe, using spectral evidence. When persons are rejected from a teaching position, or denied publication, simply because of an unusual belief or controversial reputation, they are victims of spectral evidence. When anyone is denied due process, the right to face their accusers directly—or treated in any way that disregards their rights and feelings as long-standing, proven, virtuous members of the church—they are victims of the kind of irrational fears that gripped Salem and killed some of its best people through spectral evidence. And when any of us stereotype religion teachers as being reactionary or narrow-minded or criticize, in public or in private conversations, the church’s general authorities, we are guilty of responding to spectral evidence.

Of course, criticism and judgment are proper—even required—for certain responsibilities, but they are deeply flawed and dangerous, I believe, when they do not include direct response to whole persons rather than indirect and punitive response to specters of them.

The great evil of spectral evidence, of course, even when it stops short of punishment, is that it reduces the most precious eternal beings in the universe, children of God with infinite capacity who are constantly changing, to static, partial beings. A specter can never properly represent the whole being—which is one reason we are warned not to judge and that we will be judged (that is, will judge ourselves) the same way we judge: partially. Human beings cannot be reduced to an action, a political or intellectual position, a quotation in a newspaper, an essay or story they have written. Each of those, even if clearly and fully seen (which is impossible, since we always see only partially, from a particular point of view), is still only part, a static part, of what is a constantly dynamic, complex, failing, and repenting potential god. We are never less—and actually much more because of our infinite potential—than the complete sum of our history, our stories, a sum which is constantly increasing, changing, through time.

The weekend of October 3 and 4 was perfect Utah Indian summer. Though it cooled off to freezing at night, it was quite warm in the day, emphasizing the warm colors of the leaves that filled the canyons and contrasted with the cool, dense blue of the sky. We have a cabin a few miles up the South Fork of the Provo River, in an area of narrow canyon that

angles generally southeast, leaving no large northern slopes for pines. The steep mountain walls on both sides are covered with deciduous shrubs and trees which because of the dry summer had already dropped most of their leaves—mainly the soft reds of mountain maple and soft yellows of box elder mixed with bronze scrub oak. The masses of leaves had completely covered the ground of the hillsides and had blown down across the lawns and fields to the river: “worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie”—and Hopkins was right, it was not the leaves I was mourning for.⁵

Our cabin is surrounded by aspen and cottonwoods, whose leaves were just turning bright gold and lime yellow and a few starting to fall, so that as I looked up from reading or listening to conference or walked out for a few minutes, I was surrounded, from ground to sky, with golden-yellow light which seemed substantial, heavy and falling even as it lifted me, my lungs easily filling against it.

When I drove down Provo Canyon to general priesthood meeting about 5:30, against the setting sun, I drove through air thick with falling motes of gold. Across from Upper Falls, where the traffic was shifted sharply from the two left lanes to the right lanes of the new freeway being built (the place where a BYU professor, Marek Kaliszewski, would be killed driving up the canyon just two weeks later), one last beam from the setting sun made the reflector strips on the center dividing lines disappear long enough that I drifted straight into the oncoming lane. I wrenched the car back just in time to miss a car and then drove slowly, my heart pounding, down to the stake center in north Provo.

As I watched what might be called the “specter” of Elder Dallin Oaks during the session—the electronic image of him sent out from the tabernacle through the air and projected before me, larger-than-life, on a screen—I thought of the other specters of him that I had heard used, by both liberals and conservatives, to reduce him to a partial, static version, sometimes critically.

I recently received in the mail a piece of paper that contained samples of spectral evidence. The paper quoted a stereotype of liberals: “The joke currently amusing the staff at the Church Office Building is the definition of a Mormon liberal as someone who drinks Coke, reads *Sunstone*, and prefaces every statement in the Articles of Faith with ‘Would you believe?’” The paper probably came from a pained Mormon liberal, because it then responded in kind—and in extra measure for revenge—with a series of stereotypes of conservatives: “A Mormon conservative does his home

5. Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Spring and Fall” (“Margaret, are you grieving/ Over Goldengrove unleaving?”), in *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, eds. W. H. Gardner and N. H. Mackenzie (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 89.

teaching on the last day of the month, unless there is a BYU basketball game, and then he waits a day and covers two months with the one visit. . . . He ends each message with, 'If there is something I can do for you, let me know'—until the family does ask a favor and then he suggests they use the want ads."

This can be an amusing game, but it illustrates the process of escalation that I find increasing and particularly dangerous. The person who sent me the paper, apparently bombarded by spectral evidence about liberals and possibly some personal rejection, responded with spectral evidence that will, I'm afraid, only increase the painful divisions and sense of mutual rejection.

What has happened to the terms "liberal" and "conservative" in recent years is a primary example of the serious mischief that reliance on spectral evidence can do to a community. Those terms traditionally were simply political labels, identifying two equally ethical perspectives in our democracy; they stood for the two main different, but honorable, positions from which people could seek to improve society—arguing, developing programs, compromising, voting and respecting each other as that process worked to provide better ideas than either position by itself could have produced. But in the last dozen years, especially the right wing of my own party, the Republicans, have tried to make those labels, those mere specters which before were only simple and rough guides to political tendencies, stand for the whole identity of persons as good (conservatives) or evil (liberals). It is a great tragedy that this effort has succeeded in my own state and religious community—and also provoked in some an equal and opposite reaction, so that for them "conservative" has come to be a term of dismissal of others as ignorant and heartless.

In the current philosophical and literary jargon, to use spectral evidence is to "totalize," to accept and promote by repeating, or even acting punitively upon, a specter—a real or imagined part that is made to stand for the whole—of someone who seems to be dangerous or to have done damage. It is *not* to open oneself up to the "other" as a whole person directly and continuously, critically but also receptively, in the personal give-and-take, mutual calling-to-account and forgiving, that may be the heart of eternal life. Totalizing on the basis of spectral evidence is to deny the perspective insisted on by Joseph Smith in the King Follett Discourse: "All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement and improvement."⁶ It is to refuse Christ's clear instruction, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (Matt. 18:15), which he reemphasized in modern

6. Joseph Smith, "The King Follett Discourse: A New Amalgamated Text," ed. Stan Larson, *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Winter 1978): 204.

revelation: "If thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone" (D&C 42:88).

I know this is difficult. I know that often when we make the supreme effort and, rather than responding in kind, go in humility to a person who has offended us and seek understanding we may still be rejected. I know that many right now feel they have acted in good faith, opened themselves up to others—and been totalized, even betrayed. I have heard some say, "I just don't trust so-and-so any more" or "I'm certain feminists [or conservatives or general authorities], no matter what I do, will not respond to me kindly, as a whole person, so I must protect myself."

I reject such counsel—even if the perception of unkindness by others that produces it is accurate. Just as it is wrong to let good ends justify evil means, so it is wrong to let failure to succeed justify evil means and wrong to respond with evil means to evil means. As Lowell Bennion has constantly reminded us, quoting the words of a Hindu proverb: "To action alone thou hast a right, not to its fruits."⁷ To put it bluntly, "Liberals (or conservatives) have no right to start using spectral evidence, even if it seems clear that conservatives (or liberals) are determined to use it." Especially in a religious community, trust, like Christ-like love, is to be extended not because others *deserve* it but because they *need* it, because they can *become* trustworthy (or loving) by being nurtured in a community of trust and love. Finally, we need to extend trust, even if doing so makes us vulnerable to great pain and even great cost, in order to save our own souls.

As I watched the specter of Elder Oaks on television, I became aware of a way to get beyond the dangerous temptation to credit spectral evidence—a danger I knew I had succumbed to in times past, recently in a very damaging way. I went to general priesthood meeting that night, after a day of fasting, with a special prayer that I might feel the confirmation of the Spirit as I listened to the Brethren. I prayed again during the songs and prayer and the opening speeches and felt some comfort and reassurance, but I felt most directly what I was seeking when Elder Oaks, departing from his usual clear, carefully reasoned, sometimes rather stern doctrinal messages, began to tell about the heroic Bible stories that had inspired him in his youth with a sense of God's care. I remembered those stories and my own youthful yearnings to be on God's side and to enjoy his acceptance and blessings.

Then Elder Oaks told of an occasion, while he lived in Chicago in the 1960s, when he was confronted by a young man with a gun who demanded his money and his car and probably endangered Sister Oaks, who was locked inside the car with the keys. During a momentary diversion when

7. Lowell L. Bennion, *Selected Writings of Lowell L. Bennion: 1928-1988*, ed. Eugene England (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), xxii.

a bus stopped nearby, Elder Oaks, who had his hands raised, was tempted to strike down the smaller man's arm and overpower him, but he had a clear impression from the Spirit that he should not—in fact, a clear vision of what would happen in the struggle: he would accidentally kill the man. He obeyed the Spirit, put his hand on the young man's shoulder and talked to him, so that he was dissuaded and turned and ran away.⁸

Hearing this full story, opening myself to the whole person (though it came to me only on spectral beams of light) and being unusually open to the wholesome and completing power of the Spirit, I could not see Elder Oaks as any of his specters. I saw him as a human being, one I could privately and humbly disagree with at times but openly love and respect and submit myself to. I saw him as an apostle, called by God as a special witness of Jesus Christ and an authority over God's kingdom on earth, to which I belong by covenant, a person I obey and do not criticize.

Hugh Nibley, in a discourse called "Criticizing the Brethren," talked about the shift in perspective that would allow one to say what I have just said. He told about being assigned, as a young faculty member in the 1950s, to go with Elder Spencer W. Kimball to a stake conference to recruit students for BYU. As their train made a stop in Los Angeles, Nibley, who knew the bookstores near the old Los Angeles station, hopped off, bought a rare ten-volume set of books, and barely made it back to the train by running across a lot:

As we sat talking about the books, Brother Kimball casually took an immaculate linen handkerchief from the breast pocket of his jacket, and, stooping over, vigorously dusted off my shoes and trousers. It was the most natural thing in the world, and we both took it completely for granted. . . . but ever since, that has conditioned my attitude toward the Brethren. I truly believe that they are chosen servants of God.⁹

My own experience that produced a similar life-long conviction was in some ways more dramatic, but it has been reconfirmed a number of times by simple human experiences like Brother Nibley's—such as that talk on October 3 by Elder Oaks. When I was twelve, our family moved from Downey, in southeast Idaho, where we continued to raise dryland wheat, to live the winter months in Salt Lake City. My father was called during that first year to serve on the high council of the new Hillside Stake, formed from the Sugarhouse Stake. During a Sunday session of the first conference of the new stake, on March 24, 1946, because my father was being sustained

8. Dallin H. Oaks, "Bible Stories and Personal Protection," *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): 39.

9. Hugh Nibley, *Criticizing the Brethren* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1989), 24.

I sat on the front row of the chapel, in the old Wasatch Ward on Emerson Avenue, with my younger sister and mother right behind me.

The visiting authority was Elder Harold B. Lee, a young apostle called five years before. During his address, just when I was leaning back over the seat to tease my sister, I felt something that went throughout my body and forceful enough to turn me around to look up at Elder Lee, perhaps ten feet away. After the meeting I learned from my parents that he had suddenly interrupted his speech and had begun to give the congregation an apostolic blessing. I don't remember what he said but only the feeling—like burning deep inside me but also sweet like honey—and an idea connected with that feeling: that Elder Lee was a person called of God as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, one of a body of such persons appointed to direct Christ's church. That feeling and idea have sometimes waned and waxed a bit over the years since but have always remained grounded in the deepest part of me, the part that I recognize as my eternal intelligence and the awareness of which is more real to me than anything else.

In late September 1992 our family celebrated the sixtieth wedding anniversary of my parents, who now live with my sister in Smithfield, Utah. We children and grandchildren and assorted spouses met for dinner at the marvelously preserved old Bluebird Restaurant in Logan. We had a short program honoring my parents, and then my mother stood and, with remarkable energy, given her declining health and 83 years, bore her testimony to her family. She told of feeling directly guided by the Spirit as she led the women's auxiliaries when my father was president of the North Central States Mission, of being healed from illness by the power of the priesthood, so immediately that she could feel the illness move out of her body through her arms and legs. And she told, the first time I could remember her mentioning it since it happened, about the feeling in that meeting with Elder Lee, how everyone she talked to had felt it with us, how I had asked her about it after the meeting. She said it was like a day of Pentecost to the people of the stake.

What did that day mean to me? A fundamental shift in the way I saw myself in the church: since then I have had no anxiety that the leaders would lead the church astray, have felt no need to set them straight. I have had no reason to think them infallible and plenty of reason, including the frank admissions of some, to know they make mistakes. But I have not felt it my business to correct or to criticize them. I have felt about them as Brigham Young felt about Joseph Smith:

Though I admitted in my feelings and knew all the time that Joseph was a human being and subject to err, still it was none of my business to look after his faults. . . . It was not for me to question whether Joseph was dictated by the Lord at all times and under all circumstances. . . . It was not my

prerogative to call him in question with regard to any act of his life. He was God's servant, and not mine.¹⁰

I believe the apostles are called by God to be special witnesses of Christ and bear testimony that is potentially saving to all the world—including me—and, as prophets, seers, and revelators, to proclaim the official doctrines and policies of the church. This means that so long as I claim to be part of the church I obey them—and that I am anxiously engaged in the work of the church they direct and in bearing my own testimony of Christ and his restored gospel wherever and however I can.

My calling is to be a teacher and writer, to use my gifts to seek and promote truth and virtue, and to build up the Kingdom of God with all my means. What happens, then, if I am asked by the Brethren to believe something or do something I think is wrong, even after careful thought and prayer? If the matter in question is simply a policy about church procedure and I am not obliged, in obedience, to do or say anything that in itself violates my integrity, I can quietly obey and wait for further understanding. Certainly it is possible for an individual among the Brethren to ask me to do or believe something I simply could not, at least in good conscience. As Elder Boyd K. Packer explained in a devotional address at BYU in 1991, safety lies in the motto, "'Follow the Brethren,' not 'Follow the Brother.'"¹¹ He told how the presiding councils of the church go to great effort to make certain they function that way, how he as a BYU trustee had been careful to observe that principle, and testified, "If ever another course has been followed, trouble has followed as surely as night follows day."¹²

It is, of course, not always easy for us who are not in the presiding councils to distinguish between the Brother and the Brethren, so I have come, through careful study and trial, to the following approach: I am bound by my beliefs about their calling to be attentive and receptive to everything any of the Brothers say—to listen charitably and invite the Spirit to confirm, to be fundamentally believing and submissive. I am bound by covenant to obey the official directions of the president, the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve—and to obey according to the best understanding that plain sense and the confirmation of the Spirit can give me, and not according to the claimed understanding of any other person.

This is not a simple or easy approach. It requires constant attention and

10. Brigham Young, "He That Loveth Not His Brother," *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-86), 4:297.

11. Boyd K. Packer, "'I Say unto You, Be One,'" in *Brigham Young University 1990-91 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1991), 84.

12. *Ibid.*

response. It exacts the costs of discipleship—sacrifice, discipline, sometimes humiliation—and it means that I must daily risk my salvation, as I choose to obey the Brethren as prophets, seers, and revelators and follow their ethical and religious leadership. To do this authentically, in good faith, I must constantly renew that faith as its source: my deepest feelings and sense of knowing that come from my full life experience and thought and spiritual confirmations—that include both my spiritual testimony given me in the presence of Harold B. Lee and my daily living of the restored gospel. I must constantly try to be true to both of the main roots of my integrity: (1) my convictions based on careful thought and carefully considered experience—both worldly and spiritual—and (2) my convictions about the principles, covenants, and authority in Christ's church that I have accepted on the basis of such thought, experience, and witness. I cannot shift that responsibility to any other person or to any absolute authority or dogma—nor can I avoid the consequences for my integrity of not being true to covenants I have made and authority I have accepted in good faith. Finally, I must constantly test and renew these covenants and convictions as Paul directed and Joseph Smith exemplified: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21).

One of the most troubled times of my life came about when I failed to make the distinction between Brother and Brethren. In 1979, as an associate director of the Honors Program at BYU, I gave a talk to honors students on the LDS ideal of continuing, life-long education in which I used, among other examples, the doctrine of eternal progression in knowledge. I mentioned that one of the reasons our ideal of becoming like God is so attractive is that if we do we will be able to experience the joy of learning forever. I had been taught that doctrine all my life and believed it to be perfectly orthodox—in fact, in my research for my talk I had located many references by Brigham Young and other prophets that exulted in the doctrine.

In the summer of 1980 Elder Bruce R. McConkie gave an address at BYU entitled "The Seven Deadly Heresies" in which he ranked the belief that God is progressing in knowledge as heresy number one.¹³ I was surprised and confused, as were a number of students who came to me pointing out the discrepancy between his remarks and those of various prophets. I studied the matter carefully and found that there were other leaders besides Elder McConkie, including Hyrum Smith and Joseph Fielding Smith, who had also expressed a belief that God is absolute, perfect, and not progressing.

13. Bruce R. McConkie, "The Seven Deadly Heresies," in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), 74-80.

I also found that Brigham Young and B. H. Roberts had developed a concept that could explain such an apparent contradiction: God is perfect in relation to our mortal sphere, has all knowledge regarding it, but is learning and progressing in spheres beyond ours that have nothing to do with ours—thus not endangering in any way his perfect redemptive plan and power in our sphere. It thus was possible to talk of God as perfect and unchanging when praising him in regard to us and our sphere—or to speak of him as developing and enjoying new ideas and experiences when imagining the adventure of Godhood in spheres beyond ours—and to be right and orthodox, with prophetic precedent, in both cases.

I wrote Elder McConkie explaining all this and how it had helped me resolve students' anxieties about prophetic differences. I heard nothing until six months later, when I received a phone call in London from a friend at BYU asking if a letter being circulated, purporting to be from Elder McConkie to me, was accurate. I was shocked at the content of the letter and could not confirm it as genuine until weeks later when the original arrived in England by surface mail. The letter rejected my explanation and the sources I had cited and instructed me not to speak or write about the subject. I wrote back saying I would obey.

Unfortunately a copy of Elder McConkie's letter to me had somehow been taken from his office or someone he sent a copy to and, probably because it contained a reference to a controversial teaching by Brigham Young, was widely circulated by anti-Mormons. I was deeply embarrassed by that publicity and concerned about the damage it might do to the church and my family, but I did not criticize Elder McConkie and I objected when others did so in my presence. I listened carefully to his speeches and opened my heart to believe all I could that he taught and to be obedient to my promise. I was especially moved, along with many others, by his very personal and humble testimony of Jesus Christ in his last address, in April 1985 general conference.

But I was hurting inside during most of this time, a hurt which increased after Elder McConkie's death until I spent some time considering that nagging pain and concluded that I had violated my integrity in agreeing so readily to obey, against my convictions, a single Brother rather than the Brethren in so important a matter. I knew that the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, in one of their very first joint statements, 23 August 1865, had denounced the idea that God is *not* progressing in knowledge as heresy¹⁴ and that no subsequent official statement of the Brethren had reversed that position.

14. Eugene England, "Perfection and Progression: Two Complementary Ways to Talk about God," *Brigham Young University Studies* 29 (Summer 1989): 37.

It was certainly not my prerogative to publicly challenge or oppose Elder McConkie's ideas, especially while he was serving as an apostle. But neither did it any longer seem right for me to remain silent about what I understood to be an important and official teaching of the Restoration affecting the education of my students, so in 1989 I published an essay in *Brigham Young University Studies*, exploring as objectively as possible two complementary ways of talking about God—as perfect and as progressing.

An even more painful experience occurred last summer. This time I felt the pain both of being the victim of spectral evidence and of using it myself—and found myself, though unaware of it at the time, actually criticizing the Brethren. If I had thought a little more calmly at that time, I would have recognized a condition that I have studied much in my research on the relationships between literature and the gospel of Jesus Christ—the universal and almost irresistible tendency, when a variety of tensions and mutual offenses and revenges are growing like a plague in a society, for all the fear and anxiety suddenly to focus on a scapegoat.

I should have remembered during my anger in August what I reread on October 3—Perry Miller's description of what led up to the witch trials: (1) the growing anxieties of Puritans about their children, who had not had the original conversion experience of the founders; (2) increasing concerns about changing political conditions as their original charter was revoked after the return of Catholic Royalists to power in England; and (3) the increasing worry of the ministers that the community had "abysmally degenerated." Miller describes Cotton Mather's attempt to explain what had happened in *The Wonders of the Invisible World*:

There is something both appealing and repulsive in Cotton's frantic clutching at the old array of sins in order to explain this affliction, at those village vices so long since arraigned: back-biting, scandal-mongering, talebearing, suits-at-law—precisely that cave of winds into which anthropologists of today would search for "causes" of the saturnalia that overwhelmed Salem Village.¹⁵

This seems to me exactly descriptive of many church members in the past few years, at least along the Wasatch Front: people accusing others of being Korihors or traitors or Nazis, rumors of persecution flying throughout the Mormon intellectual community, people being denied positions or opportunities on spectral evidence, and backbiting concerning the Brethren. I am ashamed that into this cave of winds I boldly and angrily stepped and committed a gross scapegoating based purely on spectral evidence.

15. Miller, 202.

It happened this way: Lavina Fielding Anderson gave a presentation at the August 1992 Sunstone Symposium on how we might go about healing the breach that has seemed to be growing between church authorities and Mormon intellectuals and feminists (see her essay in this issue). My anxiety and pain increased during her catalogue of events in which I knew people had been badly hurt, hurt at the heart of their faith, and I suddenly became convinced that actions of the Strengthening Church Members Committee (which I had recently heard something about) were behind most of those events—and my general hurt and fear focused in anger. During the question-and-answer period I accused the committee of undermining the church and invited the audience to use their influence to stop it.

I had in mind that people would write general authorities they knew and that thus the committee, which I assumed was ad hoc and middle management, would be quietly discontinued. But in my heart was probably a desire to punish, and the powers of darkness were glad to oblige—that is, the natural laws of reciprocal violence that are always unleashed by growing, unresolved animosities based on spectral evidence and by the scapegoating that suddenly focuses that growing plague. Television cameras, which in my anger I had forgotten, captured and replayed the scene on the news; an Associated Press reporter went right out, called the church spokesman, and got a confirmation of the existence of the committee and some of its activities in question, which was reported nationwide.

Meanwhile I went home to Provo in a welter of emotions (still angry, sometimes glad, even a bit self-righteous about speaking out, but then doubtful, increasingly aware that I had violated a sacred principle for me—that offenses should be dealt with personally and privately). As the publicity continued, much of it negative and surely useful to anti-Mormons, I felt much anguish; I remembered a comment to me that night after the session from one in the audience, who may well have been alluding to my recent book, *The Quality of Mercy*: “Well that was brave, but it wasn’t very merciful.” Indeed, I felt like a hypocrite, and when I learned from the First Presidency statement the next week that the committee actually consisted of two apostles, Elder James E. Faust and Elder Russell M. Nelson, I felt despair that I had, however unwittingly, criticized them and possibly invited others to do so. I immediately wrote an apology to them, at the same time doing what I should have done before if I had been patient enough to find out how: I told them directly and personally what concerned me about the committee’s actions as I now understood them, of the hurt I felt those actions had caused me and others I knew.

On October 3 I read again not only Perry Miller’s account of the witch trials but also Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown,” the best piece of American literature I know for conveying what it feels like to be, not a

victim, but a *victimizer* through spectral evidence. On my day of humiliation I identified closely with that brash young Salem Village Puritan, newly married and thus perforce a newly covenanted member of the community, who adventures forth into the forest to test his faith against the devil and accepts the devil's spectral evidence that all others in the community, including his wife, are given over to evil, are even participants with him in a witches' sabbath, and returns to a life of gloom—having lost faith, hope, and charity. Goodman Brown makes the same mistake that the Salem court made—confusing a person with that person's specter.

Hawthorne thus creates, for a careful reader, a clear sense that the devil can be a projection of ourselves, our deepest fears and animosities, and that as we move into his territory and accept his evidence, he is able to tell truths to convey more important lies that besmirch the character of whomever *we* wish to scapegoat—ultimately even everyone. The devil, for instance, exploits his (and our) recognition of the real evils committed by individual Puritans (he mentions whipping Quakers and burning Indian villages) to condemn them universally, even to promote a belief in universal evil. As David Levin writes in his excellent essay on this matter, "At the witch meeting, the 'shape of evil' invites Goodman Brown to 'the communion' of the human 'race,' the communion of evil, but we have no more right than Brown himself to believe the Father of Lies."¹⁶

When Young Goodman Brown is convinced that even his wife, Faith, whom he foolishly left behind that night, is present at the devilish sabbath, he suddenly finds himself alone, and Hawthorne asks the reader to consider whether he had "fallen asleep in the forest and only dreamed a wild dream of a witch meeting." In either case, the gloom that darkens his life from then on is only his inverted (and perverted) "faith" in the veracity of spectral evidence, and Hawthorne turns the issue to the reader, to me and you, "Be it so if you will": We must choose. And that choice will reveal whether our faith is in divine wholeness and progression or in the reductive partiality of spectral evidence. Levin in his commentary reminds us of the personal and social implications of this psychological allegory: "Hawthorne condemns that graceless perversion of true Calvinism which, in universal suspicion, actually led a community to the unjust destruction of twenty men and women."¹⁷

It is just such a "graceless perversion" of honorable motives and of true Mormonism that I fear is increasing now and may yet lead to much destruction of faith and love—as well as the pain many are already feeling. I feel the fear so deeply in part because I have felt in my bones what it is

16. David Levin, "Shadows of Doubt: Specter Evidence in Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown,'" in *American Literature* 34 (Fall 1963): 351.

17. *Ibid.*, 352.

like to be part of the perversion. Between my "outburst" (as the AP reporter rightly called it) on August 6 and my day of repentance on October 3, I went through another shift in perspective.

On the one hand I became conscious that people in the church, even in an organized way, were willing, in the name of honorable ends, to use spectral evidence to judge, hurt, intimidate, and even punish people. Perhaps most troubling of all, I learned that others, even though disagreeing with such means, were willing to stand by and let those things happen, even participate to some extent.

On the other hand I became more fully aware that *I* could participate in the same kind of activity—with gusto. In my own hurt and desire for revenge I could use spectral evidence to judge and try to punish people, even risking harm to the church I believe is even truer than the gospel and risking violation of my sacred covenants and deep commitment not to criticize the Brethren.

It is time to stop. The risk is enormous. I believe we may be at the period in the last days prophesied by Christ: "Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (Matt. 24:10). We must, in our community, stop listening to, accepting, or passing on to others spectral evidence. We must, I believe, specifically stop dealing indirectly, spectrally, with our offenses. We must stop (1) writing to people in authority with our complaints and hurts rather than facing them directly; (2) using church authority to indirectly intimidate or punish rather than dealing face-to-face with those who offend us in speech or writing; and (3) criticizing the Brethren.

I believe there are some positive things to do, in addition to the things we need to *stop* doing. We can bear witness against the use of spectral evidence—by teaching all we can influence not to use it, by kindly but firmly standing up against its use on ourselves, and by refusing to participate in its use on others, including the Brethren. We can cease to condemn others publicly for their faults, even their use of spectral evidence on us. We can extend trust even when we feel it is not deserved or has been betrayed—which seems to me exactly the ultimate vulnerability that Christ exhibited and asked of us.

I believe that, just as there is naturally the kind of escalation of imitative hurt and revenge which I have seen recently in the communities I know best, so there can be an escalation of love and trust. The new statements on academic freedom at BYU, whatever their faults, convey a remarkable degree of trust from the Board of Trustees to the faculty and administration. We all know the board has absolute power over BYU and can fire and hire as it pleases. It has consciously given up some of that power: First, it has agreed in principle to a statement on academic freedom that recognizes the unique nature of a university, its need for unfettered inquiry and for the

atmosphere of love and trust that *should* govern our behavior. Second, it has accepted a procedure of judgment in cases of termination for cause at BYU which is essentially lodged in faculty committees. I wish to respond to that trust with reciprocal expressions of trust and of my desire to be a responsible holder of the unique freedoms I have at BYU, especially the freedom to relate the gospel and my testimony to my study of literature, as both a teacher and writer.

I am especially grateful to President Gordon B. Hinckley for his devotional address on October 13, 1992. In it he expressed his confidence that “never in the history of [BYU] has there been a faculty better qualified professionally nor one more loyal and dedicated to the standards of [the church].”¹⁸ I feel certain from my own observation that he is right. I invite my colleagues to feel that way about themselves and each other—and invite the church membership at large to accept that vote of confidence in us from a prophet and member of the board.

President Hinckley quoted the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, “But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world,” and continued: “We trust you to do so. We love you. We respect you.”¹⁹ As one faculty member said in a meeting two days later in which some of the gathering tensions were discussed, “That address was like a stone was lifted from my heart.”

As for me, my job is to act and to teach my students in ways that can improve the moral quality of life in every way I can, including using what I learn from the Brethren and from literature and experience and the scriptures and the Spirit—and to try meticulously never to use spectral evidence myself. It is certainly not to use the imagined weaknesses of the Brethren or problems in the church as an excuse for my own failings—or to lash out in kind.

I can also, as Nibley suggests, talk my griefs over with the Lord, so that things bottled up do not lead to the kind of explosion I have learned that I am as capable of as others are:

Be the importunate widow and complain. Itemize your griefs, your doctrinal objections, your personal tastes. Lay them out in full detail and get it out of your system. . . . With this understanding—you will do all this before the only Person qualified to judge either you or your tormentors. As you bring your complaints, be fully aware that he knows everything already—including everything there is to know about you.²⁰

18. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Trust and Accountability,” BYU Devotional Address, 13 Oct. 1992, 2, available through BYU Alumni Association.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Nibley, 24.

Good advice for all of us, “from the highest to the least and last ordained” (as my grandfather used to pray). And the Savior has some hope for us, even in his prophecy concerning our day, if we are able to follow that good advice: “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:12-13).

What El Salvador Meant to a Three-year-old

B. J. Fogg

an iguana in our empty pool
his eyes jumping wild

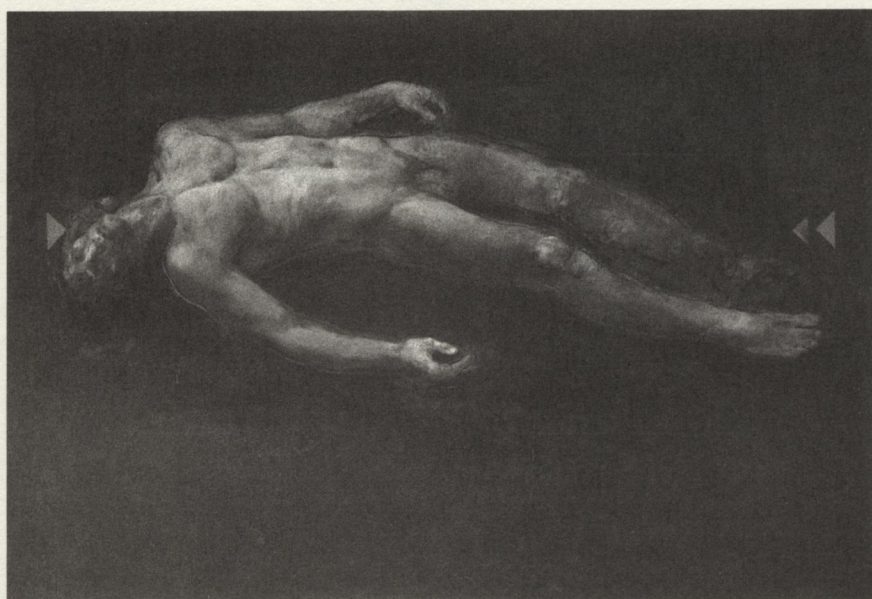
a metal fence around the yard
where naked boys waited outside for food

Señora Catalina slapping papusas for supper
my Spanish name that wasn't me

sacrament cups that bounced when they landed
floors that made my Sunday shoes click

Dad building sand cars around my body
dark waves tumbling me over and over

not remembering how I arrived
or how I returned



Introduction

SCRIPTURES ARE AUTHORITATIVE HOLY TEXTS which lie at the center of religious life and thought. This issue of *Dialogue* begins a continuing section of essays introducing readers to some of the best critical scriptural scholarship from around the world. Submissions that not only provide the best of scholarship but address issues of importance to the general reader are encouraged.

We have selected "Jesus the Peasant" by John Dominic Crossan as the first essay in this series. Crossan is professor of biblical studies at DePaul University in Chicago and author of many books and articles on the life and teachings of Jesus. He is one of the founding members of the Jesus Seminar, a group of scholars established to help close the gap between scholarly research and public awareness.

The essay which follows was originally a speech Crossan delivered summarizing some of the conclusions reached in his recent book *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991). Crossan's book is a comprehensive attempt to determine who Jesus was, what he did, and what he said. It combines historical, literary, and anthropological methodologies, and is one of the most important contributions to the study of the historical Jesus in our generation.

Conventional wisdom of critical historical scholarship has long held that little can be known about the historical Jesus. Crossan argues that Jesus is one of the best attested historical figures of antiquity, but that the sources on his life have taken liberty in portraying historical material. He maintains that careful research can now reveal more about the historical Jesus than previous scholars believed possible. He begins his assessment by examining multiple attestations in the earliest historical evidence. The following essay summarizes Crossan's conclusions about the social programs of Jesus: meals, healing, itinerancy, and dress.

Jesus the Peasant

John Dominic Crossan

Scattered across the countryside one may observe certain wild animals, male and female, dark, livid and burnt by the sun, attached to the earth which they dig and turn over with invincible stubbornness. However, they have something like an articulated voice and when they stand up they reveal a human face. Indeed, they are human beings. . . . Thanks to them the other human beings need not sow, labour and harvest in order to live. That is why they ought not to lack the bread which they have sown.

—Jean la Bruyère, French moralist of late seventeenth century

We want everybody to work, as we work. There should no longer be either rich or poor. All should have bread for themselves and for their children. We should all be equal. I have five small children and only one little room, where we have to eat and sleep and do everything, while so many lords (signori) have ten or twelve rooms, entire palaces. . . . It will be enough to put all in common and to share with justice what is produced.

—Unnamed peasant woman from Piana dei Greci, province of Palermo, speaking to a north Italian journalist during an 1893 peasant uprising

The voices that speak to us from antiquity are overwhelmingly those of the cultured few, the elites. The modern voices that carry on their tale are overwhelmingly those of white, middle-class, European and North American males. These men can, and do, laud imperialistic, authoritarian slave societies. The scholarship of antiquity is often removed from the real world, hygienically free of value judgments. Of the value judgments, that is, of the voiceless masses, the 95 % who knew how "the other half" lived in antiquity. The peasants form no part of the literate world on which most reconstructions of ancient history focus. Indeed, the peasants—the pagani—did not even form part of the lowly Christian (town dweller's) world. They are almost lost to historical view, because of their illiteracy and localism.

—Thomas F. Carney, *The Shape of the Past*, xiv, 231n123

I. THE PROBLEM OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS, STRATUM AND ATTESTATION

Trying to find the actual Jesus is like trying, in atomic physics, to locate a submicroscopic particle and determine its charge. The particle cannot be seen directly, but on a photographic plate we see the lines left by the trajectories of larger particles it put in motion. By tracing these trajectories back to their common origin, and by calculating the force necessary to make the particles move as they did, we can locate and describe the invisible cause. Admittedly, history is more complex than physics; the lines connecting the original figure to the developed legends cannot be traced with mathematical accuracy; the intervention of unknown factors has to be allowed for. Consequently, results can never claim more than probability; but "probability," as Bishop Butler said, "is the very guide of life."

—Morton Smith¹

We have for Jesus, a first-century Mediterranean Jewish peasant, four biographies by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, individuals all directly or indirectly connected with him, at least according to tradition, and all composing within say seventy-five years after his death. That is as good or even better than we have for the contemporary Roman emperor, Tiberius, for whom we have biographies by Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio Cassius, only the first of whom was directly connected with him, the others composing from seventy-five to two hundred years after his death. Why then with such ample documentation is there such a thing as the problem of the historical Jesus?

It is at heart precisely that four-fold record, even if there were no other external documents whatsoever, that constitutes the historical problem. If you read those four texts one after another from start to finish, you get a generally persuasive impression of unity, harmony, and agreement. But if you read them in parallel columns, focusing on this or that unit and comparing it across two, three, or four versions, it is disagreement rather than agreement which strikes you most forcibly. By even the middle of the second century, pagan opponents such as Celsus and Christian apologists such as Marcion or Tatian were well aware of those discrepancies. Their solution was to reduce that plurality to unity in one of the two obvious ways: either eliminate all gospels save one (the solution of Marcion) or laminate all of them into a single narrative (the solution of Tatian).

Over the last two hundred years, however, comparative work on the gospels has slowly but surely established certain conclusions. First, gospels are found not only inside but also outside the New Testament itself. Second,

1. Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 6.

the four intracanonical gospels result from neither a total collection nor a random sampling of all those available. Rather they were selected and others rejected for reasons not only of content but even of form. Third, *original*, *developed*, and *created* Jesus materials are found alike within both intracanonical and extracanonical sources. Fourth, differences and discrepancies between accounts and versions are not due primarily to vagaries of memory or divergences in emphasis but rather to quite deliberate theological interpretations of Jesus. Finally, what those first Jesus-followers experienced, even after his execution, as the continuing power of Jesus gave them a creative freedom we would never have dared postulate were it not forced upon us by the evidence. For example, even when Matthew and Luke are using Mark as a source for what Jesus said or did or what others said or did to Jesus, they are unnervingly free in their own individual accounts, even within ancient tolerances about omission and addition, about change, correction, and especially creation.

Thus the Jesus tradition contains three major layers or strata: an *original* stratum retaining at least the essential core of words and deeds, events and happenings from the life of the historical Jesus; a *developed* stratum, changing the data for new situations, novel problems, and unforeseen circumstances; and a *created* stratum, not only composing new sayings and new stories but above all composing larger complexes, textual juxtapositions, and narrative sequences which changed their contents by those very framings. My interest here is in that *original* layer, in the immediate situation of the historical Jesus, but I reject absolutely any pejorative language for those other two strata. I have no presumption whatsoever that those latter layers are illicit, invalid, useless, or detrimental. Jesus left behind him thinkers not memorizers, disciples not repeaters, people not parrots.

How does one search back through those sedimented layers to find what Jesus actually said and did, and especially how does one do so with some scholarly integrity and some methodological validity? How does one avoid in other words digging into the vast mound of the Jesus tradition to affirm as *original* whatever pleases one's own predispositions and to discard as *developed* or *created* whatever does not?

In starkest summary my method presumes the conjunction of two processes. One process studies the Christian textual foreground through three successively superimposed stages: inventory, stratigraphy, and attestation. *Inventory* means giving a complete listing of all sources and documents, intracanonical and extracanonical, to be used. *Stratigraphy* means arranging them in a chronological sequence according to their dates. *Attestation* means assessing how many independent attestations we have for each unit. For example, the solemn entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is now found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. That is not, unfortunately, a four-fold independent attestation since it is most likely that all the others

are taken from Mark. I have for that unit, therefore, only a single attestation from Mark in a stratum dating to the early seventies of the common era. My methodological discipline is to concentrate on multiple independent attestations from the first stratum, that is from materials dating between 30 and 60 C.E. I base nothing on single attestation even though *theoretically* such units might well be original—for example, “The Good Samaritan” or “The Prodigal Son,” parables found only in Luke. But such units must be precluded *methodologically* until a later stage of the investigation. Biblical injunction and journalistic ethic demand multiple independent witnesses. So does my method.

However, the second process is equally important. This takes the Jewish social background and asks: where in the Mediterranean world of the first common era century is that original stratum to be located? My hypothesis places Jesus among the illiterate peasantry of a colonial country within an agrarian empire, and it applies cross-cultural and comparative (if you prefer, multicultural) anthropology to describe the expected parameters of such a situation. I employ again three successively superimposed models: peasantry, resistance, radicalism.

The first model, *peasantry*, is based on Gerhard E. Lenski’s *Power and Privilege*, and its model for an agrarian society characterized by the iron plow and abysmal social inequality separating the upper classes from the lower classes.²

The second model, *resistance*, comes from Bryan R. Wilson’s *Magic and the Millennium*.³ He proposes a seven-fold typology of resistance to colonialism, but as his title suggests, he especially emphasizes two of these reactions: *Thaumaturgists* with their magic and *Revolutionists* with their millennium. It is in the former category that I locate the earliest Jesus-tradition, and I read it against this commentary from Wilson:

New thaumaturgical movements represent a deviant religious response—a

2. Gerhard E. Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). The vast majority of the lower classes was composed of peasants, about two-thirds on average of whose produce was taken to support the upper classes. I place Jesus in this class, leaving open whether he was a peasant farmer or a peasant artisan. Only Mark says he was a carpenter, so I do not build on that information. In any case, as Lenski emphasized, “in most agrarian societies, the artisan class was originally recruited from the ranks of the dispossessed peasantry and their noninheriting sons and was continually replenished from these sources.” In other words peasant artisans ranked below peasant farmers.

3. Bryan R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third-World Peoples* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

sectarian religious response—largely because of the newness of their ritual procedures and organizational forms. They become a protest against traditional religious practice—itself high thaumaturgical—because they pit new measures, and (often) new conceptions of social nexus, against the old. As a “protest” such new movements are muted comments on the inadequacy of previous procedures rather than an articulate condemnation. Their practice, however, is often enough to make evident at least a temporary rejection of older procedures, and of those who control them. . . . Thaumaturgical belief is not only the pristine religious orientation, it is also more persistent than millennialism. The many little failures of magic are less disturbing to believers than the one big periodic failure of the millennium, and are more easily explained away.⁴

The third and most important model, *radicalism*, is deeply indebted to the articles and books of James C. Scott, from *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* in 1976 through *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* in 1990.⁵ His work is based on field work among the contemporary Southeast Asian peasantry. Such groups are the essential antidote to any elitist presumption that peasantry means inanity and illiteracy means stupidity. Peasants, he argues, oppose their exploitation not only with unusual and climactic revolts but with usual and continual resistance on the material, symbolical, and ideological level. And indeed since their external behavior is so often forcibly constrained, it is on the internal ideological level that protest persists most profoundly.

I quote from Scott at some length now lest my later comments about Jesus’ egalitarianism be taken as crudely projecting a contemporary democratic idealism anachronistically back onto the performance of the historical Jesus. I emphasize most strongly that radical egalitarianism can stem at its deepest level from peasant society as such. According to Scott:

The popular religion and culture of peasants in a complex society are not only a syncretized, domesticated, and localized variant of larger systems of thought and doctrine. They contain almost inevitably the seeds of an alternative symbolic universe—a universe which in turn makes the social world in which peasants live less than completely inevitable. Much of this radical

4. *Ibid.*, 192, 492-93.

5. See James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Subsistence and Rebellion in Southeast Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976); “Patronage or Exploitation?” in *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies*, eds. Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury (London: Duckworth, 1977), 21-39; “Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition,” *Theory and Society* 4 (1977): 1-38, 211-46; *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985); and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

symbolism can only be explained as a cultural reaction to the situation of the peasantry *as a class*. In fact, this symbolic opposition represents the closest thing to class consciousness in pre-industrial agrarian societies. It is as if those who find themselves at the bottom of the social heap develop cultural forms which promise them dignity, respect, and economic comfort which they lack in the world as it is. A real pattern of exploitation dialectically produces its own symbolic mirror image within folk culture.⁶

This quotation is from a fascinating analysis which moves from Europe to Southeast Asia, noting the "little" tradition's common reaction to such disparate "great" traditions as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam and arguing very persuasively that peasant culture and religion is actually an anticulture which qualifies alike both the religious and political elites oppressing it. It is in fact a reflexive and reactive inversion of the pattern of exploitation common to the peasantry *as such*.

"The radical vision to which I refer," Scott continues,

is strikingly uniform despite the enormous variations in peasant cultures and the different great traditions of which they partake. . . . At the risk of overgeneralizing, it is possible to describe some common features of this reflexive symbolism. It nearly always implies a society of brotherhood in which there will be no rich and poor, in which no distinctions of rank and status (save those between believers and non-believers) will exist. Where religious institutions are experienced as justifying inequities, the abolition of rank and status may well include the elimination of religious hierarchy in favor of communities of equal believers. Property is typically, though not always, to be held in common and shared. All unjust claims to taxes, rents, and tribute are to be nullified. The envisioned utopia may also include a self-yielding and abundant nature as well as radically transformed human nature in which greed, envy, and hatred will disappear. While the earthly utopia is thus an anticipation of the future, it often harks back to a mythic Eden from which mankind has fallen away.⁷

II. THE PROGRAM OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

The body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious. The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relations afford a source of symbols for other complex structures. We cannot possibly interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva, and the rest unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society, and to

6. Scott, "Protest and Profanation," 224.

7. *Ibid.*, 225-26.

see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body.

—Mary Douglas⁸

In all societies, both simple and complex, eating is the primary way of initiating and maintaining human relationships. . . . [O]nce the anthropologist finds out where, when, and with whom the food is eaten, just about everything else can be inferred about the relations among the society's members. . . . [T]o know what, where, how, when, and with whom people eat is to know the character of their society.

—Peter Farb and George Armelagos⁹

Patients suffer "illnesses"; physicians diagnose and treat "diseases." . . . [I]llnesses are experiences of disvalued changes in states of being and in social function; diseases, in the scientific paradigm of modern medicine, are abnormalities in the structure and function of body organs and systems. . . . The very limitations of their technology kept indigenous healers more responsive to the extra-biological aspects of illness, for it was chiefly those aspects they could manipulate. Our success in dealing with certain disease problems breeds the ideological error that a technical fix is the potential solution to all. It would be absurd to suggest that we should forego the power of Western medicine in deference to shamanism. It is essential to enquire how we can expand our horizons to incorporate an understanding of illness as a psychological event. Indeed, our worship of restricted and incomplete disease models can be viewed as a kind of ritual or magical practice in itself.

—Leon Eisenberg¹⁰

The aphorisms and parables of the historical Jesus often bespeak a radical egalitarianism, but were they accompanied by any social program? Was it all an act of ecstatic imagination and rhapsodic vision, or did it also contain policies, plans, and procedures for communal implementation? My affirmative answer is based on three independent sources, two of which date from the earliest stratum of the Jesus tradition:

When you go into any land and walk about in the districts, if they receive

8. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), 115.

9. Peter Farb and George Armelagos, *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Eating* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 4, 211.

10. Leon Eisenberg, "Disease and Illness: Distinctions Between Professional and Popular Ideas of Sickness," *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* (1977): 11.

you, eat what they will set before you, and heal the sick among them (Gospel of Thomas 14:2).

Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and salute no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace be to this house!" And if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages; do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you; heal the sick in it and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, "Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near" (Synoptic Sayings Gospel [Q] in Luke 10:4-11 - Matthew 10:8-14).

He charge them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. And he said to them, "Where you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them." So they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them (Mark 6:8-13 - Matthew 10:8-10a, 11 - Luke 9:2-6).

Jesus called his practice and program the presence of the Kingdom or better the Rule of God, but that expression must be interpreted primarily in the light of those actions. It did not mean for Jesus, as it could for others, the imminent apocalyptic intervention of God to set right a world taken over by evil and injustice. It meant the presence of God's kingdom here and now in the reciprocity of open eating and open healing, in lives—that is of radical egalitarianism on both the socio-economic (eating) and the religio-political (healing) levels.

Eating

All three sources indicate that we are not just dealing with almsgiving but with an open table. Multicultural anthropology uses the term *commensality* for those decisions about what we eat, where we eat, when we eat, and above all with whom we eat as forming a miniature map of our social distinctions and hierarchies. But Jesus in rejection of this cartography of discrimination, advocates instead an open commensality. The missionaries do not carry a bag because they do not beg for alms or food or clothing or anything else. They share a miracle and a Kingdom, and they receive in return a table and a house. Here I think is the heart of the original Jesus movement: a shared egalitarianism of spiritual and material resources

where materiality and spirituality, facticity and symbolism cannot be separated. The mission we are talking about is not, like Paul's, a dramatic thrust along major trade routes to urban centers hundreds of miles apart. Yet it concerns the longest journey in the Greco-Roman world, maybe in any world, the step across the threshold of a peasant stranger's home.

Shared home and common meal must be understood, as this section's second epigraph indicates, against the cross-cultural anthropology of food and commensality. But I cannot emphasize one point too strongly: commensality is not almsgiving, almsgiving is not commensality. Generous almsgiving may even be conscience's last great refuge against the terror of open commensality. For Jesus, however, commensality was not just a strategy for supporting the mission. That could have been done by alms, wages, charges, or fees of some sort. It could have been done, for instance, by simple begging in good Cynic fashion. Commensality was rather a strategy for building or rebuilding peasant community on radically different principles from those of honor and shame, patronage and clientage. It was based on an egalitarian sharing of spiritual (healing) and material (eating) power at the most grass-roots level. And for the reason, dress and equipment appearance was just as important as house and table response.

Healing

Open eating and open healing are reciprocally linked in all three sources. I understand healing, as this section's third epigraph indicates, within the basic distinction made in cross-cultural medical anthropology and modern comparative ethnomedicine between doctors who *cure disease* and those others who, under whatever name, *heal illness*. I presume, for example, as fundamentally correct the superb study by Arthur Kleinman entitled *Patients and Healers in the Contest of Culture*.¹¹ One example, based on John Pilch's article on "Biblical Leprosy and Body Symbolism,"¹² will help to explain and apply that key difference between biomedicine's *curing of disease* seen as a biological or psychological malfunction within an isolated body and ethnomedicine's *healing of illness* seen as a social and cultural interpretation within a shared community.

The story about Jesus and the leper (found, for example, in Mark 1:40-45) comes to us already suffused with intense theological damage control, insisting that Jesus conformed strictly to the legal requirements

11. Arthur Kleinman, *Patients and Healers in the Contest of Culture: An Exploration of the Borderland between Anthropology, Medicine, and Psychiatry* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980).

12. John Pilch, "Biblical Leprosy and Body Symbolism," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 11 (1981): 108-13.

while what he was actually doing of course was negating their validity. If read in biomedical terms, this story claims that Jesus cured the disease later named after Gerhard Hansen, who discovered the bacillus *myobacterium lepraie* in 1968, a disease probably brought from India to Palestine by Alexander's veterans and known in the Greco-Roman world as *elephas*.

However, read in ethnomedical terms a very different process is revealed. Recall this section's first epigraph and the interaction between society and body as macrocosm and microcosm, between as it were the body politic and the politic body proposed by Mary Douglas. For example, legislators seeking to protect a society's status endangered by imperial engulfment will not only legislate very carefully about macrocosmic orifices and surfaces, margins and boundaries, but equally closely about their microcosmic equivalents. Thus in Leviticus 13-15 there is legislation deciding pure/impure, clean/unclean, or more simply in/out, applying these distinctions to both potential bodily orifices (in Lev. 13-14) and permanent bodily orifices (in Lev. 15). Such boundary protection is clearly easier in the latter case, where there are clear and permanent orifices to watch in both females and males.

But what if one could not tell orifice from surface? What if surfaces began to rot, spot, and degenerate into semiorifice. The Hebrew and Greek terms for that phenomenon in Leviticus 13-14 we quite mistakenly translate as our modern *leprosy*. This term is applied to skin in 13:1-46, clothes in 13:47-59, and house walls in 14:33-53. We might translate the term as scaliness, mildew, rot, flakiness. But whatever the term this condition attacks the three standard separating boundaries of skin, clothes, wall. And a person with boundaries so afflicted is isolated and quarantined from the community pending official cure and reinstatement. Whatever the actual *disease*, the *illness* was in the separation from family and village, a fate close to death in the ancient Mediterranean world of dyadic face-to-face culture, where one took one's identity from the eyes of others.

Such an *illness* Jesus healed. The *disease* as such was not cured. He healed the illness by refusing to accept the official quarantine, by refusing to stay separate from the sick person, by touching him and thereby confronting others with a challenge and a choice. By so doing of course, he was making extremely subversive claims about who defined the community, who patrolled its boundaries, who controlled its entries and exits—in other words who was in charge. As Arthur Kleinman reminds us: "In traditional societies . . . health care systems may be the major mechanism for social control."¹³

Jesus and his followers healed illness. In my opinion they never cured disease except when and if it happened indirectly through that former and

13. Kleinman, 41.

much more important process. And when such actions got Jesus into very serious trouble, it was certainly not, as the authorities would have understood very clearly, for practicing medicine without a license.

Itinerancy

Finally, in the Jesus movement, the healers make house calls. Healing is shared freely in the only way that is truly free for a peasant: it comes to you. Ever since the ground-breaking studies of Gerd Theissen in the early seventies,¹⁴ the itinerant radicalism of Jesus and of the original Jesus movement has been a major topic of discussion and controversy. Itinerant radicalism means that one's itinerancy or even vagrancy is a programmatic part of one's radical message. But is itinerancy a simple functional necessity of mission or does it actually have a radical sociosymbolic meaning? It may seem that itinerancy or vagrancy sends a message of no fixed abode, of being atopic wanderers within an alien world. But such a message is far better sent by staying in one place, where everybody knows who you are, and living like Diogenes in a barrel.

So how was the Jesus movement's itinerancy programmatically radical? My answer relies on recent work about patronage, brokerage, and clientage within Mediterranean culture in general and the Roman Empire in particular. According to John Davis in his book *The People of the Mediterranean*, these processes are "the bedrock of political life in most of those mediterranean communities which anthropologists have studied."¹⁵ The itinerancy of Jesus' movement was radical because it was a symbolic repudiation of that hierarchical system which was the celestial and terrestrial, heavenly and earthly, supernatural and natural heartbeat of the Roman world. For Jesus, God was not a patron for whom he was the broker and his followers the clients. Neither Jesus nor his followers were supposed to settle down in one place and establish there a brokered presence. And as healers we would expect them to stay in one place, to establish around them a group of followers, and to have people come to them. Instead they go out to people and have as it were to start anew each morning. If Jesus was a well-known magician, healer, or miracle-worker, first his immediate family and next his village would expect to benefit from and partake in the handling of that fame and those gifts. Any Mediterranean peasant would

14. Gerd Theissen, "Itinerant Radicalism: The Tradition of Jesus Sayings from the Perspective of the Sociology of Literature," *Radical Religion* 2 (1975 [from 1973]): 84-93; *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978 [from 1977]).

15. John Davis, *The People of the Mediterranean: An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), 146-47.

expect an expanding ripple of patronage, brokerage, and clientage to go out from Jesus through his family and his village to the outside world. But Jesus refused to stay either in his family's home at Nazareth or Peter's home at Capernaum because only itinerancy could symbolize unbrokered egalitarianism available openly and freely to all alike.

Dress

These first three elements of eating, healing, and itinerancy occur alike in all three of my prime sources. Dress or dress code occurs in only two and is therefore less secure as a defining characteristic of Jesus' program. However, dress seems so closely linked to those more secure themes that, at least in working hypothesis, I consider it also as part of Jesus' original program.

For economy's sake, I focus here on only one prohibition from that dress code: they are not to carry a *bag* or what we might term a knapsack. In most cases the dress code for Jesus' followers agreed with that of Greco-Roman Cynics, but the Cynics in contrast did carry such a *bag*—as a symbol that all they needed could be carried on their hip.

Cynics were urban missionaries who preached to ordinary people in marketplace and temple courtyard a radically counter-cultural lifestyle attacking not just Greco-Roman society but civilization itself. They were followers of Diogenes of Sinope, who lived from about 400 to about 320 B.C.E. Their title "cynic" came from *kyon*, the Greek word for dog, originally a derogatory term for the provocative shamelessness with which Diogenes deliberately flouted basic human codes of propriety and decency, custom and convention. In other words the Cynics preached by their dress and lifestyle as much as by their ideology and philosophy. And ordinary people who might miss their theoretical arguments could hardly miss their symbolic provocations.

Within the context provided by such provocative behavior, the symbolic dress and equipment of Jesus' missionaries, who carried *no bag* in contrast to the Cynics who ostentatiously carried only a bag, emphasized not their self sufficiency but their interactive dependency. Such symbolic dress thus confirmed and emphasized the heart of Jesus' program, the reciprocity of eating and healing.

III. CONCLUSION

Both focus and space preclude a wider discussion of other forms and reforms which made first-century Judaism such a magnificently variegated tapestry across the early Roman Empire. Such limits also precluded full consideration of all those types and styles of Christianity which arose from,

around, and after Jesus himself. I do not presume that Christianity was a crude betrayal of Jesus, although such accusations are always tempting in their provocativeness. I think that Christianity, then, now, and always, must be in dialectic with the historical Jesus and that betrayal only occurs when such interaction is too prudently avoided or too completely refused.

Finally I ponder how things moved in only three centuries from the open commensality of Jesus' practice and program among the peasants of Lower Galilee to the Christian bishops banqueting with the Emperor Constantine at the conclusion of the Council of Nicea. I end with a parable which might help somewhat to explain the speed and line of that development. It is Oscar Wilde's "The Disciple" taken from Richard Ellman's 1988 biography of Wilde:

When Narcissus died, the flowers of the field were desolate and asked the river for some drops of water to weep for him. "Oh!" answered the river, "if all my drops of water were tears, I should not have enough to weep for Narcissus myself. I love him." "Oh!" replied the flowers of the field, "how could you not have loved Narcissus? He was beautiful." "Was he beautiful?" said the river. "And who should know better than you? [replied the flowers.] Each day, leaning over your bank, he beheld his beauty in your waters." "If I loved him," replied the river, "it was because, when he leaned over my waters, I saw the reflection of my waters in his eyes."



Saint Theresa and the Lepress

Kathryn Kimball

Few teeth remain in her mouth,
And the mouth exhales rottenness.
I turn my back, my nose.
Still she presses in.

This dandruff-dotted coat
Wants my place in line.
Her neediness brushes my hem,
But virtue does not leave.

Theresa lays her groceries upon the counter.
As the lepress presses in upon her
For a touch (that is what she wants—
She needs no food or drink from the market)
When the lepress meets the holy woman,
They, who are never touched
Except by vermin that crawl upon the bed,
Embrace, kiss, together hold each other,
And into the shriven ear, whisper secrets.

One on the Aisle

Karen Rosenbaum

PAULA HAD THE AISLE SEAT. Her younger brother Tony was in the middle, next to Sugar, and the two of them pressed against the window and each other and pointed at cloud formations. Down below was Nevada. Paula turned another page in *The Einstein Intersection* even though she couldn't remember one word she had just read. What she *was* remembering was the wedding reception, Tony and Sugar's, yesterday, and that awful lavender dress she had to wear and how she had to smile, especially when her great aunts would say, "You just be patient, dear. Some day the right one will come along for you." And now being on the same flight. "No!" she wanted to shout, "I am *not* chaperoning the newlyweds. They get off the plane at Reno, where they are renting a jeep and driving their camping gear to Yosemite. I get off at *Oakland*."

Tony and Sug did get off the plane in Reno, Sug gushing about how she ought to come and visit them and they'd fix her up with Sug's *darling* cousin Ned, and Paula did get off in Oakland. Bumping her bag along on its inefficient little wheels, she pushed through the doors to the sidewalk.

"How's the sister of the groom?" JoAnn was standing by the Vega, holding forward the front passenger seat, so Paula stuffed her suitcase into the back and climbed in after it.

"Feel like talking?" asked Rita from behind the wheel. Rita and JoAnn believed in talk therapy. They did most of the talking.

"I thought I'd die when Janice got married," said JoAnn. Janice was JoAnn's twin. "And then Mindy." She twisted around in her seat and offered Paula a butterscotch lifesaver. "Mindy-moo. The baby."

Rita stepped on the gas and the car jerked onto the airport beltway. "Everyone for hot fudge?" she asked.

"How about Packer's?" offered JoAnn.

"The pimple platoon's always at Packer's," said Rita. "They look at us like we're their mothers."

"Fiorenza?"

"Naw. Everyone's a lez at Fiorenza." Rita squeezed the Vega in between two vans on the freeway. "How about Ice Dream?"

"I'm gonna have a double fudge," JoAnn said. "I've been good all week, and I worked out for an hour and a half last night."

"I need a few extra pounds to get the sound right," Rita said. She sang a little with an all girls' country band. She had volume.

"Why didn't you stay longer in Utah?" asked JoAnn. "You could have checked out the intermountain men."

"I can't breathe in Utah," said Paula. "I'm congested all the time. Maybe it's the sage. Maybe it's the way people look at you. I think the average thirty-year-old woman has six kids."

Paula laughed and reached into her purse for a Kleenex and spit out the gum she always chewed to help her ears pop on airplanes. "Besides I needed to get back. I've got this sale pending—if the bank comes through and the naughty ladies of Crestview Lane get that house on San Ramon."

"How naughty?" asked Rita.

"I don't know," Paula said. "The women have been renting the house since January, and the neighbors have their suspicions. One of them called me last week." Outside the car window, the coliseum lights glared over the playing field. "It seems the women don't have any jobs that the neighbors can see. They spend a lot of time outdoors picking weeds and mowing their lawn. In skimpy shorts. And at night, men come."

"What did you tell the neighbors?"

"They should be happy that someone is taking care of the yard."

"Real estate isn't as rewarding as teaching, is it?" Rita glanced at her by way of the rear view mirror.

"No. But I'm not sorry I switched. Seven years at any job is enough. Especially seven years of seven-year-olds. I've got five more years in real estate."

"I haven't heard of real estate agent burn-out," said JoAnn.

"Then what will you do," asked Rita, "if your sea captain hasn't come in?"

Paula looked at the lights of the Oakland hills. The Mormon temple emitted triangular patches of light. Last week in testimony meeting, a slightly retarded young man with a sweet, round face said that the temple lights guided to shore lost boats. "I've been thinking," Paula said, "of social work."

She really hadn't been thinking of social work, but that night as she unpacked the lavender dress—it seemed more tactful to donate it to a thrift shop here than in Salt Lake City—she remembered that at the end of each day of teaching, she had felt exhausted, often frustrated, but she never once wondered if it was worth it. Of course maybe the world just seemed more hopeful then. Last year an old boyfriend, Mark, who had just turned thirty-five, said that he figured he had lived half his life already—and even

if it hadn't been great, it had probably been the best half. "I'm going to live longer than thirty-one more years," she had told him, "and my next years are going to be *better* than my last years." It had been disquieting that he had looked neither impressed nor convinced.

The naughty ladies didn't get their loan, but Paula did have one big sale that July—a warehouse in Emeryville to a co-op of artists—and she got the listing for a promising little house in the Berkeley flatlands. She began planning a trip to England. Maybe with a sidetrip to Ireland. Tuesday nights she took an extension course in the Irish novel, a nice break from science fiction. Or was science fiction, she pondered, the break from something else? The Irish novel teacher, a thin, bearded man named John Turnwall, was a great favorite with middle-aged ladies. Am I a middle-aged lady? Paula asked herself. She decided not. True middle-aged ladies wore summery skirts and gold jewelry or polyester pants and Reeboks. Paula wore levis and a sweatshirt and munched on peaches while the true middle-aged ladies gathered around the blackboard at break-time and breathed questions at Mr. Turnwall.

"Any interesting people in your lit class?" JoAnn asked after their regular Thursday jog around Lake Merritt and during their regular Thursday salad supper at JoAnn's apartment. "Aside from the hotly-pursued teacher?"

"Three men," said Paula. "Two of them sit on the back row holding hands. Don't ask about the third."

"You've met men in those classes before." There was a hint of accusation in her voice.

"A lot of good it's done me."

"There was Lynn. That lasted a while."

"Yeah," Paula said. "All of February. That's just because he was so shy it took him a whole month to get up the nerve to ask me to sleep over."

"Maybe you should have done it."

"I'd have to turn in my Golden Gleaner pin," she said. JoAnn didn't reply. "Would *you* have done it?"

"Maybe," JoAnn said. "If I loved him, of course."

"Oh," Paula said. "Well, I didn't love Lynn."

"You liked him a lot though. You maybe could have learned to love him."

"Naw. He didn't have—he wasn't dynamic enough. Or something. It just wasn't right."

"Wouldn't bother Rita. *She'd* sleep with him if she just liked him."

"Yeah. Well, you can do that easier if you're a Presbyterian." Paula took the paper napkin JoAnn handed her. "But say you did love someone and he asked you—would you give it all up?"

"It being the church?"

"And all the things that means. The good things. The bad things."

JoAnn looked miserable. "I don't know," she said. "My mother would die. Do you think you could? How about Mark? Do you ever think you were wrong to end that?"

Paula winced a little. "Mark. I thought since he'd been a Mormon once, he'd understand."

"Naw," JoAnn said. "That's why they leave." She squeezed a slice of lemon on her plate of greens and raw mushrooms. "Well, we could hit the Saturday night dances again."

Paula stuck out her tongue. "Want to?"

"No. There's no one there worth having. Who'd have me."

"Hey," said Paula. "Do I perceive that your self-esteem is subsiding?"

"Remind me how wonderful we are."

"We *are* wonderful." Paula rattled the ice cubes in her water and brought her glass down hard on the table. "Maybe the naughty ladies have the answers. You ever think of buying a house?"

"Not on my Macy's salary."

"We maybe could go in together—both give up our apartments."

"I don't know." JoAnn ladled low-cal blue cheese dressing on what was left of her salad. "What would we do if—you know—our lives changed? If we had to split up? Who'd get the house? Besides," she added, "don't you think that would send out the wrong kind of signals?"

"What signals?"

"Well, judging from my experience, that near-extinct breed, single Mormon men, would figure we were too independent, too settled in our ways." She spread her dressing around with her fork. "And eligible non-Mormon men, who aren't in any great supply either, would figure we were gay."

"Hmm." Paula stabbed a chunk of celery. "You might be right."

"I admit there may be exceptions. Some guy who is stone-broke, for example. He probably can't afford such prejudices." JoAnn wiped the dressing out of her salad bowl with her last leaf of lettuce. "Of course, we could invent stories," she said. "Say we're sisters."

"With different last names?"

"Or cousins."

"I though you wanted a relationship based on honesty."

"Maybe that's a prejudice I can't afford," JoAnn said. "I just want a relationship."

Paula held a slice of cucumber on her fork and looked at it. "Want to go on the Sierra Singles hike on Saturday? But we don't hike together."

"Okay. Anyone interesting likely to show up?"

"There are always men," said Paula. "Politically correct men, ecologi-

cally correct men. Of course they may be child abusers, wife abusers, illegal substance abusers. But they vote the right way on wilderness bills."

"What'll I wear?" said JoAnn.

The sun broke through the fog early Saturday. Paula eyed the pickings. I hate this, she thought. Why can't I just come to enjoy the walk and the scenery? The hike leader, a mousy little guy with a fat daypack, was talking about poison oak and rockslides. There were a couple of big guys in Hawaiian shirts and thong sandals. Pass. A corporation lawyer sort who looked at everyone through half-closed eyes. Pass. JoAnn was talking to a woman with a copyright logo on her t-shirt. The hike leader strolled onto the dirt road. Everyone fell in behind him.

Paula felt in her pocket for her Kleenex. Her nose always dribbled when the grass was brown and dry. Just ahead of her, three people walked abreast, two women and a man with a maroon leather hat and a sweatshirt that skidded up in the back. He reminded her a little of Steve, a boyfriend in one of her earlier existences—her student-teacher existence. When the trail narrowed, the man politely let the two women go ahead. The khaki belt below the ragged sweatshirt looked familiar.

"Is that a Boy Scout belt?" Paula asked suddenly.

He turned around and grinned. "Yeah." He had a black beard flecked with grey. "How'd you know?"

"My brother has one," Paula said.

"See the buckle?" He didn't stop as they talked, just turned, took a few sidesteps, and lifted the sweatshirt in front.

"You've got it on upside down," said Paula.

"It's not upside down to me." He looked at the buckle. He grinned again before he turned and picked up his hiking pace.

"Your brother, huh?" he said over his shoulder.

"My brother." She hesitated. "He's on his honeymoon right now, and he probably has his Boy Scout belt with him. Except he wears it right side up."

"Does he have his wife with him too?" He lagged a little behind the two women and let her catch up with him.

"Yeah. They're camping. In Yosemite."

"Where?"

"Tuolumne Meadow, I think."

"I'm Dan," he said, turning and offering his hand.

"I'm Paula." It was strange to shake hands, still moving down the trail. The woman just ahead turned around and eyed them for a moment, then shrugged and walked on.

The group leader blew a whistle, and they stopped in a clearing under two oak trees for lunch. Paula sat on a large rock at the edge of the circle.

Dan leaned back against the rock and slid down to the ground. He squinted up at her and unwrapped his sandwich, a French roll with salami and Swiss cheese and sprouts. "Bon appetit."

"Did you make that?" she asked.

"The deli did it," he admitted. "I'll bet you made yours though."

"How'd you guess?" She pulled the plastic bag off her peanut butter and strawberry jam on whole wheat.

"I love peanut butter," Dan said.

"I love salami," Paula said. "Trade halves?"

He pulled a pocket knife out of his pocket and started sawing. They made the exchange. He looked at her hands. "I can tell this was made by a professional. You ever worked in a grade school cafeteria?" She laughed. "You ever been married?" She noted the lack of transition, but she offered him a carrot stick.

"No," she said. "You?"

"Yeah. Five years. We split up a year and a half ago."

"Kids?"

"No. You? I mean some people do even if they . . .," he started.

"No," she said. "What do you do?"

"You mean for a living?" He spoke through a mouthful of sprouts. "I'm a draftsman for Sears."

She finished her peanut butter half and started on his salami. "You design new stores?"

"Mostly warehouses. What about you?"

"Real estate." Paula glanced across the clearing at JoAnn. She was sitting in a circle with two women and two men. She briefly caught Paula's eye and discreetly nodded.

"You're about twenty-eight then?" Dan asked.

She looked at him. He'd be at least thirty, maybe thirty-five. "About," she said.

She hiked in front of him when the trail was narrow and beside him when it widened. They talked about backpacking in the Sierra and day hiking in Briones. Paula didn't mention that on her last two Sierra backpacking trips, she was herding fifteen-year-old Mormon girls along the trail. Dan would start sentences with "we," then shift hurriedly to "I."

Back at the parking lot, he asked her if she'd like to go out for a beer. "I don't drink beer," she said, "but I'd like to go out. Maybe I could get a ride back to Oakland with you?" She hoped JoAnn wasn't making similar arrangements and counting on her to drive the car back; there, leaning against the trail-head posts, JoAnn was talking to a guy in overalls.

"Sure," Dan said, so eagerly that Paula added, "I shouldn't stay out late though. I've a batch of cousins coming in tomorrow for breakfast, and I've a house to show in the afternoon." She glanced up at him, but he didn't

seem too disappointed. "Let's stop at the Leaning Tower," he said. "We can get a deepdish pesto."

When he dropped her off at the apartment, he wrote down her phone number. He'd probably call, she figured. And then what? She liked him. How long before she should tell him that she was thirty-two, that she didn't have a batch of cousins, that she spent most Sunday mornings at church, and that because of her religious scruples she wasn't likely to sleep with him, this month or next year. Here it was beginning again, another three-date affair. The phone rang. "Well," said JoAnn. "How was he?"

"Nice," Paula settled into her easy chair. "Very nice. How about Mr. Overalls?"

"Well, at least he reads."

"What does he read?" She hung her legs over the chair arm.

"I think he reads the kind of stuff *you* read. Dolphins in space, that sort of thing. Nothing I'd ever heard of. What does *yours* read?"

"You know," Paula said, "I forgot to ask."

Sunday, the bishop took her by the arm and led her into his office. "Sister Rather," he said, "we're grateful for your fine work with the young women in the ward, but I wondered since you haven't got anything to really tie you down, if you'd be interesting in going on a mission? The High Priests' quorum has a missionary fund, so the money wouldn't be any problem."

She tried to cover her gasp, but he saw it. "Sometimes women who are doing the Lord's work are blessed in other ways," he said, looking down at his fat fingers. "My wife's cousin had given up on getting married when she accepted a mission call to serve in Kansas. She hadn't been home more than a month when she met a widower who took her to the temple."

"Let me think about it," Paula said finally. "I guess I should feel flattered that you have that kind of faith in me." She didn't feel the least bit flattered. She shook the bishop's hand. "But don't write any checks yet."

Dan called Monday, and Thursday Paula met him at a waterfront cafe for lunch. They ate shrimp salads and arranged a hike for Saturday after she checked in at the office. "You bring the peanut butter sandwiches. I'll bring the wine," he said.

"Just bring enough for you," she said. "I drink water on the trail. This," she held up her Perrier, "is about as racy as I get."

Walking her to her car, he reached for her hand. "What kind of license plate is this?" he asked, pointing at her front bumper.

"Read it."

"R124C41."

"It's a test. Mean anything to you?"

He scowled.

"Don't feel bad. Only old-time science fiction fans would know. Early story by Hugo Gernsback—'Ralph 124C41'—one to foresee for one. You know, make predictions. I had it put on my plates as a joke."

"Anybody ever get it?"

"Maybe three, four people have stopped me to tell me they did. I've had the plates for almost four years."

He squeezed her hand. "Your equivalent to 'If you love Jesus, honk'?"

"Well," she said, "I guess so."

Instead of peanut butter sandwiches, she brought cold quiche to Saturday's hike, and instead of wine he brought cherry-flavored seltzer water. "I love this place," he said, stretching out against a rock in the shade. "After Chrissy and I split up, I used to come up here by myself. I'd bawl like a baby. Then I'd feel a little better and hike around some more."

Embarrassed a little by his openness and the emotion of her reaction, Paula looked down at her hands.

"You like kids?" he said suddenly.

"Yes."

"Me too. But I don't know if I could bring kids into this world."

He might be talked into children, Paula thought. "I taught for seven years," she said. "Second grade."

"Really? Did you like it?"

"I loved it. But it wore me out."

"Is that why you stopped?"

"No." She wound some grass strands around her finger. "I was afraid of getting in a rut. I didn't want to spend too long doing the same thing. I didn't want my whole life to have passed while I tacked pictures to the walls at Emerson Elementary. I wanted to start over." She looked up at him. "Does that make sense?"

"I think so." He slid over, closer to her. "But what you're doing now, is it very"—he sought the word—"fulfilling?"

"Not like teaching. But I have time now to think. If work is too fulfilling, you don't always have time or energy to appreciate it."

"It shouldn't be that way." He brushed her cheek with a grass stalk.

"Is your work—fulfilling?"

"Well, yeah, in a way. I mean, I like drafting plans. I'd like it more if I could be more innovative. Or maybe if I felt the buildings would be used for some great humanitarian purpose. I always wanted to be the guy who could talk people out of jumping off bridges and buildings instead of the guy who built stuff."

"How would you do it? How would you talk somebody out of jumping?"

"I don't know exactly. I mean it would depend on the person. You haven't ever been tempted to jump off a roof, have you?"

"Only when I was about five and thought if I wished hard enough I could fly."

He smiled. "Did you dream that too? I thought I was the only one who dreamt that!"

"I used to say a little spell," she confessed, "something I got out of one of my books. Sometimes I would ask that I could fly. Sometimes I wanted to be tiny and invisible. It was like a prayer."

"Did you pray?"

"Well, yes," she said. "And I might have mixed up the prayers and the magic spells. I think the religious things and the fantasy things all spoke to the same part of me."

"Any particular religion?"

"I was raised a Mormon."

He didn't react. "And when you stopped believing in Santa Claus, did you stop believing in Jesus Christ?"

"Ah," she breathed. "I still believe in everybody!"

"I think I believed in Christ—till my dad died. That was when I was sixteen. Your folks both still alive?"

"Yes."

"And then Chrissy—it's hard to have faith that some deity, something nonmaterial, cares for you when you're convinced no one *real* does."

"You couldn't think *no* one cared."

"That's what you think when the one who matters most stops caring. You know. You've had long-term relationships with guys." He said it rather than asked it.

"I guess so." She opened the lunch sack and offered him a plum. "Sometimes two people understand different things about the same relationship."

He looked up questioningly. "You've lived with someone before?"

"No." She said it as lightly as she was able.

"But seen the same person over a period of time."

A period of time. "Yes, of course." She held her own plum in both hands, fondling it without raising it to her mouth.

"Do you *want* a long-term relationship?" His voice sounded a little urgent.

"I can't think of that question abstractly. If there is a man I want to be with, then I want a long-term relationship." She let out a breath of air. Here, she thought, we go again.

"But you think that you might not want to be with one person a long time."

"I didn't say that. I think I would."

"How old are you?" He started counting on his fingers. "You taught seven years . . ."

Paula took another breath. "Thirty-two," she said.

"And you've never really committed yourself to a man?"

"No man has really committed himself to me." She pressed more firmly on the plum.

"Oh come on. You're an attractive woman, warm, bright." He lay his plum on the ground. "You aren't afraid of men, are you?"

Paula gave an insincere little laugh. "Only some men. I need to move a little more slowly than some people do in friendships."

He touched his hands together. At least he didn't say, "Baby, you don't have a lot of time left." What he said was, "I'm asking because I'm looking for a long-term relationship. I hate this dating crap. I don't want to waste someone else's time, and I don't want to waste my time."

Paula gave a little sigh, sincere this time. "Look," she said. "Maybe you ought to know something about me. I told you I was raised a Mormon. That means a lot of things. That means I can't," she changed her mind, "won't," she paused, "sleep," she searched for the words again, "with just anyone," she finished lamely, and bit into her now warm plum.

"Well of course not with just anyone," said Dan. "But with someone you felt serious about?"

"Probably not."

"Not ever?"

She shook her head. "If I marry," she whispered.

"Marry," he repeated and stared at her. He stood up. "You mean you're a virgin? A thirty-two-year-old virgin?"

She looked up at him. "That's right," she said. She felt suddenly defiant and wished she'd said it more emphatically.

"Really?" He crouched down and squashed his plum with one knee. He looked at it but seemed not to notice. "Really?" he said again.

"A vanishing species," she said and handed him a paper towel. She stood up. "Pardon me while I vanish."

Dan dabbed at the plum on his levis. "I guess I don't know many women who have religious backgrounds that interfere with their sexual lives."

"No," she said. "You probably don't."

"I mean, I grew up in St. Louis and there are a lot of Catholics there, but they acted just like anyone else when it came to—you know."

"I know."

"You're serious." He put one arm through his daypack strap. "You're really serious, aren't you?"

She nodded. They hiked back in silence. She felt a familiar resignation.

When they got to the car, he turned around. "You knew how you were," he said. "Why did you come out with me?"

Paula shrugged. "I didn't know how *you* were," she said.

"Yeah, but you musta known that I'd probably want to—pursue this," he said delicately.

She shrugged again. "Beyond all common reason," she said, "I continue to have hope."

England was supposed to be especially nice in September. Paula closed her eyes and leaned against the seat back. When she'd been a teacher, she couldn't take vacations in the fall. At the baggage check-in, she'd asked for the window seat, but was told she was lucky they still had one on the aisle. Across that aisle were an old lady and a very, very old lady. Probably mother and daughter. Maybe someday she'd be traveling with her widowed mother. They'd live together like two old maids. But her mother, of course, was *not* an old maid. Her mother had fulfilled woman's destiny and had given birth and nurtured children. Whatever happened to that old card game anyway, Old Maid? She supposed the feminists had drummed it off the shelves and tables of America. Even her bishop referred to "mature single women" when she had told him last week she wasn't ready yet for the kind of mission he proposed.

Next to her a small fat child of indeterminate sex was sleeping, propped up against a fat sleeping woman who had pulled down the window shade and was leaning against it. It was early morning and she guessed the plane was somewhere over Nevada. She would stop in Chicago, then switch in New York to a cheap flight to London. Two off-duty stewardesses were sitting in front of her and chattering about flights and housemates and boyfriends. "The weather was awful," said the one in the aisle seat. "No tanning in Tulsa."

Paula massaged her temples with the thumb and ring finger of her left hand. She had a packet of brochures about what to see in the Lake District. She'd have to stop in Lancaster, the town her great-great-grandparents left in 1863. She wanted to see castles and cathedrals. "Maybe you'll meet someone interesting," JoAnn had said just two hours ago as she left her at the curb at the airport. She didn't tell JoAnn that in her wallet she had a square of paper she'd cut out from Tony and Sug's last letter. "Be sure to look up Andrew," it said. "He's younger than Ned and not as cute, but he's probably really lonesome for some good American talk." The address was an Oxford one. Despite herself Paula was impressed.

She ran her fingers over the cover of her new paperback. The letters and pictures were raised like braille. A massive structure rose out of what seemed to be an airfield. Elevated roads or runways jutted out at odd

angles, and sleek spacecraft sailed in different directions. Perhaps it was a giant vertical spaceport. In a few minutes she'd start reading and find out.

But for now she slid down into the seat and closed her eyes. The child next to her whimpered and then fell silent. It was going to be a very long day, Paula thought. She'd be grateful if at the end of it there were a clean bed and nonallergenic pillows and gentle dreams.

Sestina for the Coming Fall

Anneliese Warnick

In fall, I try to understand the dying
of so many innocent leaves. The changes
happen imperceptibly, till the once-verdant is carmine
or golden, but such pulsing color is only
prelude to their silent fall to the dark flesh
of life that decayed before them. A nectarine

isn't so silent when it falls from a nectarine
tree—the stem snaps, leaves shudder as the dying
moves past them to the ground, where bruised flesh
of a once-blossom will yield to changes
wrought by moisture and parasite. Only
a ravaged pit ever remains of the once-carmine

fruit. My cheeks turn carmine
at your suggestion that a nectarine
is simply a swollen womb. I could agree, only,
so cruel that they would fall and be left dying.
One of the necessary changes,
you say. We inherit it with the flesh.

If we will fall I want first to mingle with your flesh;
we can begin with one kiss on carmine
lips and invoke the power ripe with changes
like the pregnant passing of an autumn nectarine.
Break the yielding stem for I am dying
to be awakened by you only.

In dreams sometimes, she remembered of the fall only
the weight of him against her flesh.
The space between them was too small to think of dying,
for their impressions there seemed ever carmine
like the rosy skin of a young nectarine
before tiny bruises hint of changes.

She wanted none of the painful changes
and wished sometimes only
to have refused the so succulent nectarine.
But new fruit was born of their flesh
and pulsing veins would not be coursing carmine
if they hadn't fallen together toward dying.

In fall I see changes and you show me the nectarine:
suspended only briefly above dying,
her flesh swollen with spring and sweetly carmine.

Another Kind of Abuse

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Escaping Spiritual Manipulation and False Spiritual Authority Within the Church by David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1991), 234 pp.

Churches That Abuse by Ronald M. Enroth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 227 pp.

Reviewed by J. Frederic Voros, Jr., a lawyer and writer living in Salt Lake City.

CONSIDERING THE LEVEL of popular attention recently focused on physical, sexual, even ritual abuse, the discovery of "spiritual abuse" should come as no surprise. And yet it does.

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse is a good starting point. It defines, analyzes, and provides a vocabulary for discussing spiritual abuse. While the arrangement of subject matter is confusing and the writing style verges at times on awkward, the analytical concepts and illustrations are breathtaking.

The authors, David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen, are Senior Pastor and Pastor of Counseling, respectively, at the Church of the Open Door in Crystal, Minnesota. They write as Protestants to Protestants. Although no denominations are mentioned, they seem to be describing conventional evangelical congregations.

Churches That Abuse has a different focus. It examines in wearying detail sometimes bizarre, often cult-like groups. These churches are marked by

idiosyncratic practices such as "intimate dancing" and "silence discipline." Enroth recognizes that "the abusive practices described in these pages may appear to be far removed from the world of conventional churchgoers." But he maintains that such "tendencies toward abusive styles of leadership are more prevalent than most Christians realize" (205). Still, his focus on relatively small, extremist sects makes Enroth's book both less accessible and less illuminating than *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*.

What is spiritual abuse? It is the exploitation of one's spiritual position to control or dominate another. It is the "misuse of ecclesiastical power to control and manipulate the flock" (Enroth, 29). It occurs when the "needs" of the organization are given precedence over the needs of its members (Johnson, 32).

Since the concept of spiritual abuse is still relatively novel, I will devote the bulk of this review to describing the characteristics of spiritually abusive religious systems, then the results of spiritual abuse in the lives of members, then the possible responses to spiritual abuse, and finally I will comment briefly on spiritual abuse and Mormonism.

CHARACTERISTICS

In a spiritually abusive system, "the most important thing is how things look" (Johnson, 31). Johnson and VanVonderen tell of a pastoral ministries course offered at a Bible college where a young pastor-to-be was taught the fol-

lowing: he should have his wife and children address him in public as "pastor"; if he was working on his car on a Saturday and needed to run to the parts store, he should change into his pastor's clothes in order to maintain "pastoral dignity"; and he should route the church telephone to his home and answer it "First Christian Church" in order to create the impression that he was constantly at church. When sitting on the platform at church, he was taught, it is vital to wear proper socks and never cross your legs in such a way as to reveal the soles of your shoes. "Reveal your soul," he was told, "never your soles." Finally, "When you ascend the platform, remember—you are the voice of God. Sound like it" (131).

Another characteristic of a spiritually abusive system is that its leaders require the place of honor. "Unhealthy, authoritarian leadership encourages people to place their pastors on pedestals" (Enroth, 81). "It is our belief," write Johnson and VanVonderen, "that the less secure a leader is, the more important titles will be to him or her" (134). Such leaders project the image of spirituality, require the recognition of people, and "point to themselves as the primary source of knowledge, direction, authority, and life" (Johnson, 136).

Not only will spiritually abusive leaders demand honor, claim Johnson and VanVonderen, they may actually insist that others deny reality in order to maintain their authority: "members have to deny any thought, opinion or feeling that is different than those of people in authority. Anything that has the potential to shame those in authority is ignored or denied." In other words, "The system defines reality" (58).

Spiritually abusive leaders invoke their position to enforce their decisions. "Because I'm the pastor, that's why!"

"Are you questioning my authority?" "Don't be a troublemaker." "Submit to your elder." Such phrases are symptomatic of "false authority" (Johnson, 112). Johnson and VanVonderen identify two indicia of false authority: first, leaders take authority rather than receiving it from God. Second, their authority rests not on wisdom, discernment, or truth, but solely on their position or rank—they are to be obeyed because they are in charge.

Spiritually abusive systems encourage "misplaced loyalty": loyalty to Jesus Christ is transformed into loyalty to a leader or a church. Conversely, "disloyalty to or disagreement with the leadership is equated with disobeying God. Questioning leaders is equal to questioning God. After all, the leader is the authority, and authority is always right" (Johnson, 76). Enroth asserts that abusive leaders "consciously foster an unhealthy form of dependency, spiritually and interpersonally, by focusing on themes of submission, loyalty, and obedience to those in authority" (103).

This misplaced loyalty is cultivated by three methods. First, "leadership projects a 'we alone are right' mentality, which permeates the system" (Johnson, 76). Second, leaders use "scare tactics" to bolster misplaced loyalty, perhaps telling departing members that "God is going to withdraw His Spirit from you and your family" or "God will destroy your business" (Johnson, 77). Finally, misplaced loyalty may be extracted through threats of public humiliation. "You can be 'exposed' for asking too many questions, for disobeying unspoken rules, or for disagreeing with authority. People are made public examples in order to send a message to those who remain" (Johnson, 78).

Spiritually abusive systems tend to be legalistic. Legalism focuses on

achieving righteousness through the performance of required behaviors and the avoidance of proscribed ones. Salvation is earned through human works. Johnson and VanVonderen warn against any spiritual system "in which the leaders or teachers add the performance of religious behaviors to the performance of Jesus on the cross as the means to find God's approval" (36). In such a system, love and acceptance must be earned by obeying rules.

Johnson and VanVonderen tell of a Christian conference in which the attendees were given formulas for achieving "a nice, packaged, orderly Christian life" (44). Those who successfully completed the course—mostly the naturally disciplined, strong-willed people—were permitted to attend an "advanced seminar." And the others? The speaker told the audience, "If you follow these principles and they don't work, call me and tell me about it. You need to know, though, that you'll be the first one for whom they didn't" (ibid.).

Legalism spawns a preoccupation with fault and blame. In the New Testament the purpose of confession is to receive forgiveness and cleansing; the spiritually abusive system demands confession "in order to know whom to shame—that is, whom to make feel so defective and humiliated that they won't act that way anymore" (Johnson, 58).

At the top of the legalistic system is the "Santa God": "You better watch out, you better not cry. / You better not pout, I'm telling you why. / Santa God is coming again" (Johnson, 43). Johnson and VanVonderen ask rhetorically, "how many churches teach that your place in heaven will be determined by how many good works you've done here on earth? How many teach that while your *salvation* is not dependent upon works,

your *position* close to or far from Him is dependent upon works?" (ibid.).

The structure of legalism is threatened by the grace-oriented Christian, since "living with Jesus as your only source of life and acceptance is a confrontation to those who seek God's approval on the basis of their own religious behavior" (Johnson, 37).

Abusive leaders favor legalism for a number of reasons: busy and apparently righteous adherents make them look good; a legalistic system allows them to examine others instead of themselves; and they gain a sense of validation from the good works of their followers (Johnson, 37). Of course, despite such self-interested motives, these leaders' demands are "cloaked in the language of being holy and helping others to live holy lives" (ibid.).

Another characteristic of a spiritually abusive system is deception, what Johnson and VanVonderen call "double-talk." Not to put too fine a point on it, false spiritual leaders lie in order to look good. Because they rarely say what they mean, followers may find it hard to trust them. People are told "they are not spiritual enough to understand teachings or decisions of the leaders. The leaders sound pious enough, even spiritual. But we are left with the vague sense that something is missing. They will give you the 'right' answer, but rarely will you get the 'real' answer. Everything has a double meaning" (Johnson, 126). In conversation, receiving a straight answer requires a precisely phrased question.

Manipulation is the life-blood of abusive systems. The most powerful of the manipulative techniques is enforced silence, or what Johnson and VanVonderen call the *can't-talk rule*: "If you speak about the problem out loud, *you are the problem*" (68). Those who speak

out may be accused of being unloving, unspiritual, or un-Christian (ibid.). Enroth cites a sect that, when confronted with its own wrong teachings, will "attack the character and life of the questioner by claiming that he has 'sin in his life.' Such terms as 'prideful,' 'independent spirit,' and 'rebellious' are used in answer to the inquirer" (117).

Scripture may even be invoked in the service of such abusive tactics. Thus, Hebrews 13:17, which counsels to "obey your leaders, and submit to them," is "stripped of its spirit and translated legalistically to mean, 'Don't think, don't discern, don't question, and don't notice problems.' If you do, you will be labeled as unsubmitive, unspiritual, and divisive" (Johnson, 171).

Another example is Matthew 18:21-22, where the Lord tells Peter he must forgive "up to seventy times seven." This verse may be turned against an abuse victim with the courage to speak up. Instead of addressing the problem, the leader makes the member the problem: "What's wrong with you that you can't forgive?" (Johnson, 100). Thus, "truth is suppressed in the name of spirituality" and "the code of silence is enforced with God's own Word" (Johnson, 94).

Another manipulative technique is the *unspoken rule* (Johnson, 56). Johnson and VanVonderen observe that no one would ever say out loud, "You know we must never disagree with the pastor on his sermons—and if you do you will never be trusted and never be allowed to minister in any capacity in this church" (67). This is because "examining [the statement] in the light of mature dialogue would instantly reveal how illogical, unhealthy and anti-Christian [it is]" (ibid.). Yet the rule is subtly enforced.

Another manipulative technique is

coding, the use of circuitous or euphemistic verbal formulations in order to avoid uncomfortable realities. Another is *triangulation* (they call it "triangling"), the use of intermediaries to deliver messages or directives in order to insulate the leader from the member's response (Johnson, 57).

Finally, spiritually abusive systems are secretive. "When you see people in a religious system being secretive—*watch out*. People don't hide what is appropriate, they hide what is inappropriate" (Johnson, 78). Johnson and VanVonderen report the following comment from a "wounded" Christian: "Quite a number of us wanted more information about how church finances were being spent. We wanted to know if more money could go into direct ministries, benevolences, things like that. When I asked some questions at an elders' meeting—boy did the room get icy. Later I was told to stop trying to create a faction in the church" (21). Why the secrecy? Two reasons: one is to protect the image of the organization. The leaders "become God's 'public relations' agents" (Johnson, 78). Another is the leadership's condescending view of the laity. They tell themselves, "People are not mature enough to handle truth" (ibid.).

Secretiveness fosters abhorrence of outside news media, whose attention undermines unquestioning loyalty to an abusive organization. "It is not without reason that leaders of abusive groups react so strongly and so defensively to any media criticism of their organizations" (Enroth, 162). Enroth writes, "Criticism, whether its source is Christian or secular, sincere or superficial, is always viewed by fringe churches as an 'attack'" (164).

Notwithstanding their advice for identifying abusive systems, Johnson

and VanVonderen warn against launching witch-hunts. They issue two warnings to those who see spiritual abuse around them. One is that no one is immune from acting or speaking in a way that spiritually abuses others (Johnson, 24). The other is that spiritual abuse must be distinguished from legitimate conduct that may displease another. They caution that it is not abusive for a leader with responsibility for a decision to choose contrary to your opinion; for a Christian (whether leader or not) to confront another Christian, in love, with wrongdoing; for a church board to release a minister for physical, mental, or spiritual problems; to respectfully disagree on doctrines or other issues, even in public; to be a strong leader; or to adopt certain standards of group conduct, such as dress codes (*ibid.*).

EFFECTS

What are the effects of a spiritually abusive system on the member? Johnson and VanVonderen identify and illustrate several "symptoms" they have observed in Christians suffering spiritual abuse.

The member may develop a distorted image of God, seeing God as never satisfied, vindictive, punishing, apathetic, powerless, or fickle (Johnson, 41-42).

Related to this misperception is a preoccupation with spiritual performance. It can take either of two equally disastrous courses. One is a tendency toward self-righteousness, judgmentalism, and perfectionism, expressed in a high need to control what people do and how things turn out. The other is shame, a sense of inferiority, a negative self-assessment, an indictment of one's personhood (Johnson, 44).

Another effect of spiritual abuse is

a rejection of grace. Again, this reaction may take one of two forms. The shamed member may conclude that he or she does not deserve to be treated gracefully by God. The self-righteous may feel that "others are lazy, or are taking advantage of God, or are getting off the hook too easily" (Johnson, 46).

Like victims of other forms of abuse, the spiritually abused member will often deny the abuse. Johnson and VanVonderen cite several reasons for this denial. Where spiritual abuse has become the norm, it is difficult to recognize. Admitting the abuse out loud "often feels like you're being disloyal to family, to church, even to God." Lastly, being trained that you are the problem if you notice a problem is a powerful incentive not to notice problems (Johnson, 49).

Members in an abusive system may tend toward irresponsibility, since "no amount of performance results in the promised prize of love, acceptance or rest" (Johnson, 47). Some may expend the minimum necessary effort to get by in church duties. Others have an opposite reaction, becoming hyper-responsible burden-bearers. Johnson and VanVonderen counsel that if you've been through this, "you wind up very tired, emotionally, physically and spiritually. This may show up in the form of lack of energy or motivation, impatience with the needs of others, depression, a sense of being trapped, or finding ways to escape" (Johnson, 48).

RESPONSES

Johnson and VanVonderen propose two responses to the spiritually abusive system: fight or flight. But how to decide? To assist the reader in this decision, they offer a list of questions, including the following:

Does grace have a chance in your church? They suggest this rule of thumb: "If the leadership is grace-full—even with a group of very legalistic sheep—grace has a chance . . . If, however, there is a bottleneck of power-posturing leaders at the top, who are performance-oriented, the chances of things changing are very slim" (Johnson, 215).

Are you supporting what you hate? Johnson and VanVonderen speculate that if all those contributing time, money, and energy to something they actually disagree with would stop, many unhealthy and abusive organizations would collapse (215).

Can you both stay and stay healthy? They analogize to a person holding onto the ship of his church with one hand and the pier of spiritual health and reality with the other. As the ship gradually pulls away, the member has to let it go (Johnson, 217).

Are you trying to help the system, even though you are exhausted? In a spiritually abusive system, permission to rest is never given, and cries for help are labeled unspiritual.

If you came for the first time today knowing what you now know, would you stay?

Those who opt to fight must expect resistance from both image-conscious leaders and performance-oriented members. Their task, assert Johnson and VanVonderen, is to keep telling the truth with the knowledge that they are serving God and opposing Satan (224-27). These authors cite Jesus himself as the prime example of one who attacked and exposed an abusive system:

It's important to remember four things about His confrontations. First, His confrontations landed on those who saw themselves as God's official spokespersons—the most religious,

the best performers. They gave money, attended church and had more Scripture memorized than anyone. They set the standard for everyone else. Second, Jesus broke the religious rules by confronting those in authority out loud. Third, He was treated as the problem because He said there was a problem. And fourth, crowds of broken people rushed to Him because His message offered hope and rest (Johnson, 36).

They conclude *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse* with this prayer:

"God, please pay attention to how those who have given their lives to serve you are getting intimidated and abused. And even in the middle of that, authorize and empower them to keep telling the truth. And keep moving your hand over your people to bring healing and rest, in the name of Jesus" (232).

SPIRITUAL ABUSE AND MORMONISM

In certain fundamental ways, *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse* is a distinctly Protestant work. Johnson and VanVonderen's grace-oriented theology, while clearly taught in Mormon scripture and shared by an increasing segment of the Mormon community, is probably not accepted by most Latter-day Saints.

Also, Johnson and VanVonderen see the problem of choosing one's church merely as a matter of preference. No attention is given to the notion that a church might inspire a member's loyalty based upon uniquely compelling doctrine or divinely bestowed authority, or that one might be geographically tied to a particular church unit. Nor do they consider the possibility that deeply felt cultural and family influences might tie a member to a church for extra-religious reasons.

Finally, they do not recognize priesthood in the popular Mormon meaning of that term: authority to act for God.

Nevertheless, the core insights of their book echo truths revealed within Mormonism some 154 years ago. Speaking through the prophet in Liberty Jail, the Lord expressly warned that his priesthood is not a license to exercise "unrighteous dominion" (D&C 121:35-44). He warned against those whose "hearts are set so much upon the things of this world and [who] aspire to the honors of men" that they do not or will not learn that "the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven" and can be handled only upon righteous principles. He warned against using the priesthood "to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness . . ." And he warned that "it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion."

And when they do? The heavens withdraw, the Spirit is grieved, and "Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man." Hence, "no power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned . . ."

If Johnson and VanVonderen's "spiritual abuse" does correspond to the "unrighteous dominion" of section 121, then the moment a Latter-day Saint uses authority to dominate a fellow member, to require the place of honor, to transfer loyalty from God to himself, to maintain a false image, to silence inconvenient questions, to threaten those who disagree, to attack those who notice problems, to enforce unspoken rules, to lie to followers, to insulate himself by triangulation, to compel by virtue of office, or to conceal what others have a right to know, *Amen to his priesthood*. It is forfeit in God's eyes. What remains is what they term "false authority": the power to direct people merely because you are in charge. Surely there is no more place for that within Mormonism than without.



NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

LAVINA FIELDING ANDERSON, president of Editing, Inc., lives in Salt Lake City, Utah, with her husband Paul L. Anderson and son Christian. She is editor of the *Journal of Mormon History*, a member of the Board of Directors of Signature Books, Inc., and a member of the editorial board of the *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter* and *Restoration Studies V*. She acknowledges the generosity of the many contributors to her essay and the courage of those who shared their personal stories.

JAMES E. CHAPMAN is former Arizona State Director of Community Mental Retardation Services, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Social Work at Southern Utah University, and is currently a Salt Lake City, Utah, practicing therapist. He was born a fourth-generation Latter-day Saint.

JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN is Professor of Biblical Studies at DePaul University in Chicago and author of many books and articles on the life and teachings of Jesus. He is a founding member of the Jesus Seminar.

EUGENE ENGLAND, past editor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, is Professor of English at Brigham Young University. He is author of *Why the Church is as True as the Gospel*, *Dialogues with Myself*, and *The Quality of Mercy*. He lives with his wife Charlotte England in Provo, Utah.

B. J. FOGG is one of the founders of the *Student Review*, Brigham Young University's independent student newspaper. He currently teaches English and design at BYU and resides in Provo, Utah.

LISA BOLIN HAWKINS has previously published poetry in *Dialogue* and other venues. She currently teaches English part time at the Brigham Young University J. Reuben Clark Law School. She lives in Provo, Utah.

KATHRYN KIMBALL is a doctoral candidate in English literature at Drew University.

DERK MICHAEL KOLDEWYN is a second-year senior at Brigham Young University majoring in English. He derives most of his inspiration for his writing from his job as a part-time cashier at the Utah State Liquor Store in Provo, Utah.

L. JACKSON NEWELL is Professor of Higher Education at the University of Utah and former co-editor with his wife Linda King Newell of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. He lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

DIXIE LEE PARTRIDGE is a native of Wyoming and graduate of Brigham Young University. She received the Eileen W. Barnes Award for her collection of poetry, *Watermark*. She lives in Washington with her husband Jerry Partridge and their eight children.

ELBERT EUGENE PECK is editor of *Sunstone* magazine. He resides in Salt Lake City.

RICHARD D. POLL is Professor Emeritus of History at Western Illinois University. He is general editor of *Utah's History*, co-author with Eugene E. Campbell of *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought*, and author of *History and Faith: Reflections of a Mormon Historian*. He retired in 1983 and lives in Provo, Utah, with his wife Gene Poll.

KAREN ROSENBAUM writes short stories in between teaching terms at Ohlone College in Fremont, California. She lives with her husband Ben McClinton and their two computers in the Bay Area community of Kensington. For over two decades, she experienced first-hand the joys and trials of the single, adult, Mormon woman.

RICHARD TICE works as an associate editor for Deseret Book Company. His poems have appeared in several dozen periodicals and anthologies in the United States, Canada, and Japan. He is author of *The Inside Track* and *Station Stop*. He lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

PAUL JAMES TOSCANO is a lawyer practicing in Salt Lake City. He is author of *Gospel Letters to a Missionary* and co-author with his wife Margaret Merrill Toscano of *Strangers in Paradox: Explorations in Mormon Theology*. They reside in Salt Lake City, Utah.

ANNELIESE WARNICH graduated in English and studio art from Wellesley College. She is a poet, painter, member of the LeftBank at Pierpont Artists' Co-op in Salt Lake City, Utah, and printer of fine press books.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

His family dating back several generations in southern Africa, Trevor Southey (b. 1940) came to the United States from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) as a convert to Mormonism in 1965. He received his education in England, South Africa, and the United States where he progressed from student to faculty at Brigham Young University through 1977. Having moved to San Francisco in 1985, he now maintains homes and studios in both the Bay Area and Salt Lake City. He is the devoted father of four children.

Southey's creative direction was set in the innocence of a great distance from the centers of western art. Yet in Mormonism, the dominant culture of his adopted homeland, he found a rich source for expression. His intuitive romantic idealism found focus in themes as varied as eternal family connections, human interaction, and explorations of the plan of salvation.

Although his relationship with the LDS church has changed, his work remains spiritual in nature, finding a wider and deeper expression in the broader human experience. While relishing many aspects of the modern art world, which often broaden his visual language, Southey finds his own artistic inspiration in the human body as expressed in works of the past, especially the high Renaissance. The nude remains the constant core of his work, with spiritual or sometimes psychological musings and sensual undertones, usually inadvertent, evolving in the process.

ART CREDITS

Cover: "Prodigal" 93.6" x 117" triptych, oil on panel, 1974

p. xi: "Awakening" 8" x 6", etching, 1988

p. 66: "Embryo II" 8" x 6", etching, 1991

p. 76: "Fatherhood I" 18" x 18", etching, 1981

p. 107: "At Dawn" 24" x 36", oil on canvas, 1987

p. 108: "Chrysalis" 4' x 10', oil on panel, 1982

p. 134: "Shadow" 20" x 30", etching, 1988

p. 154: "Ode to Ideology", 4' x 6', oil on panel, 1987

p. 169: "Brute", 20" x 20", oil on canvas, 1991

p. 192: "Heart Cry", 16" x 24", etching, 1985

FORTHCOMING IN
Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought
SUMMER 1993

"Ezra Taft Benson and Mormon Political Conflicts,"
by D. Michael Quinn

"Great Basin Kingdom Revisited,"
by Leonard J. Arrington

"Each in Her Own Time: Four Zinas,"
by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher

"Telling It Slant:
Aiming for Truth in Contemporary Mormon Literature,"
by William Mulder

"Posterity or Prosperity?
Women and Polygamy in the Salt Lake Valley, 1860,"
by Marie Cornwall, Camela Courtright, and Laga Van Beek

"The Identity of Jacob's Opponent:
Wrestling with Ambiguity in Genesis 32:22-32,"
by Steven Molen

"A Strange Phenomena:
Ernest L. Wilkinson, the LDS Church, and Utah Politics,"
by Gary James Bergera

NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

BRIGHT ANGELS AND FAMILIARS: CONTEMPORARY STORIES

edited by Eugene England

\$19.95 1-56085-026-4

HONORABLE RELEASE: A NOVEL

by David Gagon

\$14.95 1-56085-025-6

IMAGINATION COMES TO BREAKFAST: POEMS

by Kathy Evans

\$9.95 1-56085-031-0

MORMONS AND JEWS: EARLY THEOLOGIES OF ISRAEL

by Steven Epperson

\$18.95 1-56085-006-X

NEW APPROACHES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe

\$26.95 1-56085-017-5

NO MAN KNOWS MY PASTRIES: RECIPES

by Roger Salazar and Michael Wightman

\$8.95 1-56085-028-0

SET IN STONE, FIXED IN GLASS: TEMPLE PHOTOGRAPHERS

by Nelson B. Wadsworth

\$39.95 1-56085-024-8

WOMEN AND AUTHORITY: MORMON FEMINISM

edited by Maxine Hanks

\$19.95 1-56085-014-0

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES

by James R. Baker

\$17.95 1-56085-029-9

Available Spring/Summer 1993

A MINISTRY OF MEETINGS: DIARIES OF RUDGER CLAWSON

edited by Stan Larson

\$85.00 0-941214-96-6

THE SEARCH FOR HARMONY: MORMONISM AND SCIENCE

edited by Gene A. Sessions and Craig J. Oberg

\$17.95 1-56085-020-5

SIDNEY RIGDON: MORMON ZEALOT

by Richard S. Van Wagoner

\$28.95 1-56085-030-2

WAITING FOR WORLD'S END: DIARIES OF WILFORD WOODRUFF

edited by Susan Staker

\$19.95 0-941214-92-3

FROM SIGNATURE BOOKS

* Winner, 1993, Association for Mormon Letters, Best Essay *

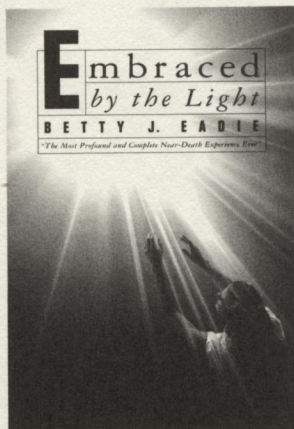
LIBERATING FORM
Mormon Essays on Religion and Literature
Marden J. Clark

Marden Clark consummates his three decades of service at Brigham Young University with *Liberating Form*, a collection of his most vital essays. Ranging from art to science to Zion, the essays focus on the struggles of a "chosen" people searching for their voice within—yet without—a greater culture. He isolates many of the paradoxes peculiar to his people and searches for meaningful and faithful reconciliations. He explains the freedom of form within the structure of the gospel, the power of the Spirit to affect art, and the remarkable implications of eternal agency.

Revealing the tensions inherent in Mormon literature and study, Clark brings a clear and confident voice to the spiraling questions of objective *and* faithful scholarship.

Available from bookstores or by calling 1 800 748-4850
Aspen Books, 241 pages, indexed, \$9.95

Embraced By The Light by Betty J. Eadie



At the age of thirty-one, Betty Eadie died in a hospital after undergoing surgery. The events that followed have been called by Dr. Raymond Moody, author of *Life After Life*, "**the most profound and complete near-death experience ever.**"

Embraced By The Light recounts the people she met, the truths she learned, and the magnificent realities of the spirit world.

Betty Eadie is the mother of eight, and grandmother of eight. As the daughter of a Sioux Indian mother, she was raised on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota and in rural Nebraska. She and her husband currently live in the Northwest.

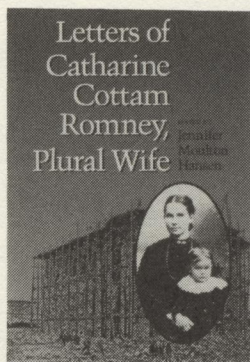
"Even after interviewing over one thousand near-death experiencers, Betty Eadie's account remains the most detailed and spellbinding near-death experience I have heard. What happened to Betty is thought-provoking, inspirational and comforting."

Kimberly Clark-Sharp
President, Seattle International Association
of Near Death Studies

If unavailable at your bookstore call Gold Leaf Press at (916) 642-1058

ILLINOIS

New from



Letters of Catharine Cottam Romney, Plural Wife

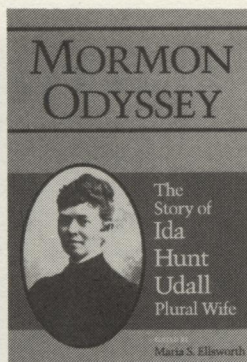
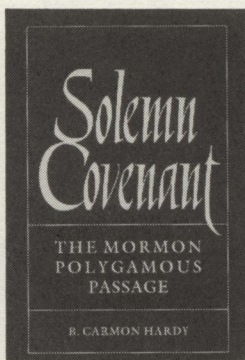
Edited by Jennifer Moulton Hansen

A compelling autobiography in more than 170 letters written between 1873 and 1917. Romney wrote from St. George, Utah, and from Mormon settlements in eastern Arizona and northern Mexico. "Like time-lapse photography, Catharine's weekly accounts of her life in a polygamous family . . . make that life accessible to women, and men, universally." — Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, author of *Eliza and Her Sisters*. Illus. \$29.95

Solemn Covenant

The Mormon Polygamous Passage
B. Carmon Hardy

"An intellectual tour de force—sophisticated and urbane, yet tempered by empathy and understanding." — Klaus J. Hansen, author of *Mormonism and The American Experience*. Illus. \$34.95



Mormon Odyssey

The Story of Ida Hunt Udall, Plural Wife

Edited by Maria S. Ellsworth

"From frontier Arizona and Utah in the late nineteenth century comes the voice of a remarkable woman. Maria Ellsworth has served us well by preserving and editing her grandmother's journal and birthday book."

— Davis Bitton, author of *Les Mormons*. Illus. \$29.95

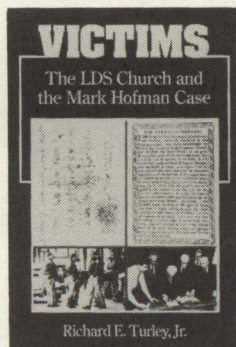
Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology

Erich Robert Paul

This first book on the topic explores the relationship between science, religion, and Mormonism, and the cosmological thinking of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, B. H. Roberts, James E. Talmage, John A. Widtsoe, and Joseph Fielding Smith, among others. Illus. \$29.95

ILLINOIS

New from



Victims

The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case
Richard E. Turley, Jr.

Three pipe bombs exploded in Salt Lake County in 1985, killing two people. Behind the murders lay a vast forgery scheme aimed at dozens of other victims, most prominently the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mark Hofmann, a master forger, went to prison for the murders. He had bilked the church, document dealers, and collectors of hundreds of thousands of dollars over several years while attempting to alter Mormon history.

Turley adds substantially to the record with previously unavailable church documentation and exclusive interviews with church officials, exposing the myths and complexities of this case with skill and objectivity.

"This book adds to and corrects the historical record." — Jan Shipps, author of *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*. Illus. \$27.95

New Paperbacks

Building the City of God

Community and Cooperation
among the Mormons
Second Edition

*Leonard J. Arrington,
Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May*

A new Preface explains the history of the first edition and brings the work up to date. "Probably the most important work relating to Mormon economic history since Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom*." — James B. Allen, author of *Trials of Discipleship*. Illus. Pb: \$16.50

The Mormon Experience

A History of the Latter-day Saints
Second Edition

*Leonard J. Arrington and
Davis Bitton*

"This is without a doubt the definitive Mormon history." — *Library Journal*. Illus. Pb: \$14.95

Order toll free 800/545-4703

University of Illinois Press

54 East Gregory Drive • Champaign, IL 61820

**LOOKING FOR
OUT-OF-PRINT L.D.S. BOOKS?
SO ARE WE . . .**

Benchmark Books:

- Buys out-of-print, used, and rare LDS books (please ask for our Want List, books we want to buy)
- Sells in-print and out-of-print LDS books
- Searches for any out-of-print LDS titles
- Issues catalogs to serious buyers/collectors

BENCHMARK BOOKS

331 Rio Grande St., Ste. 300

P.O. Box 9027

Salt Lake City, UT 84109-0027

(801) 532-3100

Store hours: 10 am to 6 pm, Mon. - Fri.

Curt Bench, owner

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

P. O. BOX 658
SALT LAKE CITY, UT, 84110-0658

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT
DIALOGUE

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SALT LAKE CITY, UT
PERMIT NO. 4559

