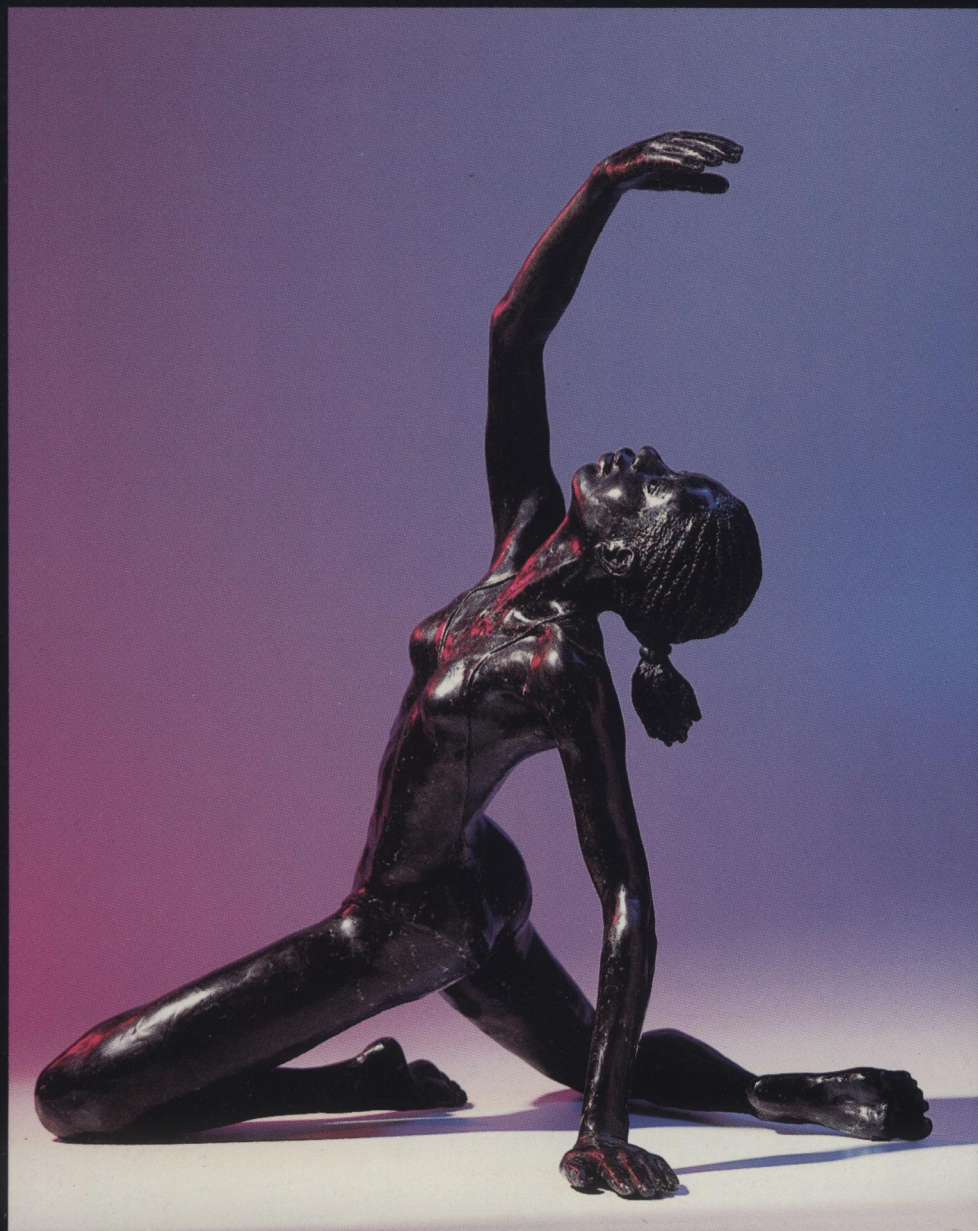


DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



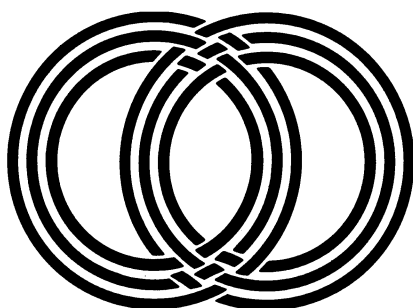
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DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

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their faith into dialogue with the
larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought
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achievement based on their cultural
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accurate scholarship and responsible
judgment, the views expressed are
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CONTENTS

LETTERS

iv

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

THE MAKING OF A MORMON MYTH: THE 1844 TRANSFIGURATION OF BRIGHAM YOUNG	<i>Richard S. Van Wagoner</i>	1
A PASSAGE BACK	<i>Becky Fogg</i>	27
"THE STRANGE MIXTURE OF EMOTION AND INTELLECT": A SOCIAL HISTORY OF DALE L. MORGAN, 1933-42	<i>Richard Saunders</i>	39
GOD: CEO OR MASTER OF THE DANCE?	<i>Edwin B. Firmage</i>	59
RETHINKING RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: NOTES FROM CRITICAL THEORY, FEMINISM, AND REAL LIFE	<i>Stacy Burton</i>	67
THE HIGHER POWERS: FRED M. SMITH AND THE PEYOTE CEREMONIES	<i>Shelby M. Barnes</i>	91
THE UNEXPECTED CHOICE	<i>Linda Paxton Greer</i>	101
MALE-MALE INTIMACY AMONG NINETEENTH- CENTURY MORMONS: A CASE STUDY	<i>D. Michael Quinn</i>	105

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE FUNCTION OF MORMON LITERARY CRITICISM AT THE PRESENT TIME	<i>Michael Austin</i>	131
LEADERS AND MEMBERS: MESSAGES FROM THE GENERAL HANDBOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS	<i>Lavina Fielding Anderson</i>	145

FICTION

PALM SUNDAY	<i>Daniel A. Austin</i>	159
BALANCING ACTS	<i>Myrna Marler</i>	169

POETRY

FALL WEEKEND AT REHOBOTH BEACH	<i>Peter Richardson</i>	25
UNTITLED	<i>Peter Bloch-Hansen</i>	38
DESCENDING ORDER	<i>Dixie Partridge</i>	65
GEORGE	<i>Lee Robison</i>	90
A KILLING FROST	<i>Timothy Liu</i>	100
HEMMED IN	<i>Michael J. Noble</i>	129
I WILL	<i>Allen W. Burch</i>	167

REVIEWS

179

THAT WHICH MOVES

Steven Epperson

Accounting for Fundamentalisms:

The Dynamic Character of Movements

edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby

MORMONS AND UFOs

Scott S. Smith

Millennium

by Jack Anderson

UNDERSTANDABLE ARCHEOLOGY

Mark Thomas

Jesus and His World:

An Archeological and Cultural Dictionary

by John Rousseau and Rami Arav

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

185

ABOUT THE ARTIST / ART CREDITS

Inside back cover

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LETTERS

Seek Understanding

I read Gary Watts's review of the fall 1993 issue of the *AMCAP Journal* in the fall 1994 issue of *Dialogue*. Upon reading his comments regarding the article I wrote with Dean Byrd, I can only conclude that he did not read the article thoroughly and therefore misunderstood its purpose. He proposed that the article may be part of an attempt "to answer the assertion of Melvin Sabshun, medical director of the American Psychiatric Association, that 'there is no published scientific evidence to support the efficacy of reparative therapy as a treatment to change one's sexual orientation.'"

My goal was not to offer scientific evidence to support the efficacy of reparative therapy. From my perspective, the purpose of the article was to present a rich picture of the struggle faced by men and women in the church who want to remain true to their moral beliefs and yet find themselves faced with ongoing homosexual attractions. In my own experience doing therapy with such individuals, I found that I gained respect and compassion for them and their struggle. I assumed that this increased understanding was the natural result of getting to know them as individuals. Dr. Byrd and I concluded, therefore, that a qualitative summary of the life stories of such individuals might serve to help others gain a deeper understanding of their struggle as well.

Increased understanding often leads to a recognition of the complexity of an issue. Rather than face that complexity, it is much easier to do as Dr. Watts and many others have done: oversimplify the topic, treating the entire matter as a "debate" about nature versus nurture. (Ironically, even if the

etiology of homosexuality were understood completely, many men and women would be left with the same dilemma: "Now I know how I got here, but I still have to decide where to go from here.")

Dr. Watts also seems to have oversimplified the nature of psychotherapy with individuals struggling with a conflict between their sexual orientation and religious values, just as many "reparative therapists" have done. To me, the real question is not, does therapy with these individuals succeed or fail? Once again, reality does not lend itself to such simplistic formulations. I have worked with dozens of individuals struggling to understand and/or change a variety of things about their sexual feelings, fantasies, and behavior. To speak of the "success" or "failure" of any one of these individuals would belittle their soul-searching, gut-wrenching struggle to explore, understand, and control what many of us merely take for granted.

The scientific debate on this topic will rage on. If scientific rigor can overcome homophobia on the one hand and political correctness on the other, the debate may prove beneficial. But regardless of how much we scientific types would like to see this entire issue put to rest by some grand research experiment, it won't happen. The most important conclusions regarding this topic will not be made in a laboratory. They are being made every day in the lives of individual men and women. To ignore this and focus instead on determinism—whether biological or environmental—is to deny the dignity and capacity of the human spirit.

Mark Chamberlain
Layton, Utah

Mormons and Templars

I am always astonished at the fascinating variety of articles in *Dialogue*. I just received my fall 1994 issue and immediately turned to the Michael Homer piece on the relationship of Freemasonry and Mormonism.

While no one can expect every writer on every topic to draw on every book or article on a particular subject under discussion, I was surprised to find but two brief citations of Cecil McGavin's groundbreaking *Mormonism and Masonry* in Homer's article, which sets out to cover the relationship between the two movements—the whole thrust of the McGavin book published almost sixty years ago. More surprising perhaps was Homer's failure to cite Michael Baignet's *The Temple and the Lodge*, of more recent publication.

Baignet, who has also published impressive work on the Dead Sea Scrolls, engaged in significant research in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the library of the British Museum in London, and extensive on-the-spot archeological digs in Scotland to persuasively establish the connection between the Knights Templars and early Freemasonry which Homer so casually dismisses (5). Of clear interest to Mormons, Baignet asserts that the Templars, during their hundred years in the Holy Land, were brought into intimate contact with the remnants of Primitive Christianity (as well as Islam), quickly observing the departure of the Roman church from the more simple teachings of James (who I think most LDS can readily accept, with Christian traditionalists, as having served as first bishop of Jerusalem—just as owing to a shortage of priesthood, Heber J. Grant, an apostle,

served simultaneously as president of the Tooele Stake and Apostle Charles C. Rich as president of the Bear Lake Stake). He further asserts that Templar ritual and teachings, drawn from their Middle East experience, came to depart so substantially from Catholic practice that they brought down upon themselves the enmity of the church and St. Bartholomew's Night, with the virtual destruction of the Templar movement. Baignet persuasively traces the escape of forewarned Templar remnants to the Low Countries and Scotland (where he uncovered on remote Scottish islands extensive Templar graveyards known to locals, but knowledge of which had been carefully concealed for generations—presumably to avoid persecution first by the Catholic church and later the puritanical Church of Scotland). He purports that Templars, in order to survive, were compelled to give up their vows of celibacy, intermarrying with tribal Scotswomen. In the process the Templar movement became transmuted into Freemasonry, preserving the essentials of temple ritual and Jamesian Christianity from Templar times in Palestine. Following much the same sources and logic of the Homer article, Baignet then shows how Freemasonry split into "craft" masonry and "speculative" masonry and went on to become one of the impressive chapters in the restructuring of British politics, as leading figures from every level of society became associated with the democratizing elements of the Masonic movement. Baignet goes so far as to assert that virtually every scientific, political, and social leader of the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century in Great Britain, including Newton, Boyle, and a succession of royal

princes were active Masons; that it was from Masonry that the Royal Society took root; and that, indeed, it was the sympathy of Masonic General Howe rather than scrambled marching orders from London which accounted for the success of the American Revolution.

If one is prepared to accept even a scintilla of the Baignet story, it becomes a fascinating chapter in how an element (if considerably corrupted) of priesthood ritual was preserved "continuing . . . in all generations" (D&C 84:17) to our time. This virtual "folk memory," once encountered by the Lord's anointed, was thereupon purified and restored to its primitive form, just as encountering the burial scrolls accompanying Michael Chandler's mummies set off the thinking that led to the Joseph Smith version of the Bible and the Book of Abraham.

I, for one, see no problem in accepting the relationship of Nauvoo Masonry and Mormon temple ritual, any more than accepting the mental stimulation provided to the prophet by participation in Professor Seixas's Hebrew classes set off inquiries which resulted in "Nauvoo theology" and Mormon Mother God doctrine.

David B. Timmins
Bucharest, Romania

More on Mormonism and Freemasonry

I have received several inquiries concerning my essay on Mormonism and Freemasonry which appeared in the fall 1994 issue of *Dialogue*. Some of these have related to the propriety of publishing portions of the temple ritual and/or specifically comparing it,

word for word, with other rituals, including the rituals of Freemasonry.

In my essay I did not quote specific language from either ritual or make specific comparisons between them. I believed it would be improper to quote from the temple ceremony, although I recognize that there are many published exposés and that some Masonic historians use eighteenth-century exposés to study the development of the Craft's ritual. I recognize that no such liberties are extended to those who have participated in the Mormon temple endowment.

The thesis of my *Dialogue* essay is consistent with what Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Franklin D. Richards, and Hugh Nibley have all acknowledged: that Masonic "rites present unmistakable parallels to those of the temple" (Nibley, *Mormonism and Early Christianity* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co.; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1987], 369). This does not mean (and I did not conclude in my essay) that common language means that the two rituals have the same religious or spiritual experience or that either depends on the other for its origin or content. In fact, Mormonism and Freemasonry are entirely different anthropological and spiritual experiences and are not part of the same cultural family. As both Massimo Introvigne and Armand Mauss have demonstrated, a ritual is a narrative and the *content* and *language* of a narrative are often very different.

This is not inconsistent with Nibley's conclusion (or similar statements by general authorities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) that the "Saints had entered an order in which even the idealism of Free Masonry 'was superseded by a more perfect fraternity found in the vows and

covenants which the endowment in the House of God afforded members of the Church"" (Nibley, *Approaching Zion* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co.; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1989] 352, quoting Matthias Cowley, *The Life of Wilford Woodruff* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964], 160); and that in "the fourth decade of the nineteenth century the idea of the temple suddenly emerged full-blown in its perfection . . . which rewarded the faithful by showing them the full scope and meaning of the plan of salvation" (Nibley, *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, 370).

For these reasons I believe that specific comparisons between Mormon and Masonic rituals are ultimately irrelevant. What I wrote on the dust jacket of David John Buerger's recently published *The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship* (San Francisco: Smith Research Associates, 1994), that "[t]he primary documents relating to Mormon temple rituals and comparisons made to Masonic and other precursors provide Mormon readers with a long-overdue basis for understanding historical context and evaluating traditional exegesis associated with the subject," referred specifically to material that had originally appeared in Buerger's two *Dialogue* articles (Spring 1983, Winter 1987), not to quotations from a nineteenth-century exposé of the temple ceremony and its parallel comparison with a contemporary ritual of Freemasonry which appeared in the book. Some Mormons disagree with reprinting what purports to be exact language from the endowment, and I personally would not have done so.

Michael W. Homer
Salt Lake City, Utah

An Egyptian Clarification

A statement in my essay in the spring 1995 issue of *Dialogue* about the difficulties which the interpretation of the figures of a hypocephalus (Facs. 2 of the Book of Abraham, PGP) presents has turned out to be prophetic. On page 150 of that essay I stated that "the sun is always a masculine deity in Egyptian religion," which is misleading. The main solar god Re is masculine, but he does have feminine counterparts, one of which is Raet (see E. Homung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. by J. Baines [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982], 84-95). Texts from the Greco-Roman period in Egypt describe Hathor as a "female sun" (see P. Derchain, *Hathor Quadri-frons: Recherches sur la syntaxe d'un mythe Égyptien* [Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut in het Nabije Oosten, 1972], 36-37). If I had followed my own advice and held the interpretation of the figures of Facsimile 2 to the context of Book of the Dead spell 162, then figure 5 could only be interpreted as *Th.t-wr.t*, the mother of the sun-god, since the other goddesses I mention do not occur in this spell.

Also, there is a very close (but not exact) parallel to figure 4 in Facsimile 2 in a New Kingdom tomb at Deir el-Medina which identifies this figure as the god Ptah-Solar. For this figure, see M. Saleh, *Das Totenbuch in den thebanischen Beamtengräbern des Neuen Reiches*. AVDAIK 46 (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1984), p. 92, fig. 121. Sokar was primarily a funerary deity associated with the underworld.

Stephen E. Thompson
Providence, Rhode Island

More on Treasure Seeking

John H. Wittorf's comments in the summer 1995 issue about my article "The Locations of Joseph Smith's Early Treasure Quests," which appeared in the fall 1994 issue, deserve a response. Wittorf is particularly troubled by my suggestion that some early residents of Palmyra/Manchester mistook the northeastern excavation on the hill Cumorah for the place where Joseph Smith had extracted the plates. I quoted Lorenzo Saunders to show that there was only one excavation on the hill, which had been dug one or two years before Smith's taking the plates from the hill in September 1827. This certainly corrected Frederick G. Mathers's claim that the northeastern excavation had been dug by Smith in 1827; it also tended to bring into question the claim of David Whitmer's 1828 informants who said they had seen the place on the hill from which the plates had been taken. In a footnote (56) I suggested that perhaps Whitmer's informants were among those who had understandably identified the wrong location. Wittorf, however, takes exception to my suggestion.

Wittorf draws inferences from the sources that I did not make in my article, stating that the conflicting sources "leave some ambiguity as to what part of the hill Whitmer was referring and whether anything had actually been recovered there by Joseph Smith." Instead, Wittorf wants us to believe that the stone box remained intact and in full view for several years after Smith had removed the plates, and that both David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery saw the box in that condition. To support his assertion, Wittorf quotes indiscriminately

from Lyndon Cook's *David Whitmer Interviews* (DWI), where Whitmer is represented as claiming that he saw the "receptacle" or "casket" in the hill. However, Wittorf's use of the sources is problematic.

Wittorf's first source—*Chicago Tribune*, 17 Dec. 1885—is a highly inaccurate account where the reporter jumbles dates, places, and events to the point that it is barely recognizable. Little wonder Whitmer criticized this interview as inaccurate (DWI:187). In the portion under discussion the reporter mixes details from Whitmer's 1828 visit to Manchester, New York, with Cowdery's trip to Harmony, Pennsylvania, in early April 1829 and Whitmer's transporting Smith and Cowdery to Fayette, New York, in early June 1829. Instead of Whitmer being told about the place on the hill (as Wittorf mistakenly brackets in his quote), it is Cowdery who is informed about the "receptacle." It is also claimed that both Whitmer and Cowdery were taken to the hill where they saw the "receptacle" for themselves. This certainly could not have happened during Whitmer's 1828 visit since Cowdery said he did not visit the hill until 1830 (*Messenger and Advocate* 2 [Oct. 1835]: 196). Wittorf even suggests that Cowdery's visit to the hill "lends additional credibility" to his 1835 description of the stone box. Yet Cowdery in describing the hill and box does not mention seeing either the box or its remains, a point he would have certainly mentioned in favor of Smith's claims if he had been in possession of such evidence. Wittorf also fails to mention that Cowdery's description of the box was different than Smith's: Cowdery stating that in the bottom of the box were three pillars upon which the plates sat and

Smith that there were two stones that lay crosswise.

In Wittorf's second source—*St. Louis Republican*, 16 July 1884—Whitmer is quoted as stating that he saw the "stone which formed the box or receptacle," which probably means that he saw the stones on the side of the hill that were believed to have originally formed the box, not that he necessarily saw the box intact.

Wittorf's third source—P. Wilhelm Poulson's letter in *Deseret Evening News*, 16 Aug. 1878—is the clearest source in support of Wittorf's belief that Whitmer saw the box intact, with the stones apparently "cemented together." However, the accuracy of this source is highly questionable. In a letter to S. T. Mouch, dated 18 November 1882, David Whitmer accused Poulson of inventing dialogue (DWI:241). In some instances, Poulson's account is at variance with other well-established facts.

Wittorf's last source—*Chicago Times*, 7 Aug. 1875—states that Whitmer had been to the hill Cumorah three times and had seen the "casket" that once "contained the tablets, and the seer-stone." Of course the box did not contain Smith's seer stone, but rather the spectacles or Urim and Thummim. This is perhaps among the "few minor errors" of which Whitmer spoke when he described the interview as "substantially correct" (DWI:235-36). Concerning the box, the *Times* adds: "Eventually the casket had been washed down to the foot of the hill, but it was to be seen when he [Whitmer] last visited the historic place." This is consistent with what Edward Stevenson was told during an 1871 visit to the hill: that some large flat stones had been found at the bottom of the hill but that they had long

since been carried off (*Reminiscences of Joseph, the Prophet and the Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City, 1893], 13). When the *Times* reporter describes the "casket" at the bottom of the hill when last Whitmer saw it, he uses the singular "it" although the stones were certainly in a scattered condition. The source is therefore unclear as to whether or not Whitmer had ever seen the box intact.

In the source that I used—*Kansas City Journal*, 5 June 1881—which was corrected by Whitmer (DWI:71-73), Whitmer does not say he visited the hill himself in 1828 but apparently relied on the word of his informants, who only mentioned seeing the "place" without saying anything about a box. This is also true of Whitmer's interview in the *Chicago Times*, 17 Oct. 1881, which Whitmer said contained "only two trifling errors" (DWI:209-10).

Against Wittorf's interpretation is the consistent testimony of visitors to the hill—such as Lorenzo Saunders in 1827, Oliver Cowdery in 1830, W. W. Phelps and James Gordon Bennett in 1831—who either describe one excavation in the hill or fail to mention seeing the box. Wittorf therefore would do well to seek proof for Joseph Smith's claims elsewhere—it is simply not here.

In the last half of his comments, Wittorf uses Whitmer's descriptions of Joseph Smith translating in the open with his face buried in his hat and no book or manuscript before him to argue that Smith's dictation of some eighteen chapters from the book of Isaiah almost verbatim proves that Smith was either "an extremely gifted individual with an extraordinary memory" or a truly inspired prophet.

Wittorf—and some others—

make too much of Whitmer's statement, which was designed to combat the claim that Smith had used the Spaulding manuscript in producing the Book of Mormon. Whitmer's description only applies to Smith's general method of translation and does not necessarily preclude use of the Bible. Whitmer admitted that he was not always present during the translation (compare DWI:62 / 72). Even if Whitmer had seen Smith read to Cowdery from the Bible, Whitmer would not have interpreted it as a source for the Book of Mormon but as an aid in translating, perhaps an opportunity for Joseph to rest his eyes. Regardless, there are other elements in Whitmer's description of the translation process that are inaccurate—such as the words not disappearing from the seer stone until written correctly—that result from Whitmer's tendency to exaggerate for apologetic purposes.

Rather than being used apologetically to prove the either/or reduction of memory versus inspiration, the closeness of the Book of Mormon's Isaiah text to the King James Version, including its many errors, has been interpreted by some, including the late Sidney B. Sperry, as proof that Smith at some time took his head out of the hat and read from the Bible. The tendency for the variant readings in the Book of Mormon's Isaiah text to be above the line additions argues for its being originally copied from the Bible, perhaps in Smith's absence. Regardless, rather than providing proof of Joseph Smith's inspiration, the existence of the Isaiah text in the Book of Mormon, including the errors of the King James Version, actually creates some serious problems.

Wittorf seems unable to deal directly with the historical fact of Joseph

Smith's being a treasure seer since he resorts to indirect sarcasm: "If Joseph spent as much time searching for buried treasure as has been alleged, he must have been an extremely 'quick study' with respect to internalizing biblical text . . ." The important thing is not how much time Joseph spent in searching for buried treasure, but that he spent more time than he was later willing to admit. He also obscured his central role in those operations as the gifted treasure seer. The diggers dug at his command in locations he pointed out through the aid of his stone, the same stone he used in producing the Book of Mormon. This tells us something about Joseph Smith that he apparently did not want to reveal himself.

Dan Vogel
Columbus, Ohio

"Small Isn't Always Beautiful"

I read with interest Donald H. Gibbon's article entitled "Famine Relief, the Church, and the Environment" in the summer 1995 issue. The title is sweeping, but my uneasiness is not found with this technicality. It is found in the first sentence of the last paragraph: "We can teach the world's crowded people to feed themselves more effectively without turning the planet into a giant agri-business project." He goes on to state: "I believe it can be done."

I agree with his next sentence: "One of the most common condemnations of Mormons is that they ignore the ticking of the 'population bomb' by encouraging large families." He concludes that if Mormons demonstrated the capacity to feed them-

selves, they would enhance their acceptability "among mainstream environmental thinkers" and others.

Apparently Donald L. Gibbon is a technocrat. He advances in his article "an alternative model for self-sufficiency/development" based on the notion of organic agriculture and small endeavors. He draws heavily upon the experience of a private relief organization, Land and Water Resources International (LAWRI), in advancing basic tenets for "mutually-enhancing relationships with the earth," a quote he used from a John Berry (104).

It borders on absurdity to believe that "the planet" could ever be "turned into a giant agri-business project." By implication this appears to be a great evil. Without debating this supposedly great evil, as a young person I lived under the circumstances Donald L. Gibbon proposes. Because of an acute shortage of land and water, and masses of people, nineteenth-century Mormons lived on miniature twenty- or so acre farms. The church's agrarian policy collapsed during the Great Depression. Only Mississippi had more poor on its relief rolls than Utah.

My family cultivated every inch of our twenty-acre field. Even the ditch banks provided grazing for a few cows and horses. Kids herded milk cows which grazed on roadside patches of grass, clover, and alfalfa. In the early spring Russian thistle and sheet grass provided the only grazing, poor as it was.

Our corral was a massive compost pile where pigs fed on excreta of cows and horses, and chickens further scratched through the waste. In watching pigs and chickens scavenge the pile of filthy waste, we often pon-

dered which "critter" was the most vile.

In discussing our depressed lot my scholarly-oriented father would say: "Poor people have poor ways." Under the circumstances of calorie production, as later ascertained in my studies of simple agricultural practices worldwide, we were very efficient, nearly 100 percent so. We got about one calorie of energy output for one calorie of input. We were organic farmers because we had no money to purchase fertilizers and pesticides. Our horses survived the winters on open range. In the spring they were feeble animals. A lot of sheer human energy was expended in cultivating and harvesting. The hardest work was cleaning the irrigation ditches by shovel.

My mother slaved many hours over the wood-fired stove, bottling each year a thousand or more quarts of fruit and vegetables. There was nothing romantic about it. The same may be said for milking the scrawny cows, killing the pig, and hoeing the garden rows. Churning butter and baking bread took hours of family time.

What I recall most was the "hellish" fly population. Local wags would say: "We ought to package them up and sell them for raisins."

For three decades I wrestled off-and-on with the design of small-scale irrigated agriculture. I reached the conclusion that if the rate of calorie production is the critical measure, and this is basically what organic agriculture is all about, then one better carefully understand the nature of the indigenous practice/system before rushing off to make some proposed innovations. I have no recommendations to make, however, on how to

cope with the fly populations, since poor people's ways generate flies.

I am grateful for American agribusiness, which liberated me and several million others in my lot of life from the drudgery of small-scale, low-technology agriculture. This even includes the kind which Gibbon observed in Switzerland with every space of land utilized. If he really wished to see such intensive land use, he should visit the Island of Java, with its near 100 million people living on an area near the size of New York state.

The evil in today's world, and this is my expression, not Gibbon's, is an excessive population compounded by an excessive rate of growth. For this reason America's agri-business achievement will find increased difficulties in being exported abroad—especially to those agrarian societies already burdened with masses of surplus people. There is no hope for a country such as Bangladesh.

Nevertheless in such situations, and this encompasses the majority of the world's population, Gibbon's suggestions make good sense along with offering a palliative for social irresponsibility.

Quality, not quantity, should be the criterion for human reproduction. Three healthy children per couple is more than enough procreation to insure the perpetuation of the human

species.

In sum, I do not believe that any amount of small-scale food production and processing by pronatalist Mormons in the United States, with their proclivity to live in big houses with two or more TVs and several motor vehicles parked in the driveway, will win "acceptability among mainstream environmental thinkers" (109). Required is a radical change in the Mormon ethic. The only consoling thought is that sexually-active Mormons with a pronatalist belief constitute an insignificant number in the total world population. In this reference small, indeed, may be considered beautiful.

It is written in Mormon thought and doctrine that perilous times are ahead. I suggest that they are now. Until the population matter is constructively resolved, massive socio-disorder will occur, and it will take many different forms, from drive-by shootings to ethnic cleansing. As an expediency Gibbon's proposal makes good sense. As a form of development with human beings rising to lofty potential, I see in it little utility. It is another band-aid treatment for a distressing world social ill: too many people.

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The Making of a Mormon Myth: The 1844 Transfiguration of Brigham Young

Richard S. Van Wagoner

The brethren testify that brother Brigham Young is brother Joseph's legal successor. You never heard me say so. I say that I am a good hand to keep the dogs and wolves out of the flock.

—Brigham Young (1860)¹

MORMONISM, AMERICA'S UNIQUE RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATION, has a remarkable past. Nourished on the spectacular, the faith can count heroic martyrs, epic treks, and seemingly supernatural manifestations. Deep in the Mormon psyche is an attraction to prophetic swagger. Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young, in particular, are icons who have come to dominate the Mormon world like mythical colossuses.

After Smith's tragic 1844 murder, Brigham Young and an ailing Sidney Rigdon, the only surviving member of the First Presidency, became entangled in an ecclesiastical dogfight for primacy. Young, a masterful strategist with a political adroitness and physical vitality Rigdon lacked, easily won the mantle.² But as time passed the rather prosaic

1. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: LDS Bookseller's Depot, 1855-86), 8 (3 June 1860): 69; hereafter *JD*.

2. For five years Rigdon had been weakened by episodic bouts of malaria and depression. For a discussion of his health problems, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 266-70, 279, 281-85.

events surrounding this tussle for church leadership metamorphosed into a mythical marvel. The legend is now unsurpassed in Mormon lore, second only to Joseph Smith's own account of angelic ministrations and his "first vision."

While the veracity of angelic visitations, apparitions, and miracles is typically difficult to authenticate due to a lack of corroborative evidence, the averred "Transfiguration of Brigham Young" can be scrutinized in detail in newspaper accounts, diaries, official proclamations, retrospective observations, and other exemplification.

The official account of post-martyrdom Mormonism was written after-the-fact by members of the Quorum of the Twelve or their advocates. These men, under Brigham Young's direction, zealously projected their role in history in the most favorable light. Overshadowed by editorial censorship, hundreds of deletions, additions, and alterations were made when the *History of Joseph Smith*, as it was originally called, was serialized in the *Deseret News* in the late 1850s. Not only does this history place polygamy and Brigham Young's ecclesiastical significance in the rosy glow of political acceptability, it does a monumental disservice to Sidney Rigdon and others who challenged the Twelve's ascent to power.

The Twelve's nineteenth-century propaganda mill was so adroit that few outside Brigham Young's inner circle were aware of the behind-the-scenes alterations that were seamlessly stitched into church history. Charles Wesley Wandell, an assistant church historian who later left the church, was aghast at these emendations. Commenting on the many changes made in the historical work as it was being serialized, Wandell noted in his diary:

I notice the interpolations because having been employed in the Historian's office at Nauvoo by Doctor Richards, and employed, too, in 1845, in compiling this very autobiography, I know that after Joseph's death his memoir was "doctored" to suit the new order of things, and this, too, by the direct order of Brigham Young to Doctor Richards and systematically by Richards.³

More than a dozen references to Brigham Young's involvement in transposing the written history may be found in the post-martyrdom record first published in book form in 1902 as *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. For example, an 1 April 1845 citation records Young saying: "I commenced revising the History of Joseph Smith at Brother Richard's office: Elder Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith

3. Inez Smith, "Biography of Charles Wesley Wandell," *Journal of History* 3 (Jan. 1910): 455-63.

were with me."⁴

That this revision, or censorship, of the official history came from Brigham Young is evidenced by an 11 July 1856 reference in Wilford Woodruff's diary. Apostle Woodruff, working in the church historian's office, questioned Young respecting a "p[ie]ce of History on Book E-1 page 1681-2 concerning Hyr[u]m leading this Church & tracing the [A]aronic Priesthood." Young advised, "it was not essential to be inserted in the History & had better be omitted." Woodruff then queried him about "Joseph[s] words on South Carolina" (see D&C 87; 130:12-13) which had recently been published in the *Deseret News*. Young said he "wished it not published."⁵ Years later Elder Charles W. Penrose, a member of the First Presidency, admitted that after Joseph Smith's death some changes were made in the official record "for prudential reasons."⁶

Censorship has severely tarnished Sidney Rigdon's historical image. Contrary to the official Mormon view, for example, Rigdon did not travel to Pennsylvania prior to Joseph Smith's death in the summer of 1844 to escape the turmoil of Nauvoo or desert the church as was retrospectively charged. He had not "apostatized and left Bro[ther] Joseph," as Brigham Young declared on 24 June 1868.⁷ Rather, Rigdon was dispatched to his home state by the prophet Joseph for at least three reasons. The first was political. U.S. presidential candidate Joseph Smith had declared Illinois residency. Rigdon, his vice presidential running mate, was required by law to establish residency elsewhere. Second, at an earlier time when Rigdon and Smith were living in Kirtland, Ohio, the prophet, as recorded by Book of Mormon witness David Whitmer, prophesied that "my servant Sydney must go sooner or later to Pittsburg."⁸ Thus the move to Pennsylvania was intended to fulfill revelation as well as political expediency. In addition, the prophet, fearing for Rigdon's life in the aftermath of the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, wanted his counselor to survive. Smith's personal diary entry for 22 June 1844 makes that clear. "I have sent Br. R[igdon] away," the prophet wrote, "[and] I want to send Hiram

4. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1902), 7:389; hereafter *HC*. For other references regarding revisions, see *ibid.*, 389-90, 408, 411, 414, 427-28, 514, 519, 520, 532, 533, 556.

5. Scott Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal-Typescript*, 9 vols. (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983), 3:429.

6. Charles W. Penrose diary, 10 Jan. 1897, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

7. Young's false statement was made during Heber C. Kimball's funeral (see *Journal History*, 24 June 1868, archives, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter LDS archives).

8. David Whitmer to Joseph Smith III, 9 Dec. 1886, cited in *Saints' Herald*, 5 Feb. 1887.

away to save him [too], to avenge my Blood."⁹

By official design Rigdon was not in Illinois at the time of the infamous homicides at Carthage Jail. On 18 June, nine days before the martyrdom of the Smith brothers, the Rigdon family departed on the steamer *Osprey* for Pittsburgh. According to Rigdon's son Wickliffe, Joseph Smith and "many of the prominent members of the church came to the boat to bid them goodbye[e]."¹⁰ Ebenezer Robinson, sent with Rigdon to establish a Mormon newspaper in Pittsburgh, recalled that prior to embarking Smith took him aside and admonished him to stand by Rigdon "under all circumstances, and uphold his hands on all occasions, and never forsake him . . . for he is a good man and I love him better than I ever loved him in all my life, for my heart is entwined around his with chords [sic] that can never be broken."¹¹

Arriving in Pittsburgh on 27 June, the Rigdons, unaware of Joseph's and Hyrum's deaths, visited family members the following day. Next they located a rental house on 1 July. Five days later Sidney received the first news of the tragic deaths from a *Nauvoo Neighbor* brought to town by Jedediah Grant on his way to Philadelphia.¹² Rigdon told Grant that he felt prepared to claim "the Prophetic mantle" and that he would "now take his place, at the head of the church, in spite of men or devils, at the risk of his life."¹³ Knowing that Grant planned to leave the following day for Philadelphia, Rigdon requested him to relay word to any of the Twelve he might meet, that it "was his wish and desire that they should come to Pittsburgh before going to Nauvoo, and hold a council."¹⁴ Sidney also sent a letter to Brigham Young in care of *The Prophet*, a Mormon

9. Joseph Smith diary, loose sheet under date, microfilm copy in Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Provo, Utah; hereafter BYU Library. I am indebted to D. Michael Quinn for drawing this unpublished reference to my attention.

10. J. Wickliffe Rigdon, "Life of Sidney Rigdon," 178-79, LDS archives.

11. *Latter Day Saint's Messenger and Advocate* (Pittsburgh) 4 (6 Dec. 1844). Richard Savary, Benjamin Stafford, and Ebenezer Robinson constituted a committee of Rigdon followers to counter Quorum of the Twelve accusations that Smith and Rigdon were estranged when he went to Pittsburgh. They published a late 1844 notice in Pittsburgh which claimed that Rigdon "enjoyed Joseph's confidence to the fullest extent until the time of his decease." They asserted that Smith wished Rigdon "to stand next to himself in political as well as religious matters," and that is why he was selected as his vice-presidential running mate (*ibid.*).

12. Although at the time Rigdon was shocked to learn of the prophet's death, in a 25 May 1873 letter to Charles F. Woodard (after Sidney's mind was addled by a series of strokes) he stated: "The Lord notified us that the church of Jesus Christ of Latter day saints were a going to be d[e]stroyed and for us to leave we did so and the Smiths were killed a few days after we started" (Rigdon Collection, LDS archives).

13. Jedediah M. Grant, *A Collection of Facts Relative to the Course Taken by Elder Sidney Rigdon in the States of Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking & Guilbert, 1844), 44-45.

14. *Ibid.*, 17.

newspaper in the East, suggesting a date to conference in Pittsburgh.

But the Twelve, with succession aspirations of their own, disregarded Rigdon's wishes. Wilford Woodruff wrote from Boston to Brigham Young on 16 July urging quorum members in the East to meet in Massachusetts, suggesting they exclude Rigdon.¹⁵ The Twelve then had Orson Hyde write to Rigdon, informing him that they "thought it safer for them to return" through Buffalo and Chicago, requesting him to "meet them in Nauvoo, where they would council together."¹⁶ Initially Rigdon had not planned to return to Illinois. According to his account, however, he heard the spectral voice of Joseph Smith directing him, "You must not stay, you must go."¹⁷

Despite frequent kidnapping and assassination attempts, Joseph Smith established no firm policies regarding presidential succession in the event of his death. The resulting confusion threw the prophetic transition into turmoil. He simply had not expected to die at thirty-eight. Never given to full disclosure to any man or woman, the prophet's public and private statements between 1834-44 suggested at least eight different methods for succession, each pointing to different successors with some claims to validity.¹⁸

Consequently, Rigdon found the Saints in a leadership quandary when he arrived in Nauvoo on Saturday, 3 August. Apostles Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, and George A. Smith invited him to meet with them at 8:00 a.m. the following day at John Taylor's home. The men waited an hour. Pratt, sent to find Rigdon, found him engaged with a lawyer, and by then it was too late for him to meet with the apostles as he had a speaking engagement at worship services. Taking as his text the scriptural concept "For my thoughts are not as your thoughts," President Rigdon related to the audience a vision he claimed to have received recently in Pittsburgh.

Declaring his manifestation as a "continuation of the same vision that he and Joseph had in Kirtland . . . concerning the different glories or mansions in the 'Father's House,'" Rigdon testified that the prophet "had ascended to heaven, and that he stood on the right hand of the Son of God, and that he had seen him there, clothed with all the power, glory, might, majesty, and dominion of the celestial kingdoms." He added that Joseph

15. Woodruff to Young, 16 July 1844, in "Brigham Young Collection of Wilford Woodruff Correspondence, 1840-44," Brigham Young Collection, LDS archives.

16. Grant, 17.

17. This quotation is from either the Willard Richards or William Clayton diary, both of which are presently unavailable to researchers. The citation was taken from Andrew F. Ehat, "Joseph Smith's Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Succession Question," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1982, 197.

18. D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," *Brigham Young University Studies* 16 (Winter 1976): 187-233.

still held "the keys of the kingdom . . . would continue to hold them to all eternity . . . and that no man could ever take his place, neither have power to build up the kingdom to any other creature or being but to Joseph Smith."¹⁹

Emphasizing his longtime role as "Spokesman to the Lord," which had been pronounced by Smith in both revelation and a special blessing, Rigdon reported the Lord's wish that "there must be a guardian appointed to build the Church up to Joseph."²⁰ He then explained that "he was the identical man that the ancient prophets had sung about, wrote and rejoiced over; and that he was sent to do the identical work that had been the theme of all the prophets in every proceeding generation."²¹ Declaring that the Lord's ways are not as our ways, he veered into his favorite topic, the prophecies of Armageddon. The time was near at hand, he warned, when the Saints "would see one hundred tons of metal per second thrown at the enemies of God," and blood would flow as deep as "horses' bridles." With his usual aplomb and extravagant phraseology, Sidney trumpeted:

I am going to fight a real bloody battle with sword and with gun. . . . I will fight the battles of the Lord. I will also cross the Atlantic, encounter the queen's forces, and overcome them—plant the American standard on English ground, and then march to the palace of her majesty, and demand a portion of her riches and dominions, which if she refuse, I will take the little madam by the nose and lead her out, and she shall have no power to help herself. If I do not do this, the Lord never spake by mortal.²²

During the afternoon meeting, while Charles C. Rich was speaking, Nauvoo Stake president William Marks, at Rigdon's request, interrupted and gave public notice of a Thursday, 8 August, special assembly to choose a guardian of the church. Some suggested waiting until the full Quorum of the Twelve returned. But Rigdon said he was "some distance from his family" and wanted to "know if this people had any thing for him to do." If not, then he wanted to be on his way "for there was a people 1000's & 10,000's who would receive him[,] that he wanted to visit

19. Orson Hyde, *Speech of Elder Orson Hyde, Delivered Before the High Priest's Quorum, in Nauvoo, April 27th, 1845, Upon the Course and Conduct of Mr. Sidney Rigdon, and Upon the Merits of His Claims to the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: James and Woodburn, 1845), 12.

20. Ibid., 12. In a special blessing given to Rigdon on 13 December 1833, Joseph Smith designated him as "spokesman unto the Lord . . . all the days of his life" (Patriarchal Blessing Book 1, 12, in Richard L. Anderson, "The Mature Joseph Smith and Treasure Searching," *Brigham Young University Studies* 24 [Fall 1984]: 529; see also D&C 100:9, 11).

21. Journal History, 4 Aug. 1844.

22. Hyde, 16.

other branches around [but Nauvoo] first."²³ Many thought that Rigdon was pushing his claims too fast. On Monday morning, 5 August, Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, John Taylor, George A. Smith, Amasa Lyman, and Bishop Newel K. Whitney called on Sidney to ask what his hurry was. He denied that he expected the people to choose a guardian on Thursday, saying that he wished just a "prayer meeting, and interchange of thought and feeling [to] warm up each other's hearts."²⁴

Later that evening five more members of the Twelve arrived in Nauvoo, bringing the number to nine. The next day a combined meeting of the Twelve, the Nauvoo High Council, and the High Priest's Quorum was held in the second story of the new Seventies Hall. Brigham Young, who scheduled the meeting, called on Rigdon to make a statement to the church concerning his Pittsburgh revelation. Rigdon explained that the manifestation, while not an open vision, was presented to his mind. He was shown that the prophet sustained the same relationship to the church in death that he had in life. No man could be Joseph's successor, Rigdon said. The Kingdom must be "built up to Christ" through the dead prophet. Revelation was still required, and since Rigdon had been ordained as Smith's spokesman he was to continue to speak for him on this side of the veil "until Joseph Smith himself shall descend as a mighty angel, lay his hand on [my] head & ordain [me] & say, 'Come up & act for me.'" Concluding, he appended, "I have discharged my duty, & done what God commanded me. . . . The people could please themselves whether they accepted [me] or not."²⁵ Young then responded that he wished to hear the voice of the entire church in conference before a decision was made. He wryly commented that "he did not care who led the Church of God if God said so even if it was old 'Ann Lee' but he must know that God said so."²⁶ Young added that he had "the keys and the means of knowing the mind of God on this subject."²⁷

By rights of his 1841 ordination as "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator," Rigdon was entitled to visionary experiences. Yet Wilford Woodruff called Sidney's disclosure "a kind of second [c]lass vision."²⁸ Young, in-

23. *Journal History*, 4 Aug. 1844; Hyde, 40-41.

24. *HC*, 7:226.

25. The original minutes of this 7 August 1844 meeting, presently controlled by the Quorum of the Twelve, are "not available for public scrutiny" (F. Michael Watson, secretary to the First Presidency, to Richard S. Van Wagoner, 14 June 1993). The account of the meeting in William Clayton's diary (in possession of the First Presidency) is also unavailable. I therefore cite Ehat, 197-98.

26. Ann Lee Stanley (1736-84) claimed to be the female incarnation of Jesus Christ and was leader of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming, the "Shaking Quakers."

27. Ehat, 198.

28. Kenney, 2:434.

clined to sarcastic ridicule, called Sidney a fool to his face.²⁹ The "Lion of the Lord" did not suffer fools easily. Rigdon underestimated Young, who soon would become one of the most powerful Americans of his generation. Rigdon, when in good health, was without question Brigham's oratorical superior, but Young, never a passive observer, was more clever, ambitious, and politically astute. Not content to let the mantle of leadership pass him by, he simply wrestled it away from Rigdon.

Young, like Rigdon, stunned by the news of Joseph Smith's murder, seems not to have concluded immediately that the prophet's death placed the crown of leadership on the heads of the Twelve or on him. In fact, Young initially wondered if the prophet had taken the keys of authority with him. "I had no more idea of [the mantle] falling upon me than of the most unlikely thing in the world," he later told family members.³⁰

Equipped with a well-honed mind, however, Young became convinced en route to Nauvoo from Boston "by the visions of the Spirit," as he later told colleagues, that the Twelve constituted an interim church presidency from which a First Presidency eventually would arise.³¹ Yet Young told no one of his intuition on this matter for three years. "I knew then what I now know concerning the organization of the church," he retrospectively proclaimed, but "I revealed it to no living being, until the pioneers to this valley were returning to Winter Quarters. Br[other]. Wilford Woodruff was the first man I ever spoke to about it."³²

29. Thomas Bullock's report of the special afternoon meeting of 8 August 1844, General Minutes Collection, LDS archives.

30. Manuscript minutes of Brigham Young sermon "on the occasion of a family meeting, held at his residence," 25 Dec. 1857, Brigham Young Collection.

31. Miscellaneous Minutes, 12 Feb. 1849, Brigham Young Collection.

32. Journal History, 7 Oct. 1860. Woodruff confirmed in his 12 Oct. 1847 diary: "I had A question put to me by President Young what my opinion was concerning one of the Twelve Apostles being appointed as the President of the Church with his two Councillors. I answered that A quorum like the Twelve who had been appointed by revelation & confirmed by revelation from time to time I thought it would require A revelation to change the order of that Quorum" (Kenney, 3:283).

Woodruff also recorded another of Brigham Young's references to this matter in his 28 July 1860 diary entry:

When I met with the Saints in Nauvoo at the first meeting after Joseph[']s death in defending the true organization against Sidney Rigdon I had it in my mind all the time that there would have to be a Presidency of three Appointed but I knew the people Could not bear it at the time and on our return as the pioneers from the valley I Broached the subject first to Brother Woodruff and afterwards to the rest of the Quorum. They received it & finally sustained it (Kenney, 5:478).

While the official reorganization of the First Presidency may not have taken place until 1847, the manuscript minutes of 7 April 1845 general conference show that Brigham Young was unanimously voted on and sustained as "the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to this Church and nation, and all nations, and also as the President of the whole Church of Latter Day Saints."

By 8 August 1844 the stage was set for a Rigdon-versus-Young morality play, an ecclesiastical contest in which the winner could claim the primary position of Mormon power. Although these happenings constitute one of Mormonism's most pivotal shifts of leadership, considerable confusion surrounds the day's events. Much of the retrospective disarray arises from the fact that two public gatherings were held that day. Many commentators have either assumed that the alleged "transfiguration of Brigham Young" occurred in the afternoon meeting or have combined both meetings into a single narrative.

Several sets of minutes of the afternoon meeting, each in the hand of a different scribe, make it clear that they saw no mystical occurrence during that gathering. Furthermore, virtually all retrospective accounts mention that Young was "transfigured" when he began to speak after Rigdon had spoken. Rigdon only addressed the congregation in the morning session, he did not speak in the afternoon. While minutes of the morning gathering do exist, in stenographer Thomas Bullock's shorthand, they have never been transcribed. By order of the current LDS Quorum of the Twelve Apostles they remain unavailable "for public scrutiny."³³ Nevertheless, several other accounts of the morning's events survive.

By 10:00 a.m. more than 5,000 Saints had gathered at the grove east of the temple in response to William Marks's announcement. As Rigdon began speaking, a strong headwind muted his voice, so he relocated to the leeward side and climbed on top of a wagon box. From that spot he addressed the Saints until 11:30 a.m. While some have painted Rigdon's discourse as uninspired, others, including Orson Hyde, a longtime Rigdon critic, said he presented "his claims with all the eloquence and power that he was master of."³⁴

Despite assurances that the convocation was nothing more than a prayer meeting, Rigdon labored to gain a show of support from the throng of LDS faithful. Hyde reported that Rigdon was just "about to ask an expression of the people by vote; when lo! to his grief and mortification, [Brigham Young] stepped upon the stand . . . and with a word stayed all the proceedings of Mr. Rigdon."³⁵ Young, recalling the event in 1860, stated: "when I went to meet Sidney Rigdon on the meeting ground I went alone, and was ready alone to face and drive the dogs from the flock."³⁶

Jacob Hamblin's recollection of the morning of 8 August indicates that Young's booming voice and stunning display of brinkmanship caused the audience to turn in their seats and face his commanding

33. Watson to Van Wagoner.

34. Hyde, 13.

35. Ibid.

36. Journal History, 6 Oct. 1860.

presence on the stand. "I will manage this voting for Elder Rigdon," he bellowed. "He does not preside here. This child [meaning himself] will manage this flock for a season."³⁷ Tactically, he then dismissed the meeting, allowing time for Rigdon's rhetoric to dissipate, and announced a special assembly for 2:00 p.m. Wilford Woodruff's diary records, under the same date: "The[re] was a meeting appointed at the grove for the Church to come together for Prayers. But in consequence of some excitement among the People and a dispositions by some spirits to try to divide the Church, it was thought best to attend to the business of the Church in the afternoon that was to be attended to on Tuesday."³⁸

The afternoon meeting was organized like a solemn assembly with various leaders appropriately ordering their quorums. After prayer, Brigham Young stood before the people. It was a momentous occasion. For the first and only time in Mormon history church leadership was about to be determined by the will of the people. Brother Brigham, who possessed a mean-weather-eye for prevailing winds from the masses, catered to the majority who had grown accustomed to being told what to do. While Rigdon had been spouting wild Armageddon rhetoric during the previous week, Young perceived that the Saints "like children without a father, and sheep without a shepherd," mostly wanted comfort.³⁹ Lonely and bereaved, more than a third of the Mormon faithful were middle- and working-class British immigrants, converted by Young and his fellow apostles. These new arrivals, conditioned from their earliest years, were used to working under the direct guidance of a master's hand in their homeland. Young saw their dependency, their inability to provide for their own emotional and economic sustenance. Accustomed to following directions from Joseph Smith, and scarcely familiar with Rigdon who had been ill for years, being instructed what to do by Brigham Young was a relief.

Fully confident, tossing off platitudes and pronouncements, Young's afternoon address on 8 August was a remarkable assertion of the Twelve's right to govern as well as his personal claim to be shepherd of the Mormon flock. "For the first time since [I] became a member of the church," Young began, "the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb, chosen by revelation, in this last dispensation of the gospel for the winding up scene, present themselves before the saints, to stand in their lot according to ap-

37. Cited in James A. Little, *Jacob Hamblin* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), 20-21.

38. Kenney, 2:434-35.

39. *Journal History*, 8 Aug. 1844. This state of normlessness, of not knowing how to act in new or confusing situations, is called anomie by social scientists (see William Kornblum, *Sociology in a Changing World*, 3rd ed. [Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994], 257).

pointment."⁴⁰ After explaining "matters so satisfactorily that every saint could see that Elijah's mantle had truly fallen upon the 'Twelve,'" wrote a reporter in the 2 September 1844 *Times and Seasons*, Young, ever the strategist, then asked, "I now want to ask each of you to tell me if you want to choose a guardian, a Prophet, evangelist or sumthing els[e] as your head to lead you. All that are in favor of it make it manifest by raising the right hand." No one did.⁴¹

Assuming the authoritarian Mormon father role he filled so well, Young then responded, "I know your feelings—do you want me to tell your feelings?" Responding to murmurs and assenting nods of the compliant flock he continued:

[H]ere [is] the 12 an independ[en]t body—who have the Keys of the K[ingdom] to all the whole world so help me God[, and] the[y] are, as the 1st pres[iden]cy of the church. . . . [Y]ou can[']t call a Prophet you can[']t take El[der] Rig[don] or Amas[a] Lyman they must be ord[aine]d by the 12. . . . God will have nothing to do with you—you can[']t put any one at the head of the 12.⁴²

"Perhaps some think that our beloved brother Rigdon would not be honored, would not be looked to as a friend, but if he does right, and remains faithful, he will not act against our counsel, nor we against his, but act together, and we shall be as one."⁴³ "Do you want a spokesman?" Young then asked. "Do you want the church properly organized, or do you want a spokesman to be chief cook and bottle washer?"

Discussing Rigdon's calling as spokesman to the prophet, Young agreed, "Very well, he was." But he added, "If he wants now to be a spokesman to the Prophet he must go to the other side of the veil for the Prophet is there, but Elder Rigdon is here. Why will Elder Rigdon be a fool? Who knows anything of the [fulness of the] priesthood, or of the organization of the kingdom of God? [the Council of Fifty]. I am plain."⁴⁴ As the meeting progressed, the sentiment which had so recently changed in favor of the Twelve became palpable. When Amasa Lyman took the

40. *Times and Seasons* 5 (2 Sept. 1844): 637. While my narration generally follows the 8 August 1844 Journal History account, which for the most part fleshes out Thomas Bullock's 8 August p.m. minutes (General Minutes Collection), other important references are Wilford Woodruff's diary account (Kenney, 2:434-40); Brigham Young diary entry for 8 August 1844; William Clayton diary entry for 8 August 1844, in George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in Association with Smith Research Associates, 1991), 142; and HC, 7:231-42.

41. 8 Aug. 1844 p.m. minutes in unknown scribe's hand (General Minutes Collection).

42. Ibid.

43. Journal History, 8 Aug. 1844.

44. Ibid.

stand to speak, he placed himself in Young's amen corner.

Shaken by the effect of Young's words upon the audience, the usually loquacious Rigdon declined to speak when afforded rebuttal opportunities. Considering Rigdon's rhetorical proclivities, his decision seems tantamount to conceding defeat. His face buried in his hands, the infirm Rigdon requested an old Missouri nemesis, W. W. Phelps, to champion his cause. The cagey editor, realizing that Rigdon's cause was lost, delivered an ardent affirmation of the Twelve's position.

After Parley P. Pratt addressed the crowd, Young again took the stand. Attesting that if men "abide our Council they will go right into the K[ingdom] . . . we have all the signs [and] the tokens to give to the Porter [and] he will let us in the qu[ay]," Young proposed a vote. "Do you want Bro. Rig[don] to stand forward as you[r] leader[,] your guide[,] your spokesman[?]"⁴⁵ Rigdon interrupted then, saying he "wanted him to bring up the other question first." So Young asked,

[does] this Ch[urch] want, [and is] their only desire to sust[ai]n the 12 as the 1st pres[iden]cy of this people[?] [H]ere [are] the A[postles], the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the doc[trine] [and] cov[enants] is here [and] here (head & heart) it is written on the tablet of my heart. . . . [I]f the Ch[urch] want the 12 to walk in to their call[ing], if this is your mind[,] signify it by the uplifted hand.

The vote, according to Young, was unanimous, which he announced "supercedes the other question."⁴⁶

Young then announced that "Rig[don] is . . . one with us—we want such men as Bro[ther] R[igdon] he has been sent away to build a K[ingdom] let him keep the instruct[i]o[n] [and] calling[,] let him raise up a k[ingdom] in Pittsburg [and] we will lift up his hand. I guess we[']ll have a printing office [and] gathering there." Wishing to support Rigdon in his calling as counselor, Young continued, "I feel to bring up Bro[ther] Rig[don] we are of one mind . . . will this con[gregation] uphold him in the place . . . [and] let him be one with us [and] we with him."⁴⁷ The voting was unanimous.

The leadership claim of the Twelve was beyond their February 1835 apostolic ordination, the March 1835 revelation that gave them authority equal to the First Presidency, and the July 1837 revelation that the Twelve

45. 8 Aug. 1844 p.m. minutes in Thomas Bullock's handwriting.

46. Ibid. William C. Staines Journal, cited in *HC*, 7:236, reported there were "a few dissenting voices." "History of William Adams, Wrote by himself January 1894," 15, adds that "out of that vast multitude about twenty voted for Rigdon to be Gardian" (Special Collections, BYU Library).

47. 8 Aug. 1844 p.m. minutes in Thomas Bullock's handwriting.

shared the keys of the kingdom with the First Presidency. Their assertion to "stand in their lot according to appointment," as Brigham had declared on 8 August, was based entirely on Joseph Smith's commission to them and others of the "keys of the kingdom" during a spring 1844 meeting of the Council of Fifty, the organization Young referred to on 8 August saying "if you let the 12 rem[ai]n the keys of the K[ingdom] are in them . . . we have an organ[izatio]n that you have not seen."⁴⁸

Orson Hyde commented on this 26 March 1844 empowerment, commonly called Joseph Smith's "last charge," in an 1869 address:

In one particular place, in the presence of about sixty men, [Joseph Smith] said, "My work is about done; I am going to step aside awhile. I am going to rest from my labors; for I have borne the [burden] and heat of the day, and now I am going to step aside and rest a little. And I roll the [burden] off my shoulders on the shoulders of the Twelve Apostles. 'Now,' said he, 'round up your shoulders and bear off this kingdom.'" Has he ever said this to any one else? I do not know; I do not care. It is enough for me to know that he said it to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.⁴⁹

Wilford Woodruff's account of this meeting quotes the prophet as saying: "I tell you the burden of this kingdom now rests upon your shoulders; you have got to bear it off in all the world, and if you don't do it you will be damned."⁵⁰ The most explicit statement on the charge, however, came from Benjamin F. Johnson, the youngest council member. He wrote that the prophet

Stood before that association of his Select Friends including all the Twelve and with great Feeling & Animation he graphically Reviewed his Life of Pers[e]cution Labor & Sacr[ifice] For the church & Kingdom of God—Both-of-Which—he d[e]clared were now organized upon the earth. The burden of which had become too great for him longer to carry. That he was weary & Tired with the weight he So long had bourn and he then Said with great Veh[e]mence "And in the name of . . . the Lord I now Shake from my Shoulders the Responsibilities of bearing off the Kingdom of God to all the world—and-here-& now I place that Responsibility with all the Keys Powrs & privilege pertaining there too upon the Shoulders of you the Twelve Apostles in Connection with this Council."⁵¹

48. Ibid.

49. *JD*, 13 (6 Oct. 1869): 180.

50. "Wilford Woodruff's Testimony on Priesthood and Presidency," delivered on 23 Feb. 1892, in *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 7 (16 Apr. 1910): 682.

51. Dean R. Zimmerman, *I Knew the Prophets, An Analysis of the Letter of Benjamin F. Johnson to George F. Gibbs, Reporting Doctrinal Views of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young* (Bountiful, UT: Horizon, 1976) 35.

The kingdom the prophet directed the Twelve to carry on their shoulders, however, was the political theocracy, the Kingdom of God, a shadow organization separate from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was this organization, best known as the Council of Fifty, not the Quorum of the Twelve, that the prophet intended to help relieve the responsibilities of administering the temporal and secular affairs of the church.

While the Mormon vote on 8 August 1844 called for stability and ecclesiastical continuity, some have interpreted the assembly's actions as affirming Young's role as Joseph Smith's prophetic successor. That this was not intended is clarified in an epistle from the Twelve published in the 15 August 1844 *Times and Seasons*. The circular announced: "You are now without a prophet present with you in the flesh to guide you. . . . Let no man presume for a moment that [Joseph Smith's] place will be filled by another; for, remember he stands in his own place, and always will."⁵²

The 2 September *Times and Seasons* also editorialized: "Great excitement prevails throughout the world to know 'who shall be the successor of Joseph Smith.'" The paper then admonished, "be patient, *be patient* a little, till the proper time comes, and we will tell you all. 'Great wheels move slow.' At present, we can say that a special conference of the church was held in Nauvoo on the 8th ult., and it was carried *without a dissenting voice*, that the 'Twelve' should preside over the whole church, and when any alteration in the presidency shall be required, seasonable notice will be given."⁵³

While no known contemporary record supports a supernatural occurrence on either the morning or afternoon of 8 August, over the years some have extemporized a surrealistic view of the day. In LDS phraseology the alleged transcendental morning experience is known as the "Transfiguration of Brigham Young" or the "Mantle of the Prophet Incident."⁵⁴ "When Brigham Young arose and addressed the people," wrote future apostle George Q. Cannon two decades later:

If Joseph had risen from the dead and again spoken in their hearing, the effect could not have been more startling than it was to many present at that meeting, it was the voice of Joseph himself; and not only was it the voice of Joseph which was heard, but it seemed in the eyes of the people as if it were the very person of Joseph which stood before them. A more wonderful and

52. *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 Aug. 1844): 618.

53. *Ibid.* 5 (2 Sept. 1844): 632.

54. This latter terminology likely evolved from a figurative or allegorical description such as the one in an anonymous letter published in the 15 October 1844 *Times and Seasons* (5:675). "Who can[']t see," began the communication, "that the mantle of the prophet has fallen on Pres. Young and the Twelve? The same spirit," continued the letter, "which inspired our beloved bro. Joseph Smith, now inspires Pres. Young."

miraculous event than was wrought that day in the presence of that congregation, we never heard of. The Lord gave His people a testimony that left no room for doubt as to who was the man chosen to lead them. They both saw and heard with their natural eyes and ears, and the words which were uttered came, accompanied by the convincing power of God, to their hearts, and they were filled with the Spirit and with great joy. There had been gloom, and in some hearts, probably, doubt and uncertainty, but now it was plain to all that here was the man upon whom the Lord had bestowed the necessary authority to act in their midst in Joseph's stead. On that occasion Brigham Young seemed to be transformed, and a change such as that we read of in the scriptures as happening to the Prophet Elisha, when Elijah was translated in his presence, seemed to have taken place with him. The mantle of the Prophet Joseph had been left for Brigham. . . . The people said one to another: "The spirit of Joseph rests on Brigham": they knew that he was the man chosen to lead them and they honored him accordingly.⁵⁵

D. Michael Quinn, foremost authority on the Mormon succession crisis of 1844, has discovered several early references which he cites as supporting a transfiguration incident. A 15 November 1844 letter from Henry and Catharine Brooke wrote that Young "favours Br Joseph, both in person, & manner of speaking more than any person every you saw, looks like another."⁵⁶ Five days later Azra Hinckley referred to "Brigham Young on [w]hom the mantle of the prophet Joseph has fal[l]en."⁵⁷ The May 1845 diary of William Burton (who died in 1851) noted that "[Joseph and Hyrum Smith's] places were filled by others much better than I once supposed they could have been," Burton wrote. "The spirit of Joseph appeared to rest upon Brigham."⁵⁸ Yet none of these references describe an explicit transfiguration, a physical metamorphosis of Brigham Young into the form and voice of Joseph Smith. The use of the phrase "spirit of Joseph" is merely elocutionary. Brigham Young, himself, used this same rhetorical form of expression during a 19 July 1857 address to the gathered Saints in Salt Lake City. Referring to the possibility of his own death, Young informed his listeners that "the spirit of Joseph which fell upon me is ready to fall upon somebody else when I am removed."⁵⁹

The earliest detailed accounts of a purported transfiguration did not

55. Kate B. Carter, comp., *Heart Throbs of the West* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1943), 4:420; see also Andrew Jensen, *The Historical Record*, Book 1:789-91, and *JD* 23 (29 Oct. 1882): 358.

56. Henry and Catharine Brooke to Leonard and Mary Pickel, 15 Nov. 1844, Leonard Pickel papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University, cited in D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 167.

57. Azra Hinckley diary, 20 Nov. 1844, Special Collections, BYU Library.

58. William Burton diary, May 1845, LDS archives.

59. "Remarks by President Brigham Young, made in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 19 July 1857," in *JD* 13 (19 July 1857): 57-58.

begin to surface until long after the Saints were settled in the Great Basin. The fact that no account was included in "Joseph Smith's History," completed in August 1856, or in *The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, completed before his 1857 death, suggests that the myth was not fully developed by this period. The first public reference to a "transfiguration" may have been a 19 July 1857 statement by Albert Carrington before a huge gathering of Saints that "he could not tell [Brigham Young] from Joseph Smith" when Young "was speaking in the stand in Nauvoo" during the 8 August 1844 convocation. "Somebody came along and passed a finger over his eyes," Brigham Young declared, "and he could not see any one but Joseph speaking, until I got through addressing the congregation."⁶⁰ Yet Young himself, while addressing the assembled Saints on the afternoon of 8 August 1844, confirmed that no chimerical experience had occurred that day. "For the first in the kingdom of God in the 19th century," he remarked, we are "without a Prophet at our head." Henceforth, he added, we are "called to walk by faith, *not by sight*."⁶¹

Retrospective retellings of a "transfiguration," in a variety of forms, can be found in dozens of sources, yet no two seem to agree on precise details.⁶² Elizabeth Haven Barlow, a cousin of Brigham Young, for example, wrote that her mother told her that "thousands in that assembly" saw Young "take on the form of Joseph Smith and heard his voice change

60. Ibid.

61. HC, 7:232; italics mine.

62. Anson Call, Salt Lake City School of the Prophets minutes, 26 Aug. 1871, LDS archives; Caroline Barnes Crosby, "Retrospective Memoirs Written in 1851," LDS archives; Homer Duncan Journal, LDS archives; Zadok Knapp Judd, "Reminiscence Written at Age Seventy-five," Utah Historical Society; Catharine Thomas Leishman Autobiography, LDS archives; George Morris Autobiography, Special Collections, BYU Library; John Riggs Murdock, in J. M. Tanner, *A Biographical Sketch of John Riggs Murdock* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), 71; Zera Pulsipher, in Terry and Nora Lund, comps., *The Pulsipher Family History Book* (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1953), 10-24; William Lampard Watkins Autobiography, LDS archives; Samuel Amos Woolley Autobiography, LDS archives; Eliza Westover, "2 July 1916 Letter to Her Son," LDS archives; Emily Smith Hoyt, "Reminiscences and Diaries (1851-1893)," LDS archives; Robert Taylor Burton, "Statement of 28 July 1905," LDS archives; Jacob Hamblin, in Pearson H. Corbett, *Jacob Hamblin—The Peacemaker* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1952), 22; "Wilford Woodruff's Testimony on Priesthood And Presidency—Delivered on 23 February 1892," in *Liahona The Elders' Journal* 7 (16 Apr. 1910): 683; "Wilford Woodruff Statement," in *Deseret News*, 15 Mar. 1892; *Journal History*, 9 Oct. 1867; Benjamin F. Johnson, in Zimmerman, 17; Robert T. Taylor, in Janet Burton Seegmiller, *The Life Story of Robert Taylor Burton* (Salt Lake City: Robert Taylor Burton Family Organization, 1988), 49; William C. Staines, in *The Contributor* 12 (1891): 315; William Van Orden Carbine, in Kate B. Carter, comp., *Our Pioneer Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1963), 6:203; Albert Clements, *ibid.*, 12:219; William L. Watkins, *ibid.*, 19:390-91; Talitha Cheney Autobiography, *ibid.*, 15:118-19; Ezra T. Benson, in John Henry Evans and Minnie Egan Anderson, *Ezra T. Benson—Pioneer, Statesman, Saint* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1947), 88-89; and "Typescript Account of Testimony of Bishop George Romney," by Mary R. Ross, LDS archives.

to that of the Prophet's."⁶³ Eliza Ann Perry Benson reminisced that the Saints arose "from their seats enmass" exclaiming "Joseph has come! He is here!"⁶⁴ While Eliza Ann Haven Westover, writing in 1918, remembered that "hundreds witnessed the [transfiguration], but not all that were there had that privilege."⁶⁵

John D. Lee, writing of 8 August 1844 events in his autobiography, said:

Sidney Rigdon was the first who appeared upon the stand. He had been considered rather in the back-ground for sometime previous to the death of the Prophet. He made but a weak claim. . . . Just then Brigham Young arose and roared like a young lion, imitating the style and voice of the Joseph, the Prophet. Many of the brethren declared that they saw the mantle of Joseph fall upon him. I myself, *at the time*, imagined that I saw and heard a strong resemblance to the Prophet in him, and felt that he was the man to lead us until Joseph's legal successor should grow up to manhood, when he should surrender the Presidency to the man who held the birthright.⁶⁶

Claim to the contrary, Lee could not have witnessed this. His personal diary makes it clear that he did not return to Nauvoo until 20 August, nearly two weeks later.⁶⁷

Apostle Orson Hyde, prone to exaggerate, particularly when attempting to undermine the succession claims of his archenemy Sidney Rigdon,⁶⁸ did not arrive in Nauvoo until 13 August.⁶⁹ Yet he left two elaborate personal reminiscences of a "transfiguration" he could not possibly have witnessed either. When Young began to speak that morning, Quorum of the Twelve president Hyde recalled in 1869, "his words went through me like electricity." This is my testimony, Hyde added for special emphasis, "it was not only the voice of Joseph Smith but there were the

63. "Autobiography of Six Pioneer Women," in Kate B. Carter, ed., *Our Pioneer Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1976), 19:327.

64. Donald Benson Alder and Elsie L. Alder, comp., *The Benson Family—The Ancestry and Descendants of Ezra T. Benson* (Salt Lake City: Ezra T. Benson Genealogical Society, Inc., 1979), 238.

65. Burton, 50.

66. John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled; including the Remarkable Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee* (St Louis: Scammell and Company, 1881), 155.

67. Cited in Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee: Zealot—Pioneer Builder—Scapegoat* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark, 1961), 62.

68. Although Rigdon was Hyde's mentor in both the Reformed Baptist Movement and Mormonism, he never forgave Rigdon for opposing his return to the church after his defection during the Missouri difficulties. Additional problems between the two also arose when Hyde's wife, Nancy, served as the go-between in Joseph Smith's attempted seduction of Rigdon's daughter Nancy. See Van Wagoner, 266, 282, 294-95, 320, 324, 354.

69. See Wilford Woodruff diary under date in Kenney, 2:441.

features, the gestures and even the stature of Joseph before us in the person of Brigham."⁷⁰

Eight years later Hyde declared in general conference that as soon as Young opened his mouth

I heard the voice of Joseph through him, and it was as familiar to me as the voice of my wife, the voice of my child, or the voice of my father. And not only the voice of Joseph did I distinctly and unmistakably hear, but I saw the very gestures of his person, the very features of his countenance, and if I mistake not, the very size of his person appeared on the stand. And it went through me with the thrill of conviction that Brigham was the man to lead this people. And from that day to the present there has not been a query or a doubt upon my mind with regard to the divinity of his appointment; I know that he was the man selected of God to fill the position he now holds.⁷¹

Wilford Woodruff, the foremost chronicler of early Mormon history, also left several first-hand accounts of a "transfiguration incident." His 8 August 1844 diary, however, makes it clear that he did not attend the morning meeting when both Young and Rigdon addressed the crowd. "The Twelve spent their time in the fore part of the day at the office," he wrote, and "in the afternoon met at the grove."⁷² Although Woodruff's recounting of the day consists of one of the longest, single-entry accounts in his voluminous diary, nearly 2,200 words, he makes no mention of anything miraculous.

One year later, in a letter to church members in Great Britain, Woodruff reported that during the 8 August 1844 special conference

we met in a special conference, all the quorums, authorities, and members of the Church, that could assemble in Nauvoo. They were addressed by elder Brigham Young, the president of the quorum of the twelve. It was evident to the Saints that the mantle of Joseph had fallen upon him, the road that he pointed out could be seen so plainly, that none need err therein; the spirit of wisdom and counsel attended all his teachings, he struck upon a chord, with

70. *JD* 13 (6 Oct. 1869): 181.

71. *Ibid.* 19 (5 Apr. 1877): 58. In 1860 Hyde also embellished his recall of the 1847 organization of the First Presidency. He said that he heard the voice of God declare: "Let my servant Brigham step forth and receive the full power of the presiding Priesthood in my Church and kingdom" (*JD* 8 [7 Oct. 1860]: 234). Yet when President Wilford Woodruff was asked during an 1894 meeting of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve if he observed any of the special manifestations described by Hyde in connection with the 1847 organization, he said he did "not remember any particular manifestations at the time of the organization of the Presidency" (Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 30 Aug. 1894, Special Collections, BYU Library).

72. *HC*, 2:435.

which all hearts beat in unison.⁷³

Yet by 1872 Woodruff, like many other Nauvoo Mormons, had begun to describe Brigham Young's 8 August 1844 manly defeat of Sidney Rigdon as something more arcane than a mere strategic conquest. "Every man and every woman in that assembly, which perhaps might number thousands," he declared, "could bear the same testimony. I was there, the Twelve were there, and a good many others, and all can bear the same testimony." Continuing with his expansive explanation of that long ago day, he asked the audience:

Why was the appearance of Joseph Smith given to Brigham Young? Because here was Sidney Rigdon and other men rising up and claiming to be the leaders of the Church, and men stood, as it were on a pivot, not knowing which way to turn. But just as quick as Brigham rose in that assembly, his face was that of Joseph Smith—the mantle of Joseph had fallen upon him, the power of God that was upon Joseph Smith was upon him, he had the voice of Joseph, and it was the voice of the shepherd. There was not a person in that assembly, Rigdon, himself, not excepted, but was satisfied in his own mind that Brigham was the proper leader of the people, for he [Rigdon] would not have his name presented, by his own consent, after that sermon was delivered. There was a reason for this in the mind of God; it convinced the people. They saw and heard for themselves, and it was by the power of God.⁷⁴

Twenty years later, while again discussing the 1844 war of words between Young and Rigdon, Woodruff was cited as saying:

I do not know if there was any one present here tonight but myself who was there at that [8 August 1844] conference. There are but few living who were present on that occasion. . . and when Brigham arose and commenced speaking, as has been said, if my eyes had not been so I could see, if I had not seen him with my own eyes, there is no one that could have convinced me that it was not Joseph Smith speaking. It was with the voice and face of Joseph Smith; and many can testify to this who was acquainted with the two men.⁷⁵

While all transfiguration anecdotes, like the Lee, Hyde, and Woodruff narratives, are belated recountings, a George Laub diary refer-

73. "To the [Church] Officers and Members," in *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Feb. 1845.

74. *JD* 15 (8 Apr. 1872): 81.

75. *Deseret News*, 12 Mar. 1892.

ence was thought by many, until recently, to have been written in 1846. "Now when President Young arose to address the congregation," Laub's account begins, "his voice was the voice of Bro. Joseph and his face appeared as Joseph's face & Should I not have seen his face but heard his voice I should have declared that it was Joseph." This small tan-colored leather diary, which has misled many scholars, has now been determined to be a copy of the original by Laub himself, with additions.⁷⁶

76. The tan-colored copy, incorrectly thought to be the original diary, was published in its entirety by Eugene England, ed., "George Laub's Nauvoo Journal," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Winter 1977): 151-78. Whereas the original maroon-colored diary is written in a variety of inks, as one would expect in a multi-year diary, the copy is written in only two inks (copy, 1-43, a dark ink; 44-139, a lighter ink). Extensive family genealogy is also included on the inside covers of the original diary. Not so with the copy. The lighter ink used in the copy is also evident after p. 195 in the original. This reflects Laub's first entry in Deseret (Utah). Whereas he did not arrive in Utah territory until 25 August 1852 (original, 266), the copy was likely made after this date. The 25 August entry is a retrospective one, for he notes on 1 March 1857, "this day I commenced my daily Journal." Laub's insertion in the original (139, not 140 as England noted), "here ends the transfer of the first," is in the same light ink as the copy, leaving no doubt as to which is the original.

Laub's treatment of Rigdon is considerably more negative in the copied diary and more positive regarding Brigham Young, reflecting a retrospective change of heart. For example, when Joseph Smith accused Rigdon of conspiring to turn him over to Missouri officials in October 1843, Laub's original diary reports Rigdon as saying:

If president Smith will have me no longer for his Spokesman I will give him the parting hand of friendship and he wept upon which President Smith arose up [im]mediatly and gave him the Parting hand. . . . But the People having mercy upon him after Hyrum Smith plead for mercy for him and the voice of the people was in his favour (original, 155).

Furthermore, the copy has been modified to read much like the similar revisions made by Quorum of the Twelve historians to disparage Rigdon:

Joseph told us he did not want [Rigdon] for his councilor any further, that if the people put him there they might. But he said I will Shake him off. He Shook him Self and Shook hands on them words with Rigdon. . . . But the mercy pleading for Rigdon by Bro Hyrum Smith the patriarch Softened the hearts of the people, so they put him in again by their Voice. But Joseph never acknowledged him any further. Yet Rigdon was weeping & pleading. But Joseph Said he cursed god in the Misouri troubles (England, 159).

The most important alteration made by Laub in his copied diary was the addition of two paragraphs which do *not* appear in the original. This insertion led England and others to believe the entry was the "earliest account of the 1844 'transfiguration' of Brigham Young when he was given the Prophet's 'mantle' of authority" (England, 151).

Additional evidence supporting the authenticity of the original diary is that at the exact spot where the "transfiguration" insertion is made in the copy, a + mark is made in the light-colored ink of the copied diary. The original diary at this point reads:

The original diary, which also exists, contains no reference to a transfiguration of Brigham Young.

When 8 August 1844 is stripped of emotional overlay, there is not a shred of irrefutable contemporary evidence to support the occurrence of a mystical event either in the morning or afternoon gatherings of that day. A more likely scenario was that it was the force of Young's commanding presence, his well-timed arrival at the morning meeting, and perhaps a bit of theatrical mimicry⁷⁷ that swayed the crowd rather than a

Now after the Death of Jos & Hyrum[,] Rigdon came from Pittsburgh. (Because Jos. had sent him there to get him out of his way as Rigdon Desired to goe) to clame the presidency of the church to lead the church[.] But as the lord would have his servant Brigham Young the President of the Twelve to come just in time to tell the people who was the fals sheperd or who was the good shepard and Rigdon soon quaked and trembled and these things which he declared the day before to be revelations was then think [so's] and gess [so's] and hoap so and his words fell to the ground because they was Lies from the beginning to the End (original, 115).

The copied diary at this point has been profoundly altered by Laub to reflect the retrospective image of the "transfiguration" that began to evolve in Utah folklore in the late 1850s:

Now after the death of Br. Joseph & Hyrum[,] Rigdon having A mission appointed him by Joseph to Pittsburg before his death. Now after his death Sidney came in all the hast[e] in him to Nauvoo from Pittsburgh to claime the presidency of the church, him not knowing that Joseph Sent him out of the way to get r[i]d of him. Now when he returned to Nauvoo he called all the people to gether to choos them a guardian, as he Expressed himself. Now, Said he, the Church is 14 years old and it was the duty of the church to choose a guardien & preached there for Two days on that subject of guardianism & the Lords ways was not as mans ways. But as the heavens are hier than the earth So are the Lords ways above mans ways, etc. Just about the time that the Vote was to be taken for him to be president & guardien, But as the Lord would have the Twelve to come home & I felt to praise God to See Bro Brigham Young walk upon the stand then. Thes positive Revelations of Rigdon's ware only guess So & he thinks So & hoap so, while the lord had told him how to proseed before according to his [own] mouth & afterwards only Suposed them so.

Now when President Young arose to address the congregation his Voice was the Voice of Bro. Joseph and his face appeared as Joseph's face, & Should I not have seen his face but herd his Voice I Should have declared that it was Joseph. Now he arose and commenced Speaking, Saying I would rather have m[o]rned forty days then to come here, & if Rigdon was the Legal heir to lead the Church why did he not Stop to Pittsburg till we came and accompanied him as I had wrote to him. But he was afraid that he could not kerry out his designes & conspericy underhanded, etc. Emedietely Rigdons followers armed them with the wepons of death & with the Brandy Jug So that they might have their Spirits of their calling (England, 166).

77. Orson Hyde, in 1869 comments, raised the issue of Brigham Young sounding like Joseph Smith on 8 August 1844 by noting that "President Young is a complete *mimic*, and can mimic anybody," although he added, "I would like to see the man who can mimic another *in stature* who was about *four or five inches higher than himself*" (JD 13 [6 Oct. 1869]: 181), emphasis in original.

metaphysical transfiguration of his physical body. Mormon Bishop George Miller, present at the gathering, later recalled that nothing supernatural had occurred on that day. Young made a "long and loud harangue," Miller later wrote, for which I "could not see any point in the course of his remarks than to overturn Sidney Rigdon's pretensions."⁷⁸

Rigdon himself, in an 6 December 1870 letter to Brigham Young, accused his former sparring partner of duplicity in encouraging transfiguration anecdotes to propagate:

O vain man. . . . Did you suppose that your hypocritical and lying preten[s]e that the spirit of Joseph Smith had [e]ntered into you, was going to prevail with God and man. You knew you lied when you made that preten[s]e. Your ignorance was such that you did not know that there were those living who knew that there never was[,] is[,] nor will be[,] such a metamorphosis on this earth as you wickedly, heaven enduringly pretended had taken place with you.⁷⁹

Apostles Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, and Wilford Woodruff, all of whom made 8 August 1844 entries in their diaries, make no reference to an epiphany. Such an event, had it truly transpired, would have stood at the apogee of world history, a physical metamorphosis unsurpassed except for the transfiguration and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Yet neither the *Times and Seasons* nor the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, local newspapers owned by the church, mention such a wonder. Neither do the 1844 and 1845 accounts of Jedediah Grant and Orson Hyde, specifically written to refute Sidney Rigdon's robust challenge to the Quorum of Twelve's succession claims.

The most damning evidence to claims of a transfiguration is the fact that on 8 August 1844 the congregation sustained a committee rather than an individual to run the church. They confirmed the collective Quorum of the Twelve as their presiding authority. Furthermore, Young's ascent to the presidency was no ceremonial stroll, as could be expected if something as phenomenal as a transfiguration occurred. His emergence as the dominant, uncontested Mormon guiding force was not complete until late 1847, after the pioneer trek west. Even then there was substantial opposition to Brigham setting himself apart from his brethren. Orson Hyde, who would succeed Young as quorum president, later said: "Did it require argument to prove that brother Brigham Young held the position

78. *Correspondence of Bishop George Miller with the Northern Islander From His Acquaintance with Mormonism Up to Near the Close of His Life, 1855* (Burlington, WI: W. Watson, 1916), 20-21.

79. An undated copy is in the Stephen Post Collection, box 1, folder 1, LDS archives; and also is listed as Section 61 in Copying Book A. The mailed letter to Young is in the Brigham Young Collection (Box 42, fd. 2, reel 73).

of Joseph, the martyred Prophet? Did it require proof that Joseph was there in the person of Brigham, speaking with an angel's voice? It required no argument; with those who feared God and loved truth, it required none."⁸⁰

This observation was not accurate, however. Considerable opposition to Brigham Young establishing a First Presidency is evident in original, unaltered accounts. Particularly outspoken were Wilford Woodruff, Orson Pratt, and to a lesser degree John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt, George A. Smith, and Amasa Lyman. The number of meetings on the topic is ample proof of contention. Woodruff told Young on 12 October 1847 that he felt it "would require [a] revelation to change the order of that Quorum."⁸¹ Six weeks later Woodruff, again objecting to Young's formation of a First Presidency, said that if three were taken out of the Twelve it seemed like "severing the body in 2." Furthermore, if the Quorum of the Twelve surrendered its power "unto [three]," he added, "I sho[ul]d be totally opposed to it." Pratt's viewpoint was that the "head of the church consists of the Apostleship united together."⁸² The matter was not resolved until a lengthy, emotional-filled meeting of the quorum on 5 December 1847.⁸³

The paramount dilemma with retrospective transfiguration recountings is why so many otherwise honorable, pious people recalled experiencing something they probably did not. A rational and likely explanation for this faulty group memory is that a "contagious" thought can spread through the populace to create a "collective mind." This phenomenon is what social scientists call *contagion theory* or *scenario fulfillment*, whereby one sees what one expects, especially belatedly. Memory is more than direct recollection. It springs from tales harbored in the common fund which may then effect a re-shaping of a community's sense of itself. Joseph Smith had truly ushered in an age of miracles and wonder. Every streaking meteor in the heavens seemed to portend marvels for the Mormon masses.

Brigham Young, although not as charismatic as Joseph Smith, was certainly more pragmatic. However, Mormonism was founded on pro-

80. *JD* 13 (6 Oct. 1869): 181.

81. Kenney, 3:283.

82. 5 Dec. 1847, *Miscellaneous Minutes*, Brigham Young Collection, ms. 1234, box 47, fd. 4.

83. "Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles," under date, LDS archives. Although neither Wilford Woodruff's diary nor the official minutes mention anything unusual about the 5 December meeting, Brigham Young and Orson Hyde would later claim a supernatural occurrence on this day also. Young in April 1860 told the quorum: "At O. Hyde's the power came upon us, a shock that alarmed the neighborhood" ("Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 4 April 1860," LDS archives). Hyde expanded on that at the October conference by affirming that the apostles organized the First Presidency because the voice of God declared: "Let my servant Brigham step forth and receive the full power of the presiding Priesthood in my Church and kingdom" (*JD* 8:223-24).

phetic allure. And viewed in the vague afterlight of the Utah period the fact that Brigham Young had simply bested Sidney Rigdon in Nauvoo, toe to toe, man to man, was not enchanting enough to nurture and sustain the cohesive post-martyrdom Mormon psyche. A mystical stamp of God's approval or faith-promoting myth was necessary. Young had to be set apart from the masses, even from the Twelve itself, by a wondrous miracle. Nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints in a rather classic example of spontaneous collective behavior⁸⁴ began to interpret as miraculous what in 1844 had simply been a turf battle and a changing of the guard. What is clear is that this pious folklore, by the force of iteration and re-iteration, thrives in present-day Mormondom.

Fables can be useful to a culture. Who can deny that Santa Claus makes Christmas more memorable to the child in us all. And what a wonderful tale of George Washington and the cherry tree did Mason Locke Weems weave out of whole cloth not "to give information about George Washington but to suggest virtuous conduct to young Americans."⁸⁵ In religious matters, however, folk tales equated with reality can ultimately destroy conviction when unmasked. Latter-day Saints who base their faith on such irresolute stories as Paul H. Dunn's allegories⁸⁶ or the "Transfiguration of Brigham Young," when faced with evidence that their belief system seems to rest on sources that are dubious at best or duplicitous at worst, may conclude as Elder Brigham H. Roberts once warned "that since these things are myth and our Church has permitted them to be perpetuated . . . might not the other fundamentals to the actual story of the Church, the things in which it had its origin, might they not all be lies and nothing but lies." Answering his own compelling question, Roberts responded, "I find my own heart strengthened in the truth by getting rid of the untruth, the spectacular, the bizarre, as soon as I learn that it is based upon worthless testimony."⁸⁷ That advice, like a spectral voice of reason from the past, remains as sound today as it did six decades ago.

84. For a treatment of collective behavior and mass publics, see Kornblum, 243-71. Another example of controversial Mormon collective behavior in the 1840s and early 1850s was the group denial of the polygamy many of them were secretly practicing but adamantly denying until 1852.

85. A. B. Hart, *American Historical Review* 15 (1910): 242, cited in Robin W. Winks, ed., *The Historian as Detective* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 183.

86. Elder Dunn, who based his career on relating faith-promoting allegories about his own exaggerated personal accomplishments, is now a general authority emeritus. See Lynn Packer, "Paul H. Dunn: Fields of Dreams," *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 35-44; "Elder Dunn Apologizes For Inaccuracies," *Sunstone* 15 (Nov. 1991): 60.

87. Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 363.

Fall Weekend at Rehoboth Beach

Peter Richardson

Out along the shore the sky is wide.
Ducks fly, drafting like cyclists in Central Park
but unfettered, their path dictated only by season, instinct,
and windshifts. Below with me
sandpipers, like children, stand in groups, then motor around
on fast-twitch legs to peck for insects.

A one-legged sandpiper
keeps up with the others, hop-walking in his own way.

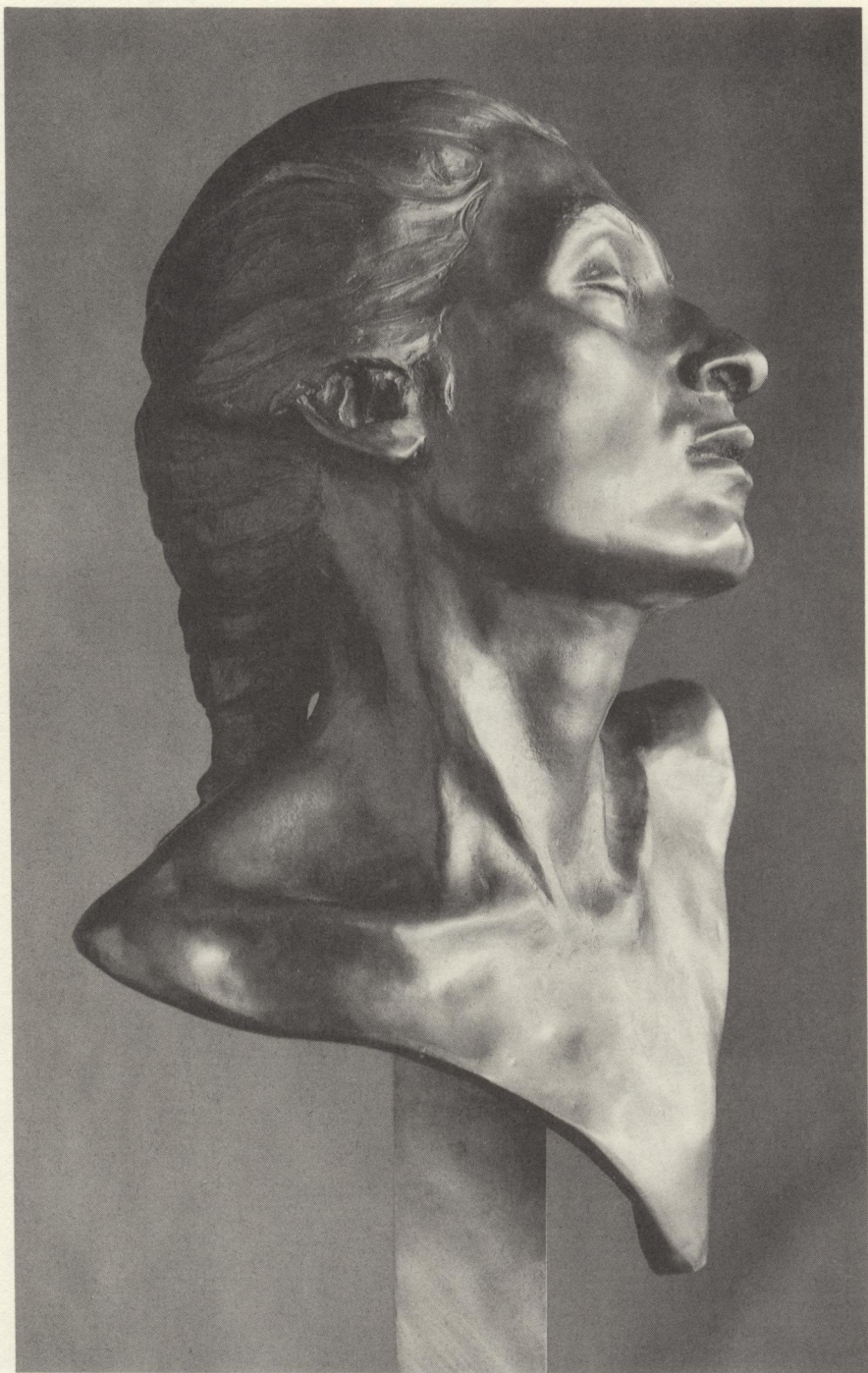
As a group, the small birds elevate off the ground, fly a length
fast and efficient, then land, stand, and walk.
Even the one-legger seems to prefer to walk.
I step on a clam shell, pick it up, and frisbee it into the surf.
I notice a dark shard of glass jutting toward me

and walk past on the smooth part of the sand,
slightly crusted from an earlier, higher tide.

Once I walked on Broadway like this, no shoes,
and Cather's Ivar came to mind:
We are to subdue our passions.
We have directives about our hands and heart, eyes and tongue,

but with our feet we feel the earth.

We step in shit or glass
and then wash, or scab over, and walk again.



A Passage Back

Becky Fogg

WHILE WE WAITED FOR THE SCHOOL BUS, my little brother grabbed my arm and said, "Becky, those kids are calling me 'Monkey Head' again." I had to admit to myself he did look . . . well . . . different. Because of the chemotherapy his hair was thinning and his cheeks were getting chubby. His ears stuck out and, of course, the school kids thought it was funny. But I didn't understand how they could be so mean to someone with leukemia.

I turned to the group of kids who were laughing and jeering. "Stop it," I said. "You guys are not being nice." I could feel Greg clinging on to my back pack. It wasn't fair. No one understood. Although I was just in the second grade—two years older than my brother Greg—he looked to me for protection, and I stood firm. "Don't!" I said again, this time louder.

"You look like a monkey!" the red head said.

I hated her.

Greg and I were buddies. Being at the tail end of a large family of seven, we were often left alone to play with each other while everyone else was busy being grown up. We had our secret hiding places and our private passwords—"Kermit" and "Miss Piggy"—to get into the fort. At times we would trespass over to the neighbor's yard and throw mud at passing cars. When the cars screeched to a stop, we would run back into the trees and find our secret passage back to safety. We watched out for each other and kept each other's secrets, and sometimes I wondered if we could communicate without even talking. I could just look at him and know his feelings. I loved all my brothers and sisters, but with Greg it was different: I was proud of him; he was my little brother; he was a part of me; it was us, together, inseparable.

The kids at the bus stop wouldn't quit. "Monkey, Monkey," they said. They were jumping around scratching their armpits and yelling as though they were in a jungle. I looked at Greg and saw tears welling up in his eyes. I could feel my face getting hot and my body bigger and bigger. Finally, I snapped. I ran over and landed my fist into the face of

the biggest boy. Then all the noise stopped. Greg was startled, and once I noticed what I had done, I panicked and ran back next to him. He started laughing through his tears.

"Sshh!" I said. "Greg, don't laugh!" I waited for the big boy to do something, but he didn't. He just picked up his back pack and got in line and we all waited for the bus quietly. By lunch time everyone knew: Don't mess with Becky's little brother.

"Come on kids," Mom called down the hallway. "Get in the car. Greg has an appointment with Dr. Medrano in ten minutes."

"I don't want to go," Greg said to me softly.

"Why?" I asked. I knew Dr. Medrano was his favorite doctor. Such a nice man. He always did Greg's finger pricks fast so they wouldn't hurt, and then we would all get a treat afterwards.

"I just don't," Greg said. He traced the carpet patterns with his Hot Wheels racer. Mom called again. "Kids . . ."

"No," he yelled back. "I'm not going!" He threw his car and ran to the toy closet, shutting himself in. Mom came into the playroom confused. I shrugged and pointed to the closet. She sighed, went over to the closet, and spoke softly to Greg.

"Come on," Mom said. "Dr. Medrano is expecting us today. Honey, we can't be late. Please come out, dear." She waited but we didn't hear a thing. Mom spoke through the crack in the door: "How about if we stop by the toy store on the way home?" After a few seconds the closet door opened, and Greg headed for the garage; Mom followed, and I was close behind.

Sometimes I resented Greg for his manipulative powers. I didn't know why after every doctor's appointment we had to go to the toy store so he could pick out another Transformer or Hot Wheels. Big deal. Sometimes I even wished I was sick.

Because of Greg's illness, I soon learned all the vocabulary that goes along with leukemia: chemotherapy, prednisone, remission, relapse, red blood count, platelets, transplant, bone marrow, spinal tap, finger prick—and hell. After Greg was first diagnosed at the age of three, he was taken to Long Beach hospital for his first few treatments. Mom and Dad went with him, and some of the older kids visited on the weekend. But I was stuck home—two weeks without my buddy Greg. Everyone at school wanted to know where he was. I really didn't even know.

After a year of spinal taps and finger pricks at Dr. Medrano's, Greg went into remission. "It's as good as cured," Mom explained to the family. "There aren't any bad blood cells in Greg's body now. Although the bad cells could come back, we have a really good chance that they

won't." I thought I understood: Greg was okay, but we still had to pray for him, just in case.

At Christmas time Mom was in charge of the ward Christmas show. She prided herself on the musical ability of our family. She had taught us all how to sing—even harmonize—as early as the age of three. A typical family night began with Mom at the grand piano, all seven children seated around her with Dad at her shoulder. My favorite song was, "Hey Everybody, It's Family Night!" We would sing every verse and Greg and I even put actions to the words. The table in the middle of the room turned into a stage, and Greg and I would perform. The highlight of the upcoming Christmas program was sure to be Greg's number. Everyone in the ward adored him. He was only four but was more charming than a prince himself.

On the day of the big program Greg was dressed in a black tuxedo with a red vest and a green bow tie. His four-year-old voice started off softly, and his hands were clasped behind his back.

"I'm gettin' nuttin' 'for Christmas, Mommy and Daddy are mad. I'm gettin' nuttin' 'for Christmas. Cuz I ain't been nuttin, but bad."

"Come on Greg!" I called out. I stood off the side of the stage behind the curtains. "You can do it!"

The crowd laughed and it seemed to energize his performance. Greg realized that everyone loved him; he was the star and he began belting out the words.

"I put a tack on teacher's chair, somebody snitched on me. Spilled some ink on Mommy's rug, I made Becky eat a bug."

He looked over to me, emphasized my name, and chuckled as he finished.

"Bought some gum with a penny slug, somebody snitched on me. Oh, I 'm gettin' nuttin' 'for Christmas . . ."

The music ended and Greg took a bow. Everyone applauded while he kept bowing—and bowing and bowing. My turn was next. Mom looked to me from the piano and motioned me to come on stage for my solo. I pointed to Greg who was still bowing and throwing kisses.

"Greg!" I whispered sharply. "It's my turn." He kept bowing. My mother stood up and went to offer her hand to help him down off the stage. He saw her and ran to the other side of the stage, the audience now exploding with laughter.

I could hear my mother, "Greg, get off the stage now." She was stern and—I could tell by her voice—frustrated with her four-year-old show-off. As he moved closer toward my end of the stage, I grabbed his arm and pulled him off.

I didn't want to perform in the Christmas program anymore. Greg

had already stolen the show.

Our family tried to live normally through months of chemotherapy; sometimes it seemed as if the whole family had the disease. Greg was sometimes moody and other times happy. The joys of medication. We were just glad he was in remission. Then, at the age of seven, I contracted chicken pox. This posed a major problem. Greg's immune system was still not functioning to its full strength. If he contracted chicken pox, it wouldn't be just a normal case; it could become so severe it would take his life. I had to move out for five weeks, roaming from friends to family to friends, finding a bed to sleep in every night—but it was never my own. After the worst part of my illness had subsided, I pleaded with my mom to let me come home. She said that I had to have fewer than ten chicken pox scabs. I waited and watched each little sore turn into scab and heal, anticipating the day I would reach the goal of "fewer than ten."

Twelve.

Eleven.

Ten.

Nine!

It finally came.

Mom answered the door and caught me by the arm as I ran past her. "Becky," she said, "don't go too close to Greg. It still might be dangerous." Mom's tone was firm. I nodded. I understood but was disappointed. I walked around the corner and saw Greg watching TV.

"Becky!" Greg called out jumping up from the couch and running to me. He opened his arms to give me a hug.

"No! Don't!" I said backing away. I was afraid of killing him. "Mom told me I can't touch you." I put my hands up and stepped behind a chair. Greg stopped and looked at me. His face turned to the floor and he fell on the rocking chair crying. "I'm really sorry," I said, as I ran down the hall to my room. I didn't want him to see my tears; I had to be strong.

It was Halloween morning and Greg was going to be Dracula. Kind of ironic for a kid with blood cancer. Mom made our costumes: a long black cape for Greg, a bunny suit for me, and a princess gown for my sister. Everyone else in the family was too old to trick or treat.

"Greg," Mom said, "we have an appointment with Dr. Medrano this morning." He still needed monthly check-ups. They left for his appointment, and I finished ironing Dracula's cape.

That night Mom put make-up on Greg—scary dark eyes and blood dripping from his mouth. I had fake bunny teeth, and my sister got to wear blue eye shadow.

"Cheryl," Dad said to Mom as he stepped into the room. "You need

to get on the phone." His voice sounded tense, and I looked at my mother anxiously. She picked up the phone by her bed. "No, dear," Dad said, "the phone in the study." Mom left the room and I looked at Greg. He shrugged and turned to the mirror to admire his face.

With our parents gone, Dracula and the fuzzy white bunny lit candles and put out bowls of goodies for any trick or treaters coming our way. As we grew bored of our costumes, we went and watched the Halloween specials on TV, waiting for Mom and Dad to come out of the study. I saw Mom walk out of the study with Dad's arms encircled around her. They went straight to their bedroom; no one noticed but me. I got up and walked down the hallway, where I could hear Mom sobbing. I knocked.

Dad answered the door.

"Where is Mom?" I said.

"Come in, honey," Mom said, inviting me to sit on her lap. I was worried, and I stared at her hands as she explained what had happened. "Gregory has relapsed," She said. "This means he has leukemia again. But this time, it has come back worse." She hugged me tighter, and I didn't know what to do. Dad had gathered the rest of the family, everyone except Greg; he was still watching cartoons. "We are not going to tell Greg tonight," my mother continued. "I don't want to wreck his Halloween. I want him to have one last night of being a normal child."

The chemotherapy started up again; Greg's cheeks regained their chubbiness; his hair started falling out—all the familiar symptoms that I had forgotten about. The relapse didn't seem to affect Greg the way it affected us. We were watching him die; he was going on with life. I worried that he wouldn't see Christmas; he talked about fishing in the summer. Greg even found a silver lining in his relapse: he thought it was pretty neat that his hair could come out in the handfuls just by giving his locks a slight tug. "Merry Christmas!" he would say as he pulled out a handful of hair and threw it on the shocked girls on the playground. I saw Greg's blonde hair turn into convenient confetti.

Later that day, walking home from the bus stop, I tried to teach him: "Greg, you can't do that."

"Why not?"

"It's just not . . . not cool," I replied, searching for words. But he didn't seem to care; he pulled out a lock of hair and threw it on me.

"Merry Christmas!" he laughed as he ran home.

The last thing I wanted for my tenth birthday was to spend it in the UCLA hospital. Greg had gone to L.A. for a bone marrow transplant. "It's Greg's only choice," Mom had explained. Although the doctors

hadn't perfected the treatment, Dr. Medrano had recommended it very highly. So, like it or not, I was there with Greg. As usual, my sister, my dad, and I had driven down for the weekend. Mom had been there for a month and was glad to welcome us back on our weekly commute. The whole scene was frightening: we went through a sanitation room before entering Greg's room, washed our hands, and changed our clothes. Bright yellow tape that said "Intensive Care" formed an X across his door. No germs allowed. The room was decorated with his Transformers, G.I. Joes, a stuffed guard dog, a computer, games, and flowers. Two colorful signs broke the monotony of the white walls: "Good luck, Greg!" and "Get well soon!" Every weekend many new cards or flower bouquets appeared.

Each time I returned to school, kids in his second grade class would ask if he was okay and when he would be back. I would say, "He's doing fine, and he'll be home this summer." But I wasn't sure about anything anymore.

Another month gone and the transplant went fine. His body had accepted the marrow, for now. In preparation for the transplant, the doctors had tested each of us to be marrow donors. I wished I would be the match, but I wasn't. I had O+; Greg had B-. My oldest sister was his perfect match.

Greg had now spent eleven weeks in the hospital. Fifth floor, east wing. He had a new poster that said, "We love you, Greg. 9th Ward." He knew all of the nurses and called them by name.

"Lisa," Greg said as she changed his IV. "Do you know that I love you?" He winked at her.

"You're an angel!" she smiled, rubbing his bald head. He was famous for winking at the nurses. They would always tease me, "Your brother sure knows how to flirt for an eight-year-old. Did you teach him that?"

"Of course," I'd say with a swish of my hair.

But I was scared: Greg didn't look healthy. I was uncomfortable around him, and I knew he could sense it. Some weekends he didn't even want to see me. "It's his medication, Becky," my mother would console me.

At this point in his declining health, Greg's eyes couldn't stand bright light because of the radiation treatments and medication. Mom bought him some cheap red sunglasses with mirror lenses. They covered his brown eyes, which were the biggest and darkest in the family.

But Greg made the best of it. "I'm Joe Cool," he'd say, holding up his thumbs like the "Fonz." The only time his tubes and IV seemed to disappear was when he would laugh; he was his old self. But when we went outside to the playground, Charlie (he had named his IV and monitor) would have to come along, still attached to his body.

Greg came home after the transplant had been classified as “successful,” and our family felt privileged to have a “miracle” in the household. His room was ready and waiting. I was sure that even our dogs missed him too. On arriving, Greg stepped out of the Chevy Suburban and looked over the whole house as if he had forgotten what it had looked like. He smiled. I stood close by holding his favorite pillow. He was home. What a relief. I’d been so afraid that I would never see that day.

Our delight lasted less than seventy-two hours. Mom and Dad had to drive him back to UCLA. His eyes were yellow, a sign that his liver was not functioning as it should. If needed, the rest of the family would come up later that week. It was the beginning of July, and school was out.

Word came back from UCLA: Greg wasn’t well; he had declined fast. The rest of us left for L.A. the next day. When we arrived, I volunteered to stay with Greg while the others went out to eat in Westwood.

“I’ll be fine,” I insisted. “Just go and bring me back something to eat.” I sat in the rocking chair next to Greg’s bed. The television was on, and I pretended to watch *The Cosby Show*. I couldn’t help but wonder if this would be the end. Greg was taped with round sensors. Wires connected him to machines. I could watch his heart beat. “Just keep on beating,” I thought. Being in the hospital had been hard on him. One of the new nurses had ripped tape off his body yesterday to change the sensors, tearing his skin like paper. Greg had tubes running from his nose, and his lips were dry and chapped. His body was not working like it was supposed to. His stomach was full of fluids that his liver couldn’t handle, and it made his belly look like an expectant mother’s. I didn’t like how he looked. He was motionless. He just lay there. He watched TV. Or he pretended to.

I didn’t say much to him that night. But I wish I had.

The next morning Dad came down to meet us in the lobby. “You need to come upstairs,” he said, “Greg is getting worse fast.” He could hardly say the words. My heart beat wildly, and I dreaded what my mind had ignored for the last couple of months—that he might die.

I hurried to his room and looked in through the window. I couldn’t see him. Doctors and nurses surrounded him. Big machines, ones that I didn’t recognize, stood next to his bed. The main doctor came out and I shuffled aside.

He spoke to my dad quickly. “Greg has had a seizure, and it doesn’t look as if he will last long. His lungs are filling up with fluid faster than we can extract it.” The doctor was holding a needle, the size of a twelve-inch ruler. Dad motioned the whole family into the empty room across the hall.

“Greg isn’t going to last long.” He gathered us into a circle. “Mom

and I have decided that we don't want to put him on a respirator. We don't want to make him suffer any longer." Dad looked to us for support of this decision. I stared at the floor. This was all happening too quickly. We bowed our heads for prayer. I heard my father say, "Thy will be done, Father. We are letting him go."

I was numb.

The main doctor peeked in. "Gary?" he said. He motioned for us to come. Quickly.

I followed my parents. People rushing around. I heard noises and beeps. The voices of doctors and nurses grew louder. We stood in the hallway, waiting. I looked to my brothers' and sisters' faces for reinforcement that things were going to be okay. I only saw confusion and pain.

My mother grabbed onto my dad. "Gary!" she cried. The rest of her sentence was mumbled into his collar. She had spent the last three months by the bedside of her youngest son and here she stood in the hallway as he lay inside without her. "He's calling me," Mom said, hugging Dad tighter.

The door opened. The doctors and nurses filed out of the room, their faces fraught with frustration and failure. The head doctor nodded at my parents, and we entered Greg's room. The machines were gone and things were quiet. Sensors gone. Tubes gone.

Greg lay on the white bed, arms neatly folded over the sheets. His bald head cradled by his pillow. Eyes shut. My brother's bare chest was red, and markings of needles were left behind. One nurse on the left side of his bed quickly wiped away blood that had escaped Greg's mouth, probably hoping that none of us had noticed.

I had. I grabbed my mother and buried my screaming face in her stomach. I could barely feel her hand caress my head as her body shook. She latched on to Dad, and I stood between them.

I could barely stand to peek out on the scene. Greg's Transformers still stood in the window sill. His stuffed dog, "Bruno," stood guard, as Greg always had said, by the window. The signs were still hanging, almost mocking the hope we'd once had. "Get well soon!" But it was over. We had lost the battle. I never thought this would happen. I expected Greg to grow up by my side. We still had so much to do. Soccer games. Junior high. Seminary. Girls. High school. Driving. Dating. We would be there for each other. But now things had changed. No one knew what to do until we instinctively knelt around his bed, holding hands, and Dad offered a prayer once again. I opened my eyes and looked around the room wondering if my brother were still here. I knew he was.

After the prayer I touched his hand; it was still warm. We were then allowed a little more time to say good-bye before his body was taken downstairs to be prepared to fly home. I didn't want to go home; he

wouldn't be there. I wanted to pretend that I would find Greg in front of the TV with his thumb in his mouth. I wanted to crawl into bed with him. I wanted to yell out his name and hear him respond. I wanted to jump on the trampoline with him. I wanted to meet him in our fort, to follow him through our secret passages, to give him my password. Pretending was no use.

Two years ago Mom was in charge of the Easter fireside for the whole stake. And, of course—thanks to Mom—I sang a solo. After the program Sister Wills, a dear old lady with marshmallow-white hair, came up to me in tears.

"You are beautiful," she told me, hugging me close.

"Thank you, Sister Wills," I said, "so are you."

"I have to tell you something, my dear," she said. She brought her wadded tissue up to her eyes, lifted her glasses, and caught the tears from her right eye. "While you were singing that beautiful solo . . .," she paused, "I saw your brother standing on your left side. He was there, with you . . . a beautiful angel." She smiled at me and held my hand tightly.

Tears came to my eyes as I registered what she had said. Had my brother been there? I wanted to see him. For a moment I was angry that I had not seen him. Why had Sister Wills? If I had looked over my shoulder, would I have seen him?

Maybe.

I went to my father in tears, trying not to make a scene. "Dad," I said. He was waiting for my mother to stop talking so we could go home. "I have something to tell you," I said pulling him over to a corner. "Greg was here tonight. Sister Wills told me."

Tears came to my father's eyes as I explained and he sat down. "That is really special, Becky." He looked at me. "Does Mother know?"

On the day my brother would have turned sixteen, my mom called to remind me. "Yes, Mom, I know," I said. I was disappointed and a bit angry. I'd had a hard day, and the last thing I needed was for my mother to think I'd forgotten my younger brother, as though he was unimportant to me. Maybe she thought that I didn't remember him enough. Like visiting his grave. Mom insists on it every time we are in Utah. But that plot of grass doesn't mean anything to me. I don't remember him best by looking at a piece of stone.

Sometimes I deal with my brother's death by tricking myself into believing it never even happened. But then I see his picture. It all rushes back. The loneliness never goes away. At times I can feel him near. I know

he is concerned about me and watches over the things I do. He is a part of me.

Through the years Greg has lived on in my mind. Last year I was playing a “get-to-know-you” game with my Family Home Evening group at BYU. We took turns answering questions that were printed on cards. I was asked the question, “Would you trade all your memories if you could have all the money in the world?” I stopped. My mind flashed back to Greg—his bald head, his smile, his laugh, our hiding places, our secret passages, his toys, the doctor’s office, his three-wheeler, his eyes.

“No,” I said. “Never.”



Untitled

Peter Bloch-Hansen

Sing a song of sixth sense,
a pocket full of Why;
four and twenty Reasons,
beams in your eye.

But when the Eye is opened,
you see everything,
especially You,
so daintily
set before the King.

“The Strange Mixture of Emotion and Intellect”: A Social History of Dale L. Morgan, 1933-42

Richard Saunders

IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING THE DEPRESSION of the 1930s there rose a group of writers known informally in Latter-day Saint history as Mormonism’s “Lost Generation.” These were a diverse lot of academics and writers with familial roots in Utah but who almost always circulated outside of the state’s boundaries. Bernard DeVoto, Fawn Brodie, and Nels Anderson were three who in the mid-half of the twentieth century bolted or drifted away from the LDS church and never really left behind ties to the state or the tensions of its overwhelmingly Mormon/gentile culture. They were among the first generation of “modern” Utahns with emotional or temporal roots not directly in Mormonism’s “Pioneer Past.” Along with Brodie, Dale L. Morgan has in many ways come to symbolize the Lost Generation. Born and raised as a member of the LDS church and educated in Salt Lake City, he found that his passion for historical research drew him out of Utah in 1942. His stellar career as a student of the American fur trade and Oregon-California trail was awakened as a youth in his home town, though it would be beyond its borders that he would earn his reputation as one of Western American history’s most capable scholars.

Dale Morgan was born in 1914, the oldest child of office machine salesman James Lowell and Emily Holmes Morgan. Three more children were born to the couple before James succumbed to a lingering death from appendicitis in 1920. Left with four children under five, the independent twenty-five-year-old widow, Emily Morgan, enrolled at the University of Utah, qualified as a teacher, and taught grade school to support

her family until her own death half a century later.

The immediate trauma of losing a parent was somewhat mitigated by the age of the children; Dale at five was the oldest, Robert, the youngest, was barely six months old. In the Morgan family life without father was simply the way of things, there was no separation anxiety or grieving as would be expected in older children. Despite the absence of a father, Dale's childhood was largely a normal one, but as the oldest child he assumed the role of caretaker of his younger siblings during much of their early lives.¹

If Morgan was spared the pain of one watershed event because of his youth, that same youthfulness was cruelly compromised ten years later by another watershed event, perhaps the major physical, emotional, and social turning point of his life. Morgan contracted spinal meningitis in the summer of 1929 just before beginning high school. For several weeks he hovered near death, then began a slow recovery that kept him out of school at home for a full year. As he recovered, his audible world changed. He began to hear whistles, bells, and howls which became louder and more frequent and then which stopped abruptly. The recovery was only a partial one; the disease that had nearly killed him left a bitter mark—he was completely deaf. From that point until his death from cancer in 1972 Dale Morgan was forced into a silent world.

The disease had come inopportunistly at the onset of puberty and the loss of his hearing savaged Morgan's social development. In later years he recognized to his cousin and best friend Jerry Bleak the extent to which his world shattered: "I felt guilty and inferior and betrayed by my life in a great many ways. The loss of my hearing at a stroke cut me off from the leadership in my school and my neighborhood which I had previously experienced; I shrank from the conspicuity of my disability; I could not or would not establish myself socially."² As a youth he had to readjust entirely to a life which was alien but wholly inescapable. Emily did not want her son to stagnate and arranged for Dale to transfer from South High to West High, where a lip reading class was taught. His high school years were difficult, but being a good student he maintained high marks.

Well into his late teens Morgan's mother, Emily, insisted that Dale devote part of each day learning to lip read. Sister Ruth and brothers Jim and Bob were assessed blocks of time to work with Dale on textbook drills. Youngest brother Robert remembered sitting on opposite ends of the porch swing through the summer, endlessly saying words and drilling Dale on the facial shapes and motions of speech that he could not

1. Interview with Robert D. Morgan, 25 Apr. 1994, transcript in my possession.

2. Dale L. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 5 Oct. 1938, Jerry Bleak Correspondence, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; hereafter Bleak Letters.

now hear. Unable to grasp the visual intricacies of spoken sound, he often stormed off in frustration. "The lip reader goes 'by guess and by God,'" he wrote later, "and must try to gather what is meant by the context: whether, in a given case, the speaker is talking, say, about a pad, pat, pan, bad, bat, ban, mad, mat, man, pant, or band."³ An inborn drive for accuracy made lipreading a welter of maddening supposition. Despite his native intelligence and the effort devoted to the drills, Morgan was never able to master lip reading for people much beyond his immediate family and closest friends. For the rest of his life comprehension of face-to-face communication depended largely on the context of the topic, an incredibly quick mind, the rudiments of lip reading, and words sketched with a finger in the palm of a hand or jotted quickly onto a pad.⁴

Deafness carries its own physical weight. The quality of his speech deteriorated. His deafness coming at the onset of puberty as it did, his voice changed, causing no end of embarrassment as he was unaware of the change or how to correct his vocal timbre. "Stated quite simply," he later wrote, "I had no mental background for a reliable method of expressiveness within the lower registers." "The throat-strain attendant on high tones served to inform me that my voice was out of step, I naturally attempted to restrain my voice; a degree of monotone has quite inevitably followed in my speech."⁵ In addition, because he had no aural benchmark against which to compare his vocal expression to being monotonic, Dale's voice became rather loud. Acquaintances often discreetly waved a hand to communicate that he needed to modify the volume. Generally, reticence caused him to be shy about his vocal quality, and eventually he chose not to speak except among family and close friends. At school and with casual acquaintances he would often communicate back and forth in longhand only.

The nine years between beginning college in 1933 and leaving Utah for Washington, D.C., in 1942 were important years that set direction to the rest of his life. Psychologically as well as physically handicapped, Morgan was, in 1933, turning nineteen, a year older than his graduating high school classmates. The secure daily routine of school at West High was behind him and he had been five years without sound. Physically he was a different person than he had been even three years earlier. He was a gangly adolescent. He had grown fairly tall (just under six feet), but the robust youth that had reveled with his cousins and neighbors in tennis and impromptu neighborhood track meets was now thin to the point of

3. "To Those With Ears," Apr. or May 1937, Dale L. Morgan Papers, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California; microfilm at Special Collections, Marriott Library, reel 54, frames 674-96; hereafter cited as Morgan Papers, [reel];[frames].

4. Robert Morgan interview, 25 Apr. 1994, in my possession.

5. "To Those with Ears."

being wan. Still, his strength had largely returned and he was no longer required to rest regularly. The wavy hair still piled atop his head but now presided over a pair of ears that were rather large and a thin face. Due to severe adolescent acne that carried into adulthood, Morgan's face remained pitted to the end of his life.

When Dale graduated from high school in the late spring of 1933, he was thrown forcibly with thousands of other graduates into the stark world of the Great Depression. It was an anguishing prospect and one that terrified the young man. Without direction—complicated by his loss of hearing—he felt naked and unprepared to cope with the societal demands placed on a graduate. His ambivalence was complicated by what he felt was social ineptitude, particularly with girls. He acutely felt his failure to attend school dances and to date. His biology unfulfilled and somewhat repressed by his social reticence, women and sexuality became a deliciously introspective topic in his silent world, but one that also caused him considerable moral self-castigation for that attention.⁶

Cousin Jerry (T. Gerald Bleak), a year older and two grades ahead of Dale, had taken a year of post-graduate studies at West High before joining the Civilian Conservation Corps.⁷ With Jerry detailed to a work camp in southern Utah, Dale was deprived of his boon companion and of the one member of the Bleak/Holmes/Morgan cousin-pairings who had been his nearest friend. Jerry had taught Dale chess the year before his meningitis infection, but Morgan's gift for deductive logic quickly outstripped the older boy and pushed him to compete with ever more skillful players. Jerry's absence and his own completion of high school left Morgan with a surplus of unstructured time through the summer of 1933.

Having graduated from high school, with little to do that summer and no chance of participating in any of the relief work beginning under Franklin Roosevelt's first administration, Morgan threw himself into reading. Confiding to Jerry in southern Utah, he outlined one week's literary diet as seven to nine Western novels, as many novelettes in half a dozen magazines, plus whatever short fiction might be sandwiched between the magazine covers.⁸ The *Argosy*, a weekly fiction magazine, was a perennial favorite shared by both boys, and Dale kept Jerry closely apprised of its contents.

Morgan's voracious and omnivorous reading was perfectly suited to his handicap. It was at this period particularly that he began to stretch his capacity for concentration and his innate gift for comprehension and recall. It was also probably now that he began to accelerate the reading

6. Morgan to Bleak.

7. This unusual situation was a response to the high unemployment of the Depression. It reduced the number of young unemployed by keeping them in school.

8. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 25 July 1933, Bleak Letters.

speed that would in later life allow him to devour books at a rate of about two to three seconds per page.⁹ Morgan also discovered chess played by mail so that he could play Jerry in addition to the half-dozen friends he played weekly in person.¹⁰

Still, reading and chess provided escapes from the world around him, not substitutes for it. Morgan harbored no concrete plans for his future and was understandably uneasy about his occupational prospects being deaf in a depression economy. Due to his scholastic record and his handicap, Morgan qualified for a probationary scholarship to the University of Utah given by the Utah State Rehabilitation Department.¹¹ This award was supplemented with a \$6.00 monthly stipend from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration's student aid program. The latter award was "to pay students for doing socially desirable work, such as clerical, library and research work."¹² Unfortunately no record survives that records his assignment. Nonetheless, Morgan began a freshman's load of classes in the fall of 1933 as soon as possible after his high school graduation.

Throughout his collegiate career Dale lived at home on Hollywood Avenue, commuting to the university by streetcar and on foot. The first two years of school were a terrific challenge for him. He was more conscious than ever of his handicap, and because he seemed unable to master lip reading, he was unable to maintain the exemplary grades of his high school days. Morgan was overwhelmed, but not undone. The collegiate lecture system made his lack of hearing a major problem. "As far as the lecturing itself went, I gathered much of the meat of the courses by a liberal helping of myself to the notes of right- and left-hand neighbors, . . . and by attending to such comprehensible blackboard demonstrations as developed." His method was not without drawbacks, however. "There was [a] memorable class," he wrote once, "where my only neighbor, a Japanese student, wrote his notes in a combination of English, shorthand, and Japanese, but by and large, with some intensive application to the class texts, I fared well enough."¹³

Like any student Morgan was required to take scientific classes, but despite his youthful interest in chemistry, they did not hold the fascination for him that the humanities did. As he continued through school, he gravitated toward three areas of study that allowed him to study and perform as an individual with total hearing loss: English (specifically

9. James S. Morgan, personal communication, 25 Apr. 1992.

10. Morgan to Bleak, 25 July 1933.

11. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 6 Oct. 1937, Bleak Letters.

12. Federal Emergency Relief Administration 1934-35, 4, Accn. 17, 72:6, University of Utah Archives.

13. "To Those With Ears."

writing), psychology, and art. They in turn shaped his perception of himself and provided important footings for his opinion of Mormonism and his relationship to it. As disciplines both art and writing had the feature of being self-generative, psychology classes demanded pedagogical (and for Morgan, introspective) study. In these three areas learning would not be compromised by his handicap.

Morgan possessed some natural talent for drawing and layout. His posters in high school had regularly won student awards. Art classes at the U offered him a formal opportunity to train his eye and hand, but more personally important, they gave him an opportunity to draw from life. "Drawing," for Morgan, was life drawing, not still life or landscape. Life drawing became, until he left Salt Lake City in 1942, one of his favorite pastimes and apparently came to provide a modicum of vicarious satisfaction for the human intimacy he felt he lacked.¹⁴

Classes in psychology and sociology affected him deeply. Psychology provided an opportunity to analyze himself and his drives and to come to terms at least scientifically and quite matter-of-factly with what he had missed or not understood when developing as an adolescent. Though he probably no longer felt himself to be a believer in Mormonism, it was by immersing himself in reading sexual and Freudian developmental psychology that he was able to distance himself from his family's and culture's mores. An introspective psychological critique of himself soon turned outward to hold at arm's length the Utah/Mormon culture and people of which he was emotionally still very much a part.

However much art pleased Dale and psychology stimulated him, it was in writing that he finally found not only an outlet for his creativity but some of the expressive freedom for which, being a deaf adult, he longed. "It's one of the more unfortunate disabilities of my inability to hear that it has limited me in my adult conversations with people," he once wrote to an aunt. "To talk with people very intimately or at very great length involves a certain amount of labor, both for me and for the person I'm talking to."¹⁵ Possessed of a quick mind, he never quite overcame the need for that labor and never did become comfortable speaking conversationally with those with whom he was not well acquainted.¹⁶

His reading habits as a young adult provided a solid foundation in good writing. College provided both a workshop and an outlet for his first serious literary work. In 1935 Morgan was accepted as a staff writer

14. Undated diary entry, Morgan Papers, 25:1687.

15. Interview with James S. and Mary Beth Morgan, 25 Apr. 1991, transcript in my possession.

16. Despite his lengthy contacts with Morgan, Talisman Press publisher Robert Greenwood was unaware that Dale could speak until they met to discuss the third book to be released for the press. Personal communication, Apr. 1990.

on the university's student newspaper the *Chronicle*, where he was introduced to and worked under the tutelage of advisor Wallace Stegner. Working there he wrote on virtually everything at the university, occasionally under a byline. Journalistic work, however, was more a diversion and training ground for his interest in fiction. In his four years at the university Morgan published eight times in the quarterly student literary magazine, *The University Pen*. Four submissions were short critical essays on the collegiate experience, four were fiction.¹⁷ For three years, until he joined the Federal Writers' Project in 1938, Morgan constantly wrote and revised short stories and produced outlines and plot sketches for longer works.¹⁸

Morgan's period of serious fictional writing began in 1935 and concluded with an uncompleted autobiographical novel in late 1939. Guided by his study in psychology, in the midst of his intellectual coming of age, Morgan wrote and submitted to the *Salt Lake Tribune* a short story called "The Atheist," which was published on 12 May 1935 and won the *Tribune's* free-lance award for short fiction. Carefully constructed in the language of the eight-year-old character, a boy discovers through a juvenile test that "there is no God!" This small success encouraged Morgan to pursue writing actively. Two years after "Atheist," in "The Business Man," another award-winning short story, he spills out the frustration of a handicapped person (blind, in this case) seeking to be considered as an equal in society. "Twenty-nine Dollars," "Eve," "For the Sun Will Be Always Bright," and surviving drafts of plots and story outlines hint at the weight that sexual awareness played in his own coping with social mores and adjustment in society. Fiction provided a path to discuss himself and personal concerns that he felt uncomfortable expressing to his Latter-day Saint mother and family; consequently Morgan's fiction is strongly autobiographical. In fiction he could pour onto the page the frustration and social ambivalence he felt uncomfortable expressing—especially to his active LDS family.

Some of Morgan's most telling documents at this time are several surviving "discussions" about writing and his concept of self that survive in his papers. "Originality and genuineness," he wrote in one discussion, apparently with an English professor, "are liberated only within narrow limits; the strange mixture of emotion and intellect which make up my character is forcibly subdued . . . [and is revealed] only [as] a shadow of the real self, which would emerge if I were liberated from all social, intel-

17. See my *Eloquence from a Silent World: A Bibliography of the Published Writings of Dale L. Morgan* (Salt Lake City: Caramon Press, 1990), nos. 80-82, 84, 86, 88-90; most are named below.

18. A few of these are scattered in his papers. See Morgan Papers, reels 54 and 55.

lectual and moral restraints."¹⁹ It is evident that Morgan is drinking in some of the radical individuality—and hubris—that seems to characterize those seeking to understand themselves. The restraint he felt was not specifically Mormonism, but unnamed (perhaps unknown) forces of social mores and self-controls. His fiction, particularly the unpublished drafts, reveal the ambivalence of someone who wants to seek absolute freedom but yearns for the security of predictable and comfortable social institutions. What liberation reading had brought to pre-collegiate Dale Morgan, art, psychology, and writing became for the student.

As a result of his first publication in the *Pen*, Morgan attended late in the 1934 school year a meeting of Sigma Nu, an honorary literary club at the university. Here he met Jarvis Thurston, an Ogden expatriate a year ahead of him in school. Thurston became a good friend but graduated the following year and accepted a position teaching mathematics at Ogden Junior High School.²⁰

During the time Morgan and Thurston were in school, Morgan was introduced to Thurston's fiancée Madeline Reeder, who was several years older than either Morgan or her fiancé. She and Thurston had met while she was working at the Ogden Public Library. While Jarvis was in classes, she occasionally travelled to Salt Lake City to visit at the U. She and Thurston married shortly after he graduated in 1935. At the time she was expecting to have a novel published by Alfred A. Knopf and had literary contacts to Utah expatriate and *American Mercury* editor Bernard DeVoto. Morgan was captivated. "Honest," he wrote to Jerry, "she is 'more fun than a picnic', because she has a brain like a razor, very penetrating wit, and a remarkable literary background." Morgan's hunger for literary success elevated Madeline Thurston and her writing experience to a high pedestal. Discussions of literary criticism resulted in soul-baring analysis for the two writers that drew them closely together.²¹ For Madeline the relationship with this younger man may have been limited to intellectual intimacy, for Morgan it was one of near-captive devotion. The summer that Dale graduated from the U, he and an unidentified "friend" had a long, intense discussion about human sexuality, and Dale himself acknowledged the effect that this exchange had on him.²² It seems to have provided for Morgan the catharsis of sexual identity that had been the focus of his collegiate fiction. As he had few intimates, that friend was most likely Madeline Thurston.

By the time Morgan graduated from the University of Utah in 1937, studying psychology had served its purpose, awakening a critical vein of

19. Morgan Papers, 55:11f.

20. Jarvis Thurston interview, 16 June 1994, 2-4, in my possession.

21. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 16 July 1937, Bleak Letters.

22. Morgan to Bleak, 5 Oct. 1938.

thought that was severing emotional ties to Mormon culture; intellectual and spiritual ties had dissolved years earlier. Though he continued to draw recreationally for five more years, the studio was also largely left behind. After graduating with a B.A. and an art emphasis that June, Morgan was left with writing. As he had four years before, he faced the prospect of being unemployed. This time, however, he was becoming reconciled to the concept of human sexuality and to his deafness, emotionally able face the situation with increased confidence.

The summer and fall of 1937 were fruitless for Morgan's job search. Almost immediately upon graduating, twenty-three-year-old Dale Morgan approached the *Salt Lake Tribune's* Literature and Art Department with a suggestion that he be hired to write a daily book review. In the midst of the slow summer season the section editor did not feel that a column was warranted but offered Morgan the opportunity to write a regular Sunday review.²³ He accepted the offer and wrote periodic book reviews for the paper until 1939. In August Dale went to work on a pair of sample ad campaigns for two of the best customers of Gillham's Advertising, Salt Lake's largest advertising business. Initially he was encouraged by their interest and waited anxiously to hear from them. It was not until October that he learned from an acquaintance who worked for Gillham's that his appointment was virtually certain until a staid vice president concluded not to interview him because of his handicap. Through the rest of the summer and fall of 1937 Morgan played chess, read, worked around the Hollywood Avenue house, and wrote to Salt Lake City's department stores and advertising companies, unsuccessfully seeking work on advertising and art staffs. "I have about given up the idea of a local journalistic career for the present," he decided.²⁴ Near the first of October the State Rehabilitation Department wrote offering to help him in his job search. He was reluctant, preferring to have choice in employment rather than being placed.

As fall approached, Dale travelled to Ogden and stayed with the Thurstons for two weeks through mid-October, determined to begin a novel: "an examination of the Utah generation now coming of age—the generation for whom the frontier no longer exists in the land but in the minds of men." The theme was a logical extension of the novel Madeline Thurston had completed and was revising,²⁵ suggesting how closely he identified with the older woman. While in Ogden he played an exhibition chess match against the entire club simultaneously, winning ten and

23. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 21 June, 23 May, 16 July 1937, Bleak Letters. A list of the thirty-three reviews appears in *Eloquence*, n. 158-n.189.

24. Morgan to Bleak, 6 Oct. 1937.

25. Thurston interview.

drawing one of fourteen boards.²⁶

After returning from Ogden Morgan essentially dropped job hunting through the holiday season to concentrate on personal study and writing. Through January 1938 he was putting four hours daily into studying advertising until he set it aside, consumed by a flash of literary inspiration. "I am in the very middle of the most fertile period I have experienced in over two years of writing," he confessed to Jerry serving an LDS mission in Samoa. "I begrudge almost every minute stolen from that writing, whether to eat, sleep, read, play chess, bathe, or keep up with my correspondence." He wrote feverishly, and before May had composed what he felt was his best short fiction and submitted several short pieces to magazines.²⁷ From the turn of the New Year until July Morgan alternated between writing his Utah novel and short fiction at home in Salt Lake City and assisting Madeline Thurston to rewrite her novel at her home in Ogden.

In late July 1938 Morgan travelled to Ogden on one of his periodic trips, intending to accompany the Thurstons on a ten-day vacation to Yellowstone. A few days before he arrived, Jarvis Thurston had been approached by Maurice L. Howe of the Historical Records Survey about working on a new federal relief project in the state. The work involved locating, collecting, and transcribing nineteenth-century diaries and autobiographies and conducting oral histories with Utah's oldest surviving emigrants. Thurston declined the offer in favor of continuing his teaching contract in the Ogden schools but suggested Morgan and Radcliffe Squires as alternates. Before they left, Thurston directed Morgan to the WPA office. Morgan was tentatively hired on the strength of that recommendation despite the fact that he was non-certified (was not on federal relief), pending interviews with Ogden office superintendent Hugh O'Neil, general editor and state Writers' Project director Maurice L. Howe, and approval by the state WPA board.

Morgan and the Thurstons cut their Yellowstone trip to four days and returned in time for Morgan to meet with Howe and receive final clearance from the state WPA board. He was cleared and began a 90-hour work month as "historian" in the Ogden office on 10 August 1938. "My work is somewhat diverse in character," he explained to Jerry, "but I will handle all the publicity for the Survey in Utah, do general rewriting and editing work on the inventories of all the county records, which the Survey has gathered and is publishing, and in general make myself useful."²⁸

26. Morgan to Bleak, 6 Oct., 7, 30 Nov. 1937, Bleak Letters.

27. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 28 Jan., 25 Feb. 1938, Bleak Letters. Some of the plots written at this period survived in his papers. See Morgan Papers, 55:233f.

28. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 13 Aug. 1938, Bleak Letters; Thurston interview.

More than anything, being employed crystallized in Morgan a change in his social outlook and self-awareness that had begun shortly before, instilling in its catharsis a real vitality. His lack of employment for the prior year had depressed him; life at home confined him (he was concerned that writing late into the night would disturb the family with his typewriter clacking and felt literarily hampered). Within a month after moving to Ogden he wrote a "most unexpected and strange letter" to his mother explaining to her his need for the emotional independence and opportunity for self-proving that this job provided.²⁹ Emily, a concerned and protective mother, was watching her beloved, handicapped son strike out on his own. Dale, genuinely solituous of his mother's feelings, was trying to do so gently.

In May 1939 his monthly letter to Jerry Bleak assumed a more serious aspect and revealed deeper issues that he was not comfortable expressing to his immediate family. "I have written you letters which had hardly more of me than of the man in the moon in them—they could have been written by any of six thousand people on this earth—and your letters have been much of the same sort. . . . I have been possessed, up to now, with a thousand utterly trivial things. I am now undergoing a wholesale revision of all my beliefs and habits and methods of living, . . ."³⁰ This "revision" was not broadcast beyond his most intimate acquaintances. "There are no more than about 4 more persons to whom I am saying this—and you are the only one among my relatives to whom I so express myself." In coming months he continued to plead with Jerry to approach their relationship seriously and not merely as a superficial friendship. "I am simply driven now by a desire to establish my life on a more vital basis," he explained.³¹

Part of that drive was poured into a new novel. The main character was Morgan himself, thinly disguised as Ed Garnett, a boy deafened at fourteen by meningitis. Summoning all of his energy and talent for writing and expression, the lonely, silent frustration of ten years spilled onto page after page of self-revelation. For a full year Morgan wrote of the confused disbelief over losing his hearing and of the several attempts to explain and then cure the problem, the agony of being thrust beyond society, the inability to understand or meaningfully communicate the biology of puberty, the fascination and the repulsion that sexuality held, the challenge of school, and all the hard, or sharp, or weak, or fearful things with which experience could hurt or confuse him. He proceeded with the work as far as a cleanly-typed draft manuscript edited from his first (and possibly second) draft. When he shelved the incomplete manuscript to

29. Morgan to Emily Morgan, 2 Sept. 1938, Morgan Papers, 21:12.

30. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 22 May 1938, Bleak Letters.

31. Morgan to Bleak, 13 Aug. 1938.

concentrate on historical writing shortly after the turn of 1940, much of the pain had apparently dissipated, for he never returned to the manuscript.³²

The survey wasted no time putting Morgan to work. In July 1938, just as he was hired, the federal offices directed that the two- to three-page historical sketches that had been included with county records inventories should be expanded into pieces of greater historical value. Between July and October 1938 Dale completed a finished draft of the Beaver County history and compiled the research for Tooele. The Beaver County history was the first of Utah's county histories to be completed and stood as a benchmark for all other histories produced in the state, but the inventory of county records remained incomplete and the volume was never published. Before the end of the year Dale was slated to complete draft histories for Washington and Utah counties, too. The research for this historical writing threw him into contact with the state's nineteenth-century diaries and autobiographies being transcribed by the Writers' Project, in addition to what primary and secondary history of the state and the Mormons had been written. With the latter he was not impressed. "Practically nothing really worthwhile touching upon Utah and Mormonism, what they have been, and what they have become, is worth one single damn, and that goes not only for non-Mormon writing but for Mormon writing," he wrote to Jerry. "There is a golden opportunity for some gifted writer to produce the first extensive, penetrating work on the whole amazing phenomena of Utah, the West, and the Mormon relation to itself and both."³³ Morgan probably did not realize at the time he wrote this just how prophetic his words were, nor the wrenching effect they would have on his life in little more than a decade.

Dale's capacity for concentration and innate attention to detail quickly distinguished him as a careful researcher and good writer. Within three months of being hired Morgan and bibliographer Leonard Hart were established as the survey's "historical department," answering directly to the state HRS supervisor. By this time Morgan was just finishing a 2,500-word introduction for a republication of Utah's first book of laws, the *Ordinances of the State of Deseret*, while the drafts of his county histories were being reviewed for federal approval.³⁴ Six months later in March 1939, barely nine months from the date he began work, he wrote home to tell his mother of his impending appointment to the general editorship of the Utah HRS.³⁵

32. The manuscript (unidentified in the papers) is divided between Morgan Papers' reels 54 and 55.

33. Morgan to Bleak, 5 Oct. 1938.

34. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 31 Nov. [Dec.] 1938, Bleak Letters.

35. Morgan to Emily Morgan, Morgan Papers, 21:26.

Not all in his life was going so evenly. In the same letter to Emily Morgan, Dale related to her a confrontation with a local gossip-monger over rumors she had been spreading about his relationship to the Thurstons. In truth, Morgan and the Thurstons spent a good deal of time together. Dale would play chess with Jarvis and "discuss" literature with Madeline at the same time. Quickly moving a chess piece, he would turn to Madeline and would ask a question of some sort, Thurston remembered, speaking of these multi-faceted sessions, "then you would have to reply by writing it all down. And these questions were [questions] like: 'what do you think of Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*' or something; then you'd have to write four pages in order to explain about it." With the two busy at their respective tasks, Morgan would read a book.³⁶

Part of the gossip was grounded in fact. Jarvis and Madeline Thurston's marriage seemed to be deteriorating and she began shifting her attention elsewhere. Dale was quite eager to pick up for her what pieces there may have been, but Madeline would not have it. Morgan's mother Emily disliked Madeline intensely, but Dale's equally intense loyalty to his friends defended the older woman from ridicule, even from his own mother.³⁷ Despite this, Morgan was acutely conscious that Madeline did not accord him the same emotion that he held for her. "Came home to find a letter from Madeline," he wrote once in an undated diary entry from the period. "I was greatly disappointed; it was so chill and remote for all the surface warmth. Again I had the wretched feeling of being only of intellectual interest."³⁸ Events later would suggest that there was considerable truth to his despondent guess.

Despite the complication that the Thurstons represented to his life, Morgan liked them both and enjoyed his work. All of his letters to friends and family breathe energy and recount the incredible scope of his activity. Despite the promotion, he could not help but remember that the job was at best an indeterminate one, sure to end no later than with the project's conclusion. As spring 1939 broke, he decided to make another attempt in advertising. He immediately contacted Gillham's in Salt Lake City to see if they had softened. Again they were interested and again their interest cooled quickly, so Morgan turned his attention outside the state. Brushing up his advertising studies, he drafted some sample campaigns introducing himself to prospective employers and in July travelled with his family by car to Washington then down the coast to the San Francisco Bay Area. For two weeks he contacted potential employment prospects and received encouragement from many. None, however, were in a position to hire him. Morgan also approached the *San Francisco Chronicle*

36. Thurston interview.

37. Interview with Robert Morgan, 19 Mar. 1994, transcript in my possession.

38. Undated diary entry (likely Mar. 1939), Morgan Papers, 25:1687.

about an editorial position there and was put off until the fall. "'If the sun began to shine' perhaps a couple of sample articles this fall [will] open the way," he wrote hopefully to Jerry.³⁹

He returned to Utah mid-month, rather depressed, and found himself out of a job at the survey. Due to a federal employment rule, employees voluntarily absent from work over five days were subject to dismissal. A month before his trip Morgan had accepted a transfer from the Ogden office to Salt Lake City to be closer to the state's largest libraries. Administrative tangles between the WPA and the Salt Lake Re-employment Service were ironed out allowing him to be rehired, but he idled at home for nearly a month earning no salary, still intending to return to the coast in the fall.

Dale occupied this free time by beginning research on a book treating the early fur trade to be co-authored with Maurice Howe, former Utah director of the HRS and Federal Writers' Project now transferred to Washington, D.C. He also wrote feverishly on the autobiographical novel, telling Jerry that a draft would be hopefully ready by the time he returned from Samoa in October.⁴⁰ Once back on the WPA staff, Dale completed the Daggett County historical sketch in time for the county inventory to be published in August and commenced work on a historical sketch of Weber County.⁴¹

Morgan devoted some of his free time to investigating advertising but before the end of the year had pretty much abandoned the idea of advertising as a career and did not return to California. Instead, he wrote in October a letter to Farrar & Rinehart, publisher of the *Rivers of America* Series. The inquiry became a hinge pin around which his entire future turned: "I have been mulling over in my mind a book which, it appears to me, would fit admirably into your *Rivers of America* Series. Announcement of publication of your book on the Sacramento River has finally stirred me to this inquiry."⁴² Farrar & Rinehart's "*Rivers*" series was successful and produced as late as 1972 some very competent history. In 1939 the series had fewer than half a dozen titles to its credit but had attracted critical acclaim. Morgan proposed (there was no manuscript at this point) a book on the Mary's or Humbolt River, a vital stretch of brackish water that sinks into the Nevada desert without reaching another river, marking an important stretch of the California Trail. He received no immediate answer and the next month wrote to the company asking for a decision, explaining that he was also working on a novel

39. Morgan to Jerry Bleak, 12 Aug. 1939, Bleak Letters.

40. Ibid.

41. *Inventory of the County Archives of Utah: No. 5 Daggett County (Manila)* (Ogden, UT: Historical Records Survey, 1939).

42. Morgan to Farrar & Rinehart, Morgan Papers, 3:310.

(most likely the semi-fictional autobiography) that might be completed under contract to another publisher. Farrar & Rinehart accepted the Humbolt proposal almost at once, and at the close of the year Morgan returned a signed contract.⁴³

For Dale, the year that began with such a bright outlook (1940) also held an important and unpleasant personal rift that affected his later life. Dale asked his mother if she could put up Madeline for a couple of nights and Emily did so grudgingly. Jarvis and Madeline Thurston's marriage had frayed seriously. Perhaps unknown to Dale, Madeline had formed an attachment to Thomas McQuown, a mutual friend who worked as a railway postal clerk. Morgan watched from the sidelines, perhaps unaware of the triangle that did not involve himself but unwilling to step in to see the relationship preserved in any case. In the spring of 1940 McQuown finally persuaded Madeline to leave Jarvis and establish residency in Nevada preliminary to a divorce.

Madeline left a brief note at home for her husband and without a hint of her destination or intent caught a train out of Salt Lake City. Thurston was thunderstruck but surmised the purpose. He rightly supposed that Dale would know of her whereabouts and went to his apartment. Madeline and Dale had apparently had a discussion before she left, but perhaps in a thin hope that he could talk Madeline into marrying him once the divorce was completed, Morgan was unwilling to tell his chess partner and friend anything. Jarvis angrily left Dale's apartment, and the two never saw each other again.

Thurston eventually traced Madeline to Las Vegas and talked her out of pursuing the legal action, but at Tom McQuown's continued prompting she completed the divorce proceedings. Dale probably never understood that he was not of romantic interest to Madeline. In March he had written a pleading letter seeking the emotional intimacy that leads to affection. Madeline folded it and on the back over Morgan's signature doodled dozens of times the name of Tom McQuown, whom she would pass over Morgan to marry in late 1940.⁴⁴

Survey work for Dale in 1940 was a continuous round of manuscripts, proofreading, corrections, and galleys. For the next year or two chess and fiction were relegated to back seats as he pursued historical writing and his personal life, though he still found time for occasional chess games and for dropping in to life-drawing studios at the commu-

43. Morgan to Farrar & Rinehart, 18 Nov. 1939; Morgan to Stanley M. Rinehart, Jr., Morgan Papers, 6:473.

44. Thurston interview; Jarvis Thurston to Richard Saunders, 19 July 1994, in my possession; Morgan to Madeline Thurston, 14 Mar. 1940, Madeline McQuown Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

nity arts center.⁴⁵ Due to the new Farrar & Rinehart contract for *Humbolt* he shelved the autobiography after the turn of the year and determined to clean up his writing projects in progress at work. By February 1941 he was putting a finish to the manuscript for *The State of Deseret*, which had swallowed up his introduction to *Ordinances of the State of Deseret*; was writing the histories of Carbon and Utah counties; had begun work on an Ogden municipal history; and was madly compiling and rewriting what became *Utah: A Guide to the State*. In the evenings and on weekends he worked on *Humbolt* research.

Though he was respected for producing good historical work, *The State of Deseret* was his first truly path-breaking history, the first history of the Mormons' provisional government organized and functioning independently in Great Salt Lake City before territorial status was granted to Utah in 1850. The piece had been conceived merely as an introduction to a mimeographed reprinting of *Ordinances of the State of Deseret*, the printed original of which existed in barely half a dozen widely scattered copies. By the time it was completed, his history had grown substantially beyond the size of a typical "introduction." The Utah Project published it as a separate work—a "pre-print" (with the "Ordinances" relegated to an appendix) intended as an introduction to a never-completed inventory of the state archives. In October the entire work was also released as a monograph in three combined issues of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*.⁴⁶

In August 1940 Dale had confessed to John Farrar of Farrar & Rinehart that he had not touched *Humbolt* yet due to the press of compiling the *Utah Guide*. By his own account Morgan had devoted much of the summer to "40,000 words to the Utah guide, including the 20,000 word history of the state." He also completed editorial work for a new edition of *Origins of Utah Place Names*, from survey data sheets compiled and edited much of the first volume of the *Inventory of the Church Archives of Utah*, and completed histories for the Carbon County and Utah County inventories. He might also have added that within the past month he had taken over the Utah Writers' Project with responsibility not only for the history he was writing but also overall editorial responsibility for all work produced by the project. He continued to do press releases and project publicity. He promised Farrar to begin writing in November, over a year after his letter proposing the book. His burden was eased considerably by completing the history of Ogden and the historical sketch for the Uintah inventory in October and November respectively, by returning

45. Morgan to John Farrer, 3:315; undated diary entry, 25:1687, both in Morgan Papers.

46. For a description of both, see *Eloquence*, n.8 and n.94. *The State of Deseret* was reprinted by Utah State University Press (Logan) in 1987, edited with an introduction by Charles S. Peterson.

the corrected galleys for the *Guide* in February 1941, and by finishing the Emery County historical sketch in March.⁴⁷

Later that spring some polite official correspondence about WPA diary typescripts began a personal and literary friendship that would last to the end of his life. Juanita Brooks, a lay historian from southern Utah on retainer as a collector for the Huntington Library, was engrossed with locating and transcribing primary sources from the southern outposts of Mormon settlement. Turning northward she inquired about an exchange of historical sources. Morgan gladly complied and gratefully added her typescripts to the growing corpus of transcribed primary sources collected by his staff. When *Utah: A Guide to the State* was released in mid-1941, Brooks's praise was warm; Morgan acknowledged her contribution to preserving historical sources and literary attainments. Within a few months they had dropped formalities and operated on a first-name basis. Morgan contributed greatly to Brooks's development as a writer. "Juanita," wrote her biographer, "accepted Morgan as her mentor in scholarly and literary matters . . . His technical advice would profoundly influence the form and content of her major writings."⁴⁸ From her Morgan gained not only a disciple but also a connection to what he felt was Mormonism's last pioneer blood. Their common ground was not Utah but Mormonism, though the pair found themselves on opposite sides when it came to spiritual belief.

As he worked on historical endeavors, Morgan's remaining ties to Latter-day Saint culture dissolved. After high school it was evident to those outside the family that he did not consider himself a believer in the LDS church but at the same time had not left it.⁴⁹ That position changed with his education at the University of Utah and personal readings in psychoanalysis, which had served to reconcile Mormon faith structures to simple psychological dependence and group sociology. Primarily, however, Morgan was critical of the casual hypocrisy that he felt characterized the lives of many Latter-day Saints and Utahns. Citing several examples and analyzing them for a former chess partner Richards Durham, abroad on an LDS mission, he commented: "I have never known, save only now in you, a person I could respect who held to the Mormon beliefs." To Juanita Brooks he later stated: "if I have a religion, it is a belief in what I call 'the decency of human relationships.' I live life as I see it from day to day . . . and in my way I think I am a better Mormon than those who go to church on Sunday and pay their tithing." Dale's respect

47. Morgan to Farrar & Rinehart, 10 Aug. 1940; Morgan to Bernard DeVoto, 2:1417, both in Morgan Papers.

48. Levi S. Peterson, *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 120.

49. Interview with Samuel Holmes, 6 Mar. 1995, typescript in my possession.

for a religious believer seemed to be based on an appreciation of critical, thoughtful belief. Morgan did not care for doctrine and pointedly did not reject Mormon beliefs, but rather he was critical of the thoughtless disregard that individuals paid to their own religious participation and the casualness with which Latter-day Saint ethical strictures were held in the social culture. Though he dismissed the doctrines of his family's faith as an unbeliever, he did not reject them as an apostate. Instead he seemed to place himself within the larger context of Mormonism that encompassed all groups claiming a heritage from the following of Joseph Smith. Responding pointedly to criticism from RLDS historian S. A. Burgess, Morgan wrote that he "[did] not subscribe to the doctrinal contentions of any of the several Mormon churches." He continued to be intrigued by the Latter-day Saints. Mormonism for Dale Morgan remained alive and vital, but only as a cultural vitality, not as a faith.⁵⁰

Despite the as-yet-unmet commitment to Farrar & Rinehart for the *Humbolt* manuscript, at the close of 1941 Morgan had wrapped up a host of smaller projects and needed a new project for official writing at work. The result was a history of Provo, Utah, *Provo: Pioneer Mormon City*, done in the WPA guidebook style but with a substantial history of the area and with geographical and community descriptions as well. Little is known of the history of this book as there are no surviving office records, and Morgan barely mentions it in correspondence. That the book is largely his work is evident from the style of the writing. The introduction and lion's share of the 150-page history is certainly his. The volume was published in 1942 by Binsfords and Mort of Portland, Oregon, and represented his last work for the Utah Writers' Project.

Classification as 4-F by the local draft board in May 1941 insured that his work on *Humbolt* or for the HRS would not be interrupted by induction into the military. For a year and a half Morgan concentrated on producing a manuscript for *Humbolt* but took enough time to pursue shorter projects. He drafted a substantial article on the Deseret Alphabet that remains unpublished. The fur trade book begun with Maurice Howe apparently never progressed much past a cursory research stage, and the project was probably dropped shortly after Morgan received the contract to produce *Humbolt*.⁵¹

Morgan had accepted his initial position and worked for four years in the Historical Records Survey knowing that he would ultimately leave

50. Morgan to Richards Durham, 4 Dec. 1940, Morgan Papers, 2:1543; Morgan to Juanita Brooks, 12 Apr. 1942, Juanita Brooks Collection, Utah State Historical Society, cited in Peterson, *Juanita Brooks*, 125; Morgan to Maguerite Sinclair, 21 Dec. 1940, Morgan Papers, 6:328.

51. Morgan Papers, 25:1791; Morgan to Wallace Stegner, 28 Jan. 1942, both in Morgan Papers.

Utah.⁵² It was merely a matter of timing. In 1938 he had been convinced that it would be best to pursue advertising; by spring 1942 he was turning toward historical writing as a profession. To meaningfully pursue that field he had to be near the greatest concentration of sources. He turned his attention east to the large research libraries, notably the Library of Congress and the National Archives. Maurice Howe, now in a federal position, offered him a place to stay in Washington, D.C., if he chose to look for work there. The *Guide* had gone to press and been released to critical acclaim, and with the exception of his Deseret Alphabet piece, all his other work was concluding. In June with the U.S. involved in a new world war Dale received a further draft-board classification as "Scientific and Specialized Personnel" that would allow him to work permanently in the private sector throughout the war.⁵³ After hosting Juanita Brooks on a tour of the city libraries and archives, Morgan began to wrap up his WPA activities and make plans to leave. Before the summer closed, he read and critiqued the galleys for Wallace Stegner's *Mormon Country* and worked furiously to complete a manuscript for the *Humbolt* while wrapping up what work remained at the Utah Writers' Project office. Practically his last act in Salt Lake City in October 1942 was to write to Farrar & Rinehart, notifying them that the manuscript for *The Humbolt: Highroad of the West* would be delivered to him from the typist the following morning and was ready for delivery "one year late, almost to the day."⁵⁴

Dale had applied for a civil service position in Washington, D.C., in May but had not received word since. The war-time economy in the capital and his classification, however, almost guaranteed him a position of some sort, and it was with this slim certainty for the future that he boarded the east-bound train from Ogden in mid-October 1942 that would take him out of Utah. With the train lurching beneath him and alone with his thoughts, Dale installed his portable typewriter in the club car crowded with draftees and tapped out a poignant letter to his mother that was also very much a goodbye to Utah, Mormonism, and the insecurity of his youth.

I want to get outside the world I have lived in for so long, to get a new perspective on this world and upon myself. I want to see what the Mormon people, and Utah, look like from the vantage point of another culture in another environment. And I want to see how I fit into the world, where I belong in this world. I have always had the sense of dependencies: people have had to do things for me. Of course, that is true of everyone in life, but it means

52. Morgan to Emily Morgan, Morgan Papers, 21:12.

53. Morgan Papers, 25:1793.

54. Morgan to Wallace Stegner, 13 July 1942; Morgan to Stanley M. Rinehart, Jr., 27 Sept. 1942, both in Morgan Papers.

something to me to take hold of my life with both hands and do with it something affirmative. I think going away in this manner will give me a little better idea of where I fit into the world and what is to come of me hereafter. . . . For my own good, I want whatever come of my life to be of my choice, . . .⁵⁵

It is perhaps gently appropriate that he was riding east on the Union Pacific's passenger train named the *Challenger*. He certainly made the most of his challenging opportunity. His free time in Washington while working in the Office of Price Administration proved a boon to his research, and much of his later work rested on footings gleaned from microfilm in the Library of Congress and National Archives during several years of lunch hours.

The Dale Morgan that rode eastward in October 1942 had intellectually matured but more importantly had reached a point of self-reconciliation. His sexual angst was conquered, he had found in writing a voice he felt he lacked as a youth and had proven to himself that he was capable of succeeding on the merits of his own skills. Unlike Fawn Brodie wrenching herself out of Mormonism, unlike Bernard DeVoto disgustingly dismissing Utah's parochialism, Morgan was not escaping from Utah, from the LDS church, or from Mormons—literally or figuratively. In moving east he was making for himself a calculated opportunity for self-development, one that dictated he find greener pastures. Through the next three decades he would return frequently to Salt Lake City's Hollywood Avenue, but only as a guest. Dale Morgan was riding off alone into the sunrise.

55. Morgan to Emily Morgan, Morgan Papers, 21:36.

God: CEO or Master of the Dance?

Edwin B. Firmage

MY TEXT IS A POEM AND A SCRIPTURE since as I age I find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between beauty and truth.

Pied Beauty

—by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89)

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trèdes, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

And from Jeremiah 31:31-34:

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord.

The God of Genesis loved life in abundant and dazzling diversity.

Humanity grows in God's image through autonomy. Creation continues.

Jehovah through Jeremiah spoke of a new covenant: "I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts." We would no longer rely solely on teachers but with God's law within our center there discover the divine. No longer would an elite caste be intermediary between God and the people: "They shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest."

Hopkins, with that wonderful paradox that often reveals God's finger, speaks from a conservative century in a conservative country and as a member of a then austere, rigid, and legalistic Jesuit order. But just as a vow of silence unleashed a torrent of beauty and spiritual insight in the words of Thomas Merton, so a hundred years before Hopkins saw the endless beauty in the diversity of all life. Though a member of an order militaristic in more than metaphor, Hopkins praised, "dappled things"—"skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow"—"rose moles all in stipple upon trout that swim"—"finches' wings"—"landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plow"—

And as a member of an organization then demanding obedience and uniformity and authoritarian structure above all else, Hopkins gloried in "all things counter, original, spare, strange"—

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim.

All this diversity, this dazzling diversity created by and in praise of God.

In our culture and throughout the world we see this tension between those who insist upon an Augustinian authoritarian order of massive uniformity and those who glory in the individuality of conscience, a reflection of God's limitlessness in the endless diversity of creation.

Of course, there must be an intermixture of authoritarian structure—law, if you will, and unfettered individuality. The emphasis that we place on one or the other will be reflected in how we envision God: As Chief Executive Officer or as Master of the Dance.

Our tilt will depend on time and circumstance.

Paul spoke of the law as schoolmaster. Schoolmaster, perhaps, to nurture us as children until, with the law finally written upon our hearts, we are capable of enjoying that level of autonomy that marks us not as slaves or bond-servants but as heavenly heirs, children of God.

For the huge majority of us, we never reach a point of not needing the association of others. We need community. We thrive in intimate and friendly relations and we pine, decline, and become frail and fragile in isolation.

But the collective should not demand our souls as the price of membership. Any group that levies such a toll will do its best to keep its mem-

bership in supine inferiority and childish dependence. Such an organization will see obedience to the group as the highest good. Those who attempt a relationship with God that reflects the first commandment's injunction that God alone is worshipped, not the corporate self, will be seen as a grave and heretical threat. Obedience and order will overshadow conscience and individual spirituality. The first commandment is lost in corporate self-worship.

We all reflect society's demand that we conform in the persona and the super-ego, those parts of us that attempt to make us look like society wants us to look.

But the conscience is subversive. If we are untrue to that part of our center where God wrote upon us, that part of us that cries out, "Abba—Father, Mother!" then by dreams, neuroses, and behavior we will reflect this inner struggle until we express our own individuality in God's image.

At this stage in my own life I see truth now not so much in law as in nature or music or dance or poetry. I am less impressed by bureaucratic structure than by rhythm, the seasons: a time to dance, a time to mourn; a place of beauty, a sense of the sacred.

My reading may be less within theology, more attracted to prophetic power in spirituality and poetry.

My spiritual practice centers upon my dreams, meditation, contemplation. A growing appreciation of God's presence in simple things in each day's activity. In mountains and at the ocean shore, where one life-system meets another. I find spirituality along those seams. I sense a connectedness to a larger whole.

T. S. Eliot put it this way in "Ash Wednesday":

This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

Blessèd sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

Increasingly I see my own frailty. My own inability to define or confine God or anyone else.

We deal in metaphors. We lack God's capacity to know or understand completely. We see fragments, figments, phantasy and yet we slaughter each other, or only somewhat less brutal and presumptuous, we excommunicate or eviscerate each other for seeing a different metaphor. The definition (and sexuality) of God. What constitutes scripture and what does it mean? The meaning and qualifications for priesthood.

With our finite minds and fragile bodies we grope for truth. Such profound limitations should force upon us equally profound reticence to force upon another our particular view. God objectively exists. Evil as well. Yet subjectively I perceive both. Even my rare glimpse through dream of an image of God unfiltered by all the wordiness of my mind is nevertheless affected by my own soul.

Whose metaphor is best? Who decides? At least we might acknowledge that it is metaphor and not objective truth the acceptance of which we demand of another lest we unleash ferocious violence: genocidal war pitting religious or ethnic groups; economic and political systems; nations; and individuals within church and state.

In *Tao Te Ching* Lao-Tzu said:

The Tao that can be told
is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named
is not the eternal Name.

And again:

When you have names and forms,
Know that they are provisional.
When you have institutions,
Know where their functions should end.
Knowing when to stop,
You can avoid anger.
All things end in the Tao
As rivers run into the sea.

We need law, structure, but primarily to transcend it. With St. Paul I sense the limits of law. Law does not save. Our wholeness, our completeness, our autonomy is in boundless love and grace. If government saw itself as means and means only to the end of our ultimate autonomy, then ends and means would be in harmony. But when the institution of the church or state sees itself as the end and people as the means to the organization's perpetuation, then ends and means are subverted. Individuals

are crushed and killed so that the monolithic power of the government may continue unthreatened by thought, change, dissent, or the spirit of God. Ultimately, this destroys the institutions of church and state just as surely as it injures the individual.

The historian of the former Soviet Union, Robert Conquest, noted that "the behavior of an organization can often be predicted by assuming it to be controlled by a cabal of its enemies."

Alternatively, if a Christian church, for example, were to mold its actions by the man Jesus, revered as God incarnate, then as Andrew Greeley observes from Jesus' parables:

The church would never abandon.

The church would forgive before confession could be spoken.

The church would spoil, not spank wayward children.

The church would condemn itself for its obscuring God by the church's behavior as if it were a dysfunctional family.

The church would be under the same injunction as the farmer who was forbidden to pull out what he perceived as weeds. As my friend, Richard Rohr, Franciscan priest, has noted: "I now see the weeds of my youth as the wheat of my life. And the wheat of my youth as the weeds of my life."

The church would spend its funds on food, drink, clothing, and parties for the poor and disreputable of this world. The church would harvest and cultivate fish of every kind, not an elite or a believing few.

Clearly, the God of the New Testament—and of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea—has fallen madly, crazily in love with people. Liars, prostitutes, thieves. This God is an indiscriminate lover who sees himself and herself variously as husband, wife, lover, father, mother; unconditional and even erotic lover.

The God I worship—and any spiritual community that might nurture me—would glory in my autonomy and cheer my steps and my frequent missteps toward wholeness. I in turn must cultivate my own limited capacity to see God's image in every human, every non-human animal, and every part of this living, breathing organism, earth and cosmos.

Thank God for pied beauty, "for dappled things—For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow; For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;" For "finches' wings; Landscape plotted and pieced—fold fallow, and plough;"—for "All things counter, original, spare, strange;—"

With our Hindu sisters and brothers, as with Francis of Assisi, we should bow before each other in honor and in awe, sensing the spirit of God in each of us and in all persons and parts of creation. Then the spirit of dogmatism and violence and authoritarian pretentiousness would evaporate.

With this sense of holiness in everyone, we would as a matter of course, honor autonomy, individuality, idiosyncrasy as what it is: the image of God.

With Francis Thompson, a Victorian English poet, we would sense every rock and fish, every person as being suffused with God's spirit: our earth's water as the environment of eternal life; and our mountain breeze as God's spirit wafting where it will:

The Kingdom of God Is within You

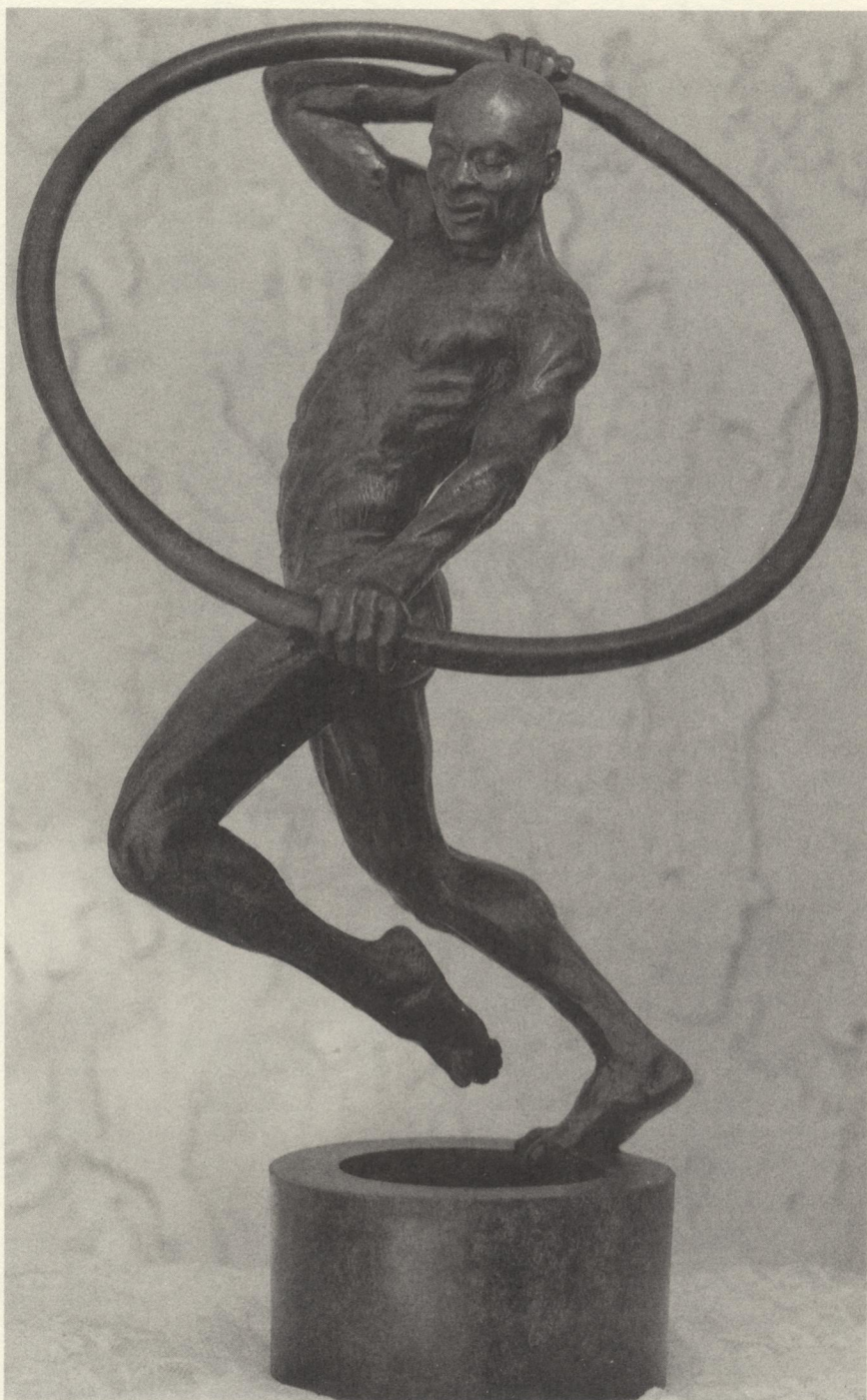
The angels keep their ancient places;
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendored thing.

But (when so sad thou can't not sadder)
Cry—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Descending Order

Dixie Partridge

Snow falling into the pond
leaves you weak with its metaphor
of sadness, as though all that makes you
could be instantly broken down,
leaving whole only the blackness of the pool
to dilate around you.
You push yourself to walk on,
the pollen light of autumn
gone—empty winter something to return to,
to remind us that less is needed,
and of what might be left
to lose.
Tangles of reddish vine
clog the path.
You turn back and recognize
the silence, but this time
it closes like water
around breath.
Sound gnarls your throat.
You look toward remaining
leaves—downturned and still.
The sky lowers . . . stone.
It's as though the years
of trying to retrieve
a language of grasses,
of aspen leaves and riverbeds,
have been misplaced—
that they were never
speaking to you
at all.



Rethinking Religious Experience: Notes from Critical Theory, Feminism, and Real Life

Stacy Burton

SINCE HUMANS HAVE LONG MANAGED to have experiences that they understood to be religious without the benefit of critical theory, some may wonder why I find thinking about Mormonism and theory not only worthwhile but imperative. Others may suppose that using critical theory as a lens for viewing Mormonism puts the cart before the horse or uses the cart to mow the horse down. The short response to these reservations is that theory enables us to view our identities and our experiences—religious as well as secular—more fully, honestly, and critically; it highlights easily unnoticed but absolutely crucial factors that shape how we exist, think, and interact with others. The long response is this essay.¹

Religious movements begin in human experience: they are based, as William James writes, in the founder's revelatory experience, in "direct personal communication with the divine." From such "*feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine,*" he explains, "theologies, philosophies, and ecclesiastical organizations may secondarily grow."² It is also from such experiences that scriptural texts

1. My thoughts on this topic began to coalesce in a conversation with Lorie Winder Stromberg following Gloria Cronin's paper at Sunstone West in April 1993; I appreciate the spark their ideas provided. My thanks to friends whose readings have helped me to clarify my ideas: Michael Evenden, Joy Ross, Kathleen Boardman, Gaye McCollum, Martha Hildreth, and Elizabeth Houlding.

2. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902; New York: New American Library, 1958), 42.

develop, for scripture is not a neutral repository of information but is narrative that serves to codify both individual and collective human experience with the divine. Together, scripture, religious institutions, and tradition provide pre-established forms for the woman or man James calls "your ordinary religious believer" to follow.³ But while James dismisses the experiences of conventional believers as imitative, "second-hand religious life," more recent writers such as Rosemary Radford Ruether argue that it is precisely the ability of religious forms to have meaning for subsequent believers that demonstrates their authenticity. Religious tradition, she writes, "is constantly renewed or discarded through the test of experience": if or when "a symbol does not speak authentically to experience, it becomes dead or must be altered to provide a new meaning."⁴

Many critical analyses of Mormon culture, history, and theology have been published in recent years, but comparatively little that focuses specifically on the nature of Mormon religious experience.⁵ Initially this may seem odd, since in placing a high value on both revelation and history, Mormons have long seen religious experience as something so fundamental it matters more than theology.⁶ On reflection, however, I think this is not especially surprising: tracing historical events and analyzing abstract concepts may be more pragmatic, perhaps slightly easier, than probing the complicated, subjective, contradictory ways theology plays out in human lives. Experiences that lead to faith can be so important or so evanescent that people hesitate to probe them; we often see (or desire to see) personal experience as something inviolably trustworthy; and religious experience can also be truly personal. At the same time seeing in-

3. Ibid., 24.

4. Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 12-13.

5. Notable exceptions include the following articles, some of which are discussed later in this essay: Lavina Fielding Anderson, "In the Garden God Hath Planted: Explorations Toward a Maturing Faith," *Sunstone* 14 (Oct. 1990): 24-27; and "Modes of Revelation: A Personal Approach," *Sunstone* 16 (Aug. 1992): 34-38; Scott Kenney, "At Home at Sea: Confession of a Cultural Mormon," *Sunstone* 13 (June 1989): 16-21; David Knowlton, "Missionary, Native, and General Authority Accounts of a Bolivian Conversion," *Sunstone* 13 (Jan. 1989): 14-20; and "Belief, Metaphor, and Rhetoric: The Mormon Practice of Testimony Bearing," *Sunstone* 15 (Apr. 1991): 20-27; John Tarjan, "Heavenly Father or Chairman of the Board? How Organizational Metaphors Can Define and Confine Religious Experience," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Fall 1992): 36-55; Lawrence Young, "Response to Scott Kenney," *Sunstone* 13 (June 1989): 21-23; and "Truth and Transcendence," *Sunstone* 15 (Sept. 1991): 55-57.

6. Within the LDS church, for instance, it is widely accepted that people truly convert to Mormon beliefs less through a rational conclusion about their validity than through the persuasion of personal experience, through conviction that comes from following the Book of Mormon advice to "experiment" upon God's word.

dividual or collective experience as both the ground of religious traditions and test of their validity may threaten authority. In Ruether's words, "Received symbols, formulas, and laws are either authenticated or not through their ability to illuminate and interpret experience. Systems of authority try to reverse this relation and make received symbols dictate what can be experienced as well as the interpretation of that which is experienced." "In reality," she argues, "the relation is the opposite."⁷ Because the significance of "experience" is so contested, questions about Mormon religious experience are often most effectively asked indirectly—through examining our theology, exploring our history, or scrutinizing our institutions.⁸

In this essay I would like to shift perspectives, to look directly at Mormon understandings of religious experience and assess them in light of contemporary critical theory. How do Mormons define experience as "religious," and what does that mean? What does it mean to identify our experience as "authentic"? What forms for understanding experience does Mormonism offer individuals as they shape their identities, interact with others, and interpret what happens to them—and do they help or hinder the process? What is the place of individual religious experience in Mormon theology, and in the various Mormon communities in which we live?

To address these questions, it is first necessary to consider the term "experience." By habit, we readily trust experience as, in Raymond Williams's words, "the most authentic kind of truth," as "the ground for all (subsequent) reasoning and analysis."⁹ Yet even everyday usage reveals how uncertain or contradictory our grasp of experience may be. Anyone who has heard fishing stories has glimpsed how interpretations of experience change over time. Anyone who has had a harrowing adventure or deeply spiritual impression knows how difficult it can be to express such things in the first place. And anyone who has been in a car accident, heard both participants recount a bad date, or found a church meeting insipid while others were moved to tears knows that people can experience something together and understand it in opposite ways. The relations among what happens to people, how they perceive it, and how they narrate it to themselves and to others are anything but straightforward and pristine.

7. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 12.

8. Certainly many of these inquiries have some basis in experience: contemporary Mormon interest in God the Mother, for example, often comes from those who feel they have experienced loss in her absence, or joy in the sense of her presence.

9. Williams quoted in Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 27.

CRITICAL THEORY AND EXPERIENCE

Writers and historians have long recognized the significant divergence among actual, remembered, and reported experience. Leo Tolstoy describes this in an essay on his novel *War and Peace*:

Make a round of all the troops right after a battle, or even on the second or third day, before the reports have been written, and ask any of the soldiers and senior and junior officers what the battle was like: you will be told what all these people experienced and saw, and you will form a sublime, complex, infinitely varied and grim, indistinct impression; and from no one—least of all from the commander in chief—will you learn what the whole affair was like. But in two or three days the reports begin to be handed in. Talkers begin to narrate how things they did not see took place; finally a general report is compiled and the general opinion of the army is formed according to this report. Everyone is relieved to exchange his own doubts and questions for this false, but clear and always flattering presentation. A month or two later, question a person who took part in the battle, and already you will not sense the raw, vital material that used to be there, but he will narrate according to the reports.¹⁰

For Tolstoy, perception quickly if not immediately distorts the experience it aims to represent. We make sense of experience by shaping narratives, addressed to ourselves (reflection, memory) or to others (reports, autobiographies, testimonies); in the process we highlight some events and elide others.¹¹

Contemporary critical theory further challenges the everyday as-

10. Tolstoy quoted in Gary Saul Morson, *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potentials in War and Peace* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 107.

11. Morson (110-11) traces the implications of Tolstoy's ideas:

Immediately after an event, memory begins its work. In order to remember, one must order incidents in some way; those incidents that are not ordered are forgotten. Random incidents—which may have been the most efficacious ones—cannot be narrated, for they fit no structure. . . . Tolstoy frequently describes both an event as it occurs and a participant's account of the event soon after it has taken place; the two renditions always diverge markedly, and imply the impossibility of deriving the actual events from the remembered version.

Indeed, Tolstoy suggests that the mechanisms of memory that regularize and order an event begin their work *immediately*, even as the event is unfolding. Perception itself makes use of the same mechanisms of regularization: to a certain extent, we perceive only what is more or less amenable to memory, and so introduce order not present in the actual event. Thus, mechanisms of memory are also mechanisms of perception, which select and order an event *as it is being initially apprehended*. We see events as if we are narrating them. From experience to recollection, and from each recollection to the next, still more distortions are introduced into events to make them fit the shape of narratives we have heard and can easily remember.

sumption that experience is self-evident and unproblematically true. In recent decades scholars in several disciplines have examined how language and conceptual structures delimit our understanding of experience. The origins of their critical theories are beyond the scope of this essay, but a brief summary of the context in which they developed clarifies some of their primary concerns. From the 1920s into the 1960s formalist and structuralist critics mapped various kinds of human activity, constructing paradigms to show how humans organize their language, ideas, and experience. They emphasized the positive possibilities of both the structures they described and their critical endeavor: the advantages of binary thinking and paradigms, the variety of ways that conventional plot elements are combined in forming stories, the hope of someday being able to explain all human discourse and activity in structural terms.

Since the 1960s, however, many cultural critics have examined discourse and experience in quite different ways; for want of something better they are often referred to by the umbrella term “poststructuralists.” Influenced variously by Karl Marx and Louis Althusser, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, Helene Cixous and Gayatri Spivak, poststructuralist critics have cast a critical light on, around, under, and through structuralist paradigms. Where earlier critics emphasized what forms make possible, these recent critics highlight what forms limit, suppress, or distort; they subvert them by critique from within and without, and trace what happens when they break apart. They also re-examine the underpinnings of concepts once assumed to be foundational, such as “self,” “identity,” and “experience,” and often focus on questions about ideology and subjectivity. By using the tools of deconstruction, re-viewing the world through a feminist lens, or engaging in Marxist critique, they examine the ways both everyday and critical understandings of experience are produced. They explore how human beings and knowledge are shaped through discourses that by nature are never neutral but always deeply marked by ideology.

In everyday usage “ideology” is a pejorative term—the other person’s ideas are ideological, polemical nonsense, while yours are judicious, unbiased fact. But critical theory argues persuasively that *all* perceptions are ideological: ideas and experiences occur not in a vacuum but in a context shaped by assumptions about the hows and whys of human existence. Catherine Belsey explains the concept:

ideology is not simply a set of illusions . . . but a system of representations (discourses, images, myths) concerning the real relations in which people live. . . . In other words, ideology is both a real and an imaginary relation to the world—real in that it is the way in which people really live their relationship to the social relations which govern their conditions of existence, but imaginary in that it discourages a full understanding of these conditions of

existence and the ways in which people are constituted in them.

Ideology, she continues, thus “obscures the real conditions of existence by presenting partial truths. It is a set of omissions, gaps rather than lies, smoothing over contradictions, appearing to provide answers to questions which in reality it evades, and masquerading as coherence.”¹²

The traditional notion of the individual as autonomous, unified self is one of these partial truths. For critical theorists, human beings are more accurately described as subjects constructed through a variety of discourses regarding social relations, knowledge, gender identity, and existence. The human subject is not simply the conscious self at any moment but “the site of contradiction”; it is not fixed but rather “perpetually in the process of construction.”¹³ Belsey uses gender to illustrate:

Women as a group in our society are both produced and inhibited by contradictory discourses. Very broadly, we participate both in the liberal-humanist discourse of freedom, self-determination and rationality and at the same time in the specifically feminine discourse offered by society of submission, relative inadequacy and irrational intuition. The attempt to locate a single and coherent subject-position within these contradictory discourses, and in consequence to find a non-contradictory pattern of behavior, can lead to intolerable pressures. One way of responding to this situation is to retreat from the contradictions and from discourse itself, to become “sick”—more women than men are treated for mental illness. Another is to seek a resolution of the contradictions in the discourses of feminism.¹⁴

The subject-positions this society produces for women are fundamentally contradictory and thus ripe for dismantling. Poststructuralist feminist thought breaks these positions down by uncovering how they are formed and by challenging the social relations that ideologies about unified selves and women’s roles obscure.¹⁵

Understanding human subjectivity as something constructed and in process undermines the assumption that experience provides uncontested, un-ideological evidence. As Joan Scott points out, the idea that experience is transparently true “reproduces rather than contests given ideological systems.”¹⁶ To return to Tolstoy’s example, it means taking

12. Catherine Belsey, “Constructing the Subject: Deconstructing the Text,” in *Feminist Criticism and Social Change*, ed. Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt (New York: Methuen, 1985), 45-46.

13. *Ibid.*, 50-51.

14. *Ibid.*, 50.

15. For further discussion of poststructuralism, subjectivity, and feminism, see Chris Weedon’s clear, accessible *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), esp. 74-106.

16. Scott, 25.

battle accounts as self-evident facts, without examining the ways narrative forms, notions about manhood, public rhetoric about war, and other discourses must be smoothed over in order to make "complex, infinitely varied . . . impression[s]" into a "clear and always flattering presentation." The idea that experience is transparently true assumes a fixed self as the "bedrock of evidence." Scott proposes a different view: "It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience. Experience in this definition then becomes not the origin of our explanation, not the authoritative . . . evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced."¹⁷

As this brief discussion suggests, poststructuralist theories make it difficult, even impossible to use terms like "self" or "experience" uncritically.¹⁸ Recently, however, several thinkers have argued that contemporary theorists must negotiate new ways to discuss "experience," in part because it is "so much a part of everyday language" that it seems "more useful to work with it, to analyze its operations and to redefine its meaning."¹⁹ Critics concerned with gender and race offer an especially compelling argument. Intellectual and political movements from the margins—those of women, African Americans, and peoples of the so-called "Third World"—have long relied on the authenticity of previously unheard voices. They have emphasized passionately and persuasively the importance of taking once-discounted experience seriously. As bell hooks points out, however, the poststructuralist disarticulation of the human subject ironically "surface[s] at a historical moment when many subjugated people feel themselves coming to voice for the first time."²⁰

In response, hooks and others argue, cultural critics need to create ways to discuss experience that both value individual voices and *at the same time* examine them critically, as voices restricted or silenced by—and challenging—the discourses that shape them. Contemporary theory must develop approaches that hear voices from the margins without trying to co-opt them, that listen to subjectivities without trying to fix identities. For, in Trinh T. Minh-ha's words,

17. Ibid., 25-26. Scott continues: "To think about experience in this way is to historicize it as well as to historicize the identities it produces. . . . it . . . implies critical scrutiny of all explanatory categories usually taken for granted, including the category of 'experience.'"

18. Indeed, for a time in the 1980s poststructuralists made these terms taboo in some critical circles and labeled those who used them as hopelessly naive. See, for example, Susan Stanford Friedman, "Post/Poststructuralist Feminist Criticism: The Politics of Recuperation and Negotiation," *New Literary History* 22 (1991): 473-75.

19. Scott, 37. Friedman criticizes the implications of the more frequently used "recuperate" and proposes "negotiate" as a better term (476-86).

20. bell hooks, "Postmodern Blackness," *Postmodern Culture* 1 (1990): para. 9 (electronic format).

Despite our desperate, eternal attempt to separate, contain, and mend, categories always leak. Of all the layers that form the open (never finite) totality of "I," which is to be filtered out as superfluous, fake, corrupt, and which is to be called pure, true, real, genuine, original, authentic? Which, indeed, since all interchange, revolving in an endless process? (According to the context in which they operate, the superfluous can become real; the authentic can prove fake; and so on.)²¹

A critical theory equal to this understanding of identity will seek to describe the workings of the subject-in-process, to understand the ways subjects are formed without necessarily re-forming them along the way. Scott proposes that it should be possible, in Spivak's terms, to "make visible the assignment of subject-positions": to understand the ways identities are "ascribed, resisted, or embraced" through "complex and changing discursive processes" which "achieve their effect because they aren't noticed."²²

Creating such a new approach requires rethinking the old opposition between history and theory (or, in the present context, theology): "history," taken too naively, assumes experience is transparently true, while "theory," taken too absolutely, assumes it doesn't matter. The present, Susan Stanford Friedman suggests, calls for "a commitment to self-consciously historicising theory and theorizing history": an approach that sees history as the product of complex discourses, theory as the product of historically-specific circumstances, and experience as something constructed rather than simply given.²³ Such an approach will recognize, Scott writes, that "experience is at once always already an interpretation *and* is in need of interpretation. What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward; it is always contested, always therefore political."²⁴

MORMONISM AND THE FORMS OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The significance of these theories for the study of religion in general, and Mormonism in particular, may by now be evident, for encounters with the sacred are the most profound and complicated of human experiences. Mormonism emerged from Joseph Smith's inarticulable experience of the divine in a grove in western New York, and each conversion that

21. Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 94.

22. "To do this," Scott continues, "a change of object seems to be required, one which takes the emergence of concepts and identities as historical events in need of explanation" (33).

23. Friedman, 482-84.

24. Scott, 37.

followed served as further confirmation of that experience, as a figurative renewal of his sacred narrative.²⁵ As Richard Bushman explains, from the beginning "the core of Mormon belief was a conviction about actual events. The test of faith was not adherence to a certain confession of faith but belief that Christ was resurrected, that Joseph Smith saw God, that the Book of Mormon was true history, and that Peter, James, and John restored the apostleship. Mormonism was history, not philosophy."²⁶ Certainly Mormonism has also emphasized its distinctive theology and, in recent years, its ecclesiastical organization: such claims, however, are virtually always made by appealing to historical "facts." The result is a creative, often very contradictory relation between experience and theology, history and theory.²⁷

"In the final analysis," Bushman suggests, "the power of Joseph Smith to breathe new life into the ancient sacred stories, and to make a sacred story out of his own life, was the source of his extraordinary influence."²⁸ What interests me is this process of distinguishing experiences as religious, of making sacred stories out of human lives. It is important, of course, to recognize that definitions of "religion" and "the sacred" are not absolute: simply calling something a "religious experience" involves interpretation. As Colleen McDannell points out, boundaries between sacred and profane are fluid, created and re-created by those who live them, and often defined differently by members and authorities.²⁹ To a

25. Cf. Knowlton, "Belief, Metaphor, and Rhetoric," 24-25.

26. Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 188.

27. Mark P. Leone, as Bushman notes, discusses this contradiction in his *Roots of Modern Mormonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979). In response to a question about what the LDS church has to fear from contemporary research on Mormon history, Sterling McMurrin comments:

Mormonism is a historically oriented religion. To a remarkable degree, the Church has concealed much of its history from its people, while at the same time causing them to tie their religious faith to its own controlled interpretations of its history. So there is no point in arguing whether a serious study of Mormon history may have a deteriorating effect upon the faith of large numbers of Mormon people. It certainly will in countless cases. But that is the Church's fault or the fault of the weakness of the faith, not the fault of today's historians, most of whom are both honest and highly competent. The Church shouldn't tie religious faith to history. Religious faith should be faith in God and in one's fellowmen—not faith in some historical events and their official interpretation.

In the case of Mormonism, historical events have been made in effect the foundation of the faith and in a sense the touchstone of orthodoxy (in Blake Ostler, "An Interview with Sterling M. McMurrin," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 [Spring 1984]: 20-21).

28. Bushman, 188.

29. Colleen McDannell, "Sacred, Secret, and the Non-Mormon," Salt Lake City Sunstone Symposium, Aug. 1992, audiotape.

large degree, we identify experience as sacred through the forms described in our religious institutions—by which I mean ecclesiastical organizations, scriptural texts, and cultural traditions. These institutions have a great deal of authority in Mormonism, both officially and unofficially: they serve as precedent in a culture where precedent often matters more than circumstance, and measure validity in a world where knowing what is “true” is paramount. Mormons are taught to “liken scripture unto themselves,” to look to the past to know how the church should operate, and to rely on scripture, church meetings, and what has been called “faithful history” to show them what religious experience is like.³⁰

These institutions are not timeless or absolute, however, but historically-formed and culturally-specific. We understand, respond to, and attempt to imitate them from our own cultural contexts: religious experiences occur in creative interaction between our own circumstances and the forms given to us as tradition. Carol Christ describes the process:

There is a dialectic between story and experience. Stories shape experience; experience shapes stories. There is no primary preverbal experience utterly unshaped by stories. In a sense, without stories there is no experience. On the other hand, there is a distinction between stories and experiences which enables us to see that not all stories are adequate to our experience. Conversely we experience a shock of recognition when we find a story which articulates an as yet unarticulated part of our experience.³¹

Certainly religious conventions do, as she suggests, help us to recognize the possibilities of the sacred in our own lives; they help us identify with the community and in some ways actually make religious experiences possible. For example, as David Knowlton explains, the Mormon practice of testimony bearing “accepts individual experience and creeds and sub-

30. In a discussion of Harold Bloom’s reading of Mormonism, Lawrence Young observes:

Although Mormons are gnostic in the sense that they place great emphasis on experience and have virtually no systematic or formal theology, their emphasis on experience does not result in freedom of self from the community. For Mormon religious experience to be valid, it must be interpreted in ways that elevate the organization above the self. Individual experience must remain subordinate to and never contradict hierarchical authority (in Lawrence A. Young, “Confronting Turbulent Environments: Issues in the Organizational Growth and Globalization of Mormonism,” in *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives*, ed. Marie Cornwall, Tim B. Heaton, and Lawrence A. Young [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994], 45–46).

31. Carol P. Christ, “Spiritual Quest and Women’s Experience,” in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, ed. Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 229.

sumes them under unifying collective symbols."³² Such conventions also enable us to talk about the sacred in a recognizable and public manner. When one Mormon tells another that he or she "has a testimony," the phrase serves as a kind of shorthand that both joins the individual with the community and implies a type of experience without revealing details one may wish to keep private.

At the same time pre-existing stories and conventions can have limiting effects or be inadequate for articulating our experiences. Without them, people may not recognize the spiritual, but restricted to them they may miss it as well; "likening scripture unto oneself" works in some circumstances but leaves one out in the cold in others. Conventions tend to conceal the messy realities of life rather than to lay them bare. As Mikhail Bakhtin observes: "All ideological forms, that is, institutions, become hypocritical and false, while real life, denied any ideological directives, becomes crude and bestial."³³ Any ideology provides a system of representation, a way of ordering and making sense of the world around us; Mormon culture and theology are no exception. But the neat, partial images ideologies necessarily rely on to interpret ideas and experiences come at a cost. Such cultural forms value some things at the expense of others and may even specifically reject the kinds of experience we want to understand.

This occurs particularly, Ruether argues, when the "historical institution"—in her example, the Christian church generally—disclaims its own historicity and fails to respond to the community. For Ruether, the church must be understood not as institution *or* community but as a dialogic relation between the two that unfortunately breaks down easily and seldom occurs with "optimal creativity."³⁴ Her argument is strongly phrased, striking, and worth quoting at length:

[H]istorical institutions must accept both their historical relativity as institutions and also their limits as vehicles of transmission and communication. What they transmit is not the Spirit or the living presence of God as such, but rather forms of interpretation of the presence of God that have been shaped by past historical experiences of encounter with God and reflection upon them. At their best, institutions carry with them some collective wisdom about what has worked and what has not, how ecstatic experience can be abused by charlatans and power mongers, or how to draw people of different age groups into learning and participation. All of this cultural heritage is

32. Knowlton, "Belief, Metaphor, and Rhetoric," 25.

33. M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 162.

34. Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Women-Church: Theology and Practice of Feminist Liturgical Communities* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 32.

very important. But all of this is dead without living persons who, in each particular moment, engage in transforming both their experience and the traditional forms into the spark of lived meaning. This is the Spirit actually alive in our midst.

"At their best," Ruether continues,

historical institutions create the occasion for the experience of the Spirit. But they cannot cause the presence of the Spirit, which always breaks in from a direct encounter of living persons and the divine. Historic institutions also transmit a culture of interpretation around such spiritual encounters, but this culture of interpretation cannot be closed and finalized. It is, at best, an open system of symbolism that gives guidelines to interpret the experience and translate it into daily life. But the living encounter with the Spirit is also the occasion for new appropriation of meaning by which the given culture of interpretation is itself renewed and reshaped. Tradition, to remain alive, must be open to this continual reshaping of interpretive culture by new spiritual experience.³⁵

As Ruether and other feminist theologians point out, our cultures of interpretation fall especially short of enabling us to have and understand religious experiences when they are deeply, inequitably marked by gender. When historic forms are presumed to be timeless and definitive, for example, we erroneously take stories constructed around men as straightforward means of understanding the experiences of all human beings. Such a "conceptual error of vast proportion" has led to fundamentally inaccurate understandings of reality and thus of the experiences of both men and women.³⁶ It has long required women, Carol Christ explains, to live "in the interstices between inchoate experiences and the shapings to experience given by the stories of men." They have "discovered more and less adequate ways of circumventing this basic situation of being without their own stories," but the cost has been incalculable: "In a very real sense, women have not experienced their own experience."³⁷

RETHINKING MORMONISM'S INTERPRETIVE CULTURE

In the last decade thoughtful, striking, critical analyses of Mormon religious institutions have appeared from both within and without the LDS

35. *Ibid.*, 34-35.

36. The phrase comes from Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 220.

37. Christ, 228-29. And, one might add, men have thus had no access to women's experience either.

church. They have highlighted the limits of Mormon interpretive culture, named many of its blind spots, and dismantled some of its deep contradictions. David Knowlton, for instance, draws upon critical theory in investigating cultural contradictions in international Mormonism and the Mormon construction of masculinity.³⁸ Lavina Fielding Anderson, Dorice Williams Elliott, and Sonja Farnsworth use rhetorical criticism and feminist and discourse theories in compelling readings of the ways Mormon culture relies on a "grammar of inequity" that devalues women.³⁹ Marie Cornwall analyzes the effects of institutionalizing church organizations in terms of the strikingly disparate roles and experiences assigned to women and to men.⁴⁰ Others, including Elaine Lawless, Margaret Brady, and Susan Swetnam, have examined the complicated ways Mormon women use specific cultural forms—the bearing of testimonies, the telling of visionary experiences, and the writing of ancestor biographies—in trying to make coherent the contradictory subject-positions their culture offers them.⁴¹ And John Tarjan draws upon organization theory to examine how the use of corporate metaphors in contemporary Mormonism leads to emphasis on form over substance, cohesion over benevolence, and competition over community.

Through their thoughtful analyses, these cultural critics have taken on the enormous, unending project of rethinking Mormon religious

38. In addition to the essays already cited, see David Knowlton, "On Mormon Masculinity," *Sunstone* 16 (Aug. 1992): 19-31, and "'Gringo Jeringo': Anglo Mormon Missionary Culture in Bolivia," in *Contemporary Mormonism*, 218-36.

39. See Lavina Fielding Anderson, "A Voice From the Past: The Benson Instructions for Parents," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Winter 1988): 103-13; and "The Grammar of Inequity," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23 (Winter 1990): 81-95, reprinted in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, ed. Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 215-30; Dorice Williams Elliott, "For Those Who Have Ears to Hear: Subversive Hidden Messages in Conventional Mormon Women's Discourse," Salt Lake City Sunstone Symposium, Aug. 1987, typescript; "The Mormon Conference Talk as Patriarchal Discourse," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22 (Spring 1989): 70-78; and "Let Women No Longer Keep Silent in Our Churches: Women's Voices in Mormonism," in *Women and Authority*, 201-14; Sonja Farnsworth, "Mormonism's Odd Couple: The Motherhood-Priesthood Concept," *Mormon Women's Forum* 2 (Mar. 1991): 1, 6-11, reprinted in *Women and Authority*, 299-314. See also Linda P. Wilcox, "Mormon Motherhood: Official Images," in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 208-26.

40. Marie Cornwall, "The Institutional Role of Mormon Women," in *Contemporary Mormonism*, 239-64.

41. Elaine J. Lawless, "'I Know If I Don't Bear My Testimony, I'll Lose It': Why Mormon Women Bother to Speak at All," *Kentucky Folklore Record* 30 (1984): 79-96; Margaret K. Brady, "Transformations of Power: Mormon Women's Visionary Narratives," *Journal of American Folklore* 100 (1987): 461-68; and Susan H. Swetnam, "Turning to the Mothers: Mormon Women's Biographies of Their Female Forebears and the Mormon Church's Expectations for Women," *Frontiers* 10 (1988): 1-6.

experience. The task is overwhelming and overdue. In recent decades the interpretive culture through which many Mormons experience the divine, understand their lives, and shape their religious community has been open-ended and tremendously vibrant. It has enabled Mormons to understand themselves and others as subjects-in-process in rich, diverse ways; it has made it possible for many to continue participating in a community they care for deeply. During the same period, however, the conventional or official interpretive culture of the organizational church has appeared increasingly constrained by authority and cut off from historicity.⁴² The dialogic relation between historical institution and spirit-filled community has not been operating with "optimal creativity."

The result is abrupt, sometimes painful disjunction between experience and official stories. Compelling, articulate efforts to make visible the assignment of subject-positions to Mormon women, in particular, have often met with disdain, if not derision. In the 1990s many old conventions about women remain deeply entrenched in Mormon rhetoric, despite increasing awareness of their ideological underpinnings and their distance from women's experiences. Despite encouraging cultural changes and occasional institutional shifts, in the 1990s one can still learn from the pulpit that sons matter more than daughters; that "specialness" and spirituality are equivalent; and that women have a good deal in motherhood instead of a burden of priesthood. Ruether writes that "religious traditions fall into crisis when the received interpretations of the redemptive paradigms contradict experience in significant ways."⁴³ It seems no exaggeration to see such a crisis in contemporary Mormonism.⁴⁴

In the process of writing this paper I reread essays about literary theory and Mormon culture, notes from classes and symposia, old e-mail messages, and comments scrawled (sometimes heatedly) on church programs and odd slips of paper. In this mass of material what struck me most were observations made on separate occasions by several intelli-

42. Armand Mauss discusses factors contributing to this in *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), and "The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation and Identity: Trends and Developments since Midcentury," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (Spring 1994): 129-49.

43. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 16.

44. The events concerning women and intellectuals in the church chronicled by Lavina Fielding Anderson help support such a hypothesis; see Anderson, "Landmarks for LDS Women: A Contemporary Chronology," *Mormon Women's Forum* 3 (Dec. 1992): 1-20; and "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Spring 1993): 7-64.

gent, committed, extraordinary Mormon women.⁴⁵ In differing ways each mentioned that her alienation in the church and sometimes her skepticism—in part, about others' accounts of "spiritual experiences"—had led her to suppose she lacked sufficient spirituality or simply wasn't "spiritual." Eventually, however, each came to understand that her initial assumptions were skewed: she was indeed "spiritual" but had not recognized it because her perceptions and experiences did not fit those in the script she'd been handed in a religion where spirituality is too often measured by conventionality.⁴⁶ Relying on such cultural institutions can hinder recognition of the spiritual within ourselves and others, cause us to devalue genuine introspection, lead us to mistake the secular for the divine, and make us doubt the significance of our own experience. Without new, open-ended stories, unarticulated Mormon experiences can remain disarticulated and absent from our view. Discontent does not automatically signify the absence of spirituality but can indeed be a sign of its presence.

Among the most difficult and pressing questions for contemporary Mormonism are how to honor experiences, understand them critically, and see their relation with the divine. How can we renew our culture of interpretation so that it does not overvalue some forms of religiosity at the expense of others? How can we trust past experiences after recognizing how deeply they may have been shaped by the grammar and ideology of inequity? How can we foster and celebrate the increasingly diverse voices in Mormonism, and hear those from the margins as well as the center? How can we respond to those who speak in unexpected, even disturbing ways? How can we honor one another's "open (never finite)" subjectivity without trying to fix one another's identity? These questions are complicated, to be sure, but they are also essential. Let me sketch some specific areas for further thought.

First, critical and creative examination of Mormon discourse and culture must continue. While some fear such analysis harms the church, it is imperative for the vitality of our communities. Though touched by the divine, theologies and religious forms develop in contexts that are histor-

45. See, for example, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "The Pink *Dialogue* and Beyond," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Winter 1981): 28-39; and "Lusterware," in *A Thoughtful Faith: Essays on Belief by Mormon Scholars*, ed. Philip L. Barlow (Centerville, UT: Canon Press, 1986), 195-203. Also Lorie Winder Stromberg, in the discussion following the panel "What Do Those Women Want? Mormon Women and Feminism" at Sunstone West in 1991; and Laurie Newman DiPadova, in a post on Mormon-L (electronic forum), 23 June 1992. A similar comment appears in Esther Peterson, "The World Beyond the Valley," *Sunstone* 15 (Nov. 1991): 21-25.

46. Cf. David Knowlton, "Why Can't We Talk? Secrecy, Deceit, and the Sacred in Mormonism," Salt Lake City Sunstone Symposium, Aug. 1992, audiotape.

ically-specific and ideologically-shaped: Mormonism is charged with utopian visions, but it is also very human.⁴⁷ Our culture of interpretation, like any other, can and does become clichéd. And clichés, as Nancy Mairs notes, provide set formats that distance us from genuine experience while masquerading as the real thing.⁴⁸ By inertia, ubiquity, and institutional expediency they claim an authority far exceeding their value: once one has been schooled in clichés, their truth-claim can be difficult to counter. The cliché easily functions as what Bakhtin calls the authoritative or monologic word: it “demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it may have to persuade us internally.” It stands apart from life and requires our “unconditional allegiance.”⁴⁹ Such authoritative or monologic discourse presents itself as true rather than partial; it seeks to define rather than to engage, refusing the richness, validity, or even existence of other voices. Creative, critical response, however, Bakhtin argues, will eventually, dialogically, dismantle such claims and lead to something richer.

Second, the nature and significance of faith merit constant reconsideration. Over the last decade I have had the opportunity for many conversations with old friends on the subject of losing and sustaining faith. What has been most revealing is how infrequently the loss of faith is connected with new certainty about the death of God or the fraudulence of all religion. For the most part, it has come through the anguish of trying to live through the deeply conflicted discourses that construct Mormon lives. It is the paradoxical nature of contemporary Mormonism to produce independent-minded, tolerant, responsible, questioning, caring subjects-in-process who are very much Mormon yet never at home in the institution and often ill at ease with the culture. They are Mormon in their bones, but their experiences and critical insight have shown them

47. German critic Gisela Ecker says of essentialist tendencies in contemporary feminism: “If it is true that no utopian program can do without myth-making it should at least be accompanied by an examination of how these myths are produced and what they are like.” In *Feminist Aesthetics*, ed. Gisela Ecker, trans. Harriet Anderson (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 15.

48. Nancy Mairs, Interview on *Fresh Air* (National Public Radio, 30 July 1993).

49. Bakhtin, 342-43. Richard Poll comments on authoritarian language in the church:

Authoritarian pronouncement is, of course, one technique of denial, well represented in the literature of the new LDS orthodoxy. *Since* the scriptures are substantially inerrant, now that the footnotes from the Prophet’s revision are there to smooth out rough places in the Bible, neither fossils nor floating axes need trouble the faithful. *Since* the public utterances of the prophets are almost always inspired and cover almost every consequential topic, one needs only quasi-authoritative help with the odd incongruity in the *Journal of Discourses* to remain secure against the buffetings of dissonance and doubt (in Poll, “Dealing with Dissonance: Myths, Documents, and Faith,” *Sunstone* 12 [May 1988]: 21).

the poverty of cherished clichés and the limits of Mormon religious conventions. In one way or another many have lost hope in the capacity of Mormonism to interpret their experiences and aid them in approaching the divine. They have not necessarily lost faith in God but have sadly recognized that their church often denies the legitimacy of their hope to “experience their own experience,” choosing to fix itself outside of historicity rather than remain open to new possibilities for spiritual insight.

One of the significant contributions of the Sunstone symposia has been the “Pillars of My Faith” series. Together, these presentations and essays provide glimpses of the kind of rich, evolving understanding of faith that may be essential for the future of the Mormon community. Faith takes many forms, develops in diverse ways, and is unpredictable: it is a spectrum or process of belief, not something one either has or hasn’t got. What is faith-promoting for some members of the church alienates others; one person’s pillars can even be another’s burdens. In considering the myriad possibilities of faith, it is crucial to remember that our public expressions and private understanding of faith take shape in the dialogic relationship between story and experience that Carol Christ describes. Stories and language devised for the purpose of inspiring and converting often make faith look like a simpler proposition than it is in real life: do A, B, and C and you will have Faith. This narrative strategy serves a useful purpose, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich notes: “Scriptures clarify by sifting . . . eternal principles from the grainy confusion of ordinary life.”⁵⁰ But that clarity becomes a liability if people then devalue ordinary experience because it isn’t like life in the scriptures, or distrust their faith because it isn’t just like someone else’s. One must also remember that faith and religious understanding change through time. While Mormons conventionally describe this as a process of accretion (“line upon line”), it may often be much more a process of discontinuous rediscovery, as semiotician Carlo Ginzburg describes: “I believe that the accumulation of knowledge always happens in this way: across broken rather than continuous lines; through false beginnings, corrections, oversights, and rediscoveries; thanks to filters and schemata which blind and at the same time illuminate.”⁵¹

50. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “Family Scriptures,” originally published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*; reprinted in *Personal Voices: A Celebration of Dialogue*, ed. Mary Lythgoe Bradford (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 267.

51. Carlo Ginzburg, “On the European (Re)discovery of Shamans,” *Elementa: Journal of Slavic Studies and Comparative Cultural Semiotics* 1 (1993): 35. After writing this, I re-read Lavina Fielding Anderson’s “In the Garden God Hath Planted”:

Revelation is not an orderly, linear process. It can be a sunburst of insight, a glimmer of comprehension, the rethinking with understanding of long-past events, the testing of a beloved principle in an unforeseen crucible. But most important of all, it’s *our* experience. Even if it begins with instructions from elsewhere, it must become *our* experience before it becomes *our* revelation (26).

Third, Mormons need to recognize that there are many viable avenues for religious experience. A man in my former stake commented that he was learning from his children that experiences of the gospel other than his own can also be true; I recall his remark often and think his children fortunate. For within Mormonism there can be too much hostility and not enough respect among caring individuals whose ways of life and approaches to religious experience differ, sometimes tremendously. Those who find religious experience in participating in every program the church offers sometimes need to recognize that what they consider basic activity feels like hyperactivity to others. Those whose religious understanding is shaped by intellectual traditions or critical theory occasionally need to recall that Mormon ideology has virtues as well as failings. To take a random example: I may never voluntarily attend a homemaking meeting, but I must also understand how it gives some women a sense of autonomy and community they find nowhere else in the church. At the same time men and women who would never dream of "questioning" need to understand that for many discussing Mormonism openly and critically is an essential part of religious experience.⁵²

Perhaps the best way to honor Mormon religious experience is to write, read, and tell it against as well as with the grain. We should actively seek new ways of interpreting the secular and the sacred as they mix in human lives—not simply for the novelty, but as a means of coming to a richer understanding of experience and of the effects, positive and negative, of institutions. Mormons need to create approaches for articulating experiences that have been recounted poorly, left unnamed, or silenced entirely by the interpretive means currently available. At present this occurs most successfully in journals and personal essays, where, Julie Nichols writes, stories from ordinary lives have the "ability to interrogate and correct the inadequacies in the larger cultural narrative."⁵³ Bakhtin's understanding of narrative is illuminating here. Rather than repeating old forms handed down from the past, or authorizing one voice and silencing others, the narrative discourse Bakhtin celebrates reveals the mix-

52. Thoughtful comments on the nature and obligations of being an "alternate voice" in the Mormon community appear in Armand L. Mauss, "Alternate Voices: The Calling and Its Implications," *Sunstone* 14 (Apr. 1990): 7-10; Scott Kenney, "God's Alternate Voices," *Sunstone* 14 (Apr. 1990): 11-15; and Richard Poll, "Dialogue Toward Forgiveness: A Supporting View—A Response to 'The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology,'" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Spring 1993): 67-75.

53. Julie J. Nichols, "The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: Women's Stories, Women's Lives," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Summer 1992): 77. Many of these personal essays do offer unfinalized, challenging narratives in place of finished didacticism. See, for example, Martha Pierce's discussion in "Personal Discourse on God the Mother," in *Women and Authority*, 247-56; Martha Sonntag Bradley's "Reclaiming One's Voice," *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter* 4 (Sept. 1993): 8-9; and the regular "Sisters Speak" section in *Exponent II*.

ture and messy conflict of many voices in a polyphonic world. It dismantles the dominance of any single script through the dialogic presence of others; "it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding"; it takes shape in "maximal contact with the present (with contemporary reality) in all its openendedness."⁵⁴

Dialogue and openendedness can be possible in other Mormon discourses as well. For example, literary critics have highlighted the ways autobiographies and biographies strain, wrench, or delete women's experiences in order to fit conventional plots for women's lives.⁵⁵ Mormons have similarly often let the didactic purposes of personal and family histories circumscribe which experiences are recounted and what they are allowed to mean. Even when the narratives include a few moderately subversive anecdotes, their exemplary message predominates.⁵⁶ Different kinds of sacrament meeting talks and testimonies may also enrich Mormon understanding of religious experience: even public testimonies about not "having" a testimony provide opportunities for the community to reflect on the diversity of faith and the unfinished nature of all human subjects. Eugene England proposes that in the great social revolution of caring about others, perhaps telling our stories will accomplish what speaking in anger does not.⁵⁷ I agree: it is in storytelling that we can best

54. Bakhtin, 9, 11. In his 1990 lecture "Is Nothing Sacred?" Salman Rushdie discusses literature as the absolutely necessary place in which the interconnection between sacred and secular can be explored:

Can the religious mentality survive outside of religious dogma and hierarchy? Which is to say: Can art be the third principle that mediates between the spiritual and material worlds; might it, by "swallowing" both worlds, offer us something new—something that might even be called a secular definition of transcendence?

I believe it can. I believe it must. And I believe that, at its best, it does (in Rushdie, *Is Nothing Sacred?* [New York: Granta, 1990], 7).

55. For a readable introduction to this topic, see Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York: Norton, 1988).

56. Susan Swetnam's analysis of Mormon women's biographies of their female forebears suggests some of these contradictions. In a third of those she read, the writer fit her ancestor's life to a conventional formula and praised her as a proper Mormon woman—yet at the same time included a story or two that showed the paragon violating prescribed behavioral norms (using colorful language, rebelling against polygamy, dressing like men, being impatient with children). None of the writers, Swetnam points out, "even seem to recognize the subversive anecdotes" as challenges to their general claims about their ancestors' virtuousness. Whether consciously or not, she suggests, at some level they "see no contradiction in declaring their flawed grandmothers to be appropriate subjects for laudatory biography"—and thus make use of that most Mormon of tasks, family history, in order to quietly subvert cultural conventions about gender roles. See Swetnam, 5.

57. Eugene England, comment made following his plenary address at Sunstone West in April 1993.

tease out the contradictions of human experience, the ways ideology is both a real and an imaginary relation to the world. And it is in retelling old stories against the grain that we can seek a different value for experiences deeply tainted by the grammar and ideology of inequity. The *challenge* lies in telling them out loud in a religious culture where the manner of one's speech can matter more than the content of one's heart, and where narratives that do not match the given scripts too often are discounted as inauthentic.⁵⁸ It lies as well in making them heard, for perhaps some of the stories most in need of telling—and hearing—are about misunderstanding, anger, alienation, and voicelessness.

Fourth, Mormons, remembering our deepest ideals, need to work toward institutions and communities in which "the holiness of diversity" is respected as a fundamental part of religious experience.⁵⁹ This ideal isn't easy: it can be one thing to accept differences in the abstract, quite another to co-exist with them peaceably in one's own ward and family. Yet, though Mormon culture often underplays or even suppresses them, significant differences do exist in our wards, families, and other communities. Elouise Bell observed at the 1991 Sunstone Symposium that

Mormons tend to speak up about the aspects of their faith which are predictable and traditional; they tend to keep quiet about those parts of their faith which are exotic, unexpected, and highly individualized. But more and more of these folks are speaking of their faith these days. (Look at the program in your hands for proof.) What with the harvest of converts abroad and the unexpected varieties in the crop springing up at home, the church membership will have many interesting questions to ponder in the years ahead.⁶⁰

For the benefit of all, contemporary Mormonism should ponder how it

58. Zina D. H. Young observed at the first general Relief Society conference: "Where sisters can do so, it would be desirable and we think profitable, to visit each other's organizations and become acquainted; it will tend to union and harmony, promote confidence, and strengthen the chords that bind us together, for there is more difference in our manner of speech, than in the motives of our hearts" (see *Woman's Exponent* 17 [15 Apr. 1889]: 172).

59. The phrase comes from Anderson, "In the Garden God Hath Planted," 26. Recent discussions of Mormon community and diversity in the 1990s and beyond include Reba Keele, "Is Religious Community an Oxymoron?" *Sunstone* 16 (Nov. 1993): 13-21; Eugene England, "'No Respector of Persons': A Mormon Ethics of Diversity," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (Winter 1994): 79-100; Joanna Brooks, "Gender and Spirituality, or Why the Guerrilla Is the Most Feminine Creature in the Spiritual Jungle," *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter* 5 (Mar. 1994): 6-7; Jan Shipps, "Making Saints: In the Early Days and the Latter Days," *Contemporary Mormonism*, 64-83; and O. Kendall White, Jr., "The Church and the Community: Personal Reflections on Mormon Intellectual Life," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28 (Summer 1995): 83-91.

60. Elouise Bell, "'Yet All Experience is an Arch,'" *Sunstone* 15 (Nov. 1991): 20.

may welcome the exotic and the unexpected along with the predictable and the traditional: though they may exist on the margins, they are always already—and always have been—a part of our community.⁶¹

One of the more striking ideas in recent critical theory is that *all* knowledge is “situated”: it is partial, historically-located, culturally-specific, embodied, contradictory.⁶² To produce anything approximating authentic accounts of reality, humans must draw from many partial perspectives and recognize that we remain delimited by our own perspective and historicity. We must also remember that every account is provisional, that the authentic comes threaded with the inauthentic, and that one more voice or another partial vision is always possible. If Mormonism aims to embrace all truth, as nineteenth-century Mormons were fond of proclaiming, Mormons nearing the twenty-first century must be willing to hear those voices, whether they come from the margins, the center, or beyond the edges. Mormons must work to honor individuals as well as community, and to become a community that values “alternate” voices as much as “authorized” ones. The voices of women are not “auxiliary,” nor are those of intellectuals. Recently I read the idea that Christianity is “a perspective that is not already true but that becomes true where human beings are freed.”⁶³ In citing this I do not intend to downplay the significance of Jesus Christ. What I do intend is to suggest that if

61. In 1859 Brigham Young commented:

In this Territory are people gathered from almost all nations, where they have been differently educated, differently traditioned, and differently ruled. How, then, can we expect them to look, to act, and to have sentiments, faith, and customs precisely alike? I do not expect to see any such thing, but I endeavor to look upon them as an angel would, having compassion, long-suffering, and forbearance toward them (*Journal of Discourses* 7:134).

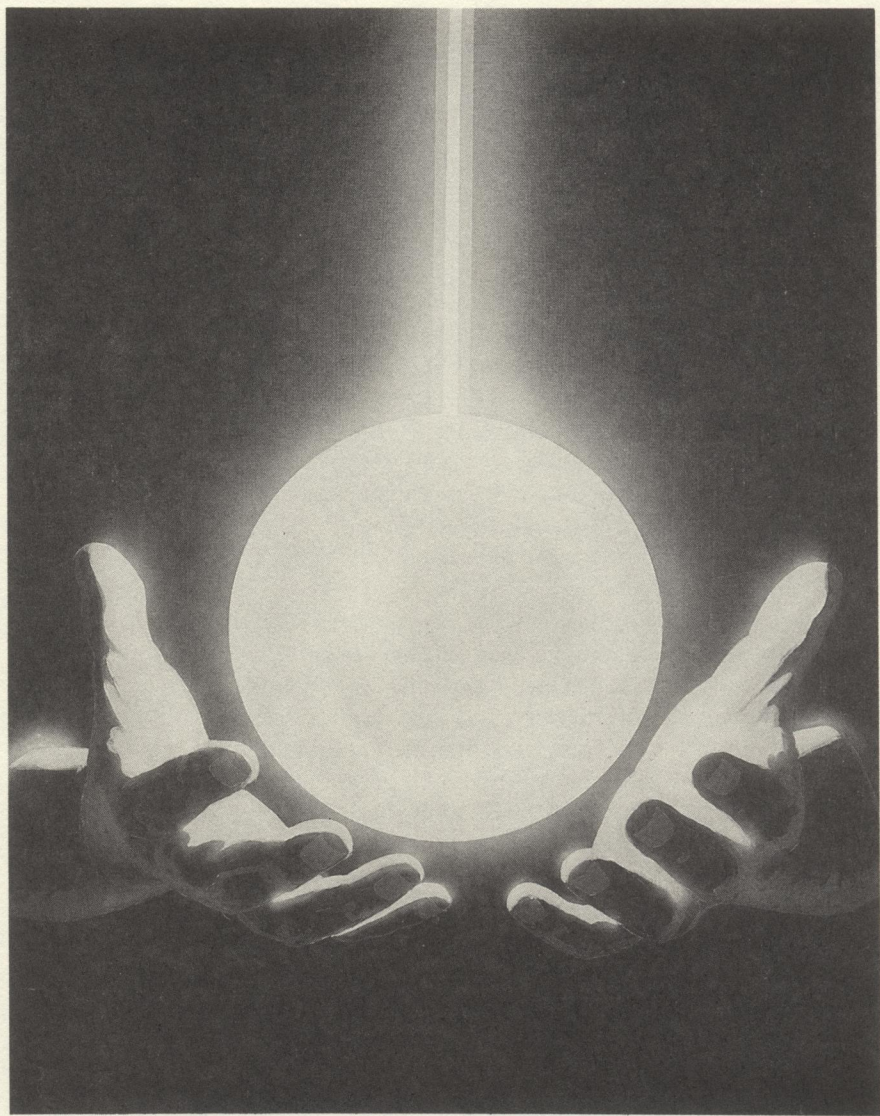
Certainly the cultural challenges facing the contemporary church differ significantly from those of the nineteenth century, but the need for compassion, tolerance, and acceptance of diversity continues.

62. See Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 183–201. Seeing unmediated knowledge claims as impossible, relativism as unsatisfactory, and both as irresponsible, Haraway argues for “situated and embodied knowledges”: “the alternative to relativism is not totalization and single vision. . . . The alternative to relativism is partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology” (191).

63. Sharon Welch, “The Truth of Liberation Theology: ‘Particulars of a Relative Sublime,’” in *Feminism & Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, ed. Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 226. On truth as something made, not found, see Scott Abbott, “Will We Find Zion or Make It? An Essay on Postmodernity and Revelation,” *Sunstone* 17 (Dec. 1994): 16–21.

Mormons do not listen to one another's voices, if we do not honor individual subjects as well as institutions, we fall short of real understanding. If Mormons take seriously Brigham Young's notion that all truth, even that possessed by infidels, "pertains to divinity,"⁶⁴ we must acknowledge the unexpected possibilities of the holy in all experience.

64. *Journal of Discourses* 7:283-84.



George

Lee Robison

He speaks in a poetry of mumbles, not quite rambling
under the breaking sky about what happened
half his life ago and the end of a promise
that makes him angry. Shows the confusion
of skin and hair the Cong shrapnel left
above the cracked china eye that never seems
to find a focus, always askew as if
it had learned a wariness of heaven.

He'd studied languages at Michigan. Blessed with eight
before whatever gouged that tangled crease
in his hair stole seven and an eye and nine years
from the order of memory, and a generation later
he has stopped a stranger of his generation to pass
the time, to ask his name and say it looks
like rain, to show a scar and say that a loss
he knows but cannot recall makes him angry,

to ask my name and say he has what he has
to get what he can out of life, and it looks
like rain. And I nearly cannot hinder
my hand from touching that mend, like the need to prick
thumb on a martyr's crown. Yet no martyr,
only two men who had lived different ways
that distant year, and who stand under
collapsing gray exchanging names.

The Higher Powers: Fred M. Smith and the Peyote Ceremonies

Shelby M. Barnes

FREDERICK MADISON SMITH (1874-1946) WAS THIRD president and prophet of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Son of Joseph III and grandson of Joseph the Martyr, Fred M., as he was generally known, came to lead the Reorganization in 1915. Smith was a highly educated man interested in the relationship between science and religion. His interest led him to experiment with the religious significance of the hallucinogenic drug peyote. By his own admission, he widely used the drug in searching for what he would identify as "the higher powers of man."¹

As a participant in peyote religious ceremonies, Fred M. Smith celebrated with his American Indian colleagues in their search for ecstasy. Though Smith seldom discussed his views with the wider church membership, his participation and its resulting knowledge were an important part of his open-minded, far-sighted attitude about the mysteries of human ecstasy as an essential element in religion.

Ecstasy, as Smith defined it, is "calling into action the higher powers of man" or, as he sometimes described it, "the state of being beside one's

1. *Saints Herald*, 19 Aug. 1914, 784; *Saints Herald*, 26 Nov. 1919, 1151-53; *Saints Herald*, 24 Dec. 1919, 1243; Addie Spaulding Stowell, *The Red Man's Hope* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1963), 173; Virgil Thomson, *Virgil Thomson* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 42; *The Arimat*, 1 Nov. 1919, 2-3, Alice M. Edwards Papers, Restoration History Manuscript Collection, Smith Library, Lamoni, Iowa. Frederick M. Smith received his B.A. from Graceland College, his M.A. from the University of Kansas, and his Ph.D. from Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts.

self.”² Like many people of his time, Fred M. was not clear about what constituted a religion among the American Indians. Persons unfamiliar with Native American culture often looked for some sort of organized religion and, noting the lack of it, assumed Indians had no religion. However, Smith acknowledged that religious experience occurred among the Indians and saw the peyote ceremony as a way for the Indians to reach ecstasy. Such experience could, and did, occur despite the lack of recognized—by which Fred M. meant organized—religion.

Smith quite naturally felt the call to “return” the American Indian to the Christian faith and supported the Reorganization’s missionary work among the descendants of the Book of Mormon people. But he also believed that the ecstasy experienced in the peyote ceremony had much to offer the Reorganization. He was concerned about the narrow road the church was following and sought ways to help the institution grow and expand to encompass an enlarged world view. He thus encouraged sympathy for, and an informed understanding of, American Indian ceremonies. He urged the church to look forward with him into the future. And, in limited and controlled measures, he urged others to experiment with him in the search for ecstasy via the peyote celebrations.³

As Fred M. began his academic studies, he became increasingly interested in the mystery of what, at the time, was called “mind expansion.” He related this human ability to expand the mind with the LDS view of contemporary revelation. At the time he began his studies at the University of Kansas in 1909, two members of the Reorganization, Phillip Cook and Chief Three Fingers of the Cheyenne Nation, talked with Smith about peyote and its use in religious ceremonies. It interested Smith who, completing his studies in Kansas, was anticipating enrollment at Clark University in Massachusetts for a doctorate.

Smith had talked with those in charge at the university about a two-year program of study in the field of sociology. But after arriving in 1914, and expressing his interest in the expansive power of the human mind, Fred M. was persuaded to do a psychological study of a primitive people, understanding this study would assist him in the field of religion. Prominent American psychologist G. Stanley Hall agreed to be his advisor and direct him in a study of the Native American Indian peyote cults.

2. Frederick M. Smith, *The Higher Powers of Man* (Lamoni, IA: Herald House, 1918), 59. This work, taken primarily from his dissertation, is a key to understanding Frederick M. Smith’s views on the topic of expanded understandings. The book, continually available through the RLDS publishing house, Herald Publishing Company, is not well known among members of the Reorganization, and I would be surprised if it had been read by other than a few scholars. Also see Theodore Ribot, “Ecstasy,” *Open Court*, 5 Dec. 1889, as reported in Smith, *Higher Powers*.

3. Frederick Madison Smith, “Preparation,” *Saints Herald*, 19 Aug. 1914, 783-85.

During this time Smith, who was already assuming more and more of the duties of the presidency of the church, minored in philosophy and in economics. He felt these might be of practical value in the work which he faced.⁴

G. Stanley Hall, professor of psychology at Johns Hopkins University and founder of *The American Journal of Psychology*, was a pioneer in the field of scientific psychology. Hall, who together with William James, Alfred Adler, and Sigmund Freud, would help to establish psychology as an academically trained professional discipline, assumed the presidency of Clark University in 1889.⁵ He sought to make the university a research rather than teaching institution. By 1898 Clark had graduated thirty of the fifty-four Ph.D.s granted in the United States that year.⁶

Many of Hall's ideas appealed to Fred M. and were adopted into his dissertation. But it was from William James that Smith took his concepts of expanded mental ability. From James's article, "The Energies of Men," Smith took the idea that erethism, the extreme stimulation of the mind, was as effective as any physical "second breath or wind." Few persons experienced the effect of this intoxication, however, because they were content to live below their maximum energy.⁷

Most people are aware of the "second wind" which often becomes available as a reservoir of energy brought on by the physical stimulation of extreme effort. Smith, much like James and Hall, became interested in the stimulation of the mind which could release mental energies, a sort of "second thought" to be used for even further understanding.

Clearly, it was not the idea of intoxication which interested Smith. In fact he gave the impression of being opposed to alcoholic beverages. In a sermon in Independence, Missouri, in 1914 he encouraged the Saints to vote for a dry town, explicitly stating the church's views.⁸ Again in July 1938 a *Saints Herald* article identified his belief that sale of such "poisons" was causing great social damage.⁹

4. Paul M. Edwards, *The Chief: An Administrative Biography of Fred M. Smith* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1988), 100. Edwards does not pursue the topic of peyote in this administrative biography. Larry Hunt, in his biography, deals with it in volume one.

5. Larry E. Hunt, *F. M. Smith: Saint as Reformer. Volume 1* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1982), 68. See also William James, "The Energies of Men," *Philosophical Review* 16 (1907): 1-20; G. Stanley Hall, "Anger," *American Journal of Psychology* 10; G. Stanley Hall, Introduction to Smith, *Higher Powers*, 9-13; Smith, *Higher Powers*, 29.

6. Hunt, 72-73; Dorothy Ross, *G. Stanley Hall, Psychologist as Prophet* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

7. Smith, *Higher Powers*, 15.

8. Frederick Madison Smith, "Preparation," *Saints Herald*, 19 Aug. 1914, 785.

9. Frederick M. Smith, "Better Not to Drink," *Saints Herald*, 30 July 1938, 963. See also Paul Shupe, "Indulging in Temperance: Prohibition and Political Activism in the RLDS Church," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 21.

Medical drugs, however, were different. In an article in the *Herald* of 1943 Smith discussed the need for medicine which, in coordination with a physician's instruction, promoted healing. This may have been an important view to express, for there was an attitude among some Saints that one needed only to rely on faith and prayer to be healed. Smith related the growing progress of the art of healing and the "wider and deeper knowledge of the human body and its function."¹⁰

The intoxication of the mind about which Fred M. spoke could be described in several ways: a state of excitement, a revival of emotions, a change from outer to inner control, a feeling of an expanded self, and enlarged powers.¹¹ Smith named this mystical experience "ecstasy."

Ecstasy, as so defined, plays an important role in human affairs, particularly in the area of religious experience. When a state of ecstasy occurs, the great force it creates demands attention and must "either be entirely expended" or "transformed into a work of art, of the pen, the chisel, or pencil."¹² The result of Fred M.'s study was compiled in a dissertation which was accepted by Hall, and the degree of doctor of philosophy was conferred on Smith by Clark University in 1916. By this time Smith has assumed the presidency of the Reorganization.

Much of what was in this dissertation depended on Smith's own varied experience. During his younger years he had worked in agronomy, blacksmithing, metallurgy, installed heating systems, repaired automobiles, set up a telephone system, and was increasingly familiar with sophisticated photographic equipment. His personal interests led him to explore economic systems, industrial efficiency, and the conservation of energy. All of these impacted his approach to the study, for in them all he had identified the limitations imposed by humans on their own mental growth. And, on some occasions, he had expended both physical and mental "second wind."

In a different fashion Smith's experiences with his father during the final years of Joseph III's life, and the anticipation of the burden of prophetic office, also played an important role in his study and conclusions. In a significant way Fred M. was seeking answers for his own powerful questions.

Understandably, given Fred M.'s calling, he was vitally concerned with the possibility of a man revealing the mind of God. And, if so, how?

10. Frederick M. Smith, "Our Attitude Towards Medicine," *Saints Herald*, 23 Jan. 1943, 100.

11. Colin Wilson, a contemporary British philosopher, considers the expanded self in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature and calls the person effected the "outsider" and the cause of the effect the "X" factor. For a discussion, see Howard F. Dossor, ed., *Colin Wilson: The Bimemorial Critic* (Salem, NH: Salem House, 1985), 5-7.

12. Smith, *Higher Powers*, 69.

The expectations of his office concerned him, for he questioned his own ability to give revelation to the Reorganization. And, unlike most other presidents of the Reorganization, in presenting his inspired documents to the church he did so in a more detached manner: "I am permitted to say to the church by way of instruction, through inspiration received" (RLDS D&C 133:1).

From his studies he was convinced that every human being had the potential to expand the limits of his or her mind. To what degree this could be done, and how best to do it, were questions which remained for him to address. It was a personal quest for Smith, but it was also a quest which was conducted within the larger community of the church. He was concerned about how he might encourage others to expand their minds beyond the limits they knew, to stretch, to grow, to further experience ecstasy.

Fred M. investigated alcoholic intoxication as a part of his dissertation and came to the conclusion that this sort of intoxication, which might also be seen as an ecstatic state, has the opposite effect than the one for which he searched. In alcoholic intoxication the higher mental powers were depressed and the lower mental powers were exaggerated. And, like many non-drinkers, Smith failed to distinguish clearly between drinking and being drunk.¹³ Thus Smith concluded that alcohol, even in moderation, was the antithesis to the ecstasy he sought and did not help people reach the full power of their mind.

In a lengthy portion of his dissertation, Fred M. relates and supports William James's assertion "that it is possible to reach higher levels of energy than are usually reached by individuals."¹⁴ James wanted to know how people could direct educational activity in such a way that they might reach their maximum mental potential.

Smith saw a relationship between James's concept of "revelation without religion" and Hall's work on mental efficiency. Hall contended that much of the loss of human potential results from the inefficient use of human power. Hall, like some rationalist philosophers before him, had determined that where the human mind becomes interested, where it is "lost" in a dominant idea or in deep devotion to a cause, there appears to be an almost unlimited reservoir of mental energy to call upon.

But persons are not simple machines where lost motion is taken up or where speed can be increased easily. Fred M.'s experiences and research led him to consider that chemical ecstasy might play a role in initiating, as well as in reaching, the heights of power and insight which he sought

13. Much has been made recently about the relationship between writing ability and the freedom produced by alcoholic indulgence. The thesis, as old as authors, was contrary to Smith's view.

14. Smith, *Higher Powers*, 22.

in mind expansion.

The ecstatic state Fred M. had in mind was reached in the Native American sunset-to-sunrise ceremony which commenced with the chewing of peyote buds. Fred describes peyote as a button from the top part of a small cactus grown in Texas and Mexico. While often confused with mescal, the Mexican liquor, Fred M. clarifies the difference,¹⁵ expressing his belief in the physical, spiritual, and mentally therapeutic effects of the peyote plant.

We know that Fred M. experimented with peyote as early as 1913. At that time he encouraged longtime church missionary Hubert Case, a man with experience among the American Indians, to join him in the experiment. "I say, Hubert, the only way we will know is to eat some of it and note the effects . . . I suggest we try it."¹⁶

Apparently, Fred and his wife, the former Ruth Cobb, joined in partaking peyote sometime in 1918 while vacationing in the southwest. He related the event, pointing out that "we both went through the peyote ceremonies which lasted from sundown to sunup."¹⁷ The next year he entered the ceremonial tepees at least four times to participate in the ritual consumption of peyote.¹⁸ Before and during the ceremonies he was asked to address those gathered and to discuss with them the Book of Mormon and the similarities of the God they worshipped.

Smith was apparently well accepted by the Indians for his willingness to worship in their environment. At a ceremony, shared with the Omaha Indians, one participant reportedly said: "The peyote boys all like Fred Smith. He is not opposed to the peyote. He is a reasonable man."¹⁹ He was given several items after one ceremony as tokens of sincere friendship. These included a sacred eagle feather fan, a dollar, a gourd rattle, and a pair of moccasins from the chief.²⁰

Fred M. made no attempt to hide his interest from the members of the church. As early as 1914 he spoke about the peyote ceremonies while preaching at the Stone Church, the headquarters congregation of the Reorganization. In this talk he discussed the effects of the drug peyote and the relationship between the Indian ceremonies and more traditional religious service. He did not, in this particular presentation, relate being a

15. Ibid., 106. Smith appears to use the words peyote and mescal interchangeably. *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, 2d ed.: "'Mescal' mescaline, any of several cacti related to, or resembling mescal: mescaline of genus *Lophophora*, C, H17, NO3." The mescal cactus produces the peyote button.

16. Stowell, 173.

17. Frederick Madison Smith, "A Trip Among the Omaha Indians," *Saints Herald*, 26 Nov. 1919, 1151.

18. Ibid., 1151-54.

19. Mrs. Edgar Butts, "An Experience with Peyote," *Saints Herald*, 19 May 1920, 480.

20. Smith, "A Trip Among the Indians of Oklahoma," 1245.

participant in a peyote ceremony but acknowledged knowing about it.²¹

However, by 1919 Smith publicly related an experience he had several years earlier in which he had gone "through the peyote ceremonies which lasted from sundown to sunup."²² In this same article he explains how he was asked to pray and speak to a group of Omaha Indians near Decatur, Iowa, about the gospel in their "lodge." He also spoke of meeting later with a group at Walthill where he had "gladly accepted" the invitation to participate in a peyote ceremony. This meeting lasted through the night, and Fred describe it as a religious experience and with a "strong appeal to the Indian heart."²³

That December Smith wrote in the *Saints Herald* about a trip he had taken to Oklahoma to visit the Cheyenne Indians. There he attended a ceremony and explained his experience in some detail. "Each worshiper is expected to roll a cigarette and solemnly smoke at least four puffs. After each has smoked, the first of the peyote is eaten. Each person is handed two or more (depending on the quantity on hand) of the herbs, and these are solemnly eaten . . . After the first general eating of peyote, the number consumed is left to individual inclination, the user securing by request from the chief the number desired."²⁴

Believing that the peyote experience first released then enhanced the human mind toward creative expansion, he understandably encouraged others to use the drug. One such example concerned Virgil Thomson. Thomson, who was to become a famous composer and longtime music critic at the *New York Times*, was a college friend of Smith's oldest daughter, Alice. The young composer became a good friend of the family, and Fred M. was interested in the power of the peyote to release the creative talents which Thomson displayed. The composer related that "the drug had been given me by Dr. Smith" who wanted Thomson to report back on what effects he had experienced.²⁵

Hubert Case, RLDS Indian missionary who Fred urged to join him, said that on Smith's encouragement he and Smith gathered the peyote and tried it together.²⁶ E. E. Long, an RLDS missionary from southern Ohio, stated that "we [several RLDS men] desired to join them [Omaha Indians] in their piote [sic] meeting . . . all drank of a concoction made of boiling piote [sic]."²⁷ Fred M.'s daughter, Alice, was sent peyote buttons

21. Frederick Madison Smith, "Preparation," *Saints Herald*, 19 Aug. 1914, 784.

22. Smith, "A Trip Among the Omaha Indians," 1152.

23. *Ibid.*, 1153.

24. Frederick Madison Smith, "A Trip Among the Indians of Oklahoma," *Saints Herald*, 24 Dec. 1919, 1244.

25. Thomson, 41-42.

26. Stowell, 173.

27. E. E. Long, "Eleven Hours in a Piote [sic] Tent," *The Arimat*, 1 Nov. 1919, 2.

by her father with instructions on how to use them.²⁸ She later reported they were bitter and caused no noticeable effect.

While RLDS church views about such things as liquor and drugs were not as well defined in the early 1920s, Fred M. did seem to demonstrate a more liberal attitude than many church members. He encouraged this religious practice because he believed that it was a way in which people could catalyze the ecstatic state.²⁹ But after the initial publication of several letters and articles mentioning Indians and peyote ceremonies, as well as Smith's participation in them, little or nothing more on the topic is recorded in church periodicals.

There is some evidence that Fred M. used his official position, as well as his own personal knowledge and experience, to defend the peyote ceremony against federal intrusion. He understood the use of peyote by his own experience and promised to lobby against federal legislation to limit the use of peyote. Hubert Case and Fred M. both indicate they journeyed to Washington, D.C., in regards to legislation pending about peyote and its uses in religious ceremonies. Smith may have also been accompanied by William Madison, RLDS member, secretary of the National Society of American Indians, and chief of the Chippewas.³⁰

Fred M. connected the "higher powers of man" with the essence of Jesus Christ, and in the conclusion to his dissertation, he pondered the secret energy of Jesus Christ. Was Jesus totally human and impelled by unusual motivation or stimulation? How was Christ able to make his human equipment produce its maximum energy? Fred M. defined his concept of ecstasy using Mark 3:11 to describe Christ as being "beside himself." This is the state of ecstasy Smith identified as calling the higher powers into his being.³¹ Though he published his dissertation in 1918, it is doubtful many church members read it or, if they did, took it seriously. Smith certainly believed, for the American Indian anyway, that the use of peyote in religion produces an ecstatic state and gives new direction to life. We can only assume he wanted to make this available, in some fashion, to his own people.

Fred M. was determined to educate the church. "He believed that education was one of the means whereby his church could 'retool' through developing that corps of 'bright young men' who would look forward with him into the future. And he himself continued to read and search for

28. Frederick Madison Smith to Alice Myrmida Edwards, Alice M. Edwards Papers.

29. Gomer T. Griffiths, "The Indian Work," *Zion's Ensign*, 23 July 1920, 558.

30. Hunt, 66-100. Gomer T. Griffiths, who in 1920 was president of the RLDS Quorum of Twelve, commented that he did not agree with Madison that the church should wait until the "embargo [against peyote] is lifted by the Government before we prosecute missionary work among them" ("A Chippewa Chieftain," *Autumn Leaves*, Nov. 1926, 468-69).

31. Smith, *Higher Powers*, 178-83.

ways to integrate faith with intellect, knowledge with service."³²

How did the RLDS church respond to President Smith's use and acceptance of peyote? Letters to the *Saints Herald* suggest that members thought the ongoing missionary work with Indians was of highest importance. But there is little evidence that members were either disturbed or encouraged by Smith's investigations. We can only speculate what might have been the outcome if Smith had pursued this quest. Unfortunately, Fred M.'s time and talents were soon turned from his interest in the peyote religion, and for that matter in the "higher powers of man," for he quickly became embroiled in the struggle over presidential power. This fight, referred to as Supreme Directional Control,³³ plus the massive depression which hit the United States and the emergence of a world war, redirected his time and energy in other directions.

32. Hunt, 102.

33. Supreme Directional Control is the term identifying Fred M.'s 1919-25 struggle over who controls the RLDS church. He believed that the power ultimately emerged from the president/prophet. This view was eventually affirmed by an RLDS world conference.

A Killing Frost

Timothy Liu

When the cold front came, all the leaves went limp.
That was that—no more white flies on the patio,
one bloom still curled tightly in its calyx,
its promise of color fading. Yet there's nothing
like a radio in a room without tables
or chairs—the way music can furnish our lives
with something. A cracked clay pot holds
the door open as you pack up your belongings
in boxes that have lost their stiffness,
move after move after move, leaving more behind
each year, a flower swaying on its stem
in a silent dance. It doesn't matter what was
playing all these years, what more could you want
than this—to travel as light as possible?
Leave me in this house as evening washes over us.

The Unexpected Choice

Linda Paxton Greer

"MRS. GREER, YOU MUST ABORT YOUR BABY." The words wrapped me in horror. They offered a solution worse than the problem could ever be. I had cancer, now I was pregnant, and Dr. Krueger wanted me to abort. How could I bear it?

It was May 1986; a time when life was born, not taken away. It had *not* been a good year. In January I first discovered a lump in my left breast about the size of a small pea. My husband's employer was changing insurance companies and had not decided on the new one. Our family finances were in such deplorable shape that I didn't dare see a doctor unless a good insurance policy was in place. In February I managed to severely damage our only car when I swerved to miss an oncoming vehicle. It was still driveable, but the windows on the driver's side were broken out and we did not have the necessary funds to replace them. It is very cold in northern Virginia in February.

Then about mid-March the new insurance company was chosen and the lump had not become larger—a good sign. I made an appointment with Dr. Fanale, my obstetrician. He examined me and diagnosed fibrocystic tumors. He wanted me to see a general surgeon "just to be sure." Two weeks later, I had a biopsy.

Prior to the surgery, my surgeon, Dr. Seamons, said, "Linda, I don't believe it's cancer. You're simply not a candidate. I'd tell you if I thought it was a possibility." Twenty-four hours later in the recovery room it was a different story. With tears running in rivulets down his cheeks, he said, "Linda, it *is* cancer. The breast will have to be removed."

I said, "How will I feed my babies?"

He gently but firmly replied, "Linda, there will be no more babies," but the unmistakable voice of a kind heavenly father assured me the "no more babies" part was not true. His spirit surrounded me, despite the grim diagnosis.

Four days later I underwent surgery for a modified radical mastectomy. The following week Dr. Krueger, my oncologist, recommended six months of chemo and radiation therapy because of the lymph node

involvement. I resisted the idea. I had several close friends who had undergone chemotherapy with less than desirable results. One died after a seven-year struggle with what I believed was chemotherapy—not cancer. I struggled for several weeks about my decision. I had not decided firmly to follow the advice of the doctors, but I was weakening. I knew it was important to obtain baseline x-rays for the medical staff to have in evaluating my progress.

On the scheduled day I entered the all too familiar x-ray suite, signed the register, and seated myself in a comfortable chair with a favorite magazine to pass the time. As I began to peruse the magazine, I found myself becoming extremely uncomfortable with a sign on the wall directly opposite my chair, "IF YOU THINK YOU MIGHT BE PREGNANT, PLEASE INFORM THE RECEPTIONIST." I had been in many x-ray rooms with lots of those signs, but this time the sign seemed to speak to me. Eventually, I got up and moved to the adjacent side of the room, hoping to avoid the power of the sign. I felt rather stupid. The presence of the sign became so annoying I was motivated to get up, cross the room, and inform the receptionist to place a lead shield over my pelvic region. The receptionist informed me such a thing was not possible, because the area they needed to shoot was located in that region.

I said, "Well, go ahead, then."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Greer, we can't do that. We need to find out if you're pregnant."

I thought, "Pregnant? That's absurd." I was only six weeks post-op.

I was sent to the hospital lab to have my blood drawn for a serum pregnancy test. I was asked to wait for the results and informed it would take about twenty minutes. I read another magazine. Finally, a fresh-pressed nurse came into the room and crossed to the phone at the nurse's station. "Hello, Dr. Krueger, Mrs. Greer's pregnancy test is positive."

Positive? There was simply no way I could be pregnant. "Nurse, maybe my blood sample was confused with someone else's."

"Mrs. Greer, you're the only patient who has been in the laboratory this morning. There is no mistake. Dr. Krueger wants you to come to his office right away."

As I was walking through the hospital corridors toward the parking lot, the wave of surprise and shock melted into sheer elation that a new life had begun and would add to our quiver of seven children. By the time I reached the exit doors, I was shedding tears of joy at the prospect of having a new baby.

Dr. Krueger was not nearly so excited. In fact, he was angry. The truth of the matter was never in our whole married lives had we tried to prevent pregnancy except this time. Then Dr. Krueger delivered the blow—"Mrs. Greer, you must abort this baby. Your cancer is estrogen sensitive. If

you continue with the pregnancy, expect large tumor growth and possible death. You have a 40 percent chance of living, at best." Now I was angry. In his stiffly starched manner he presumed to be God, capable of deciding my fate with his statistics and theories. How can anyone measure a mother's heart?

I drove home in a somber mood. My husband and I made an appointment with Dr. Krueger for the next afternoon. At the conclusion of the appointment I had a lump in my throat but anger was still my dominant emotion—anger that I could have been placed in such a dilemma. How could I have the wisdom to choose between our baby's life and my own?

Several days later I attended a church Institute class on Contemporary Issues. The topic was abortion. The sources of authority were messages and letters from our church leaders and the scriptures. The longer we discussed the issue, the more emotionally uncomfortable I became. When my inner turmoil had just about moved me to my feet and flight, the instructor quoted, "A mother should do everything in her power to preserve her life." I felt as if my heart would stop beating. I consulted with my bishop. I fasted and prayed fervently. I had my name placed on the temple prayer roll.

The following week during my regularly scheduled oncology appointment the doctor said, "Linda, you have seven children. They need a mother." I went home, driving slowly to stretch my time to think and ponder the gravity of that statement. They did need a mother. I know of others who had chosen abortion. I had compassion and understanding for these people, who wrestled with this agonizing resolution. It is not easy to make such a decision. Like the individual right to choose or reject chemotherapy treatment, it must be a personal choice, one that cannot fairly be judged by another. The weight of the issue must be decided through deep thought, fasting, prayer, and listening to the spirit.

At this point I remembered an interview with Sammy Davis, Jr., on television when I was fifteen. The commentator asked, "What was the most difficult thing for you to overcome in Harlem?" He replied, "Not having a mother. But I believe any one can overcome any obstacle, even not having a mother." I believed my children could survive without me. I envisioned in my mind the faces of my children. My arms wanted to hold them close and cry until I was exhausted. I knew if I aborted my baby I would always wonder what he or she would have looked like. When I looked at my children, I would be reminded of the one I didn't have and would be rendered a mental cripple of a mother. It felt like revelation.

The cloud was lifted from my mind and I decided that beautiful sunny day I would have my baby. If I died, my family would be taken care of by the Lord. If I lived, my joy would be full. A peace came to my

soul that I had not known for weeks. I knew this decision was right for me.

So I opted for neither abortion nor chemotherapy. My post-pregnancy scans showed no evidence of cancer. I enjoyed remission for nearly four years. Though I have since had a recurrence, undergone surgery, chemo and radiation therapy, I have been in remission again for five years. The love, unity, and joy my little boy has brought to me and members of my family have been worth the price. Justin will always be a constant reminder to us of how much we love each other.

It's true 1986 was not a good year. But 1995 is the best. Nothing in the world is more exciting than my eight-year-old putting his arms around my neck and whispering in my ear, "I love you, Mommy." And nothing is more comforting than knowing the spirit speaks in a thousand small ways about our deepest needs and that his answers are always right.

Male-Male Intimacy among Nineteenth-century Mormons: A Case Study

D. Michael Quinn

IN RECENT DECADES A GROWING NUMBER of scholarly journals have given serious attention to "the same-sex dynamics" of nineteenth-century Americans.¹ Included are such conservative publications as the *New England Quarterly*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Victorian Studies*, *American Literary Realism*, *Journal of Social History*, *Journal of American History*, *American Historical Review*, and *U.S. News and World Report*.² *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* entered this field in 1983 when Lavina Fielding Anderson discussed the same-sex love poetry of Kate Thomas (b. 1871) who published primarily in the LDS periodical, *Young Woman's*

1. For more extensive discussion and bibliography from a national and cross-cultural perspective, see D. Michael Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans: A Mormon Example* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

2. William R. Taylor and Christopher Lasch, "Two 'Kindred Spirits': Sorority and Family in New England, 1839-1846," *New England Quarterly* 36 (Mar. 1963): 23-41; Lillian Faderman, "Emily Dickinson's Letters to Sue Gilbert," *Massachusetts Review* 18 (Summer 1977): 197-225; Robert K. Martin, "The 'High Felicity' of Comradeship: A New Reading of Roderick Hudson," *American Literary Realism* 11 (Spring 1978): 100-108; Michael Lynch, "'Here Is Adhesiveness': From Friendship To Homosexuality," *Victorian Studies* 29 (Autumn 1985): 67-96; E. Anthony Rotundo, "Romantic Friendship: Male Intimacy and Middle-Class Youth in the Northern United States, 1800-1900," *Journal of Social History* 23 (Fall 1989): 1-25; John D. Wrathall, "Provenance as Text: Reading the Silences around Sexuality in Manuscript Collections," *Journal of American History* 79 (June 1992): 165-78; "Intimate Friendships: History Shows that the Lines between 'Straight' and 'Gay' Sexuality Are Much More Fluid than Today's Debate Suggests," *U.S. News and World Report* 115 (5 July 1993): 49-52; Mary W. Blanchard, "Boundaries and the Victorian Body: Aesthetic Fashion in Gilded Age America," *American Historical Review* 100 (Feb. 1995): 40.

Journal.³

In fact, most of these first explorations of same-sex dynamics emphasized the intense emotional and social relationships between nineteenth-century women. In 1963 William R. Taylor and Christopher Lasch discussed the "sorority" of such relationships, which Carol Lasser later defined as the "Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendship."⁴ In 1975 Carroll Smith-Rosenberg introduced the term "homosociality" into the analysis of these relationships.⁵ By the 1980s the academic community had added male-male relationships to the study of same-sex dynamics in nineteenth-century America. Just as men have been researching and writing about female-female relationships, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Karen V. Hansen have been among the principal contributors to the examination of male-male "intimacy" and "intimate friendship" in the nineteenth century.⁶

3. Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Ministering Angels: Single Women in Mormon Society," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Autumn 1983): 68-69; also discussions of Kate Thomas in Rocky O'Donovan, "'The Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature': A Brief History of Homosexuality and Mormonism, 1840-1980," in Brent Corcoran, ed., *Multiply and Replenish: Mormon Essays on Sex and Family* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 128, 129-31; Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

4. Taylor and Lasch, "Two 'Kindred Spirits,'" also Judith Becker Ranlett, "Sorority and Community: Women's Answer To a Changing Massachusetts, 1865-1895," Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1974; Carol Lasser, "'Let Us Be Sisters Forever': The Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendship," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14 (Autumn 1988): 158-81.

5. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29, reprinted in Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Pleck, eds., *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women* (New York: Touchstone/Simon and Schuster, 1979), in Michael Gordon, ed., *The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective*, 3rd ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), and in Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987).

6. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Karen V. Hansen, "'Helped Put in a Quilt': Men's Work and Male Intimacy in Nineteenth-Century New England," *Gender and Society* 3 (Sept. 1989): 334-54; Karen V. Hansen, "'Our Eyes Behold Each Other': Masculinity and Intimate Friendship in Antebellum New England," in Peter M. Nardi, ed., *Men's Friendship: Research on Men and Masculinities* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1992), 35-58; also Leonard Harry Ellis, "Men Among Men: An Exploration of All-Male Relationships in Victorian America," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1982; John W. Crowley, "Howells, Stoddard, and Male Homosocial Attachment in Victorian America," in Henry Brod, ed., *The Making of Masculinities: The New Men's Studies* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987); Jeffrey Richards, "'Passing the Love of Women': Manly Love and Victorian Society," in J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester University Press, 1987), 92-122; Donald Yacovone, "Abolitionists and the 'Language of Fraternal Love,'" in Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

Of nineteenth-century society, noted historian Peter Gay writes: "Passionate [same-gender] friendships begun in adolescence often survived the passage of years, the strain of physical separation, even the trauma of the partners' marriage. But these enduring attachments were generally discreet and, in any event, the nineteenth century mustered singular sympathy for warm language between friends." He adds that "the cult of friendship . . . flourishing unabated through much of the nineteenth [century], permitted men to declare their love for other men—or women for other women—with impunity."⁷ Because nineteenth-century Americans rarely referred to the sexual side of their marital relationships, neither Mormons nor any one else of that era would likely acknowledge if there were an erotic side to their same-sex relationships.⁸ It was thus possible for nineteenth-century Americans to speak in the vernacular of platonic love while announcing their romantic and erotic attachments with persons of the same sex. Literary historians have observed this in the work of such nineteenth-century writers as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Bayard Taylor, Herman Melville, William Dean Howells, Amy Lowell, George Santayana, Willa Cather, Henry James, and Mark Twain.⁹

7. Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud*, vol. 2, *The Tender Passion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 217.

8. Still some contemporary readers require that kind of explicit acknowledgement of sex acts on the part of people involved in demonstrably romantic, long-term relationships during which they shared a bed with a loved one of the same gender. See Blanche Wiesen Cook, "The Historical Denial of Lesbianism," *Radical History Review* 20 (Spring/Summer 1979): 60-65; Leila J. Rupp, "'Imagine My Surprise': Women's Relationships in Historical Perspective," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 5 (Fall 1980): 61-62, 67; Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 162; Sheila Jeffreys, "Does It Matter if They Did It?" in Lesbian History Group, *Not a Passing Phase: Reclaiming Lesbians in History, 1840-1985* (London: The Woman's Press, Ltd., 1993), 23.

9. By nineteenth-century authors, I mean those who reached adulthood in the nineteenth century, even if they published in the twentieth century. Among other works, see Newton Arvin, *Herman Melville* (New York: William Sloan Associates, 1950), 128-30; Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Criterion Books, 1960), 522-38; Gustav Bychowski, "Walt Whitman: A Study in Sublimation," in Henry Ruitenbeck, ed., *Homosexuality and Creative Genius* (New York: Astor-Honor, 1967), 140-81; John Cody, *After Great Pain: The Inner Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1971), 135-52, 176-84; Walter Loewenfels, ed., *The Tenderest Lover: The Erotic Poetry of Walt Whitman* (New York: Dell, 1972); Robert K. Martin, "Whitman's Song of Myself: Homosexual Dream and Vision," *Partisan Review* 42 (1975), 1:80-96; Edwin Haviland Miller, *Melville* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1975), 234-30; John Snyder, *The Dear Love of Man: Tragic and Lyric Communion in Walt Whitman* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975); Jeffrey Meyers, *Homosexuality and Literature, 1890-1930* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1977), 20-31; Robert K. Martin, "The 'High Felicity' of Comradeship: A New Reading of Roderick Hudson," *American Literary Realism* 11 (Spring 1978): 100-108; Georges-Michel Sarotte, *Like a Brother, Like a Lover: Male Homosexuality in the American Novel and Theater from Herman Melville to James Baldwin*, trans. Richard Miller (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978), 12-13,

As Lowell's biographer commented, "[T]hose who had the eyes to see it or the antennae to sense it" would recognize the homoromantic and homoerotic sub-text. Those without such sensitivities would not have

73, 78-83, 197-211; Robert K. Martin, "Bayard Taylor's Valley of Bliss: The Pastoral and the Search for Form," *Markham Review* 9 (Fall 1979): 13-17; Robert K. Martin, *The Homosexual Tradition in American Poetry* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 3-89, 97-114, 676-90; Deborah Lambert, "The Defeat of a Hero: Autonomy and Sexuality in *My Antonia*," *American Literature* 53 (Jan. 1982): 676-90; Calvin Bedient, "Walt Whitman: Overruled," *Salmagundi: A Quarterly of the Humanities and the Social Sciences*, 58-59 (Fall 1982-Winter 1983): 326-46; Richard Hall, "Henry James: Interpreting an Obsessive Memory," *Journal of Homosexuality* 8 (Spring-Summer 1983), 83-97; Elizabeth Stevens Prioleau, *The Circle of Eros: Sexuality In the Work of William Dean Howells* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983), 110; Stephen Coote, ed., *The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse* (London: Penguin Books, 1983), 203-205, 207-11; Sharon O'Brien, "'The Thing Not Named,': Willa Cather as a Lesbian Writer," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 9 (Summer 1984): 576-99; Vivian R. Pollack, *Dickinson: The Anxiety of Gender* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 134-56; Joseph Cady, "Drum-Taps and Nineteenth-Century Male Homosexual Literature," in Joann P. Krieg, ed., *Walt Whitman Here and Now* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 49-59; Leon Edel, *Henry James: A Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 83, 245-46, 497; John W. Crowley, *The Black Heart's Truth: The Early Career of W. D. Howells* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 89, 91, 97-99; Joanna Russ, "To Write 'Like a Woman': Transformation of Identity in the Work of Willa Cather," and Timothy Dow Adams, "My Gay Antonia: The Politics of Willa Cather's Lesbianism," *Journal of Homosexuality* 12 (May 1986): 77-87, 89-98; Robert K. Martin, *Hero, Captain, and Stranger: Male Friendship, Social Critique, and Literary Form in the Sea Novels of Herman Melville* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 6-7, 14-16, 26, 51-58, 63-64, 73-74, 105; Sandra Gilbert, "The American Sexual Poetics of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson," in Sacvan Bercovitch, ed., *Reconstructing American Literary History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 123-54; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "The Beast in the Closet: James and the Writing of Homosexual Panic," in Ruth Bernard Yeazell, ed., *Sex, Politics, and Science in the Nineteenth Century Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 148-86; Sharon O'Brien, *Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 127-46, 205-22, 357-69; John McCormick, *George Santayana: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 49-52, 334; M. Jimmie Killingsworth, *Whitman's Poetry of the Body: Sexuality, Politics, and the Text* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 98-111; John W. Crowley, *The Mask of Fiction: Essays on W. D. Howells* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 56-82; Susan Gillman, *Dark Twins: Imposture and Identity in Mark Twain's America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 34, 99, 119-22, 124; Robert K. Martin, "Knights-Errant and Gothic Seducers: The Representation of Male Friendship in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," in Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, Jr., eds., *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* (New York: New American Library, 1989), 169-82; Paula Bennett, "The Pea That Duty Locks: Lesbian and Feminist-Heterosexual Readings of Emily Dickinson's Poetry," in Karla Jay and Joanne Glasgow, eds., *Lesbian Texts and Contexts: Radical Revisions* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 104-25; Zan Dale Robinson, *Semiotic and Psychoanalytical Interpretation of Herman Melville's Fiction* (San Francisco: Mellon Research University Press, 1991), 53, 100; Byrne R. S. Fone, *Masculine Landscapes: Walt Whitman and the Homoerotic Text* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 73-103, 167-76; John Bryant, *Melville and Repose: The Rhetoric of Humor in The American Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 189-91, 217; David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 323-24, 391-402, 575-76; Byrne R. S. Fone, *A Road to Stonewall, 1750-1969: Male Homosexuality and Homophobia in English and American Literature* (New York: Twayne, 1995), 57-83.

discerned this deeper declaration.¹⁰

Although homoerotic attraction has probably always existed, nineteenth-century Americans (like many other contemporary non-Western societies) did not regard men and women as divided into us-them camps according to opposite-sex versus same-sex desire. In fact, the term "homosexual" did not even appear in American writings until 1892, when "heterosexual" was also used for the first time.¹¹ As historian E. Anthony Rotundo has commented, this lack of cultural categories for sexual orientation directly affected same-sex friendships.

To the extent that they did have ideas—and a language—about homosexuality, they thought of particular sexual acts, not of a personal disposition or social identity that produced such acts. . . . In a society that had no clear concept of homosexuality, young men did not need to draw a line between right and wrong forms of [physical] contact, except perhaps at genital play. . . . Middle-class culture [in nineteenth-century America] drew no clear line of division between homosexual and heterosexual. As a result young men (and women, too) could express their affection for each other physically without risking social censure or feelings of guilt.¹²

Of women in that era who wrote passionate love letters to one another and lived together, a recent article in *U.S. News and World Report* reports: "But Ruth Cleveland [sister of the U.S. president] and Evangeline Whipple loved in the waning years of another time, when the lines were drawn differently, the urge to categorize and dissect not so overpowering. Belonging to the 19th century, they were not yet initiated into the idea of 'sexual identity.'"¹³ Evidently, when society, culture, and religion impose no stigma, individuals feel no guilt for activities that seem natural to them.

10. Jean Gould, *Amy: The World of Amy Lowell and the Imagist Movement* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1975), 259. Gould also discusses the intimate relationship this lesbian poet shared with Mormon actress Ada Dwyer Russell, which likewise appears in Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

11. James G. Kiernan, "Responsibility In Sexual Perversion," *Chicago Medical Reporter* 3 (May 1892): 185-210, quoted in Jonathan Katz, *Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 232 and note; also George H. Wiedeman, "Survey of Psychoanalytic Literature on Overt Male Homosexuality," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 10 (Apr. 1962): 386n, and Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (New York: Dutton, 1995), for Dr. Karl Maria Benkert's introduction of the term "homosexual" and concept of "homosexuality" in Europe in 1869.

12. Rotundo, "Romantic Friendship: Male Intimacy and Middle-Class Youth in the Northern United States, 1800-1900," 10, 12; also Rotundo's other statement of this view in his *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity From the Revolution To the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 83-84, and Hansen, "'Our Eyes Behold Each Other': Masculinity and Intimate Friendship in Antebellum New England," in Nardi, *Men's Friendship*, 45.

13. "Intimate Friendships," *U.S. News and World Report*, 49.

Like American culture of the time, nineteenth-century Mormonism encouraged various levels of same-gender intimacy which most Mormons experienced without erotic response. In the nineteenth century it was acceptable for Mormon girls, boys, women, and men to walk arm-in-arm in public with those of the same gender. It was acceptable for same-sex couples to dance together at LDS church socials. School yearbooks pictured Mormon boys on high school athletic teams holding hands or resting one's hand on a teammate's bare thigh. It was also acceptable for Mormons to publicly or privately kiss those of the same sex "full on the lips," and it was okay to acknowledge that they dreamed of doing so.¹⁴ And as taught by their martyred prophet himself, it was acceptable for LDS "friends to lie down together, locked in the arms of love, to sleep and wake in each other's embrace."¹⁵ These various same-sex dynamics made life somewhat easier and more secure for nineteenth-century Mormons who also felt the romantic and erotic side of same-sex relations. There was much that did not have to be hidden by Mormons who felt sexual interest for those of their same gender.

While nineteenth-century Americans rarely recorded explicit references to their erotic desires and behaviors, they did write of intense same-sex friendships in diaries and letters. Mormonism's own record-keeping impulse offers supportive evidence of such same-sex dynamics. The life of Evan Stephens, director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir at the turn of the twentieth century, provides a case study in the use of social history sources, as well as being a prime example of the early Mormon celebration of male-male intimacy. For example, First Presidency counselor George Q. Cannon praised male-male love during a sermon on Utah's Pioneer Day in 1881: "Men may never have beheld each other's faces and yet they will love one another, and it is a love that is greater than the love of woman." Cannon, like other nineteenth-century Americans, then em-

14. Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

15. Joseph Smith sermon, 16 Apr. 1843, in Joseph Smith et al., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Period I: History of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and . . . Period II: From the Manuscript History of Brigham Young and Other Original Documents*, ed. B.H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1902-32; 2d ed. rev [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978]), 5:361. This is a slight variation on the original minutes of apostle and historian Willard Richards as reproduced in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 195, and in Scott H. Faulring, ed., *An American Prophet's Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books/Smith Research Associates, 1987), 366, both of which show that *History of Church* failed to print a repetition of the word "locked" before "in each others embrace." However, in his review of the book by Ehat and Cook, Dean C. Jessee claimed that the omitted word in the original manuscript was actually "rocked," which intensifies the tenderness involved in same-sex bedmates as advocated by the Mormon prophet. See Jessee's review in *Brigham Young University Studies* 21 (Fall 1981): 531.

phasized the platonic dimension of this male-male love: "It exceeds any sexual love that can be conceived of, and it is this love that has bound the [Mormon] people together."¹⁶

Evan Stephens (b. 1854) directed the Tabernacle Choir from 1890 until he retired in 1916. *The Contributor*, the LDS periodical for young men, once praised Stephens as a man who in falsetto "could sing soprano like a lady, and baritone in his natural voice."¹⁷ A tireless composer, Stephens wrote the words and music for nineteen hymns that remain in the official LDS hymn book today, more than by any other composer.¹⁸

The small, tightly-knit Mormon community at church headquarters in Salt Lake City knew that Stephens never married. A family who had been acquainted with him for decades commented: "Concerning the reason he never married nothing could be drawn from him."¹⁹ His recent biographer also admitted: "Stephens' relations with women were paradoxical" and "he avoided relationships with women."²⁰ Imagine such a situation today when Mormons begin to whisper about a young man's sexual orientation if he isn't married by age twenty-six. Imagine the reaction of such whisperers to the following description of the Tabernacle Choir director's same-sex relationships as published in the LDS church's *The Children's Friend*.

In January 1919 the *Friend* began monthly installments about the childhood of "Evan Bach," a play on the name of German composer J. S. Bach. Sixty-five-year-old Evan Stephens himself authored these third-person biographical articles that lacked a by-line.²¹ Starting with the October issue, the *Friend* devoted the three remaining issues of the year to

16. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool, Eng.: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-86), 22:365 (Cannon/1881); also Richards, "'Passing the Love of Women': Manly Love and Victorian Society," in Mangan and Walvin, *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, 92-122.

17. Evan Stephens (b. 28 June 1854; d. 27 Oct. 1930); Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press and Andrew Jenson History Co., 1901-36), 1:740, 4:247; B. F. Cummings, Jr., "Shining Lights: Professor Evan Stephens," *The Contributor, Representing the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations of the Latter-day Saints* 16 (Sept. 1895): 655.

18. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 11, 17, 18, 23, 33, 35, 55, 61, 74, 91, 118, 120, 183, 229, 243, 254, 312, 330, 337, compared with index of authors and composers.

19. Richard Bolton Kennedy, "Precious Moments With Evan Stephens, By Samuel Bailey Mitton And Others," Salt Lake City, 25 May 1983, 8, Family History Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter LDS Family History Library.

20. Ray L. Bergman, *The Children Sang: The Life and Music of Evan Stephens With the Mormon Tabernacle Choir* (Salt Lake City: Northwest Publishing, Inc., 1992), 182; also Dale A. Johnson, "The Life and Contributions of Evan Stephens," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1951, 73.

21. Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 219, 279.

Stephens's own account of the same-sex dynamics of his teenage life. During the next year seven issues of this church magazine emphasized different aspects of Stephens's adult life, including his same-sex relationships.

Of thirteen-year-old Evan's arrival in Willard, Utah, the autobiography began: "The two great passions of his life seemed now to be growing very rapidly, *love of friendship and music*. His day dreams . . . were all centered around imaginary scenes he would conjure up of these things, now taking possession of his young heart." The article continued: "The good [ward] choir leader was a lovable man who might have already been drawn to the blue-eyed, affectionate boy."²² It was this local choir leader "I most loved," Evan had earlier written in the church's *Improvement Era*, and the teenager "cr[ie]d his heart out at the loss" when the twenty-three-year-old chorister moved away. "I wanted to go with him," Evan confessed.²³

Concerning the young male singers in the choir, the *Children's Friend* continued: "Evan became the pet of the choir. The [young] men among whom he sat seemed to take a delight in loving him. Timidly and blushing he would be squeezed in between them, and kindly arms generally enfolded him much as if he had been a fair sweetheart of the big brawny young men. Oh, how he loved these men, too . . ."²⁴ The "men" he referred to were in their teens and early twenties.

The *Friend* also acknowledged a physical dimension in Evan's attraction to young men. Its author (Stephens) marveled at "the picturesque manliness with those coatless and braceless [suspender-less] costumes worn by the men. What freedom and grace they gave, what full manly outlines to the body and chest, what a form to admire they gave to the creature *Man* . . . Those who saw the young men in their coatless costumes of early day, with their fine, free careless airs to correspond, [now]

22. "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer [Stephens himself]," *The Children's Friend* 18 (Oct. 1919): 386, 387; for the acknowledgement of Stephens as the subject, see photograph: "PROFESSOR EVAN STEPHENS, 'OUR EVAN BACH,'" *Children's Friend* 18 (Dec. 1919): [468]; Evan Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 720.

23. Evan Stephens, "Going Home To Willard," *Improvement Era* 19 (Oct. 1916): 1090; "A Talk Given By Prof. Evan Stephens Before the Daughters of the Pioneers, Hawthorne Camp, Feb. 5, 1930," typescript, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, published as "The Great Musician," in Kate B. Carter, ed., *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958-77), 10: 86; also Cummings, "Shining Lights," 654; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 49, 54.

24. "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Oct. 1919): 387. Although the phrasing of the sentence would lead the reader to expect the words "gently enfolded," the published article used "generally enfolded."

think of them as a truly superior race of beings."²⁵

A continuation of this third-person autobiography in the *Friend* related that from ages fourteen to sixteen, Evan lived with a stonemason, Shadrach Jones, as his "loved young friend." The article gave no other reason for the teenager's decision to leave the home of his devoted parents in the same town. Evan's employment as Shadrach's helper did not require co-residence.²⁶ At the time Jones was in his late thirties and had never fathered a child by his wife.²⁷ After briefly returning to his family's residence in 1870, Evan left them permanently. At age sixteen Stephens moved in with John Ward who was his same age and "Evan's dearest friend."²⁸

Evan explained, "Without 'John' nothing was worthwhile. With him, everything; even the hardest toil was heaven." He added, "What a treasure a chum is to an affectionate boy!"²⁹ The two friends were accustomed to sleeping in the same bed, since there were eight other children

25. "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Nov. 1919): 432. The pre-October installments of "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," contained two references which appear significant only by comparison with the emphasis on male-male love in the October-December 1919 installments. *Children's Friend* 18 (Feb. 1919): 47 referred to "an old schoolboy [in Wales] for whom he secretly cherished intense admiration and childish affection." Also *Children's Friend* 18 (July 1919): 254 stated: "Most attractive of all to Evan Bach, were the merry smiling teamsters from the 'Valley.'"

26. "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Nov. 1919): 430; Cummings, "Shining Lights: Professor Evan Stephens," 655, noted that "Evan was employed by a stone mason, whose name was Shadrach Jones . . ."; also Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 57. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 720, observed that from 1868 to 1870 he "helped to build stone walls and houses in Willard."

27. Shadrach Jones (b. 17 Nov. 1832 in Wales; md. 9 July 1853, no children; d. 1883) in Ancestral File, LDS Family History Library, hereafter LDS Ancestral File; Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 3:660-61; "[The Welch] In Box Elder County," in Kate B. Carter, ed., *Heart Throbs of the West*, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1939-51), 11:22; Teddy Griffith, "A Heritage of Stone in Willard," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 43 (Summer 1975): 290-98. The U.S. 1870 Census for Box Elder County, Utah, sheet 78, mistakenly listed Jones by the first name "Frederick," as a stone mason, with wife Mary who "cannot write." The U.S. 1880 Census for Box Elder County, Utah, sheet 72, listed him as Shadrach, with consistent ages for him and wife Mary who "cannot write."

28. "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Oct. 1919): 389, (Dec. 1919): 470; also Evan Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 720; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 56; also discussion of the Stephens-Ward relationship in O'Donovan, "The Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature," 142-43.

29. Evan Stephens, "Going Home To Willard," *Improvement Era* 19 (Oct. 1916): 1090; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 56.

in the Ward family's house at the time.³⁰

After three years in the cramped family's house, the two young men moved out together. "In my twentieth year [age nineteen]," Evan bought a two-room house (sitting room and a bedroom), and John moved in. *The Children's Friend* said that while these nineteen-year-olds were "batching it . . . [this] was a happy time for Evan and John." A photograph of Evan standing with his hand on John's shoulder is captioned: "WITH HIS BOY CHUM, JOHN [J.] WARD, WHEN ABOUT 21 YEARS OLD."³¹

After six years of living with Evan, John married in 1876, but Evan remained close. The census four years later showed him as a "boarder" just a few houses from John, his wife, and infant. After the June 1880 census, Stephens left their town of Willard to expand his music career. John fathered ten children before Evan's biography appeared in *The Children's Friend*. He named one of his sons Evan.³²

That article did not mention several of Evan's other significant "boy chums." Shortly after twenty-six-year-old Stephens moved to Logan in 1880, he met seventeen-year-old Samuel B. Mitton, organist of the nearby Wellsville Ward. Mitton's family later wrote: "From that occasion on[,] their friendship grew and blossomed into one of the sweetest relationships that could exist between two sensitive, poetic musicians."³³ In 1882 Evan moved to Salt Lake City to study with the Tabernacle organist, but "their visits were frequent, and over the years their correspondence was regular and candid, each bringing pure delight to the other with these contacts." Then in the spring of 1887 Samuel began seriously courting a young woman.³⁴

According to Stephens, that same year "Horace S. Ensign became a

30. U.S. 1870 Census of Willard, Box Elder County, Utah, sheet 78. For discussion of the same-sex sleeping arrangements of children in early Mormon families, see Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

31. Evan Stephens, "Going Home to Willard," *Improvement Era* 19 (Oct. 1916): 1092; "Evan Bach [Evan Stephens]: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Oct. 1919): 389, (Dec. 1919): 471, (Oct. 1919): 388; (Mar. 1920): 97; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 64-65. *The Children's Friend* mistakenly gave John Ward's middle initial as "Y."

32. U.S. 1880 Census of Box Elder County, Utah, sheet 73; John J. Ward (b. 23 Jan. 1854 at Willard, Utah; md. in 1876, ten children) in LDS Ancestral File. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 720, said that in "1879—Accepted a position in Logan as organist of the Logan Tabernacle." However, he accepted the position in 1880, remained a resident of Willard, and commuted to Logan as necessary (Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 69). The federal census of June 1880 showed him as a resident of Willard, not Logan. Some of the other dates in Evan's autobiography are demonstrably in error.

33. Samuel Bailey Mitton (b. 21 Mar. 1863; md. 1888, seven children; d. 1954); Victor L. Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton* (Salt Lake City: the Author, 1965), 69, 293, copy in Utah State Historical Society; Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 3:167-68.

34. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 721; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 75-76; Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton*, 7, 293.

regular companion [of mine] for many years." Horace was not quite sixteen years old, and Evan was thirty-three.³⁵ Evan's former teenage companion, Samuel Mitton, married the next year at age twenty-five and later fathered seven children.³⁶ Still, Evan and Samuel wrote letters to each other, signed "Love," during the next decades.³⁷

As for Evan and his new teenage companion, after a camping trip together at Yellowstone Park in 1889, Horace lived next door to Evan for several years. When Horace turned twenty in 1891, he began living with thirty-seven-year-old Evan.³⁸ In 1893 he accompanied the conductor alone for a two-week trip to Chicago. A few months later they traveled to Chicago again when the Tabernacle Choir performed its award-winning concert at the 1893 World's Fair.³⁹ They were "regular companion[s]" until Horace married in 1894 at age twenty-three. The two men remained close, however. Evan gave Horace a house as a wedding present and appointed him assistant conductor of the Tabernacle Choir. Eventually, Horace Ensign fathered four children and became an LDS mission president.⁴⁰

Whenever Stephens took a long trip, he traveled with a young male

35. Evan Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 66 (Jan. 1931): 10; Horace S. Ensign, Jr., was born 10 November 1871 and was probably still fifteen years old when Stephens met him in 1887. See Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4:236.

36. *Windows of Wellsville, 1856-1984* (Providence, UT: Keith W. Watkins and Sons, 1985), 619; Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton*, 322-60.

37. "From One Musician to Another: Extract from a letter written by Samuel B. Mitton, of Logan, to Evan Stephens of Salt Lake City," undated, but signed "Love to you," in *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Oct. 1930): 599; Evan Stephens to Samuel B. Mitton, 7 Dec. 1924, in Kennedy, "Precious Moments With Evan Stephens," 26-27; Stephens to Mitton, 14 Mar., 19 June 1921, in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 236, 238.

38. *Salt Lake City Directory For 1890* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1890), 274, 580, showed that Horace had a room in a house next to Evan's house. *Utah Gazetteer . . . 1892-93* (Salt Lake City: Stenhouse & Co., 1892), 284, 676, and *Salt Lake City Directory, 1896* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1896), 282, 654, showed them living together. Evan referred to their trip "through the Park with me seven or eight years ago," in his letter to Horace S. Ensign, 18 Aug. 1897, in *Deseret Evening News*, 26 Aug. 1897, 5.

39. Evan Stephens, "The World's Fair Gold Medal, Continued from the September number of 'The Children's Friend,'" *Children's Friend* 19 (Oct. 1920): 420; "Making Ready To Go: Names of the Fortunate 400 Who Will Leave for Chicago Tomorrow," *Deseret Evening News*, 28 Aug. 1893, 1; "The Choir Returns: Our Famous Singers Complete Their Tour," *Deseret Evening News*, 13 Sept. 1893, 1.

40. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 66 (Mar. 1931): 133; and *Salt Lake City Directory, 1898* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1898), 272, 712; "Horace Ensign Is Appointed: New Leader for the Tabernacle Choir Chosen Last Night," *Deseret Evening News*, 19 Jan. 1900, 8; "Tabernacle Choir In Readiness for Tour of Eastern States," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Oct. 1911, III, 1; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 119, 214; Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1941), 374; Horace S. Ensign and Mary L. Whitney in LDS Ancestral File; "H. S. Ensign Dies At Home," *Deseret Evening News*, 29 Aug. 1944, 9.

companion, usually unmarried. When the Tabernacle Choir made a ten-day concert tour to San Francisco in April 1896, Stephens traveled in the same railway car with Willard A. Christopherson, his brother, and father. The Christophersons had lived next to Stephens since 1894, the year Horace Ensign married.⁴¹ In August 1897 forty-three-year-old Stephens took nineteen-year-old "Willie" Christopherson on a two-week camping trip to Yellowstone Park, but Evan reassured the now-married Horace Ensign in a letter from there that "you are constantly in my mind . . ." Like Horace, Willard was a member of the Tabernacle Choir where he was a soloist.⁴² During a visit to the east coast in 1898 Evan simply referred to "my accompanying friend," probably Christopherson.⁴³

Stephens's primary residence in Salt Lake City had an address listed as "State Street 1 north of Twelfth South" until a revision of the street-numbering system changed the address to 1996 South State Street. A large boating lake nearly surrounded this house which stood on four acres of land. In addition to his house, Evan also stayed in a downtown apartment.⁴⁴ Willard Christopherson had lived next to Evan's State Street house from 1894 until mid-1899, when (at age twenty-two) he began sharing the same downtown apartment with forty-six-year-old Evan.⁴⁵

41. List of occupants of "Car No. 6" in "The Choir's Tour: Will Begin Monday Morning and Cover a Period of Ten Days," *Deseret Evening News*, 11 Apr. 1896, 8; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1894-5* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1894), 219.

42. Stephens to Horace S. Ensign, 18 Aug. 1897, from Yellowstone Park, printed in full in "Evan Stephens' Bear Stories," *Deseret Evening News*, 26 Aug. 1897, 5; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 203. Also, Mary Musser Barnes, "An Historical Survey of the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," M.A. thesis, University of Iowa, 1936, 93, 136. For the biography of Christopherson (b. 15 Oct. 1877), see Noble Warrum, *Utah Since Statehood*, 4 vols. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920), 4:736; and J. Cecil Alter, *Utah: The Storied Domain*, 3 vols. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1932), 2:484.

43. "Stephens in Gotham," *Deseret Evening News*, 23 Dec. 1898, 4; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 205.

44. Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 181, 215; "Famed Composer's Home Gone," *Deseret News "Church News"*, 28 May 1966, 6, noted that Stephens lived in this house when he wrote the song for Utah's statehood in 1896; also Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church . . .*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930), 6:338.

45. *Salt Lake City Directory, 1894-5*, 219; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1896* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1896), 214 (Willard Christopherson "bds e s State 2 s of Pearl av."), and 74 ("Pearl av, from State e to Second East, bet Eleventh and Twelfth South"); *Salt Lake City Directory, 1900* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1900), 190, 678. Willard is listed erroneously as "Christensen" in the middle of the "Christophersen" entries on 189-90. His father and brother were also erroneously listed as "Christensen" with Willard, but were listed as "Christophersen" before and after the 1900 directory. See *Salt Lake City Directory, 1899* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1899), 203; entry about Willard "Christophersen" in *Salt Lake City Directory, 1901* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk, 1901), 198. The 1899 directory was dated 1 May; the 1900 directory gave no specific month for its completion but was based on Willard Christopherson's co-residence with Stephens prior to February 1900, when Willard moved to Europe. Therefore, Willard moved in with Evan sometime between May 1899 and January 1900.

In early February 1900 Evan left for Europe with "my partner, Mr. Willard Christopherson."⁴⁶ After staying in Chicago and New York City for a month, Evan and "his companion" Willard boarded a ship and arrived in London on 22 March. They apparently shared a cabin-room. In April Evan wrote the Tabernacle Choir that he and "Willie" had "a nice room" in London.⁴⁷

Evan left Willie in London while he visited relatives in Wales, and upon his return "we decided on a fourteen days' visit to Paris." Stephens concluded: "My friend Willard stayed with me for about two months after we landed in England, and he is now in the Norwegian mission field, laboring in Christiania." Evan returned to Salt Lake City in September 1900, too late to be included in the federal census.⁴⁸ City directories indicate that Evan did not live with another male while Christopherson was on his full-time LDS mission.⁴⁹

In March 1902 Evan returned to Europe to "spend a large portion of his time visiting Norway, where his old friend and pupil, Willard Christopherson," was on a mission.⁵⁰ During his ocean trip from Boston to Liverpool, Evan wrote that "I and Charlie Pike have a little room" aboard ship. Although he roomed with Stephens on the trip to Europe, twenty-year-old Charles R. Pike was on route to an LDS mission in Germany. Like Evan's other traveling companions, Charles was a singer in the Tabernacle Choir—since the age of ten in Pike's case.⁵¹ While visiting Norway,

46. "Prof. Stephens' European Trip: Will Begin Next Month and Last for About One Year," *Deseret Evening News*, 2 Jan. 1900, 1.

47. "Evan Stephens Is Home Again," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Sept. 1900, 8; Evan Stephens to Tabernacle Choir, 5 Apr. 1900, in "Evan Stephens On London," *Deseret Evening News*, 5 May 1900, 11; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 206.

48. Evan Stephens to Tabernacle Choir, 24 Apr. 1900, from Paris, France, in "Evan Stephens In Wales," *Deseret Evening News*, 12 May 1900, 11; also "Evan Stephens Is Home Again," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Sept. 1900, 8; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 209; U.S. 1900 Census soundex has no entry for Evan Stephens (S-315).

49. My method for ascertaining this was to check the Salt Lake City directories for the residence addresses of every male named in the last will and testament of Evan Stephens, also of the members of the Male Glee Club at the LDS high school where Stephens was Professor of Vocal Music at the time, and also the residence addresses of the male members of his music conductor's training class at the LDS high school during these years.

50. "Evan Stephens Off to Europe," *Deseret Evening News*, 28 Mar. 1902, 2. Stephens claimed that Christopherson "is presiding over the mission," but he was only presiding over the Christiania Conference of the mission. See Alter, *Utah: The Storied Domain*, 2:485; Andrew Jensen, *History of the Scandinavian Mission* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927), 507.

51. "Evan Stephens to His Juvenile Singers," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 June 1902, II, 11. Although not published until June, this undated letter was written aboard ship in April after "we left Boston harbor . . ." For Pike, see Frank Eschom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, Comprising Photographs-Genealogies-Biographies* (Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Book Publishing Co., 1913), 1106; "Evan Stephens Music On Choir Program," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Mar. 1957, 15. The city directories show that Pike lived with his parents during the years before his trip to Europe with Stephens.

Evan also “had the pleasure of reuniting for a little while with my old—or young companion, Willard, sharing his labors, cares and pleasures while letting my own rest.”⁵²

Willard remained on this mission until after Evan returned to the United States.⁵³ After Willard’s return, he rented an apartment seven blocks from Evan, where he remained until his 1904 marriage.⁵⁴

That year seventeen-year-old Noel S. Pratt began living with fifty-year-old Stephens at his State Street house. Like Ensign and Christopherson before him, Pratt was a singer in Evan’s Tabernacle Choir. He was also an officer of his high school’s junior and senior class at the LDS University in Salt Lake City, where Stephens was Professor of Vocal Music.⁵⁵ The LDS *Juvenile Instructor* remarked that Pratt was one of Evan’s “numerous boys,” and that the Stephens residence “was always the scene of youth and youthful activities.”⁵⁶

In 1907 Evan traveled to Europe with his loyal niece-housekeeper and Pratt. Evan and the twenty-year-old apparently shared a cabin-room aboard ship during the two crossings of the Atlantic.⁵⁷ Before their trip together, Pratt lived several miles south of Evan’s house. After their return in 1907, he moved to an apartment a few blocks from Evan. When the choir went by train to the west coast for a several-week concert tour in 1909, Noel shared a Pullman stateroom with Evan. With them was

52. “Prof. Stephens Home Again,” *Deseret Evening News*, 29 July 1902, 2.

53. Ibid.: “No, I don’t bring with me friend Willard. . . . And it is possible it may be another summer before he is released [from his full-time mission].”

54. *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1903 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1903), 234, 870; Willard Christopherson (b. 15 Oct. 1877) in LDS Ancestral File.

55. LDS Ancestral File for Noel Sheets Pratt (b. 25 Dec. 1886; md. 1923; d. 1927); *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1904 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1904), 679, 801; Barnes, “An Historical Survey of the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir,” 103; *Gold and Blue* 4 (July 1904): unnumbered page of third-year class officers; *Gold and Blue* 5 (1 June 1905): 8 of fourth-year class officers; *Courses of Study Offered by the Latter-day Saints’ University, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1901-1902* (Salt Lake City: Board of Trustees, 1901), [4]; *Gold and Blue* 2 (June 1902): 5.

56. Harold H. Jenson, “Tribute to Evan Stephens,” *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 722; also Evan Stephens to Samuel B. Mitton, 2 May 1927, in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 246. Jenson’s article described himself as “one of numerous boys Professor Stephens’ influence and life inspired to greater ambition.” Born in 1895, Jenson expressed regret in this article that as a teenager he did not accept Evan’s invitation to leave his family and move in with the musician. Apparently he declined that invitation at age fourteen, shortly before Thomas S. Thomas became Evan’s next live-in companion in 1909.

57. Evan Stephens, Noel S. Pratt, and Sarah Daniels were among the LDS passengers on *Republic*, 17 July 1907, in LDS British Emigration Ship Registers (1901-13), p. 295 and (1905-1909), unpagged, LDS Family History Library. Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 180, described Noel as “one of the Professor’s ‘Boys,’” and also examined the LDS passenger list for this 1907 trip (210). However, Bergman did not mention that Noel was listed as accompanying Evan and Sarah on this voyage.

Evan's next companion, Tom S. Thomas. Pratt became Salt Lake City's municipal judge, did not marry until age thirty-six, divorced shortly afterward, and died shortly after.⁵⁸

The intensity of Evan's relationship with Thomas is suggested by a photograph accompanying the 1919 article of *Children's Friend*. The caption read: "Tom S. Thomas, a grand-nephew and one of Professor Evan Stephens' dear boy chums." This 1919 photograph had skipped from Evan's live-in companion of the 1870s to his most recent, or as *The Friend* put it, "the first and last of his several life companions, who have shared his home life."⁵⁹

Born in 1891, Tom S. Thomas, Jr., was an eighteen-year-old inactive Mormon when he began living with fifty-five-year-old Evan. Tom moved in with Stephens near the time he traveled to Seattle with the choir director in 1909.⁶⁰ They shared a house with the matronly housekeeper who was both Tom's second cousin and Evan's grand-niece. The housekeeper remained a non-Mormon as long as Evan lived.⁶¹ Thomas had apparently stopped attending school while he lived in Idaho with his parents and also during his first year living with Stephens. At age nineteen, with Evan's encouragement, he began his freshman year of high school at the LDS University in Salt Lake City. Another of Evan's boy-chums described Tom as "a blond Viking who captured the eye of everyone as a superb specimen of manhood." The impressive and mature-looking Thomas be-

58. *Salt Lake City Directory, 1906* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1906), 727; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1907* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1907), 857 (Noel S. Pratt "bds 750 Ashton av."), 48 ("ASHTON AVE—runs east from 7th to 9th East; 2 blocks south of 12th South"), 1004 (Evan Stephens "res State 1 n of 12th South"); "Singers Will Leave Tonight: Two Hundred Members of Tabernacle Choir Ready for Trip to Seattle," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Aug. 1909, 1; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1923* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1923), 770. LDS Ancestral File for Noel S. Pratt shows an undated divorce for his recent marriage, although there is no record of the divorce in Salt Lake County. He died only four years after his marriage.

59. "THE BEAUTIFUL LAKE MADE BY 'EVAN BACH' [Evan Stephens]," *Children's Friend* 18 (Nov. 1919): [428]; "Evan Bach: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Dec. 1919): 473.

60. Entries for Thomas Thomas [Jr.] (b. 10 July 1891) in St. John Ward, Malad Stake, Record of Members (1873-1901), 36, 62; Thomas S. Thomas, Sr. (b. 1864), in LDS Ancestral File, and entries for Evan Stephens and Thomas S. Thomas in LDS church census for 1914, all in LDS Family History Library; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1909* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1909), 1038, 1076; "Singers Will Leave Tonight: Two Hundred Members of Tabernacle Choir Ready for Trip to Seattle," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Aug. 1909, 1. For Thomas's inactivity in the LDS church, the church census for 1914 showed that twenty-three-year-old Thomas was still unordained.

61. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 65 (Dec. 1930): 720; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 179-82. Evan's housekeeper and grand-niece, Sarah Mary Daniels, joined the LDS church after his death. She had herself sealed to him by proxy on 5 November 1931. See Kennedy, "Precious Moments With Evan Stephens," 28; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 189. Kennedy mistakenly identified her as Evan's cousin.

came president of his sophomore class in 1911, and his final yearbook described him thus: "Aye, every inch a king," then added: "Also a 'Queener.'"⁶²

During the last years Evan and Thomas lived together in Utah, the city directory no longer listed an address for Tom but simply stated that he "r[oo]ms [with] Evan Stephens."⁶³ He accompanied Evan on the choir's month-long trip to the eastern states in 1911, the same year he was class president at the LDS high school. However, the choir's business manager George D. Pyper deleted Tom's name from the passenger list of the choir and "tourists" as published by the church's official magazine, *Improvement Era*.⁶⁴ Pyper may have been uncomfortable about same-sex relationships since 1887, when he served as the judge in the first trial of a sensational sodomy case involving teenage boys.⁶⁵

After they had lived together for seven years, twenty-five-year-old Tom prepared to move to New York City to begin medical school in 1916. Evan had put Tom through the LDS high school and the University of Utah's pre-medical program and was going to pay for his medical training, as well, but Stephens wanted to continue living with the younger man. He consequently resigned as director of the Tabernacle Choir in July. He later explained that he did this so that he could "reside, if I wished, at New York City, where I was taking a nephew I was educating as a physician, to enter Columbia University."⁶⁶ Stephens gave up his ca-

62. Jenson, "Tribute to Evan Stephens," 722; *The S Book: Commencement Number* (Salt Lake City: Associated Students of Latter-day Saints' University, 1914), 12-14, 38, for photographs of Thomas. However, Stephens was no longer an instructor at the LDS high school when Thomas was a student there. See "Teachers Who Have Taught At the School," in John Henry Evans, "An Historical Sketch of the Latter-day Saints' University," unnumbered page, typescript dated Nov. 1913, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

63. *Salt Lake City Directory, 1915* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1915), 966; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1916* (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1916), 832.

64. Thomas S. Thomas was listed in "Tabernacle Choir In Readiness For Tour of Eastern States," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Oct. 1911, III, 1, 19, but deleted in [George D. Pyper], "Six Thousand Miles With the 'Mormon' Tabernacle Choir: Impressions of the Manager," *Improvement Era* 47 (Mar. 1912): 132-33; *The S Book: Commencement Number* (Salt Lake City: Associated Students of the Latter-day Saints University, 1914), 38.

65. "Before Justice Pyper," *Deseret Evening News*, 14 Jan. 1887, [3]; "PAYING THE PYPYER: The Awful Accusation Against the Boys," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 15 Jan. 1887, [4]; also discussion in Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

66. Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 66 (Mar. 1931): 133; also Stephens to Samuel B. Mitton, 28 July 1916, in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 228; telephone statement to me on 14 September 1993 by Alumni Office of Columbia University's School of Medicine regarding the enrollment of Thomas S. Thomas in 1916. Evan's autobiography claimed that he resigned in 1914, but his resignation occurred in 1916. See "Evan Stephens Resigns Leadership of Choir; Prof. A.C. Lund of B.Y.U. Offered Position," *Deseret Evening News*, 27 July 1916, 1-2.

reer for the “blond Viking” who had become the love of his life.⁶⁷

In October 1916 the *Deseret Evening News* reported the two men’s living arrangements in New York City: “Prof. Evan Stephens and his nephew, Mr. Thomas, are living at ‘The Roland,’ east Fifty-ninth street.” Columbia University’s medical school was located on the same street. Then the newspaper referred to one of Evan’s former boy-chums: “the same hostelry he [Stephens] used to patronize years ago when he was here for a winter with Mr. Willard Christopherson.” The report added that Tom intended to move into an apartment with eight other students near the medical school.⁶⁸ Stephens later indicated that Tom’s intended student-living arrangement did not alter his “desire” to be near the young man. A few weeks after the *Deseret News* article, the police conducted a well-publicized raid on a homosexual bathhouse in New York City.⁶⁹

In November Stephens wrote about his activities in “Gay New York.” He referred to Central Park and “its flotsam of lonely souls—like myself—who wander into its retreats for some sort of companionship . . .” For New Yorkers who defined themselves by the sexual slang of the time as “gay,” Evan’s words described the common practice of seeking same-

67. This could be disputed, since Anthon H. Lund’s diary recorded on 13 July 1916 that the First Presidency and apostles decided to release Stephens as director of the Tabernacle Choir. Lund worried on 20 July that “Bro Stephens will take this release very hard.” Instead, he recorded on 25 July that Stephens “seemed to feel alright” (Lund diary, as quoted in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 13-14). On the other hand, in the same letter in which Stephens acknowledged that he was personally offended that a “committee recommended my release,” he privately confided that he had actually “deserted his job” (Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 239). I believe the resolution of this apparent contradiction is that Stephens resented the LDS hierarchy’s decision to release him, yet he had already planned to resign or ask for a leave of absence so he could move with Thomas to New York. Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 157, described the conductor’s abrasive relations with the LDS hierarchy which led to this forced resignation. However, there is no indication that LDS leaders were concerned about Stephens’s relationships with young men.

68. “Salt Lakers in Gotham,” *Deseret Evening News*, 7 Oct. 1916, Sec. 2: 7; entry for Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in *Trow General Directory of New York City, Embracing the Boroughs of Manhattan and The Bronx*, 1916 (New York: R.L. Polk & Co., 1916), 2047.

69. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books/HarperCollins, 1994), 217, 428n24, for a raid report dated 24 October 1916. The well-known Ariston homosexual bathhouse was located on Broadway and Fifty-fifth Street, only a few blocks from the hotel where Stephens and his boy-chum were staying. However, Chauncey doubts (216) that “the Ariston continued to be a homosexual rendezvous after being raided [in 1903], given the notoriety of the trials and the severity of the sentences imposed on the patrons.”

sex intimacy with strangers in Central Park.⁷⁰ Just days after the commemorative celebration in April 1917 which brought him back to Utah, Stephens said he had "a desire to return ere long to my nephew, Mr. Thomas, in New York . . ." ⁷¹

Evan apparently returned to New York later that spring and took up residence in the East Village of lower Manhattan. At least that is where the census showed Tom living within two years.⁷² By then there were so many open homosexuals and male couples living in Greenwich Village that a local song proclaimed: "Fairyland's not far from Washington Square."⁷³ Long before Evan and Tom arrived, New Yorkers used "fairy" and "fairies" as derogatory nouns for male homosexuals.⁷⁴ In fact, just before Stephens said he intended to return to Tom in New York in 1917, one of the East Village's cross-dressing dances ("drag balls") was attended by 2,000 people—"the usual crowd of homosexuals," according to one hostile investigator.⁷⁵

Tom apparently wanted to avoid the stigma of being called a New York "fairy," which had none of the light-hearted ambiguity of the

70. "Stephens Writes of Musical Events in Gay New York," *Deseret Evening News*, 11 Nov. 1916, II, 3. For "gay boy" as American slang by 1903 for "a man who is homosexual," see J. E. Lighter, ed., *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, 3 vols. (New York: Random House, 1994-96), 1:872. For homosexual "cruising" in Central Park since the 1890s, see Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 98, 182, 423n58, and 441n50, for "cruising" as a term used by nineteenth-century prostitutes (also Lighter, *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, 1:531).

71. "Prof. Stephens Enlists As a Food Producer," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 Apr. 1917, II, 6. For the program, see "PROF. EVAN STEPHENS, Who Will be Tendered a Monster Farewell Testimonial at the Tabernacle, Friday, April 6th," *Deseret Evening News*, 31 Mar. 1917, II, 5; Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 66 (Mar. 1931): 133; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 217-18. "Salt Lakers in Gotham," *Deseret Evening News*, 10 Mar. 1917, II, 7, reported that the two "well known Utah boys, Frank Spencer . . . and Tom Thomas, nephew of Prof. Evan Stephens," were still living together with six other students a few blocks from Columbia's medical school.

72. U.S. 1920 Census of New York County, New York, enumeration district 802 (enumerated in Jan. 1920), sheet 1, line 39.

73. Lyrics of a 1914 song, quoted in Steven Watson, *Strange Bedfellows: The First American Avant-Garde* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 114.

74. Colin A. Scott, "Sex and Art," *American Journal of Psychology* 7 (Jan. 1896): 216; Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Inversion*, vol. 2 of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Co., 1915), 299; Earl Lind, pseud., *Autobiography of an Androgyne* (New York: The Medico-Legal Journal, 1918; New York: Arno Press/New York Times, 1975 reprint), 7, 77-78, 155-56, 189; Jonathan Ned Katz, ed., *Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 235; Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 15, 190, 228; Lighter, *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, 1:718.

75. Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 235-36, 291, and 431n28, for the investigator's quote.

"Queener" nickname from his high school days in Utah.⁷⁶ Unlike the openness of his co-residence with Stephens in Utah, Tom never listed his Village address in New York City's directories.⁷⁷ However, Evan's and Tom's May-December relationship did not last long in Manhattan. "After some months," Evan returned to Utah permanently, while Tom remained in the Village. Thomas married within two years and fathered two children.⁷⁸

Shortly after Evan's final return to Salt Lake from New York in 1917, he befriended thirty-year-old Ortho Fairbanks. Like most of Evan's other Salt Lake City boy-chums, Ortho had been a member of the Tabernacle Choir since his mid-teens. Stephens once told him: "I believe I love you, Ortho, as much as your father does." In 1917 Evan set up the younger man in one of the houses Stephens owned in the Highland Park subdivision of Salt Lake City. Fairbanks remained there until he married at nearly thirty-five-years-of-age. He eventually fathered five children.⁷⁹

However, during the five-year period after Evan returned from New

76. "Queen" was slang for male homosexual by the 1920s. See Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 101; list of homosexual slang in Aaron J. Rosanoff, *Manual of Psychiatry*, 6th ed. (New York: Wiley, 1927), as quoted in Katz, *Gay/Lesbian Almanac*, 439. However, there is no published verification that "queen" had this meaning as early as the 1914 usage of "Queener" in the LDS high school's yearbook. Nevertheless, Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*, has verified other examples where the historical citations in slang dictionaries are decades after Mormon and Utah usage (as sexual terms) of such phrases as "sleeping with" and "monkey with."

77. Thomas S. Thomas does not appear as a student in *Trow General Directory of New York City, Embracing the Boroughs of Manhattan and The Bronx*, 1916 (New York: R.L. Polk & Co., 1916), 1660; *Trow General Directory of New York City . . . 1917, 1915; Trow General Directory of New York City . . . 1918-1919*, 1874-75; *Trow General Directory of New York City . . . 1920-1921*, 1783-84. Although the U.S. 1920 Census showed his residence address, Thomas apparently withheld that information from the city directory.

78. Evan Stephens, "The Life Story of Evan Stephens," *Juvenile Instructor* 66 (Mar. 1931): 133. Stephens erroneously dated this as occurring in 1914. See also January 1920 U.S. Census of New York City, New York, for Thomas S. Thomas and wife Priscilla in New York City; *American Medical Directory*, 1940 (Chicago: American Medical Association, 1940), 1126, for Thomas Stephens Thomas, Jr., graduate of Columbia University School of Physicians and Surgeons, and practicing in Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey; "Dr. T.S. Thomas Dies at 78 at Memorial," *Morris County's Daily Record* (22 July 1969): 2.

79. Kathryn Fairbanks Kirk, ed., *The Fairbanks Family in the West: Four Generations* (Salt Lake City: Paragon Press, 1983), 318; *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1917 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1917), 301, for Ortho Fairbanks at 1111 Whitlock Avenue; *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1919 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1919), 35, for "WHITLOCK AV (Highland Pk)"; Ortho Fairbanks (b. 29 Sept. 1887) in LDS Ancestral File; *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1923 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1923), 322; and Evan Stephens holographic Last Will and Testament, dated 9 Nov. 1927, Salt Lake County Clerk, Probated Will #16540, p. 1, Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City, for Stephens's ownership of the Highland Park properties, and p. 3 for Ortho Fairbanks as one of the persons to receive "a memento of my regards."

York City, he did not live with Fairbanks or any other male.⁸⁰ No one had taken Tom's place in Evan's heart or home. Two years after Fairbanks began living in the Highland Park house, *The Children's Friend* publicly identified Evan's former boy-chum Tom S. Thomas as the "last of his several life companions, who have shared his home life."⁸¹ There is no record of the letters Stephens might have written during this period to his now-married "blond Viking" in the east.

However, Thomas was not Evan's last boy-chum. Three months after Fairbanks married in August 1922, Stephens (now sixty-eight) took a trip to Los Angeles and San Francisco with seventeen-year-old John Wallace Packham as "his young companion." Packham was a member of the "Male Glee Club" and in student government of the LDS University (high school).⁸² The Salt Lake City directory showed him living a few houses from Evan as a student in 1924-25. At that time Stephens privately described Wallace as the "besht boy I ish gott." It is unclear why Stephens imitated a drunkard's speech. This was the only example in his available letters.⁸³

After Wallace moved to California in 1926, Evan lived with no other male. From then until his death, he rented the front portion of his State Street house to a succession of married couples in their thirties, while he lived in the rear of the house.⁸⁴

When Evan prepared his last will and testament in 1927, twenty-two-year-old Wallace was still in California, where Evan was supporting his education. Evan's will divided the bulk of his possessions among the LDS church, his brother, his housekeeper-niece, and "J. Wallace Packham, a friend." Packham eventually married twice and fathered two chil-

80. U.S. 1920 Census for Salt Lake City, Utah, enumeration district 88, sheet 12; and comparison of city directory listings with the names of all males mentioned in the last will and testament of Evan Stephens.

81. "THE BEAUTIFUL LAKE MADE BY 'EVAN BACH' [Evan Stephens]," *Children's Friend* 18 (Nov. 1919): [428]; "Evan Bach: A True Story for Little Folk, by a Pioneer," *Children's Friend* 18 (Dec. 1919): 473.

82. "Los Angeles Entertains Veteran Composer: Prof Evan Stephens Guest of Musical Organization on Coast—A Most Enjoyable Occasion," *Deseret Evening News*, 3 Feb. 1923, III, 6; *The S Book of 1924: The Annual of the Latter-day Saints High School* (Salt Lake City: Associated Students of the Latter-day Saints High School, 1924), 106, 120; also, Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 222-23; John Wallace Packham (b. 28 Dec. 1904; d. in 1972) in LDS Ancestral File. Packham turned eighteen in the middle of his trip with Stephens.

83. *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1924 (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1924), 741, 927; Evan Stephens to Samuel B. Mitton, 20 July 1924, in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 242.

84. *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1926, 1003, 1035, 1443, *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1927, 424, 1044, 1495, *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1928, 1041, 1534, *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1929, 151, 1562; *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1930, 702, 1609 (all published in Salt Lake City by R.L. Polk & Co.); LDS Ancestral File for occupants.

dren.⁸⁵

When Stephens died in 1930, one of his former boy-chums confided to his diary: "No one will know what a loss his passing is to me. The world will never seem the same to me again."⁸⁶ Although Wallace received more of the composer's estate than Evan's former (and now much older) boy-chums, Stephens also gave small bequests to John J. Ward, Horace S. Ensign, Willard A. Christopherson, to the wife of deceased Noel S. Pratt, to Thomas S. Thomas, and Ortho Fairbanks.⁸⁷

As a teenager, Stephens had doubted the marriage prediction of his psychic aunt: "I see you married three times, two of the ladies are blondes, and one a brunette." She added, "I see no children; but you will be very happy."⁸⁸ Stephens fulfilled his aunt's predictions about having no children and being happy. However, beginning with sixteen-year-old John Ward a year later, he inverted his aunt's prophecy about the gender and hair color of those described by the LDS magazine as "his several life companions." Instead of having more "blondes" as wives, Stephens had more "brunettes" as boy-chums.⁸⁹

The Children's Friend even printed Evan's 1920 poem titled "Friends" which showed that these young men had shared his bed:

We have lived and loved together,
Slept together, dined and supped,

85. "Evan Stephens' Treasures Divided," *Salt Lake Telegram*, 9 Nov. 1930, II, 1; also Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 214, 216; LDS Ancestral File for John Wallace Packham (b. 28 Dec. 1904), and his obituary in *Salt Lake Tribune*, 17 Sept. 1972, E-19.

86. Samuel B. Mitton diary, 27 Oct. 1930, quoted in Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton*, 295. Despite Evan's expressions of love for Mitton in correspondence as late as 1924, Stephens left Mitton out of his will in 1927. The reasons for that omission are presently unknown, but it must have been a surprise for Mitton when he learned this fact after Evan's will was probated. Mitton and his wife had continued visiting Stephens up through the composer's final illness, and Mitton's diary entry showed the depth of the married man's love for Evan. Despite full access to his diaries, Mitton's biographer made no reference to his exclusion from the will that remembered all of Evan's other "boy-chums" and no mention of Mitton's reaction to that omission. Either Mitton himself chose not to comment, or his biographer chose not to tarnish his narrative of the loving relationship between Mitton and Stephens.

87. Evan Stephens holographic Last Will and Testament, dated 9 Nov. 1927, 1, 3.

88. Evan Stephens, "Evan Stephens' Promotion. As told by Himself," *Children's Friend* 19 (Mar. 1920): 96; Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 65.

89. Thomas S. Thomas was the only light-blond boy-chum of Stephens as pictured in *Children's Friend* 18 (Nov. 1919): [428], and described in Jenson, "Tribute to Evan Stephens," 722. Photographs of his seven "brunette" boy-chums (at least one of whom may have been dark-blond as a younger man) are John J. Ward in *Children's Friend* 18 (Oct. 1919): 388; Samuel B. Mitton opposite p. 6 in Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton*; Horace S. Ensign in Photo 4273, Item #1, LDS archives; Willard A. Christopherson in Photo 1700-3781, LDS archives; Noel S. Pratt in Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 181; Ortho Fairbanks in Kirk, *Fairbanks Family in the West*, 239; J. Wallace Packham in *Deseret Evening News*, 3 Feb. 1923, III, 6.

Felt the pain of little quarrels,
 Then the joy of waking up;
 Held each other's hands in sorrows,
 Shook them hearty in delight,
 Held sweet converse through the day time,
 Kept it up through half the night.⁹⁰

Whether or not Stephens intended it, well-established word usage allowed a sexual meaning in that last line of his poem about male bed-mates. Since the 1780s "keep it up" was slang for "to prolong a debauch."⁹¹

Seventeen years before his poem "Friends" contained a possible reference to sexual intimacy, Stephens publicly indicated that there was a socially forbidden dimension in his same-sex friendships. In his introduction to an original composition he published in the high school student magazine of LDS University, Evan invoked the well-known examples of Ruth and Naomi, David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, and then referred to "one whom we could love if we dared to do so." Indicating that the problem involved society's rules, Stephens explained that "we feel as if there is something radically wrong in the present make up and constitution of things and we are almost ready to rebel at the established order." Then the LDS high school's student magazine printed the following lines from Evan's same-sex love song: "Ah, friend, could you and I conspire/ To wreck this sorry scheme of things entire,/ We'd break it into bits, and then—/ Remold it nearer to the heart's desire."⁹² The object of this "desire" may have been eighteen-year-old Louis Shaw, a member of the Male Glee Club at the LDS high school where Stephens was the music teacher. Shaw later became president of the Bohemian Club, identified as

90. Evan Stephens, "Little Life Experiences," *Children's Friend* 19 (June 1920): 228.

91. John S. Farmer and W.E. Henley, *Slang and Its Analogues*, 7 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1890-1904), 4 (1896): 90; Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English . . .*, 8th ed., Paul Beale, ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 638.

92. "Stephens' Day at School," *The Gold and Blue* 3 (14 Jan. 1903): 5. Although some readers might question whether LDS student-editors would knowingly print a sexual message of this kind, even more explicitly sexual items appeared in the student-edited publications of Brigham Young University. For example, the student-editors included an obviously phallic cartoon in BYU's 1924 yearbook which showed a man wearing a long curved sword, the tip of which had been redrawn as the head of a penis. The caption read: "His Master's Vice," a multiple play on words, including masturbate and "secret vice," a euphemism for masturbation. See *Banyan*, 1924, 227; also Gary James Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 100-103, 255-57.

a social haven for Salt Lake City's homosexuals.⁹³

The words of this 1903 song suggest that Stephens wanted to live in a culture where he could freely share erotic experience with the young men he openly loved in every other way. Historical evidence cannot demonstrate whether he actually created a private world of sexual intimacy with his beloved boy-chums who "shared his home life." It can only be a matter of speculation whether Evan had sexual relations with any of the young men he loved, lived with, and slept with throughout most of his life. Of his personal experiences, he confessed: "some of it [is] even too sacred to be told freely[,] only to myself."⁹⁴

If there was unexpressed erotic desire in the life of Evan Stephens, it is possible that only Stephens felt it, since all his boy-chums eventually married. Homoerotic desire could have been absent altogether, unconsciously sublimated, or consciously suppressed. However, historian John D. Wrathall cautions:

Marriage, even "happy" marriage (however we choose to define "happy"), is not proof that homoeroticism did not play an important and dynamic role in a person's relationships with members of the same sex. Nor is evidence of strong homoerotic attachments proof that a man's marriage was a sham or that a man was incapable of marriage. It is clear, however, that while strong feelings toward members of both sexes can co-exist, the way in which such feelings are embodied and acted out is strongly determined by culture.

Wrathall adds that lifelong bachelorhood also "should not be interpreted as a suggestion that these men were 'gay,' any more than marriage allows us to assume that they were 'heterosexual.'"⁹⁵ By necessity this applies to the lifelong bachelorhood of Evan Stephens as well as to the

93. *The Gold and Blue* 2 (1 Mar. 1902): 11; *Salt Lake City Directory, 1908* (Salt Lake City: R. L. Polk & Co., 1908), 83; LDS Ancestral File for Louis Casper Lambert Shaw, Jr. (b. 17 May 1884); and extended discussion in Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*. However, neither Shaw nor any other young man moved in with Stephens for more than a year after January 1903, and in 1904 Shaw's fellow student Noel Pratt began living with the music director.

94. Evan Stephens, "Going Home To Willard," *Improvement Era* 19 (Oct. 1916): 1093.

95. John Donald Wrathall, "American Manhood and the Y.M.C.A., 1868-1920," Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1994, 127-28 (forthcoming from University of Chicago Press). Wrathall places "gay" and "heterosexual" in quotes because (128) "the entire concept of sexual orientation is culturally contingent." I am pleased to acknowledge the important work of this former student who was enrolled as an undergraduate in my introductory course in American social history at Brigham Young University. Also briefer statements by Leila J. Rupp, "'Imagine My Surprise': Women's Relationships in Historical Perspective," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 5 (Fall 1980): 67, and Gilbert Herdt, "Cross-Cultural Forms of Homosexuality and the Concept 'Gay,'" *Psychiatric Annals* 18 (Jan. 1988): 38.

marriages of his former boy-chums and their fathering of numerous children.

Whether or not Evan's male friendships were explicitly homoerotic, both published and private accounts showed that the love of the Tabernacle Choir director for young men was powerful, charismatic, reciprocal, and enduring. For example, as a member of the Tabernacle Choir from age ten until Stephens's retirement, Charles R. Pike traveled with Evan (but never resided with him) and "was a close friend of Elder Stephens until his death."⁹⁶ Evan's own biographer concluded that Stephens "attached himself passionately to the male friends of his youth, and brought many young men, some distantly related, into his home for companionship . . ."⁹⁷

Probably few, if any, other prominent Mormon bachelors shared the same bed with a succession of beloved teenage boys and young men for years at a time as did Stephens. *The Children's Friend* articles invite the conclusion that sexual intimacy was part of the personal relationship which Stephens shared only with young males.

For Mormons who regarded themselves as homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual, and had "the eyes to see it or the antennae to sense it," *The Children's Friend* of 1919 endorsed their own romantic and erotic same-sex relationships. (About this time Mildred J. Berryman began a study of homosexually-identified men and women in Salt Lake City.⁹⁸) However, for the majority of Mormon readers whose same-sex dynamics had no romantic or erotic dimensions, this publication passed without special notice. The nineteenth-century's "warm language between friends" covered a multitude of relationships. Evan Stephens and his "boy chums" were only one example.

96. "Evan Stephens To His Juvenile Singers," *Deseret Evening News*, 21 June 1902, II, 11; "Evan Stephens Music On Choir Program," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Mar. 1957, 15; Salt Lake City directories.

97. Bergman, *The Children Sang*, 182.

98. Vern Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, "Lesbianism in the 1920s and 1930s: A New-found Study," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2 (Summer 1977): 896; "Historian's Research Aimed at Learning about Living in Utah," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 May 1990, A-12; chap., "The Earliest Community-Study of Lesbians and Gay Men in America: Salt Lake City," in Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*, which also gives careful attention to the verified LDS affiliation and disaffiliation of this study's participants. Two articles in *Children's Friend* of October 1919 also described and praised the same-sex relationship and live-in companionship of the LDS Primary's general president Louie B. Felt and her counselor May Anderson, "the David and Jonathan of the General Board." An analysis of these articles and their significance appears briefly in O'Donovan, "'The Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature,'" 127-29, and extensively in Quinn, *Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-century Americans*.

Hemmed In

Michael J. Noble

Above, the divorcee
with the baggy eyes and bleached hair
draws an evening bath.
The dull pat of bare feet
and the rush of piped water
ring through the elderly walls;
the light suspended from my ceiling
swings right, then left
like a pendulum.

The magpie laughter
of three generic teenagers
reverberates down the hall,
amplified by the echo.
That would be apartment 8,
whose door is perpetually open
and whose inhabitants keep no secrets.
Those who pass going up or down
just serve as extras on the set.

The television of the deaf landlady
begins to play an aggressive version
of the "Star-Spangled Banner."
I lie in my bed waiting for the static to start.
As usual, my consciousness slips,
and I jump at the sudden
shift from music to chaos.

In number 10, there is silence
though it is that pregnant quiet
which expects to birth the rattle
of keys at 2:00 a.m. when the bars close.
Red-eyed and blurry, he'll try
every key twice before one works.
But the interruption will be brief.
He'll pass out before he has a chance
to shed the day's smell and dirt.

Below, Thursday's garbage
goes crashing onto the street
as two curs quarrel territory.
The bastard on the first floor
peppers his trash with rat poison.
I imagine a hungry bag lady,
then, roll over dreaming
of the vacant apartment below.

The Function of Mormon Literary Criticism at the Present Time

Michael Austin

IN HIS HILARIOUS SHORT STORY "Conversion of the Jews," Philip Roth gives us one of the most endearing unimportant characters in our national literature: Yakov Blotnik, an old janitor at a Jewish Yeshiva who, upon seeing that a yeshiva student was standing on a ledge threatening to kill himself, goes off mumbling to himself that such goings-on are "no-good-for-the-Jews." "For Yakov Blotnik," Roth tells us in an aside, "life fractionated itself simply: things were either good-for-the-Jews or no-good-for-the-Jews."¹ This basic binary opposition, which I have named the "Blotnik dichotomy" in honor of its distinguished inventor, has, with minor variations and revisions, begun to assert itself prominently in a number of recent discussions of Mormon literature. The taxonomies that have come from these discussions tend to dichotomize Mormon letters into separate camps—such as "mantic" versus "sophic," "faithful realism" versus "faithless fiction," or "home literature" versus "the Lost Generation."² Each of these pairings suggests that at the heart of the Mormon literary consciousness lies a conception that Mormon literature can be

1. Philip Roth, *Goodbye Columbus* (New York: Bantam, 1963), 108.

2. Most of these terms have been in wide use by scholars of Mormon literature for some time. The "mantic-sophic" dichotomy was introduced by Richard Cracroft in his presidential address at the Association for Mormon Letters in 1992, which was later published as "Attuning the Authentic Mormon Voice: Stemming the Sophic Tide in LDS Literature," *Sunstone* 16 (July 1993): 51-57. For representative uses of the other terms, see the same author's entry "Literature, Mormon Writer's of—Novels" in *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992); Eugene England's "The Dawning of a Brighter Day: Mormon Literature after 150 Years," *Brigham Young University Studies* 22 (Spring 1982): 131-60; and Ed Geary's "Mormondom's Lost Generation: The Novelists of the 1940's," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Fall 1977): 89-98.

divided into two essential Blotnik types: books that are orthodox, faithful, inspiring, and testimony-building—good-for-the-Mormons; and books that are apostate, faithless, demeaning, and testimony-destroying—bad-for-the-Mormons.

While I am as concerned as anyone with what is good for the Mormons, I am not convinced, given the present state of Mormon literature and scholarship, that the Blotnik dichotomy in any of its variations provides Mormon scholars with enough useful information to justify the taxonomical importance that our recent debates have given it. This is not because I favor one end of the dichotomy over the other, or because I want to make the argument that books that might initially appear “bad-for-the-Mormons” are really, upon further scholarly consideration, “good-for-the-Mormons,” or vice versa. Rather, I believe that the conception of Mormon literature that has emerged from these discussions is too narrow to be useful to scholars of Mormonism and literature. Implicitly or explicitly, conceptions of “Mormon literature” based on these dualities force us to limit our definition of the term primarily to those books written by Mormons for Mormons dealing with Mormon themes. Such narrowing of our focus, I argue, detracts from the overall effectiveness of the Mormon scholar in the larger academic community.

In a recent *Sunstone* article based on his farewell speech as the president of the Association for Mormon Letters, Richard Cracroft, a professor of English at BYU, makes the following observation about the place of literary criticism in the LDS community:

If we who are Mormon writers, critics, and publishers wish to speak to the Saints, we must speak to them through LDS metaphors. We cannot dismiss or belittle or patronize them merely because we have supplanted their metaphors or because they refuse to set their familiar metaphors aside. This people deserves a literature grounded in Mormon metaphors, exuding their essences, mirroring their dualistic world, establishing their vision of themselves as pilgrims wandering by themselves across a twilight stage.³

When I read Professor Cracroft’s words, I find myself alternately accepting and disputing his vision of Mormon literature and Mormon literary criticism. I agree that faithful Latter-day Saints deserve a literature that will confirm their world view and justify their faith. I object to the negativism and faithlessness that pervades some of the more intellectual discussions of Mormon literature, and I reject the notion that a work of literature must be faithless or negative in order to be good. I am the last person who would ever feel compelled to cram intellectual doubt and academic angst down the throat of someone who is living a happy, produc-

3. Cracroft, “Attuning the Authentic Mormon Voice,” 53.

tive life without them.

However, I disagree with Professor Cracroft on one major premise: that it is the duty of Mormon scholars and critics to "speak to the Saints," or to work within Mormon culture to foster, encourage, or critique either "mantic" or "sophic" Mormon books. Certainly the majority of Mormon readers want faith-promoting books, and as long as they are willing to spend millions of dollars a year at LDS bookstores, they will get them. However, decisions about what to write stem from the imaginations and motivations of individual writers, who are much less affected by critical discourse than we literary critics care to admit. Great writers have always produced great works, and mediocre writers have always pandered to the popular prejudices, no matter what scholars and intellectuals have written in academic journals. Good intentions aside, literary critics have rarely been an important *direct* factor in the production or consumption of any type of literature.

However, literary critics have always been an important *indirect* factor in the production and consumption of literature. Such indirect influence comes, not as critics and theorists attempt to encourage or proscribe different kinds of literary production, but, instead, as they have used literature as a starting point for commenting on, critiquing, and helping to construct the cultures that produce and consume books. In the past twenty years or so literary scholars of all stripes have used the tools of literary criticism to build platforms from which to argue that certain groups, subcultures, classes, or peoples should have more representation in, and more recognition by, the larger national or international cultures to which they belong. These critical discourses have joined with larger political movements to create curricular and publishing environments that have helped to move traditionally underrepresented groups to the center of the academic stage.

The question at the heart of my essay, then, is: Why not the Mormons? Literary scholars and critics now rally around the cries of "tolerate difference" and "celebrate diversity," and we, as Mormons, have plenty of difference and diversity to offer. However, I would guess that there are only a handful of non-Mormon scholars outside of the Rocky Mountain West who even know that there is such a thing as "Mormon literature." Most academics view Mormonism negatively, as merely a particularly curious fringe of the unpopular religious right, and not as a unique culture with its own art, music, folklore, and literature. The persistence of these perceptions affects us all, and we should spend a substantial part of our energy addressing and correcting them. In suggesting a course for Mormon literary criticism, then, I would like to propose and build on the following three propositions: (1) the story and theology of Mormonism form a unique, compelling, and largely misrepresented part of the larger

narrative of the American experience; (2) current conventions of literary theory and criticism are well suited for those wishing to tell unique, compelling, and largely misrepresented stories; and (3) the most important thing that Mormon literary critics can do in this environment is to use the tools of our profession to construct a space, within the larger cultural context of literary studies, for honest discussion of Mormon literature and the values that construct and stem from it.

In even beginning to answer the question, "What is Mormon literature?" we must concede that Mormonism is something more than a religion as the term is usually understood. One seldom hears talk of, say, Methodist fiction or Presbyterian poetry—at least not in the mainstream press. And those religions that do tend to be associated with a literature of their own—such as Catholicism and Judaism—are generally perceived as religions whose cultural ties are at least as strong as their religious ones. So imbedded in the assertion that there is such a thing as "Mormon literature" is the claim that we, as Mormons, and particularly as American Mormons, represent a cultural entity whose traditions, heritage, and experience deserve to be considered a vital part of the American mosaic. We are claiming, not just that we are Mormons, but that we are "Mormo-Americans," that "Mormo-American literature" should be considered an important part of American literary studies, and that anyone who doesn't think we deserve our own place in the canon is a "Mormophobe" whose position should not be taken seriously by an academy that values tolerance, difference, and diversity.

As Mormo-Americans who are also practicing academics at secular universities, we should also be arguing a further point: Mormon students and Mormon professors should be able to use university time and resources to study, write, and teach about our own culture and our own literature. We must, in short, insist that our employers and our colleagues accede to the force of their own rhetoric and accord us the same legitimacy now enjoyed by other subcultures within American society—not because we have been victimized or oppressed, but because our diverse culture and history have something valuable to offer the field of literary inquiry. Such requests will most likely be resisted; academia has always resisted attempts by any outside group to gain a foothold in its well-protected ivy-covered walls. The institutes of higher learning did not approach African-American scholars or feminist critics without any preface, "You may tell us your stories now, we are finally ready to listen." Scholars in these fields have spent years fighting for the right to include their values and perceptions in their academic work, and I believe that our profession is the better for their efforts.

So again I ask, Why not the Mormons? Academia in general has become large and diverse enough to accommodate our diversity; however,

any successful movement towards Mormon literary studies in the American academy requires a substantial number of Mormon scholars who are both good Mormons and good literary critics—and who can be both at the same time. I cannot overstate the importance of this latter area. Literary criticism, like any other academic discipline, speaks a language of its own—replete with unintelligible jargon and identifying code words. A number of other academics have been able to initiate meaningful discussions of their faith within an academic context—but only after they have mastered the language and the conventions of their respective disciplines. In literary theory scholars such as Edward Said (Muslim), Rene Girard (Catholic), and even Jacques Derrida (Jewish) have changed the critical landscape by taking their respective religious traditions and combining them, intelligently and unapologetically, with the assumptions and methodologies of contemporary philosophy and literary theory.⁴ The work of these and other scholars is accepted and admired in the academy first and foremost because it is excellent, innovative, professional scholarship. Any scholarship of this caliber—even if it comes from an unregenerate Mormo-American—can have a tremendous impact on academic discourse.

It is in the first area, though, that I frankly perceive the biggest stumbling block to the type of theoretical movement I envision. In order for there to be great Mormon scholarship, Mormon scholars must not only be great, they must also be Mormon—and not just occasionally, incidentally, culturally, or secretly Mormon, but visibly Mormon, enthusiastically Mormon, and, most of all, unapologetically Mormon. It is, unfortunately, easy for faithful Mormons in academia to “pass” as normal, cynical, liberal academics. We look like normal people, we talk like normal people, and we can pick up and use jargon as quickly as our peers; if we don’t make a big deal about our religion, nobody need know the secrets that we keep hidden in the closet: that we belong to a religious community and culture that has shaped our lives more than most people imagine, and that we owe more allegiance to this community than we can ever, in rational academic terms, explain. As long as we can deflect the occasional

4. The religious affiliations of these three major critics vary to some extent. Girard, probably the most religious of the three, published, after converting to Christianity, his monumental *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Matteer (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987). Girard also speaks directly to the difference between biblical and mythical approaches to scapegoating in “The Bible is Not a Myth” in *Literature and Belief* 4 (1984): 7-15. Said, though not a practicing Muslim, writes about his Islamic heritage and culture extensively in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), and in *Covering Islam* (New York: Pantheon, 1981). Derrida, without a doubt, is the most difficult to pin down, but he has dealt with his Judaism in a number of works, the most notable perhaps being “Edmund Jabes and the Question of the Book” in *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978).

inquiry about polygamy, racism, or the status of feminists and homosexuals in our church, we can go about our scholarly business without ever having to admit to our colleague—or even to ourselves—that we really are pretty weird. Like Gulliver in Houyhnhnmland, we learn how to walk like horses and talk like horses until we convince ourselves that horses are superior to people and that horse sense is the only kind of sense worth pursuing.

However, this approach will no longer do. Mormonism has become an important phenomenon in American culture, and it will occupy an important place in academic discussions of the future—with or without the participation of faithful Mormon critics. Unless we act decisively to place Mormonism and Mormon literature in the larger critical context, others will offer the definitions for us, and we will be increasingly stuck with the professional consequences of belonging to a version of “Mormonism” that we had no part in constructing. As with most critical projects, the success of Mormon literary criticism rises or falls with our definitions—and, in particular, our definition of “Mormon literature.” It is to our advantage to define this term as broadly as possible. We lose nothing by such inclusion; defining something as “Mormon literature” does not mean that we think it is good Mormonism, or even that we think it is good literature. Including something in the Mormon canon does not mean that we endorse it; it just means that we consider it part of the group of texts that we, as critics, can use to raise certain kinds of questions about Mormonism in academic forums.

On the other hand, Mormon scholars stand to lose a great deal by defining our terms too narrowly. Every text that we eliminate from our canon is a text that we can no longer use as part of our critical discussions. If our definition of “Mormon” is so narrow that it includes only writers and works that publish to the mainstream Mormon audience, then we will find it difficult to find places where our interests intersect with those of our colleagues. If, on the other hand, our definition of “literature” is so narrow that it includes only a few genres like novels, plays, poems, and stories, then we risk losing some of the most remarkable texts that our culture has produced. In either case, we risk confining Mormon literature to the academic ghettos where nobody but Mormons will ever hear of it. Thus Mormon literary critics gain much, while losing nothing, by casting as wide a net as possible and laying claim to as many texts as we can possibly use in the service of our academic cause.

To illustrate the kind of inclusion that I am speaking of, I would like to propose the following five categories as different areas of Mormon literature that should be studied as such. I acknowledge the inherent limitations of such arbitrary classifications, and I realize that the borders between many of my categories are subjective and permeable. I do not intend, however, for the lines to be exclusionary. My purpose in proposing

these categories is to foster inclusion by suggesting how different kinds of literary texts can work into the ongoing project of defining the boundaries of a Mormon literary criticism.

1. *Books by Mormons Written to Primarily Mormon Audiences*

It has now been one hundred years since Susa Young Gates, Brigham Young's most accomplished child, began serializing *John Stevens' Courtship* in a periodical that she also edited. Three years later, in 1898, Nephi Anderson published the classic Mormon novel *Added Upon*, which has never gone out of print.⁵ In the hundred years that followed, the Mormon literary marketplace has expanded exponentially, adding hundreds, if not thousands, of novels and other works of fiction and poetry to the ranks of literature by Mormons, to Mormons, and about the joys, challenges, rewards, and struggles of being Mormon. Currently, this category includes a wide variety of purposes and philosophical viewpoints, from the faithful, testimony-building novels of Jack Weyland, Gerald Lund, and Blaine Yorgason, to the occasionally challenging, but decidedly Mormon fiction of Levi Peterson and Linda Sillitoe.

In this category I also include a wealth of literary material from genres that are often not considered "literary": journals, diaries, travel narratives, autobiographies, sermons, theological pamphlets, and religious journalism, to name only a few. These texts have played an important part in the Mormon experience, and they must also be included in our literature.⁶ The oral and written folklore of Mormonism and of the Mountain West have played a vital role in our culture and have been profitably studied in both Mormon and non-Mormon publications by such literary scholars as William A. Wilson, Jill Terry, and George Schoemaker.⁷

5. *John Stevens' Courtship: A Story of the Echo Canyon War* was serialized in *The Contributor* 17 (1895-96). It was later published by the Deseret News Press in 1909. The first edition of *Added Upon* was also published by the Deseret News Press. The most recent (1992) edition is published by Bookcraft.

6. I certainly don't claim to be breaking new ground here. The first published anthology of Mormon literature, Richard Cracroft and Neal Lambert's *A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-day Saints* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), includes a generous selection of literature from most of these important genres.

7. See William A. Wilson, "On Being Human: the Folklore of Mormon Missionaries," *New York Folklore* 8 (Winter 1982): 5-27; "Trickster Tales and the Location of Cultural Boundaries: A Mormon Example," *Journal of Folklore Research* 20 (May 1983): 55-65; "Mormon Folklore," in Richard M. Dorson et al., *Handbook of American Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 155-61; "Dealing with Organizational Stress: Lessons from the Folklore of Mormon Missionaries," in Michael Owen Jones et al., *Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimension* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988), 271-79. Also see Jill Terry, "Exploring Belief: The Study of Mormon Folklore," *Utah Folklife Newsletter* 23 (Winter 1989): 2-5; and George Schoemaker, "Made in Heaven: Marriage Confirmation Narratives among Mormons," *Northwest Folklore* 7 (Spring 1989): 38-53.

Mormon sacred texts have claimed a key position in the literature of our people, but the literary value of the Book of Mormon has yet to be understood and appreciated by the scholarly community as a whole. This project alone could occupy many lifetimes.

All of the works in this category play a vital role in our Mormon culture and heritage. They speak to us, hold a mirror to our spiritual experience, and help us construct definitions of what it means to belong to the Mormon community and have a testimony of the gospel. In saying this, I draw no important distinction between writers who try to build testimonies and writers who try to ask difficult questions. Both, I believe, provide essentially the same rhetorical function, since, for many of us, the process of building a testimony is inseparable from the process of asking difficult questions. And because these texts constitute a primary mechanism for the transmission and reproduction of Mormon culture, Mormon literary critics have naturally expended a great deal of their energies reading, classifying, interpreting, and evaluating them. This is certainly a worthy project, and one that I have no wish to disparage. But we cannot stop here. One of my assertions in this essay is that any definition of "Mormon literature" that limits itself to the works in this category cannot adequately meet the demands that currently face the Mormon literary critic. The books that we write to ourselves represent only one of many worthwhile projects that demand our attention.

2. *Books by Mormons Written to Non-Mormon Audiences (about Mormons)*

Mormons have always been a people driven by the need to tell their stories to others. In the institutional church this drive takes the form of missionary work; in the literary world it manifests itself in the desire to use the values and collective memories of our culture as the basis for great writing. While Mormon authors have produced nothing like the works of the great Jewish writers of the century, we do have our literary heroes—a fact which usually astounds non-Mormons who have never heard of Vardis Fisher, Maureen Whipple, Virginia Sorensen, or Sam Taylor. Yet Fisher's *Children of God* (1939), Whipple's *Giant Joshua* (1942), Taylor's *Heaven Knows Why* (1948), and Sorensen's *The Evening and the Morning* (1949) remain four of the greatest novels to come out of the Mormon tradition—and four texts well worth the attention of any serious scholar of the literature of the American West.

These four novels represent only the cream of the crop. During the 1940s and 1950s dozens of novels by Mormons were published in mainstream presses—some to considerable critical and commercial success.⁸

8. For a partial bibliography, see Geary's "Mormondom's Lost Generation," 131-60.

In the past ten years Mormon literature seems to have experienced a second wave of such successful fiction. Highly acclaimed fiction and personal narratives by Terry Tempest Williams, Phyllis Barber, Pauline Mortensen, Judith Freeman, Walter Kirn have gone a long way towards making the Mormon experience once again part of the experience of the general American reading public,⁹ and the success Orson Scott Card has had with employing Mormon characters in the science fiction and historical fiction markets has brought a sympathetic portrayal of the Mormon world view to hundreds of thousands of readers worldwide.

The works in this category provide a valuable on-ramp for Mormon scholars who want to discuss their faith in academic forums. Non-Mormons who read these books invariably have questions about Mormonism—questions that deserve serious scholarly treatment by literary critics familiar with Mormon theology, culture, and heritage. As I said before, if we do not step forward and answer their questions, somebody else will, and chances are good that we won't like their answers. But taking these books as the basis for serious discussions of Mormon literature allows Mormon scholars to use an expertise that we already possess in writing scholarship that, if done well, will be both useful to and well received by our colleagues in the academic community.

3. Books by Mormons Written to Non-Mormon Audiences (not about Mormons)

Any book by any Mormon writer should be considered fair game for Mormon literary critics—even if nothing conspicuously Mormon appears in it. I say this for two reasons. First, all writers include, in some way or another, their personal values in everything they write; hence, any book by someone who has been significantly influenced by Mormonism will relate, reflect, react, or in some way respond to Mormon values and perceptions. Second, and even more important, works of literature by writers known to be Mormon form a large and demonstrable part of Mormonism's contribution to our culture. Feminist writers have not limited their definition of "Women's Literature" to those texts which have an obvious feminist bent or which deal with women's issues in remarkable ways. Anything written by a woman qualifies for inclusion (though not necessarily praise) by those scholars who have dedicated their lives to discussing gender and literature. This inclusive strategy has given feminist writers a huge canvas upon which to raise and discuss questions of gender in the academic marketplace of ideas.

9. For an analysis of some of these writers, see Lavina Fielding Anderson's "Masks and Music: Recent Fiction by Mormon Women Writers," *Weber Studies* 10 (Fall 1993): 71-80.

Similarly, our definition of "Mormon literature" should include such things as the wide-ranging philosophical novels of Vardis Fisher, the award-winning children's fiction of Virginia Sorensen, the innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary fiction of Brian Evenson, and the well-respected work of those twentieth-century authors that Bruce W. Jorgensen has referred to as the Mormon "expatriates": Ray B. West, Jr., Jarvis Thurston, Wayne Carver, Richard Young Thurman, May Swenson, and David L. Wright.¹⁰ As with the previous categories, it does no use to ask, "But are they good Mormons?" This question immediately narrows our audience to the LDS community, for whom such questions matter a great deal. To the academic audience—an audience that has no problem accepting Philip Roth, Saul Bellow, Joseph Heller, and Jerzy Kosinski as "Jewish writers"—questions of meeting attendance, payment of tithes, and observance of dietary laws play a less important role than they do in our internal discussions.

4. Books by Mainstream non-Mormon Authors (about Mormons)

Mormonism has always been an interesting story, one that popular writers have found irresistible. Occasionally, these portrayals are sympathetic or positive, and some of the most important writers on two continents have had occasion to praise or defend Mormons. Charles Dickens, for example, once described the industrious, orderly nature of the Mormon emigrants he encountered on a ship leaving England.¹¹ John Stuart Mill used the Mormon practice of polygamy as a test case for his assertion that a government has no right to interfere in the private lives of its people.¹² And George Bernard Shaw carried the argument even further and argued that Mormon polygamy was not only justifiable but socially beneficial.¹³ More recently, Wallace Stegner has written sympathetically of Mormons in *Gathering to Zion*, and Harold Bloom, one of the most important figures in contemporary literary criticism, has extolled Mormonism as the quintessential American Religion and Joseph Smith as "an

10. Bruce W. Jorgensen, "Digging the Foundation: Making and Reading Mormon Literature," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 9 (Winter 1974): 51.

11. Charles Dickens, *The Uncommercial Traveller*, vol. 6 of *The Works of Charles Dickens*, 10 vols. (New York: n.p., n.d.), 635-38, quoted in Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), 132.

12. In *On Liberty* (New York: Norton, 1975), 85-86.

13. In the appendix to *Man and Superman* (New York: Bantam, 1967), Shaw includes the following maxim: "Polygamy, when tried under modern democratic conditions, as by the Mormons, is wrecked by the revolt of the mass of inferior men who are condemned to celibacy by it; for the maternal instinct leads a woman to prefer a tenth share in a first rate man to the exclusive possession of a third rate one" (218).

authentic religious genius, unique in our national history."¹⁴

More often than not, however, the portrayal of Mormons in American literature has been negative. In the years between the migration to Utah and the end of the nineteenth century, the Mormon frontier served as the background (and often the foreground) for literally dozens of pulp novels, westerns, and adventure stories.¹⁵ The majority of these texts portrayed the Mormons as a harsh, theocratic, and conspiratorial frontier community and as a sinister secret society bent on tracking down and destroying its enemies wherever in the world they tried to hide. This conception of Mormonism became so pervasive that it filtered into the writings of some of the most important writers on both sides of the Atlantic, including Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, Jack London, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Zane Grey.¹⁶ Cable TV mogul Ted Turner even used it for one last ride in the made-for-TV movie *Avenging Angel* early in 1995.

Turner's movie aside, though, the popular perceptions of Mormonism have shifted almost 180 degrees in the past 100 years. Whereas Mormons were once used to represent lawlessness, chaos, and sexual promiscuity, we have now become standard stock for writers—from Tom Clancy to Tony Kushner—who want to portray a character as hyperobedient, patriotic, conservative, and, in all probability, sexually repressed. Ironically, though, while the popular image of Mormonism in American culture has changed drastically, our relative position in that culture has remained remarkably constant. In the nineteenth century, Mormons in lit-

14. *The American Religion* (New York: Touchstone, 1992), 82. Though Bloom's book is somewhat quirky in its approach to Mormonism as a gnostic/Kaballastic sect, the author does manifest a sincere respect for Joseph Smith and historical Mormonism. And he also pays a compliment to Apostle Thomas Monson, whom he sees as the next great prophet of the Mormon church: "What dreams he dreams one cannot know, but a considerable part of our national future is incarnated in him" (122).

15. See Leonard J. Arrington and Jon Haupt, "Intolerable Zion: The Image of Mormonism in Nineteenth Century American Literature," *Western Humanities Review* 22 (Summer 1968): 243-60. See also Arrington's "Perpetuation of a Myth: Mormon Danites in Five Western Novels, 1840-90," *Brigham Young University Studies* 23 (Spring 1983): 147-65, and his "The Missouri and Illinois Mormons in Anti-Bellum Fiction," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 5 (Spring 1970): 37-50.

16. Mark Twain's *Roughing It*, chaps. 12-16 (Chicago, 1872), while satiric (and funny) is generally considered good-natured treatment. However Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (London, 1877) and Stevenson's "The Destroying Angel" (in *The Dynamiters*, New York, 1985) accept, uncritically, the presentation of Mormons found in American pulp fiction. Jack London's *The Star Rover* (New York: Macmillan, 1915) deals specifically with the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and four novels by Zane Grey present, to one degree or another, a typical nineteenth-century view of the Mormon frontier: *The Heritage of the Desert* (New York: Harper, 1910), *Riders of the Purple Sage* (New York: Harper, 1912), *Wild Horse Mesa* (New York: Harper, 1912), and *The Maverick Queen* (New York: Harper, 1950).

erature were portrayed as promiscuous misfits in a Victorian society. In the 1990s the typical Mormon character has become a Victorian misfit in a promiscuous society. In both cases Mormons represent something other than the norm—a peculiar people whose inclusion in a literary text usually indicates the desire of an author to establish a foil for the values supported in the text.

Whether pro-Mormon, anti-Mormon, or somewhere in-between, important non-Mormon writers who write about Mormonism give us a tremendous opportunity to make our faith part of our scholarship. Everything that Mark Twain, Charles Dickens, and Robert Louis Stevenson say about Mormonism interests scholars because everything that these authors say about *anything* interests them. And, while being marginalized and misunderstood is generally not pleasant, it happens to be something of an advantage in contemporary literary circles. Almost all of the prominent schools teaching literary theory during the past twenty years—including deconstruction, feminism, post-colonialism, ethnic criticism, cultural materialism, and new historicism—have attempted to rewrite, in some way or another, literary history and give utterance to voices that have been suppressed. As Mormons we should be grateful for this trend. Once we arm ourselves with the most up-to-date tools of literary analysis, we will find numerous opportunities to question and problematize the negative images and stereotypes of Mormonism that American and English culture have always constructed in its literature.

5. Books by Mainstream Authors (not about Mormons)

With everything else that it is, Mormonism is a philosophical system, a way of looking at the world. In the past ten years several Mormon literary critics have realized this and expanded their focus outside of anything that has previously been considered “Mormon.” By thus expanding their focus, they have written compelling analyses of such varied topics as the Mormon connection to William Wordsworth’s idea of the pre-existence in “Ode: Intimations of Immortality,” the relationship between John Milton and the Mormon defense of polygamy, and Milton’s engagement with Mormon theology in Herman Melville’s *The Confidence Man*.¹⁷ Scholarly projects such as these hint at the rich possibility for reading traditional literature that our Mormon perspective offers us. A work need not have a Mormon author or a superficially Mormon theme to lend itself to a Mor-

17. These articles, respectively, are Rob Paxman’s “The Poet as Prophet: The Genesis of Wordsworth’s Pre-existence,” *Insight* 5 (Winter 1990): 7-11; John S. Tanner’s “Milton and the Early Mormon Defense of Polygamy,” *Milton Quarterly* 21 (May 1987): 41-46; and Cecilia Konchar Farr’s “The Philosopher and the Brass Plate: Melville’s Quarrel with Mormonism in *The Confidence Man*,” *American Transcendental Quarterly* 3 (1989): 354-61.

mon interpretation.

By this point, it should be obvious that my definition of "Mormon literature" has become synonymous with the definition of "literature" itself. This is precisely the case that I am making. At its best, literary theory is not merely a way to analyze literature, but a way to use literature to analyze the world. And since Mormonism—like Marxism, psychoanalysis, structuralism, or existentialism—contains its own philosophical assumptions and values, it does not matter what we ultimately write *about* but who we write *as*. Marxist and feminist literary critics are Marxists and feminists, not because of the kinds of literature that they read, but because of the kinds of criticism that they write. A Mormon literary critic, then, is nothing more or less than a Mormon who does literary criticism—and does so as a Mormon, raising and answering questions about her faith in the process.

So what, finally, is "Mormon literature?" A number of contemporary literary critics, daunted by the task of defining "literature," have determined that it is "whatever literary critics criticize." Similarly, I would say that "Mormon literature" can best be defined as "whatever Mormon literary critics use as a platform for discussing our religious experience in an academic context." I do not believe that a Mormon literary criticism should be concerned with situating "Mormon literature" along any sort of Blotnik dichotomy. The tools of our profession provide us with ample opportunity to turn any relevant text—from the most mantic sacrament-meeting poem to the most sophic anti-Mormon invective—into a useful platform from which to tell our story and construct our religious faith academically. We do not need certain kinds of literature to accomplish our goals, just certain kinds of literary critics—critics willing to become experts in the conventions of contemporary literary theory while, at the same time, retaining their Mormon faith, values, and perspectives.

Students of Mormon literature have always been energized by Orson F. Whitney's prophecy that "we will yet have Miltons and Shakespeares of our own."¹⁸ I believe that we will, but I reject the notion that we must conjure them up by the power of critical inquiry. Mormonism's Miltons and Shakespeares will probably pay little attention to the scattered essays on literary criticism that we publish. They will, like the Miltons and Shakespeares who went before them, have to find their own way in the world. Our job is not to manufacture great writers but simply to recognize them when they come along. And our failure—if we fail—will not be that we never produced literary messiahs with our criticism, but that, ob-

18. Orson F. Whitney, "Home Literature" reprinted in Cracroft and Lambert, *A Believing People*, 132.

essed with our own private mythologies of deliverance, we crucified them unawares.

Before concluding, I would like to address three specific things that I am *not* saying in this essay. First, I am not saying that Mormon literary critics should be missionaries or uncritical apologists for all things Mormon. Like all spiritual systems of values, Mormonism depends on subjective spiritual experiences, and such experiences can never be reproduced by academic discourse or scientific discovery. The most that we can prove through scholarly means is that Mormonism is interesting, that it has been misrepresented in the past, and that it should form a part of our common literary canon. Second, I am not arguing that Mormons should join the already-inflated marketplace of victim-status seekers. I do not believe that Mormons do, or should, qualify as an oppressed minority, that we should receive preferential treatment, or that every descendent of a Haun's Mill victim deserves forty acres and a mule. Such arguments would appeal to the worst element of the multicultural movement; my argument is directed at the best; if diversity truly constitutes an independent good, and if different cultures and values really do make us stronger, then academia cannot, while being true to its own premises, deny a voice to the Mormons. Finally, I do not intend to suggest that only faithful Mormons can or should criticize Mormon literature. If, as I have argued, Mormon literature forms a vital part of the American cultural landscape, then it must be considered fair game for all kinds of literary scholarship.

What I am saying, though, is that only faithful Mormons can criticize Mormon literature *as faithful Mormons*. We do not have the only critical perspective on Mormon literature. Perhaps we do not even have the best. But we do have access to a unique viewpoint, and no academic discussion of Mormon literature can be considered complete without hearing what we have to say. We know Mormon culture from the inside. We know that, like any other large group of people, Mormons can be ignorant, blind, and wicked; but we also know that they can be insightful, inspired, and magnificent. And we know that all of these attributes together constitute the story of Mormonism that the rest of the world needs to hear. As practicing literary critics, we are in a profession that gives us all of the tools that we need to tell this story. If enough of us do this, and do it well, Mormonism and Mormon literature stand to become increasingly legitimate areas of inquiry in our profession. This will allow many of us to work towards a greater reconciliation of our spiritual selves and our scholarly selves, and it will promote an understanding of Mormonism that has always been lacking in our disciplines. And this, I believe, will be good for the Mormons.

Leaders and Members: Messages from the *General Handbook of Instructions*

Lavina Fielding Anderson

THE *GENERAL HANDBOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS* is, in some ways, the operational manual for units of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints worldwide. A compendium of organizational information, procedural guidelines, and policy decisions, it is updated frequently through mailings of the *Bulletin*, but the last thorough revision was issued in March 1989. Although it is available universally to priesthood leaders, members have virtually no access to it except under supervision and then it is more customary for an ecclesiastical leader to relay the policy or answer than to allow the member to consult it independently.

My interest in the *General Handbook* developed from the larger issue of the differential treatment of men and women in the church. What, I wondered, would the handbook that describes church procedures and policy to male priesthood leaders communicate, both overtly and silently, about the place of women in the church? As I read carefully through the handbook, I discovered that women are virtually invisible except where sexuality or sealings are involved. Instead, the important division is not between men and women but between male leaders and members, both male and female. Furthermore, at a time when insistence on the "specialness" of leaders is widening the gulf between members and their leaders, the handbook is an important player in making and maintaining those distinctions.

MENTIONS OF WOMEN

The invisibility of women begins on the first page of the handbook, which describes its distribution. Those authorized to receive it include general authorities, general church department heads and auxiliary pres-

idencies, directors of temporal affairs, regional representatives, temple presidents, stake presidents, bishops, mission presidents, district presidents, and branch presidents. The instruction sheet states: "Local Church officers could make a copy of the handbook available temporarily, as needed, to such leaders as high councilors, high priests group leaders, elders quorum presidents, stake mission presidents, ward mission leaders, executive secretaries, and clerks."¹ Except for the general auxiliary presidencies, no woman is on the list. I believe that this list also conveys another message: that no woman *needs* to see the handbook.

Granted, male members without these specific callings are also precluded from having the handbook; but I submit that there is an enormous emotional difference in impact on the two groups. A man may have already been or may confidently anticipate being one of these officers. It does not take an extraordinary imagination for a man to think that one day he might be a clerk. And certainly the other offices are not impossible either for men to imagine, though, in modesty, they may not take that step. But if the reader is a woman, the imaginative effort of thinking, "Someday, I may be a bishop," is more roughly equivalent to thinking, "Someday, I might be a horse." I use the hyperbole to make a point. Women have to become a different species to read themselves into the handbook in the way that, in my opinion, men can do with little effort.

This point became clear to me only slowly as I read on and then back through the handbook. Probably like most readers, I filled in the sparse administrative language with memories of past bishops and stake presidents, with my father, twice a bishop, with my husband, who has served in both a bishopric and on the high council. "How would they behave in this situation?" I asked myself. "How would they interpret these instructions?" I also asked myself, "Could a woman do this? How does this policy or this information impact women? Where would they fit in these instructions?"

When I reached the section on "Church Discipline" (sec. 10), I suddenly realized that I could see only men applying the instructions. The only role for women was to be the recipients—to be acted upon by the policies, procedures, definitions, warnings, actions, and levels of discipline. As I tried to read myself into this section, there is no question which side of the desk I was on. Nor was there any question about which side of the desk held all the power cards. This realization, not surprisingly, affected my reading of the rest of the manual, making it considerably less benign.

I do not, however, think this is a purely personal reaction. Arta L.

1. *General Handbook of Instructions* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Mar. 1989), iii. Hereafter cited parenthetically by section and page number.

Johnson of Canada, responding on an electronic network in spring 1993 to the announcement of the newly stiffened missionary requirements, commented to a male participant who felt that the handbook's inaccessibility was not particularly important:

It is a book that remains in the bishop's care. One cannot see it without asking his permission. One cannot photocopy pages and take them away to study. . . . You may have had access to this book and not understand what it might feel like to have a book that contains instructions about how you are to be dealt with, and not have it readily accessible so that you can understand the implications of what it is saying. . . .

If such rules are going to exist, they ought to be published in a place where we have access to them. If I were the parent of a disabled child, . . . I would not want to spend a lot of time preparing them for missionary service, only to learn later that they will not be allowed to serve.

. . . I do know that it is not fun to be a woman and not know the rules by which you are going to be judged.²

Women's lack of access to the handbook, though part of the larger problem of members' lack of access to the handbook, has a particularly poignant message. Based solely on the handbook of instructions, the church could operate very nicely, organizationally and structurally, as an all-male organization.

For example, the index contains no references under "women" or "wives." The entry for "Mothers" says, "See parents." "Sisters" refers the reader to "Lady missionaries." There are no entries under "Men," but under "husband" is the subentry, "call extended to wife." There are five entries for "fathers." "Relief Society president" has twelve entries; "bishop" has sixty-three.

The first two lengthy chapters are on "Church Administration" and "Meetings," complete with charts about who may call whom, who needs to sustain whom, and what releasing procedures are, organization by organization. These activities and functions are all male directed and male centered. A ward, I was interested to learn, must have "at least 300 members . . . and thirty active Melchizedek Priesthood holders" (1-5). In other words, the members are important, but one special tenth is essential.

Women may sing in Relief Society choirs for stake conferences (2-1), keep the sacrament tablecloths "clean and pressed," (5-4), and "offer prayers in Church meetings" (11-3). "Unmarried women ages twenty-one through thirty-nine may serve full-time missions for eighteen months" but "should not feel obligated and should not be urged unduly to serve

2. Arta B. Johnson, electronic transmission, Mormon-L, 25 May 1993; quoted by permission.

full-time missions" (7-1). "Auxiliary organizations may not have checking accounts or petty cash funds," although "Melchizedek Priesthood quorum funds and Scouting funds" *must* have their own checking accounts (9-3). The Relief Society president may attend stake and ward welfare services committee meetings with priesthood leaders. The Young Women's and the Primary presidents may attend an even smaller handful of meetings at which priesthood leaders are present. The *General Handbook's* descriptions of these meetings do not include any mention of consultation, discussion, exchange, conferring, dialogue, or consensus. In other words, there is no indication of what a woman would do in such a meeting besides be there. The bishop's wife, in a student ward, should stay in the resident ward with her children (3-3). "Mature, qualified students, both men and women, should be given leadership opportunities in student stakes and wards" (3-3). New converts should be ordained to the Aaronic priesthood soon after baptism, and "if they are worthy of baptism, they are worthy to hold the Aaronic Priesthood" (4-1). Clearly, women are so completely invisible at this point that the possibility that a worthy female candidate for baptism should be excluded from priesthood ordination does not enter the minds of the writers. Fathers are supposed to attend the ordinations of their sons; there is no mention that mothers may be present (4-2). "Only those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood should partici[p]late in the ordinance of naming and blessing children" (5-1). This policy reverses an earlier decision that allowed inactive or nonmember fathers to stand in the blessing circle. Significantly, it seems more important to exclude women in this case—probably because of widespread lobbying on the part of Mormon mothers in the United States for at least a decade—than to include potential priesthood holders in this all-male rite. Repeatedly, the duties and privileges of "worthy fathers" are stressed; worthy mothers are not mentioned once in the handbook.

Sexuality and sealings are sections that come the closest to dealing directly with women, but the overall impression is negative because the policies exist to eliminate or resolve problems. For example, bishops are assigned the rather bizarre role of fashion controllers for brides, being instructed to "review . . . requirements for temple wedding dresses with each bride and her parents as early as possible in the planning stages." (These dresses should be white, long-sleeved, "modest in design and fabric, and be free of elaborate ornamentation." Pants and nondetachable trains are not permitted.³)

3. A more recent addition, *Bulletin*, 1992-1, 2, goes even further in providing fashion instruction: "Brides may wear white wedding dresses in the temple if they have long sleeves and modest necklines. All sheer material should be lined. Gowns designed to be worn with long dress pants and dress pants are not acceptable in the temple."

Abortion is "one of the most revolting and sinful practices" of this day but is permitted in cases of conception as the result of incest or rape, when a medical authority certifies that the mother's life or health is jeopardized, or when the unborn child is suffering from lethal birth defects. Even in these cases, the language of decision-making assumes that a "couple" is involved and that the bishop should be "consult[ed]" (11-4). Single women who conceive a child through artificial insemination are "subject to Church discipline" (11-4). Women "who voluntarily submit to abortions growing out of their immoral conduct will not be called on full-time missions" (7-1). Unwed mothers at least seventeen years old who choose to keep their child "should be welcomed into Relief Society."⁴

The section on sealings is complicated and extensive (6-4 to 6-6). Gradually I recognized what it reminded me of: deeds transferring parcels of property from one owner to another. A time-only wedding can be performed in a temple if the wife has been sealed to a previous husband. She can be sealed to a deceased husband from whom she is currently divorced only with the written consent of her present husband, if any, and the surviving widow, if any, of the deceased candidate. A woman sealed to a former husband may not be sealed to a present husband without a cancellation of sealing. The excommunication of a husband or wife "suspends but does not cancel their sealing." "A deceased woman sealed in life to one husband may also be sealed to another man with whom she lived as a wife." "A deceased couple who lived together as man and wife may be sealed even though there may be no documentary evidence of marriage."

The language of the handbook is male throughout. Sacrament meeting speakers are to speak in "a spirit of . . . brotherhood" (2-5). Pronouns are usually male, even in a context that obviously can include women. For example, at baptisms, the one performing the baptism should "call the person by *his* full name . . .," and if an adult endowed member, not sealed as a child in a family, wishes to be sealed to foster parents "*he* must obtain permission" from the First Presidency (5-3, 6-6; emphasis mine). Notable efforts at inclusiveness, which I consider to be important, occur in the section on disciplinary councils, formerly church courts. One sentence states: "All references to transgressors are in the masculine gender, but include the feminine" (10-1). Encouragingly, the October 1991 supplement, in speaking of preparation for a patriarchal blessing, says, "The member may fast if he or she chooses" and speaks of an "unwed parent" as "him or her."

In short, explicit mentions of women are minimal. In most cases, they

4. 1991 *Supplement to General Handbook of Instructions* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1991), 9. This policy establishes that marriage is preferred or, if that is not "feasible," "placing the infant for adoption."

are not singled out for special treatment nor are they specifically excluded. Whether this can be interpreted as inclusiveness or erasure probably depends on the reader's point of view. However, a rather more significant subtext in the *General Handbook* is the leader/member dichotomy which it sets up and maintains.

THE LEADER/MEMBER DICHOTOMY

The foreword to the handbook explains its purpose:

This handbook has been prepared to guide priesthood officers so "that they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, . . . and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands" (D&C 105:10). The instructions in this handbook should guide servants of the Lord in directing the Church and helping to strengthen families (xi).

Duty, direction, requirement, instruction. Strengthening families sounds almost like an afterthought. I had anticipated subconsciously, I suppose, that at least part of the leaders' task would be defined as testifying of Christ's love, of the Atonement's power to change lives, and of helping people to grow. I found nothing remotely similar. In fact, the picture that forms from these pages of what leaders do is rather unpleasantly intrusive and aggressive. Bishops instruct, direct, conduct "searching" or "detailed" interviews, report (endlessly) to the stake president on an exhausting list of topics, make assignments, issue callings, make sure that two people are present to open tithing envelopes, and ensure that Christmas decorations are not flammable. I looked in vain for instructions to love members, to listen to them and try to understand them, to consult with them about their needs and desires, to respect their agency, to enjoy their diversity, to be guided by the Spirit.

The omission of any reminder to the bishop or stake president of the role of the Holy Ghost was particularly startling. Such instructions appear only three times. First, "members should be guided by the Holy Spirit to answer for themselves personal questions about wearing the garment."⁵ It seems to me that encouraging members to be guided by the Spirit could be profitably applied to many areas in addition to this one.

5. Compare "Instructions for Priesthood Leaders on Temple and Family History Work," n.d., 1: "Members should seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to answer for themselves any personal questions about wearing the garment." Lengthy instructions about various styles and colors of garments for endowed members serving in the armed forces conclude: "Bishops normally should not attempt to interpret this information for members. Rather, endowed persons, having read it or had it read to them, should decide for themselves what to do under the circumstances." "Instructions for Priesthood Leaders on Military Relations," 1990, 3.

Second, "Decisions on Church discipline are within the discretion and authority of bishops and stake presidents as they prayerfully seek guidance from the Lord" (10-9). Again, it seems to me that local leaders could be encouraged to "prayerfully seek guidance" in many, many areas where only a dry, administrative guideline is given. Even in the section on counseling, church members are told to "make a diligent effort, including earnest prayer, to find solutions and answers themselves"—certainly an encouraging statement, as far as it goes. However, it continues: "If they need help, they are to consult freely with their bishops and receive from them the counsel they need" (11-2). The assumption is that the bishop unquestionably has the needed counsel. How free would a bishop feel to admit confusion or lack of information with such clear role instruction?

The tone of the handbook is usually directive, even peremptory. It is rare that the reason for a policy is given. The only three examples I found that approached an "explanation" for a policy were: (1) "Local leaders should discourage" adopted children from trying to identify their natural parents "to protect the rights of the adoptive parents" (6-7); (2) artificial insemination using any but the husband's semen is discouraged because it "may seriously disrupt family harmony" (11-4); and wards and stakes may not use the official church logo on locally produced materials because "improper use of the Church logo hampers the Church's efforts to register it as the official Church trademark" (*Bulletin* 1992-2, 2).

A final message to all members—not just women—is that they should not have access to the handbook. The official instructions order priesthood officials to destroy old editions, once a new edition replaces it (xi). Such a policy is not necessarily sinister. It prevents confusion about which policy is the current one. But it also means that there is no sense of history, no sense of change over time, no documentation that things were different in the past and, consequently, will probably be different in the future. The explicit instruction to "destroy," coupled with the spelled-out list of who may have a manual, also suggests urgency and danger, as though something terrible will happen if other people have access to handbooks.⁶

Perhaps such secrecy will backfire one day. If members of the church do not know these rules, they can reasonably protest being held account-

6. I learned recently of a scholar who requested permission at the church's Historical Department library to see the instructions for handling welfare cases during the 1950s. He was instructed to submit his request in writing, explaining what he would do with the information. He was informed that receiving such permission would require the decision of a committee which would have to meet at least once and perhaps twice to make such a decision, so that he should expect a delay of at least two weeks. Fortunately, the materials for the time period of interest were more immediately available at the University of Utah.

able to them; and ultimately, if they have no voice in shaping the policies that impact so heavily on their spiritual lives, it seems to me that they can point out that they have bound themselves by no covenant to accept them.

THE "SPECIALNESS" OF CHURCH LEADERS

Naturally a handbook's function is not to provide light or inspirational reading. Its job is to be clear and specific. Still, it can be disheartening to read a thick manual that communicates too clearly assumptions of the need to control, minute legalistic job descriptions and meeting formats, lists of rules and regulations, and especially unconscious assumptions of the superiority of leaders and the inferiority of members. I see this assumption in the *General Handbook* as part of a larger, and sadder, trend in the church: the creation and maintenance of a gulf between the "specialness" of leaders and the ordinariness of members.

This gap is particularly pronounced when it comes to general authorities and members. According to the handbook, these relationships are characterized exclusively by two negatives: Members are not to "record General Authority addresses given at regional or stake conferences, missionary meetings, or other local meetings" (11-1), and members are discouraged "from calling, visiting, or writing to Church headquarters about personal matters" (11-2). This distancing of general authorities from followers has, in my opinion, intensified and accelerated within the last six years, as three conspicuous examples illustrate.

First, Elder Dallin H. Oaks's April 1989 conference address, "Alternate Voices," was, in my opinion, an attempt to silence the voices of all but general authorities. He marginalized "alternate voices" in the church, disfranchised members as representatives of the church, and eliminated dialogue and discussion, leaving only the options, for members, of silent listening or "contention."

Let me go into more detail about his disfranchisement of members as church representatives, which essentially deals with external or public relations. Elder Oaks uses the term "Church leaders" or "representative of the Church" five times in four paragraphs in juxtaposition to "members" or "volunteers," also used five times. The term "volunteer" is an odd one, since most members of the church have callings that, at least theoretically, come from God through priesthood channels in exactly the same way that the priesthood leader's calling comes. However, labeling members as "volunteers" suggests misguided and unwanted zeal. Oaks continues:

Church leaders are sometimes invited to state the Church's position at a debate or symposium. . . . But the Church is directed to avoid disputation and contention. Moreover, if a representative of the Church participated in such

an event, this could have the unwanted effect of encouraging Church members to look to the sponsors of alternate voices to bring them information on the positions of the Church. . . . Church leaders should avoid official involvement, directly or indirectly. Volunteers do not speak for the Church. . . . The Church's silence [does not] constitute . . . an admission of facts asserted in that setting.⁷

The structure of Elder Oaks's argument juxtaposes leaders and members. The term, "Church leader," is usually situation specific, ranging from the Primary president in an in-service meeting to a stake president at stake conference. Elder Oaks, however, uses "leader" to mean exclusively "General Authority," a cultural and perhaps theological innovation of this address with which I am uncomfortable. In this context, the Young Women's general president, a general board member, a missionary, that missionary's president, or a stake president would not be a leader but a member. Thousands of LDS women would perhaps be surprised to learn that Barbara B. Smith's energetic defense of the church's anti-ERA position during the 1970s was not made as a church "leader."

In short, to Elder Oaks members are not leaders and, more troubling, leaders do not seem to be members. I am disturbed by an image of leadership that defines itself as different in kind from members, that sets itself sharply apart from members, assigns members to be "examples" and "missionaries" for the church, denies that these "volunteers" represent the church, refuses to provide "authorized" representatives except as it chooses (which, I think, implies that it holds itself aloof from dialogue, questioning, or providing explanations which may be discussed), and then also insists that its silence does not become one of the elements of that dialogue. If a friend treated me in such a way, I would not know which to deplore first—the naivete of thinking that refusing to converse is not a message, or the arrogance of claiming a relationship but refusing the demands inherent in that relationship. Whatever problem Elder Oaks was trying to solve with his address or whatever the motives that prompted this approach, I feel that the consequences are deplorable. Perhaps, if he did not intend his message to read so harshly, a clarification would be in order.

The second example is Elder Russell M. Nelson's April 1993 general conference address, "Honoring the Priesthood," which is focused on prescribing "proper priesthood protocol" or "complete deference to . . . an order of correct procedure."⁸ He devotes over half of his address to a list of such procedures. The first is to always call priesthood leaders by their titles. (I need hardly mention that women have no such titles, so they are

7. Dallin H. Oaks, "Alternate Voices," *Ensign* 19 (May 1989): 28.

8. Russell M. Nelson, "Honoring the Priesthood," *Ensign* 23 (May 1993): 38.

always the addressor, never the addressed.) When a presiding officer “comes into a meeting where you had been presiding, please consult with him immediately for instruction,” Elder Nelson tells bishops and stake presidents. In a meeting no one speaks after the presiding general authority has spoken. The stake president should “remain at the side of your file leader until excused.” I found the reason for this attendance particularly interesting: “He may be impressed to give additional teaching or direction. And you may also prevent problems. For example, if a member asks a question of your leader that should not have been directed to him, you are there to respond.” Apostles honor seniority even to the point of “entering or leaving a room” in seniority.⁹ A friend who observed the party of general authorities returning to Salt Lake City after the dedication of the San Diego temple confirmed that they entered the plane in order of seniority.

Nor can Elder Nelson’s call for protocol be explained as a personal hobby-horse. Speaking earlier in the same conference, Elder Dallin H. Oaks began his address, “The Language of Prayer,” with a lengthy introduction about the importance in military, judicial, and ecclesiastical settings of using correct titles:

The use of titles signifies respect for office and authority.

The words we use in speaking to someone can identify the nature of our relationship to that person. They can also remind speaker and listener of the responsibilities they owe one another in that relationship. The form of address can also serve as a mark of respect or affection.¹⁰

What he does not point out, but a point which is difficult to overlook, is that the use of an honorific title by a subordinate reinforces nonegalitarian relationships, emphasizes the power differential between the two, and reduces the psychological and social base of the subordinate.

In the third example, Elder Boyd K. Packer, speaking to the All-Church Coordinating Council, consisting of auxiliary, department, and division heads, in May 1993, singled out homosexuals, feminists, “and the ever-present challenge from the so-called scholars or intellectuals” as “dangers” to the church. He warned that these groups had “made major invasions into the membership of the Church.”¹¹ He began with a disturbing anecdote. As a newly appointed supervisor of seminaries and Institutes of Religion in 1955, he made an appointment to see Elder Harold

9. “Honoring the Priesthood,” 39-40. Elder Ballard suggests that John the Beloved did not enter the tomb of Jesus before Peter because “he deferred to the senior Apostle” (40).

10. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Language of Prayer,” *Ensign* 23 (May 1993): 15.

11. Boyd K. Packer, “All-Church Coordinating Council,” 18 May 1993, 4, photocopy of typescript in my possession.

B. Lee, who was then just junior to Joseph Fielding Smith. Elder Packer said:

Elder Lee had agreed to give me counsel and some direction. He didn't say much, nothing really in detail, but what he told me has saved me time and time again.

"You must decide now which way you face," he said. "Either you represent the teachers and students and champion their causes or you represent the Brethren who appointed you. You need to decide now which way you face." Then he added, "Some of your predecessors faced the wrong way."¹²

The phrase "saved me time and time again" suggests urgency and danger—that dealing with leaders is high-risk and perilous. Elder Packer then related several incidents of "facing the right way" and urged his listeners to do the same, by which he meant that they were not to "represent" anyone but the general authorities. They were not to "become [the] advocates" of members of the church who are "hurting" or "think they are not understood." He offered no suggestions for how general authorities may receive information about members or from members. Rather, he warned that when a church officer "becomes their [members'] advocates—sympathize with their complaints against the Church, and perhaps even soften the commandments to comfort them, . . . then the channels of revelation are reversed."¹³

My image of the church is of a community, an extended family, in which the different parts value each other, work to understand each other, listen to each other, and try to help each other. I see faces turning in many directions, down to a child, up to an older adult, right or left to a friend and back again. Elder Packer's image is one of only two directions, of rigid role definitions in which leaders speak and members listen, of faces turned determinedly away from those in pain. It is an image of marionettes, of robots.

I think I am not mistaken in identifying this gulf as having been created by the leaders. Yes, members contribute to its maintenance out of an anxiety for orthodoxy and obedience. But in organizational terms, it primarily serves the need of leaders for docile, passive, compliant followers who will not challenge directives, insist that their needs merit the same consideration as the leader's desires, or expect to be consulted and listened to. It is hard not to see this relationship as self-serving and potentially, if not actually, abusive of the spiritual life of members.

It is fortunate indeed that the religious life of most members of the church is lived in families, neighborhoods, wards, and stakes. Although

12. *Ibid.*, 1.

13. *Ibid.*, 6.

there are exceptions, these settings function as communities of affection, affiliation, and learning. A man who is a fanatic (and fantastic) Scoutmaster today may be a struggling bishop tomorrow and a bored Sunday school president five years later. A woman who may not like the church's financial devotion to the Scouting program and who may resist the Scoutmaster's enthusiasm will teach his daughter in Laurels and be his wife's visiting teaching companion. This man will be aware that there are other opinions about how useful the money spent on Scouting is. He will set the woman apart for a calling in the Relief Society, be grateful for her impact on his daughter, and eat her casserole when his wife has an operation. They will pray with and for each other. The fluidity of callings, the presence and visible contributions of all members, and the long-term growth observed in oneself and in others over time all work against rigid roles, an emphasis on protocol at the expense of service, and the systemic devaluing and demeaning of some segments of the congregation at the expense of others. Exposure to real people in real wards, in other words, rather than isolation behind walls of protocol and rules, intensifies my testimony that the gospel is lived out in relationship. Jesus warned his disciples:

Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts (Mark 12:38-39).

I wonder if this could apply to leaders who insist on strict dress codes, enjoy the deference paid to them, and regulate their behavior among themselves by strict protocol. I think of the counsel of the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob, a passage that is extremely consoling:

O then, my dear brothers and sisters, come to the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his ways are righteous. . . . The Holy One of Israel guards the gate. He does not have a servant there. No one can come in except at the gate, and he cannot be tricked. . . .

He will open the door to whoever knocks.

The next part of this scripture is often, I think, quoted against intellectuals. But I wonder if it applies to anyone who puts himself or herself in the place of Christ, the gatekeeper, and becomes the gatekeeper instead, keeping people out or pouring energy into rulemaking and rule enforcement rather than the pure gospel of love and good works. The scripture continues:

He will open the door to whoever knocks, but he hates those who are

proud because of their wisdom and education and riches [and perhaps we might add, their special positions or their special access to special information]. If they do not throw away all those things, and think of themselves as fools before God, and become humble, he will not open the door to them.

... the things which are for those who are truly wise—that is, the happiness prepared for the saints—will not be given to them.¹⁴

Truly, it behooves all of us to give serious heed to the charge to seek humility and true wisdom. And here Jesus himself set the example. To settle a dispute among the highest officers of his church about the protocol of precedence, he stripped off his clothes, girded himself in a towel, and washed the feet of his apostles. I believe that this model of humble service is one that is still, despite tremendous pressure in the other direction, alive and well in the Church of Jesus Christ.

14. 2 Ne. 9:41-43: Lynn Mathews Anderson, *The Easy-to-Read Book of Mormon*, photocopy of typescript, Feb. 1993. This passage in the authorized version of the Book of Mormon reads:

O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.

And whoso knocketh, to him will he open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches—yea, they are they whom he despiseth; and save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them.

But the things of the wise and the prudent shall be hid from them forever—yea, that happiness which is prepared for the saints (2 Ne. 9:41-43).



Palm Sunday

Daniel A. Austin

"WE MORMONS LACK 'JOY IN THE LORD,'" Bishop Lewis told his counselors and the ward secretary at the start of bishopric meeting on Palm Sunday morning. They listened attentively. "The name of Jesus is the only name under heaven whereby man can be saved, and we almost never say that name in church."

A dark purple banner hung on the wall of the bishop's office. About four feet wide and two feet long, it was made of shimmering royal purple velvet, with a rich border of light blue braid. On the banner in the same light blue shade in meticulous embroidery were the words, "WELCOME JESUS." The banner was suspended by braiding around a wooden rod sewn through the top side. It struck the viewer as unusual, but of high-quality and not garish.

Still, the sight of the banner left both counsellors and the clerk at a loss for words. No one wanted to dampen the spirit of charismatic innovation lest the potential for a religious treat be lost, yet they were vaguely uneasy as to whether the banner would agree with standard sacrament meeting protocol. There was silence in the room. Bishop Lewis continued.

"When sacrament meeting starts, the Primary children will come in carrying the palm fronds. The banner will already be up on the podium. We will hang it from the railing, on the right side where the children will be. Each child will be holding a palm frond during the primary part of the program. Then after they are done singing, half of the children will go down the left aisle, and half will go down the right aisle, in two lines." Bishop Lewis gestured with his hands to show a line going to the left and one to the right.

"When the first child in each line—the left line and the right line—reaches the back pew, then all the children will put the palms on the floor in the aisle." The bishop made the motion of placing a palm frond on the floor. "These palms are symbols of the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the banner is to welcome him. It will be just like the road going into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday," he concluded elatedly, as if he could

hear the joyous shouts of acclaim which accompanied the Lord into Jerusalem before the Feast of the Passover.

His counselors worked on their smiles. They wanted to give the plan—and their bishop—all due consideration in case it turned out to be confirmed by the Spirit. On the other hand, neither Brother Kealoha, the first counselor, nor Brother Wendel, the second counselor, wanted to move out in front of the Spirit by a premature show of support, should the bishop's plans start to make them feel uneasy. Only Brother Jones, the portly ward clerk, seemed confirmed in his reaction. His seasoned old countenance was set in a silent but unmistakable grimace which registered a firm "no." There was quiet in the room as the brethren paused in reflection. If the bishop had ever felt uncertain about the idea, he had certainly resolved all doubts by now.

"I had the palm fronds flown in from California. My daughter lives there," Bishop Lewis said as he rose from behind his desk and made towards the door to the clerk's office. He opened the door, and indeed on the counters, file cabinets, and all over the floor were boxes upon boxes of palm fronds. The rest of the bishopric stared in speechless amazement. The boxes were the long, narrow ones that florists use, and several had been opened to reveal slender, bushy fronds of green palm leaves. A faintly musty odor gradually seeped into the bishop's office. Between the palms and the purple banner, the counselors and clerk were politely and deferentially dumbstruck.

The first ward shared a building with another ward and a student branch. The same building also housed stake offices. It was rare that the halls were so quiet and empty. The early morning stillness and the uncertainty of the bishop's plans combined to produce an eerie silence.

Bishop Lewis turned to the others in anxious expectation. He searched their eyes for clues. They all looked back at him, but nobody knew what to say. If the "WELCOME JESUS" banner seemed dramatic, the palms were downright exotic, even to Brother Kealoha, who had lived the first ten years of his life in Hawaii. Bishop Lewis did not mention that he had also considered using unleavened passover matzo in place of bread for the sacrament but found after numerous practice attempts that it crumbled too easily if broken into small pieces.

Just then a knock at the door called the bishop out into the hallway. Sister Turnell, the Primary president, had received her instructions from Bishop Lewis a few days before. In fact, she had already run the Primary children through a practice on Saturday. She grew up a Methodist but joined the church at age thirty. Now a spry forty-seven, she was anxious to do exactly what the bishop had in mind and needed to clarify instructions for bedecking the aisles with palm leaves. Nothing in the bishop's plan seemed overly daring to her.

Brother Wendel used the break in bishopric meeting to take a closer look at the palms in the clerk's office. He had grown up in the midwest, also a Methodist, and this was his first personal encounter with palm plants of any kind. He touched the coarse, prickly stems with childlike curiosity. Most of the fronds were still green and pliant, but the airmail journey from California had taken a toll. Some leaves had already gone brown and felt rough and crackly to the touch. It seemed strange to Brother Wendel that these palm leaves from modern-day California might actually resemble the ones referred to in the Bible. The odor of the palms was strong in the clerk's office, dank, almost salty, but it gave an ordinary midwestern Sunday morning a vaguely romantic sensation—romantic enough to convince Brother Wendel that the palms and the banner would impress ward members to recall that on this day, about 2,000 years ago, the Savior entered publicly into Jerusalem for the crowning act of his mortal ministry.

Bishop Lewis returned to the bishop's office, and Brother Wendel took his seat in his chair. Neither Brother Kealoha nor Brother Jones had moved. Brother Kealoha spent the interlude quietly pondering whether a banner and palms on the floor of the chapel were suitable during sacrament meeting, even if it was Palm Sunday. Brother Jones just sat impassively with his arms folded, looking out the window.

Bishopric meeting resumed, and the discussion turned to other topics: Sunday school teachers, a calling in Relief Society, and an older sister who had recently become an annoyance during sacrament meeting by constantly getting up and down several times to go to the bathroom. Finally, just before ward executive council was to begin, Bishop Lewis returned to the issue of this morning's sacrament meeting.

"So, are there any objections to my idea?" he queried, looking around the room. By this time Brother Wendel was firmly in favor, while Brother Kealoha was mildly supportive, mostly because he did not want to risk offending the bishop. From the stony look on the face of Brother Jones, it was evident that his opinion was still the same.

"I don't see anything wrong with it," Brother Wendel said, shrugging his shoulders. "It's not like the kids are wearing costumes or acting out a scene. This breaks the mold of your average sacrament meeting and gives people something to ponder about on Palm Sunday."

"Exactly," agreed Brother Kealoha. "And the banner really isn't out of the ordinary anyway, because the primary often puts scriptures on signs during their sacrament programs."

Bishop Lewis opened a desk drawer and pulled out a thick black looseleaf notebook. "I looked in the *General Handbook of Instructions*," he said, waving the book in the air. "I find nothing which would prohibit palms on Palm Sunday. Oh, there is a sentence which says that 'pag-

eantry' is not allowed, but we're not talking about a pageant here."

"All right, let's play devil's advocate for a moment," said Brother Wendel, who was a lawyer. "Perhaps loose flora all over the floor poses a safety hazard. Will the church insurance cover it if someone slips and falls?"

Suddenly Brother Jones interrupted. "It's not a question of physical safety," he said heatedly. "It's a question of spiritual safety." Tension permeated the room as the others listened politely.

"You say the palms are a symbol?" Brother Jones asked skeptically. "Well, outside sacrament meeting that might be fine. But in sacrament meeting we already have symbols—the bread and water. Should we bring in competing symbols when we sit in remembrance of the Lord's supper?"

Brother Kealoha spoke up. "But our church is filled with symbols, we use them everywhere. No one thinks of them competing with each other. They enhance and compliment each other."

"But each in its time and place," Brother Jones retorted. "I suppose it will be a Christmas tree on the stand next."

"Are we limited to only the 'official' symbols?" asked Brother Wendel, looking straight at Brother Jones. Brother Jones just stared ahead. Brother Wendel continued. "Are we not allowed to use other gospel symbols? The image of the palms is straight from the scriptures—its scriptural. Christmas trees are pagan, from Scandinavia. I don't even like a tree up in the house during Christmas, but my kids want it so we always get one. It's in the New Testament where we find the symbol of the palms. Why can't we just have the palms and the banner in sacrament meeting on this Palm Sunday for anyone who might find it spiritually nourishing, and any one who doesn't like it can just ignore it. Give the members themselves the opportunity to ponder or reject it, but don't cut it out altogether just because it's not what we normally do."

"That's not why I am against using it in sacrament meeting," Brother Jones responded, his eyes still fixed on the window. "It's pageantry and it detracts from the spirit of sacrament meeting. We already have the symbols there for the congregation to remember. That is what sacrament meeting is for. You can put on a play or performance some other time if that's what you want."

"So Jerusalem could welcome Christ but we can't?" asked Brother Kealoha.

Brother Jones unfolded his arms and turned to respond, but Bishop Lewis broke in. "I'll give you an example of how we should look at this," he said as if he were speaking to the whole group. "The *Handbook* clearly states that brass and percussion instruments are inappropriate for sacrament meeting." He tapped his finger on the *Handbook* for emphasis. "For

years, right here in our own stake, we have put on a handbell choir every Christmas. And we even have a special combined Christmas sacrament meeting—you know, Sister Pendleton directs and they all wear white gloves, red bow ties, and white shirts. Well, handbells are both percussion *and* brass instruments. So why is it that they can play handbells in the Christmas sacrament meeting? Here's why: because it's a nice Anglo-European tradition and everyone likes it. That's how we celebrate Christmas in this stake."

As if to prove his point further, Bishop Lewis pointed again to the *General Handbook of Instructions*. "Do you think the Brethren really had it in mind to prevent Mormon congregations from playing handbells at Christmas time? No. Bells are virtually synonymous with Christmas. Why so? Are they mentioned in the scriptures? No. Unlike palm trees, bells are not even in the scriptures [this was incorrect]. So when it says 'no pageantry,' does the *Handbook* really mean to prohibit us from placing palms in the aisles on Palm Sunday? Why can't we start our own Palm Sunday tradition, like other wards have their Christmas traditions? After all, we give out flowers on Mother's Day right in sacrament meeting, so why can't we use palms?"

Brother Jones gave no response, and, anyway, members of the ward executive committee were now milling impatiently outside the bishop's door, already ten minutes past the time for the start of the next meeting. There are moments in church life when the normal rules of ecclesiastical decorum are subtly undermined. Committee members were standing slightly closer to the door and their countenances were slightly less deferential than would have been the case had they not been kept waiting for some ten minutes past the scheduled start of the committee meeting. Smiles and handshakes went all around as they entered the room, but an air of lingering tension remained.

The bishop asked the Relief Society president, Sister Dawson, to give the opening prayer. She stood and folded her arms as everyone bowed their heads. "Dear Heavenly Father, please bless us this day that our hearts will be filled with love for thee and for our ward members. They are precious spirits who long to return unto thee. Help us to know thy way, and what thou wouldst have us do in our callings. Bless the missionaries to be drawn to the pure in heart, and bless us all to do thy will. In Jesus' name. Amen."

"Amen!" they chorused, and the normal business of the ward executive committee was underway. A good spirit was just entering into the meeting when the phone on the bishop's desk rang. He picked it up.

"First Ward, this is Bishop Lewis," he said. The room grew quiet. After about ten seconds it appeared to some in the room that the bishop's face had suddenly gone taut. "Right now?— How about if I just come

there?— Yes, be right down. Bye.” The bishop put down the phone. “I need to run to the stake offices,” he said quietly. “I’ll be back, but keep going.”

The meeting continued, but without Bishop Lewis it wasn’t the same. Brother Kealoha conducted the meeting efficiently enough, but in absence of the bishop any decisions were only tentative and the discussion was incomplete. Besides, everyone wondered what emergency would cause the bishop to be pulled from a meeting, especially so soon before sacrament was to start.

Executive committee meeting concluded without any word from Bishop Lewis. As Brother Kealoha took his place on the stand, minutes before sacrament meeting was supposed to begin, he wondered where the bishop was and whether he should start without him. In point of fact, Bishop Lewis was at that very moment losing an impassioned argument with the first and second counselors of the stake presidency, presidents Watson and Blaine. Stake president Foreman was himself out of town on family business.

The day before President Blaine had received a disturbing report that the First Ward was planning to decorate the chapel with palm fronds and that it was going to hang a huge banner from the podium during sacrament. The banner, he understood, had the words, “WELCOME LORD.”

“Your information is wrong,” Bishop Lewis informed them defensively. “The banner says ‘WELCOME JESUS.’ What’s wrong with that?”

“I am not saying that there is anything wrong with the banner,” President Blaine said. “And I know you meant well. It’s just that pageantry is not allowed in sacrament meetings. And we don’t celebrate Palm Sunday.”

“Where does it say we don’t celebrate Palm Sunday?” the bishop asked. “We can devote a whole meeting to Mother’s Day or Father’s Day or even to patriots and pioneers at the Fourth of July and Pioneer Day. So why can’t we celebrate Palm Sunday? We even let Boy Scouts bless and pass the sacrament in their uniforms on Scout Sunday, but we can’t put down palms in remembrance of the entry of the Lord into Jerusalem?”

President Watson leaned forward in his chair. “Bishop, the other things you mentioned are all approved by the Brethren in Salt Lake. What we remember during sacrament meeting is the atonement and resurrection of Christ, not his death as in other religions. And we do not lay palms in the aisles to celebrate his entry into Jerusalem.”

“But that was the high point of Christianity,” Bishop Lewis argued. “It was the public acknowledgement of Jesus as the king of Israel.”

“No,” President Watson shook his head. “The Atonement is the high point of Christianity. And that we celebrate that with the bread and water in the sacrament. Our meetings are structured around the sacrament, not

other religious symbols."

Bishop Lewis glanced at his watch. It was now several minutes past the starting time for the First Ward sacrament meeting. "But a bishop has the responsibility for sacrament meeting," he said, implying that presidents Watson and Blaine were overstepping their bounds. If they caught his meaning, they did not respond.

"My counselors and I have planned this for weeks," Bishop Lewis protested. "We paid money and have everything all ready." This latter statement was not exactly true. The bishop footed the bill and his counselors had known almost nothing of the plan until that morning.

"Keep the palms and the banner out of it. You can still have the Primary kids sing," President Watson said firmly. "And if the Primary wants, they can give the palms to the kids during sharing time." Bishop Lewis was disappointed. "Look," President Watson said gently, "I know you tried to do well by your ward, but it is just not appropriate to have the palms on the floor in the chapel or to put up a banner like that during sacrament meeting."

"We can't even use the banner?" cried Bishop Lewis. "What's wrong with a banner? It's not going to be hung from the podium, and the children won't even carry it in. It will already be there, on the side, like when they put Primary scriptures on a sign."

"But it's not a scripture," responded President Blaine. "It's a message, and it's not suitable for sacrament."

By this time Bishop Lewis was plainly upset and exasperated. "My sister made the banner," he said hoarsely. "I'm sure she did not mean to be heretical."

"We know it was with the best of intentions," President Watson assured him. "You're a fine bishop, and we don't want you to stop trying."

Bishop Lewis walked glumly back to the chapel and found the Primary president. "No palms," he told her. "Just have the children do everything else without the palms."

"Should we still put up the banner?" Sister Turnell asked.

"No, just leave it in my office," he said quietly. "You can use the palms and banner during sharing time in primary if you want." He still did not agree with the stake counselors, but he did not want to mar the spirit of sacrament by disregarding their admonition. Disagree or not, Bishop Lewis recognized that they felt they were right, and that they were trying to fulfill their duty to see that things in the stake were done properly.

The First Ward had its Palm Sunday sacrament without palms. Bishop Lewis had once said that he was prepared to offend five people, but no more. In point of fact, he would have offended many more than five. Rumors of the plans had spread like wildfire after executive com-

mittee meeting ended, and by now almost everyone in the ward had heard of, and formed an opinion about, the palms and the banner. The palms seemed to be the main problem. One family declared that their children would not participate in the Primary program if it involved laying palms in the aisle. Even the bishop's reliable allies were against him on this one. Of the handful of supporters—and there were only a handful—they tended to be mid-life converts from Protestant churches, Saints for whom some drama and pageantry in worship had been put to good effect earlier in life to bring home the reality of the carpenter from Nazareth.

The palms were handed out in Primary class, and some, in fact, were dropped on the floor of the building by exuberant children with other things on their minds. Yet many of the palms made it home with families, and there were even a few observant Saints who saw in the green fronds a gentle reminder of the Palm Sunday acclamation to the mortal Lord, "WELCOME JESUS."

I Will

Allen W. Burch

Bitter herbs and tears
Mulch, water the spiritual
Roots of human neuroses
Surely God sees through
The 7 habits of highly
Defective people
There must be a heart in there
One that beats, feels

"I knew Job
Job was a friend of mine
You're no Job"

Take your pill Eldon
I will. I will. I will.

Weltschmerz or the end of the world?
Chased dreams, desires
Runaway slaves
Not to be recaptured
Fled like Israel
While I Pharaoh's rider
Cast into the sea

"It's not serotonin, slacker
Shut up and re-read Packer."

Take your pill Eldon
I will. I will.

Visions
Seeing life through a
Lens of despair
So many questions
One solitary
And I mean solitary
Answer
Cease. Stop. End.

“Warning! Hamlet in the House.”

Take your pill Eldon
I will.

Balancing Acts

Myrna Marler

WHEN CATHERINE OPENED HER EYES on the Saturday morning of her daughter Kelly's baptism, she recognized that the day ahead was going to test her endurance. Not only did she have to clean the house and do the laundry for Sunday, she also had to bake the refreshments for those who would come to her home after the ceremony. And somehow in there she had to include several hours of work grading seventh-grade English papers. She looked at the clock, 6 a.m., then past the hump of her sleeping husband to the window. The Hawaiian sun streamed in through the uncurtained louvers, and just outside in the plumeria tree the myna birds had set up another ear-piercing morning caucus. Catherine usually arose at this time to prepare for another day of teaching seven periods of English to teenagers largely disinterested in the finer points of grammar and literature. But today she considered settling back among the pillows and sheets for another half hour's sleep. The alarm rang.

Grant's heavy hand fumbled in the air before smashing the buzzing into silence. "Who set that thing?" she demanded, knowing the answer.

He looked at her. "Some gremlin must have wandered in during the night."

"Right," she said. Then, "I don't see why you're so in love with the dawn. On Saturday, at least, we should be able to sleep in."

"You will perhaps admit we have a lot to do today and an early start is the best start."

She turned over, facing the wall for a moment before facing the inevitable. "Do you think," she asked, "that Jason will come to Kelly's baptism this afternoon?" Jason was their sixteen-year-old, and oldest, child. He was spectacularly inactive in the church.

Her husband shrugged. "You know what he's said."

"Yeah," she said. *That shit doesn't work for me.* Of course, he'd been angry at the time. Could he really have meant it? "Well, I'll ask him again anyway. It is a family thing."

"Good luck," he said as if he didn't care and went off to take his shower.

She thought of Jason's baptism eight years before. They had just moved to Hawaii from Omaha, and to Catherine the idea of baptism in the ocean had so clearly been like the Savior's. Back then Catherine was still at the point of wonder that she lived in Hawaii at all. When she suddenly came upon an ocean vista, saw the white-capped swells, the impossible blue of the expanse of endless water on a sunny day, the smooth, almost-white sand of the beaches against which the incoming waves curled and frothed, she wanted to throw out her arms and shout, "Thank you, God!"

But Jason was afraid of the water. His greatest fear was that a hundred-foot tsunami would roll in without warning and sweep away their house and the beds and himself while they slept. "Jason," she had reassured him repeatedly. "The Lord will bless you. Nothing will hurt you." And he and Grant had practiced together many times during the preceding Family Home Evenings, the holding of the nose, the bending of the knees, the falling backwards into the waiting arms of his father while the water covered him. Even so, Jason was reluctant.

On the day of his baptism, Catherine, Grant, their friends, and Jason's friends sat on metal folding chairs in the large lanai of a beach house the owner and the absentee landlord let the ward use for baptismal services. And Jason sat in white on the front row. Catherine sat next to him, holding the towels while the ward members sang and their home teacher gave a talk about the Holy Ghost. She noticed that his face was as pale as his shirt. Then as the guests and Catherine all stood on the shore, they watched Grant and Jason, followed by the bishop also dressed in white, wade out into the waist high waves. The three of them looked so dazzling standing there against the turquoise ocean, but when Grant had lowered Jason into the water, he had sputtered and kicked and fought to stand up. Streaming wet, red-faced now, Jason clearly wanted to head back to shore, but Grant held him with a hand on his shoulder. No one could hear what was being said, but finally after a moment Grant had raised his hand again and then pushed Jason as far under the water as he could. When the boy stood up again, everyone on the beach clapped and cheered—success at last—and Jason looked small, pale, and angry.

Was it possible, Catherine wondered for the hundred thousandth time, that they should have waited? But Jason loved the water now. He spent every free moment surfing with a ragtag bunch of friends, all of them browned to mahogany by the sun. His shoulders had broadened and he carried real muscle in his arms and chest from the daily swimming. He was a water baby. He balanced on that surfboard as if he were born to the waves. So that baptism couldn't have been the sore that turned everything else about the church rotten in his mind, could it? But if it wasn't that, what was it? She sighed and swung her feet to the floor.

By 10:00 a.m. Catherine was sitting at the kitchen table grading papers while the pies for the post-baptismal party baked when her best friend Leanne called from Seattle. The phone call was unexpected because now they usually only talked on holidays, but Leanne had an announcement to make. "I've joined the New World Church. And I want you to learn about it, too."

They had been best friends since high school but became even closer when Leanne had been baptized into the church when they were eighteen. In the twenty years since then Leanne had never married. Instead, she'd built a career in television advertising. Sometimes Catherine envied Leanne's business meetings, power suits, high rise condominium in Seattle, travel to Europe, and even her regularly polished fingernails, all of which she seemed to juggle with perfect poise. But Catherine knew that being a single woman in the church was hard, even dull maybe, especially when she was surrounded by the kind of high-powered executives she dealt with. But this news was a shock. After a small silence, Catherine said, "I've already got a church. I thought you did, too."

"This is better," Leanne said. "You'll love it."

"What is this proselyting attempt here?" Catherine said, "Is this like some pyramid scheme, where you get more points for bringing in new suckers?"

Leanne laughed, although Catherine hadn't been joking. "How can you even say that after the way the church goes after new members? Remember how you practically threw me into the baptismal font yourself?"

"That is a more than slight exaggeration, Leanne. And just what exactly do you mean by 'better'? Do you really mean easier?"

Leanne said, "It is easier, as a matter of fact. There's no Word of Wisdom. There's no tithing. There's not even any repentance because we don't believe in evil. But that's not the point. I feel as excited about this as I did after I joined the church. Remember how you told me I had the Holy Ghost then? That's how I feel now."

Leanne still said "the church." What did that mean? Catherine wondered if Leanne was remembering all the details of her baptism. She'd been excited all right. It had taken her two years to unload an old boyfriend and commit herself to going under the water, and sometimes Catherine had wondered if she'd been converted to the missionaries more than to their message. She'd always told Catherine she loved their bright eyes, "their thousand-watt smiles," their chipmunk eagerness to share the gospel. When Leanne told Catherine over the phone that she'd actually set a date for baptism, she'd said, "It was like one voice was coming out my mouth saying 'yes' to the elders when inside my head another voice was screaming, 'What? Are you nuts? Tell them no!' But I'm not sorry," she added. "I'm definitely going to go through with it." Then

on the appointed day she'd shown up late. Catherine and the two elders had hung around the meetinghouse parking lot kicking rocks and wondering if they were being stood up. Finally, Leanne's little red car had turned in from the road, fast, raising a cloud of dust behind her. "I just came to tell you," she announced rolling down her car window, "I am not in a good enough mood to go through with this."

A few minutes later, after some fast talking on Catherine's part, Leanne had changed her mind again. "OK," she said, "let's get it over with." As she walked down into the baptismal font, she'd raised her hands for Catherine's inspection. "Look," she said, "they're trembling." Yet, just seconds later when Elder Barker lifted her out of the water, her face had become, almost, luminescent, and a tangible calm had descended in her eyes. "My life is an empty pit," she'd always said only half-jokingly all through high school as she considered her alcoholic mother and other disappointments. On her baptismal day she had spread her arms and shouted, "My life is a full pit," then laughed with joy while pirouetting as gracefully as a ballerina.

Which feelings was Leanne remembering? Catherine said, "Leanne, what about the church?"

Leanne thought while the long distance lines hummed between them. Finally she said, "I'll always be grateful for the stability my years in the church brought me. That prepared me for what I've found now."

"How can you just walk away from the gospel like this?"

"Catherine," Leanne said gently, "it was as easy as falling off a log."

As easy as falling off a log. Catherine thought about that for the rest of the afternoon. She'd seen logrolling competitions, hadn't she, the lumberjack standing on the log, trying to keep his balance while the log rolled beneath his feet, every second in danger of losing his footing. What happened when he finally fell, she wondered. Did he welcome the descent into cool, clear water after all that sweaty exercise? Catherine felt sweaty right now, especially as she looked around her kitchen.

Fourteen-year-old Cara was supposed to have done the dishes on Thursday night. Because Catherine taught at the high school, her kids were absolutely expected to help with their share of the housework so she could keep all her balls floating in the air at the same time. But dirty pots and pans, dishes and glasses, nearly fossilized, were piled on the counter. Thirteen-year-old Ronald's skateboard and backpack were slung in a corner, appropriately arranged, Catherine realized, for a near-death encounter with anyone who wasn't looking. She fully expected that one day she would stumble over the skateboard with a load of laundry in her arms and take a short but unforgettable ride careening through the house out of control. Meanwhile, the lawnmower, suggestively placed in front of grass so high it had gone to seed, stood neglected by Jason. The teen-

agers had scattered, dropping every detachable appendage as they left. Ron and Cara always claimed studies at the library, or a Young Women's project, or work, or babysitting, or anything else they hoped she would believe. But Catherine was morally certain that the three of them were cruising the mall with some unlicensed, uninsured, underaged driver. From the living room Catherine heard the theme music from *The Last Action Hero* and knew that Kelly was watching that movie, theoretically edited for television, for the fiftieth time. A perfect mother, she realized, would have this same eight-year-old immersed in some creative project involving construction paper and imagination rather than letting her fry her brain and eyes in front of the television set with another Arnold Schwarzenegger fix. She also realized that a perfect mother would have long ago organized her children into an efficient cadre of happily working helpers, especially on a day like today. Instead, she usually seemed to be bouncing from one emergency to the next. She needed her husband here today to crack the whip a time or two, or at least raise his voice, but he was at an afternoon meeting of the stake high council and was probably excommunicating some hapless soul at that very moment. "I am not in control here," she said aloud.

"What?" Jason walked into the room and looked at her as if he was weighing the possibility of having her committed. After a second he turned to forage in the refrigerator, then announced, "There's nothing to eat."

"You mean there's no junk food," she said.

"Yeah," he said. "How come you guys never buy any decent food?" She was always glad to see him, always glad to see he was still alive, not drowned, not crushed in a car accident, not overdosed on some drug. But he also had a tendency to infuriate her within seconds.

She said, "Are you coming to Kelly's baptism this afternoon?"

"What?" he said, as if he had suddenly been stricken deaf.

"You heard me."

"Uh, Mom," he said, "you know baptisms aren't my thing. And, uh, well, I have plans for this afternoon."

Catherine didn't ask him what his plans were because he wouldn't tell her and she didn't want to know anyway. She also didn't want to irritate him. "Jason, she's your little sister."

"So?" His face looked as if he really expected her to explain why the family relationship might be important.

"We love you, you know."

"Oh, that's right," he said. "Lay a guilt trip on me."

The problem, Catherine decided, was that she probably wasn't as smart as he was. But she did love him. "It would mean so much to me, to your father, and to Kelly if you would come."

He slammed the refrigerator door shut, apparently rejecting food for the moment. "I'll think about it."

"What more can I ask?" she said, striving for a lack of sarcasm, and realized she felt dizzy. Maybe I need to eat something, she thought.

Grant came home about 3:30 and peeled off his suit coat and tie, laying them on the couch before he came into the kitchen. Catherine frowned. She'd told him a thousand times that he made her feel like a maid when he dropped his clothes on the furniture.

"The bishop talked to me about you," Grant said.

She continued tossing the salad. "Why?"

He shrugged. "He put it real politely, but basically he thinks you talk too much in Sunday school class and wants you to shut up. Last week Sister Spangler nearly had a heart attack when you announced Relief Society work meeting wasn't vital to your eternal salvation."

"I was just making a joke about priorities," she said, slicing a tomato with quick, sharp strokes. "About how you need to maintain a balance between what's important and what's not."

"You intimidate people," Grant said. "Some people don't understand your jokes. Some Relief Society teachers apparently want to go home and slash their wrists after one of your incisive comments."

She turned, the knife still in her hand. "Do I intimidate you?"

He looked at her thoughtfully. "No."

"I wish I intimidated Jason." She waved the knife in the air. "And Cara and Ronald for that matter as well. I wish I scared the hell out of them."

"Literally," he said.

"Yeah," she turned back to the salad. "By the way, Leanne called today. She's leaving the church. She says she's found something better. She can smoke and drink, among other things."

"I doubt that's anything new in her life," Grant said.

"Maybe if she'd found a good man," Catherine said. She tucked the salad bowl into the refrigerator.

"Honey," Grant said, "she's found a dozen good men. She just keeps turning them into toads with her kisses."

Leanne had backed out of marriage at the temple doors at least twice and discarded a number of other suitors when they got serious. "Well, maybe they weren't 'the one.'"

Grant said, "Which one is that?"

"Oh, you know—the one. The one you promise to marry in the pre-existence, the one you save yourself for. The one you meet after all kinds of trials and tribulations and know immediately that you've recognized your eternal love. And you know your life will be perfect if you can

just dance your way through courtship and make it to the altar a virgin."

Grant raised an eyebrow. "Like you recognized me?"

Catherine's pre-nuptial jitters had become legend. Her old friends still talked to her about it. Still, in spite of her terror, she'd gone ahead with the wedding because she kept getting answers to her prayers. And she wasn't sorry, usually. "Well, you know," she said, "I was neurotic. Every time I thought about spending the next fifty billion years and more with you, my stomach bloated."

"Especially since you were marrying a nerd like me," Grant said.

"Even if you'd been cool, I would have been nervous," she said. "Forever was a long time."

Grant laughed. "It still is, you know."

"I know," she said, thinking about how much both Sister Spangler and the bishop ticked her off.

At 5:00 p.m. Catherine and her family sat on a row of metal folding chairs on the same lanai where Jason's baptism had taken place. Kelly sat beside her, dressed in a white choir dress, next to Ronald and Cara who had reappeared at 4:49 to walk up the road to the beach house with the rest of the family. Jason was not in evidence. Grant was running around setting up more chairs and shaking hands with the friends and neighbors straggling in. There was no piano, so the singing, such as it was, would be a capella; and no microphone, so the talks would be largely unheard by those in the back. It was the spirit that mattered, Catherine told herself. Ronald, as one of the speakers, looked appropriately solemn, clutching a small piece of paper with suspiciously few notes scribbled on it. Ronald was the type to take a request for a short talk literally.

Although the sun over the ocean was low in the sky, it had not yet sunk toward the horizon. The light in fact was luminous, magic hour as the photographers called it, where the sky, the trees, the grass, and the water glowed as if with an inner fire. This radiance lasted only a few moments in the tropics before the sun dipped into the ocean and quite suddenly disappeared, leaving the world swathed in black night. Usually ocean baptisms were held at dawn, but Kelly had requested this late afternoon baptism, just before the sunset, so she could fall into bed almost immediately and rise up in the morning and go to church a full-fledged member. Kelly, Catherine realized, looking into her daughter's eager face, thought she was going to be a whole new person when she came up out of the water. Born again, Catherine thought, into a world of temptation and paradox.

Catherine's baptism had taken place at age thirteen when her entire family had been converted to the church by the stake missionaries. She remembered sitting in the little room adjoining the baptismal font, smell-

ing the chlorine, and hoping that two white slips under her dress would be enough to keep the cloth from clinging to her budding curves once it was drenched with water. Her mother, her father, her sister, and her two brothers sat beside her, all of them nervous at the step they were taking, committing themselves this way to a life of caffeine-free, tee-totaling church-going. Many ward members had gathered for that occasion since her family had been attending church regularly for several weeks. Sister Olmstead, the Young Women's president, was there with a load of towels; and Sister Miller, the Relief Society president, had organized the white clothes for the six of them.

When organ music rolled over the little assembly, Catherine had sung the unfamiliar hymns in the hymnbook Sister Miller handed her. She bowed her head with the prayer and listened with grave attention to the elder's talk on the gift of the Holy Ghost. She fully expected to feel a purifying fire when the missionaries laid their hands on her head to confirm her a member of the church, the mighty change they had promised to occur immediately. With interest, she had watched first her father, then her mother, walk down into the font dry and composed, then come up dripping water, hair plastered to their skulls, changed at least for the moment. Then it was her turn, and she floated down the steps as if in a trance, was grasped by the missionary's firm hands, listened to the words of the prayer, then sank down into the warm water and was raised up again, to be quickly covered by the towels Sister Miller had at the ready. Had she felt peace, Catherine wondered now, or had she simply felt unreal? For certain, when the elders had laid their hands on her head to give her the gift of the Holy Ghost, she had not felt the cleansing scourge she had hoped for. Instead, when she stood up again, she felt disoriented, turning slowly in a circle to shake the outstretched hands. The imprint of the priesthood's palms still lay heavy against her scalp, even though the hands themselves were gone. That weight held her feet steady against the floor, keeping her from drifting off out of reality all together.

Sister Olmstead had left her husband and run away with another man a year later. Sister Miller had gotten cancer and died bald, and her husband had left the church. But Catherine stayed, went to seminary, read the Book of Mormon, prayed beside her bed every night, attended BYU, married in the temple, and now walked the tightrope between maintaining her own faith and trying to raise her children to love the gospel. Her best friend had defected. And Jason wasn't there at his sister's baptism. Catherine wondered what Kelly would remember of this day as she made her life choices.

That night after the guests were gone, the apple pies demolished, the fruit punch reduced to red stains at the bottoms of paper cups, Catherine

lay in bed next to her husband and said, "Did Jason come in?"

Grant said, "He's been holed up in his room for quite awhile. He came in at the last minute, grabbed some pie and punch, gave Kelly a hug, then retreated to his bat cave."

Catherine assessed this information. He'd been home all the time. She said, "Life is such an emotional roller coaster ride, sometimes I wonder if I'm going to endure to the end."

"You will," he said.

"What's to keep me going?" she said. "So many people, strong people, seem to fall away. And Leanne and I are like twin sisters." She paused, "Or we were before you came along."

"You know why I decided to marry you? It wasn't because you were perfect."

"Big surprise," she said.

"Yeah," he said. "You were so neurotic about the wedding. A lot of people told me to get out while I still could."

"I know," she said. She'd heard these stories before. "You were very brave to take me on."

"No, you were brave. You stayed. Leanne always runs away."

"And you know," she said, "our marriage hasn't really been too bad."

"Most days," he agreed and kissed her cheek.

After he went to sleep Catherine lay next to him and thought about Leanne's phone call. Leanne had said, "I think you'll really be interested in the New World Church."

"Why would you think that?" Catherine asked.

"Well, I always have seen you as a rebel in the church. Didn't you tell me once you were such a troublemaker in Sunday school class and Relief Society that teachers flinch when you raise your hand?"

Catherine had smiled. "I'm not a rebel, Leanne. I struggle, that's all. But the church is my life."

"I've known you twenty-four years," Leanne said, "and you can still amaze me."

"I don't guess you've known me if you haven't known that," Catherine said, not gently at all.

In the dark beside her snoring husband Catherine's eyes burned with grief for the lost ones, and tears lay hot tracks across her cheeks for the ones who failed, the ones whose hearts could not hold steady. Sometimes the world seemed so full of traps, especially in the dark, as if evil lay in wait to swallow them all up if they stumbled one too many times. But that night she dreamed she was dancing on the foamy crests of towering ocean waves, nearly tipping over sometimes, often catching herself just before she fell, but usually upright, straining with effort, giddy with exhilaration, and frequently held in place by a strong and certain arm.



That Which Moves

Accounting for the Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements. Edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Reviewed by Steven Epperson, Assistant Professor of History, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

ACCOUNTING FOR FUNDAMENTALISMS is the fourth volume in a series of studies of religious fundamentalism which began in 1988. The volume reviewed is part of a massive study project sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and carried out under the direction of the distinguished American religious historians Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby. The principal task of the volume was to identify, describe, and analyze the relationship between the "organizational characteristics of fundamentalist movements . . . and their changing world views, ideologies, and programs" (3). Three earlier volumes in the series set out to describe and define fundamentalism (volume one); examine its impact on the intimate and social zones of life: family, education, communications etc. (volume two); and ascertain its influence on political life and the state (volume three). The results, in *Accounting for Fundamentalisms*, both in the individual studies and in the volume as a whole, are informative, illuminating, and occasionally incomplete.

This volume and its companions

in "The Fundamentalism Project" are meant to serve as "major resource(s) for students, commentators, and policy analysts" (4) who are perplexed by and misinformed about the contemporary, worldwide phenomenon of religious fundamentalisms. The "Project" is based on the major premise that behind the great diversity of manifestations, there are significant "family resemblances" between fundamentalisms; whether the community is American fundamentalist Protestant, Iraqi Shi'ite, the Jewish Gush Emunim, Sinhalese Buddhist, all share the task of: "Selective retrieval, embellishment, and/or construction of 'essentials' or 'fundamentals' of a religious tradition for the purposes of halting the erosion of traditional society and fighting back against the encroachment of modern secularity" (4). Of course, it is the militancy and growth of fundamentalisms which account for the enormous resources dedicated by the institutions of the "established order" to the study of fundamentalists/isms. Established elites hope, no doubt, that if they can identify those substantive similarities and account for the conditions which create and shape them, then the phenomenon can be understood, co-opted, and eventually contained.

By virtue of its sheer mass, specialization, and price, *Accounting for Fundamentalisms* is not destined for most personal libraries. It is, however,

along with the other volumes in this series, an indispensable reference source for understanding the bewildering array of fundamentalist movements and ideologies. No doubt university and "think tank" reference librarians are well aware of the fact. The series will be readily available and should be widely read.

Accounting for Fundamentalisms is the combined work of thirty authors (twenty social scientists, nine historians, and one philosopher) and is divided into four major sections, each dealing with a different "member" of the fundamentalist "family": Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and southern Asian. The scholarly production of papers in each area of study was supervised by an associate editor who, after reviewing the papers, provides a very helpful synthetic essay summarizing and analyzing the finds and themes in the section.

The book's virtues are legion. The constraints of a review format allow mentioning only a few.

Fascinating Stories. This volume is a trove of narratives of or allusions to striking historico/religious events: the Guatemalan evangelical soldier who, by force of his commitment to the gospel of Christ, converts hardened revolutionaries and countermands secret military orders to summarily execute rebel fighters (122n25); the effectiveness of Luigi Guissani to combat the submission to secularity by two generations of Italian university students (124-48); Jerry Falwell's description of the festivities of the Clinton inauguration as a Walpurgis night of the cohorts of Satan (93) (I just thought that it was overblown and mediocre!); the distinction between haredim (Jewish Ultra-Orthodox) in Jerusalem and New York City and their treatment of

gentile commercial customers (186); the report of the Iranian delegation's pledge, in a 1993 International Islamic Conference, to support Islamic groups in the overthrow of the Mubarek government (in Egypt) as the "key to the creation of the Islamic *umma* (people, or pan-national popular will)" (368); the list could go on at greater length.

Illuminating Analysis. Certain "mysteries" attendant to the phenomena of fundamentalism are made more intelligible by insightful analysis. A sample: what fundamentalist Protestant have to gain economically from political activism (32-33, 36-37); why women support fundamentalist movements (53-54); how American fundamentalists justified the innovation of political activism through a re-reading of dispensational hermeneutics (70-72); how indigenous people in Ecuador, converts to evangelical Christianity, are not passive receptacles of foreign culture but shapers of and participants in an extraordinary synergy of cultures modern and ancient (79-98, esp 98); how prayer "keeps alive a critical consciousness" (161), and study of sacred texts preserves the world (180-81); why Jewish fundamentalism is inherently limited (193), and Islamic fundamentalism prone to co-optation by the organs and leaders of the state (368); how one can account for the process of religious conversion to and mobilization within fundamentalist movements (187-97). There is no dearth of insights into the history and mechanics of organizations, ideology, and mobilization within religious fundamentalism in the pages of *Accounting for Fundamentalisms*; this is the text's particular strength.

Characters in Search of an Author. What is missing from the pages of *Accounting for Fundamentalisms* are, first,

compelling first-hand accounts and rationalizations by fundamentalists themselves for participation in and allegiance to their movements and leaders, and, second, phenomenological accounts of the religious experiences of fundamentalist participants, and how those experiences are translated into religious militancy. Any serious, in-depth "accounting for fundamentalisms" absent this essential line of inquiry is incomplete. It is largely missing from the pages of the book under review.

This particular criticism is not minor due to two internal factors. First, the editors urged the authors of each paper to be sympathetic in rendering a portrait of the fundamentalist experience to the extent that the fundamentalist, even if he/she disagreed with the author's conclusions, would at least recognize him/herself in the scholar's portrait. Second, the editors promised an examination of the relationship between organization and "worldviews" (4). How can either of these criteria be met when the immediate encounter between the religious "actor" and Transcendent Reality—which surely must be the very basis for belief and activism—is left unexamined or dismissed by one author as only "psychological" (789)?

The examples of missed opportunities are too numerous to mention.

But representative of them is in Hugh Roberts's otherwise excellent historical and sociological account of Algerian Islamic fundamentalism (428-89). In this massive article, he opines that the resurgence of mosque building in the aftermath of the Algerian struggle for independence and religious reform can be ascribed merely to the support for the project given by businessmen "anxious to consolidate or enhance their social standing" (444). While materialist explanations are surely in order, they cannot account exhaustively for this or other examples of public piety. Tod Swanson's account of Andean evangelical practice (78-98), and Aviezer Ravitzky's rendering of the Lubavitcher Hasidic cosmology (303-27), come closest to answering this need. Both are exemplary in their sympathetic and imaginative renditions of unique evangelical and hasidic beliefs and practices.

To critique is easier than to create. I am well aware of my derivative undertaking (see Mark Lilla, "The Riddle of Walter Benjamin," *New York Review of Books*, 25 May 1995, 38). *Accounting for Fundamentalisms* is ambitious, instructive, and challenging. And yet I look forward to a future volume entitled *The Varieties of Fundamentalist Religious Experience: A Book of Sources*.

Mormons and UFOs

Millennium. By Jack Anderson (New York: Thomas Doherty Associates, 1995).

Reviewed by Scott S. Smith, Thousand Oaks, California.

TOWARDS THE END OF JACK ANDERSON's first novel, *Millennium*, syndicated columnist Mick Aaronson announces: "What I am about to tell you

is the most important message I have ever written in all my years of Washington combat . . . ”

After four decades of investigative journalism, Anderson seems to be saying the same thing about a novel which he says is based on intimate knowledge of the U.S. government’s best-kept secret: its awareness of extraterrestrials and unidentified flying objects.

That such a prominent figure in the world of journalism should stoop to such a subject will undoubtedly bewilder respectable people. That Anderson is LDS may disturb those who feel he is speculating about matters on which the prophets have had little specific to say. And the Mormon intelligentsia will probably be embarrassed.

This is, however, another example (the environment, animal rights, and nutrition are others that come to mind) of how the secular world has to lead us back to our own theology. No one who has taken a serious look into the strange world of UFO phenomena can underestimate its implications for religion. Zecharia Sitchin’s *The Twelfth Planet* makes a case for extraterrestrial manipulation of Sumerian religion. In *Miracles*, Scott Rogo points out that the major visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary included reports of a large silver disk next to her figure. William Bramley’s *The Gods of Eden* draws parallels between reports of encounters with ETs and Joseph Smith’s visions.

It would make sense that a Latter-day Saint, versed in a theology about numerous worlds populated by the offspring of the gods, would feel comfortable building a novel around visitors from outer space. There are, however, pitfalls in the process.

Anderson’s story begins, as the title implies, at the end of this decade, with millennialist fever rising. An alien scientist who specializes in *homo sapiens* defies a cosmic ban on interacting with our corrupted race and decides to give us a warning that our evil ways will lead to the planet’s destruction, our sins bringing on environmental disaster. As soon as he arrives in Washington, D.C., he gets mugged and a device he carries to bend others to his will is stolen by a punk, who uses it in a crime spree.

The alien ends up living with an alcoholic socialite, out of sight of a secret government agency designated to track UFO reports (it was a review of Pulitzer Prize winner Howard Blum’s investigation of such an agency, *Out There*, which introduced me to the man who claims to have told Jack Anderson about it in 1957, and Timothy Good’s *Above Top Secret* provides declassified documents in support). Others trying to find the Visitor end up being whisked away to a secret location by this agency.

Anderson knows his subject and provides readers with a thumbnail sketch of the government’s effort to understand UFOs while denying their existence to the public. None of what Anderson relates will convince the uninformed that this is more than “swamp gas,” the classic dismissal of alleged UFO sightings by the government’s real-life leading propagandist, astrophysicist J. Allen Hyneck, who later jumped ship and founded the Center for UFO Studies.

The strength of the case for an otherworldly origin now lies less with disk-in-the-sky reports than it does for the bizarre abduction phenomena alluded to by Anderson. I find it difficult to read *Missing Time* by Budd

Hopkins and *Secret Life* by David Jacobs and not come away with the impression that something is manipulating individual human agency and mass consciousness. But how to interpret this has divided ufologists into two camps: Jacobs's contributors see this as essentially angelic intervention to save us from ourselves, Anderson's position.

Hopkins has a more malevolent interpretation, which harmonizes with the views of ufology's most innovative thinkers, such as Jacques Vallee, who believe UFOs are supernatural manifestations, rather than nuts-and-bolts craft from another planet. And the only other significant LDS book in the field, James Thompson's *Aliens and UFOs: Messengers or Deceivers*, provides a chilling theory which accounts better than any other for the many unusual facets of the UFO and

abduction scenarios, such as genetic experiments and cattle mutilation. Mormons are prone to ignore these negative aspects.

One treads on dangerous theological ground to suggest that natural disasters are increasing as we approach the millennial threshold as the result of increased sin.

In my experience, otherwise intelligent people foam at the mouth when asked to read anything on the subject. They seem subconsciously threatened by the proposal or somehow manipulated into uncharacteristic close-mindedness. But I understand: until a few years ago I thought this stuff was at best amusingly irrelevant, like the Loch Ness monster. In truth, the matter of visitors from elsewhere goes to the heart of why we are here and what our destiny may be.

Understandable Archeology

Jesus and His World: An Archeological and Cultural Dictionary. By John Rousseau and Rami Arav (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1995).

Reviewed by Mark Thomas, investment banker, Seattle, Washington.

WHEN ONE TRAVELS TO ISRAEL, IT soon becomes clear that most of the traditional sites for events in the New Testament represent locations selected by religious sentimentality, not scientific archeology. Too many publications of holy sites also perpetuate what amounts to historical rumor. To be frank, many—perhaps most—spe-

cific locations where Jesus actually walked, was born, lived, and died cannot be reliably determined. For example, the Garden Tomb was identified a century ago by a British general.

This situation makes the publication of *Jesus and His World* a remarkable and exceedingly useful tool both for those casually interested in the New Testament as well as for scholars. It combines the best available archeology with up-to-date assessments by competent biblical scholars. The book has the virtue of being on the forefront of current research and yet is written

in the language of non-specialists. It contains entries regarding the discovery of a first-century fishing boat in the Sea of Galilee, coins, the Temple, archeological discoveries in the cities and villages of Galilee where Jesus worked, the discovery of Caiaphas' tomb, modes of baptism and ritual bathing, clothing, discussions of the letters from the leader of the Jewish revolt, etc. It's like hearing the voices of ghosts. It is difficult to put this book down. I highly recommend it to

every serious student of the New Testament. Each section contains a discussion of the implications of the material findings of archeology to research on the historical Jesus.

This work is written by the codirectors of the archeological excavation at Bethsaida in Galilee. John Rousseau is at the University of California at Berkeley; Rami Arav is from the University of Haifa. Dr. Rousseau is the director of the recently opened museum at Bethsaida.

CONTRIBUTORS

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RICHARD S. VAN WAGONER is author of *Mormon Polygamy: A History* and *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*. He lives with his family in Lehi, Utah.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Sculpture is a recent art form for Warren Archer, who began sculpting in 1990. Graphic design, film art direction, and illustration have been his primary occupation since the mid-1970s (he has designed *Dialogue* for the past thirteen years). He attended BYU on an art scholarship with Trevor Southey as his mentor and advisor. He has studied sculpture under Edward Fraughton, Bruno Lucchesi, Lincoln Fox, and Richard MacDonald. Awards for his sculpture include a number of Best of Show and First Place honors. His studio and foundry are located in the old LDS meetinghouse in Marysville, Utah.

Of his work, the sculptor says, "I love the human form and its ability to touch our hearts with subtle as well as grand gesture. I attempt to capture human emotions in bronze—from moments of inner reflection to explosive expressions of joy." Striving to capture poetic movement and visual grace, Archer sculpts figurative bronze to communicate the rich culture and physical diversity of humankind. As a spiritually sensitive person, he desires that his work communicate the divine as well as the physical nature of humanity. "I want the people who experience my work to feel the joy of being human as well as being children of a loving God," he explains.

SCULPTURE

Front : "Gesel," 26" tall, bronze, 1993

Back : "Towards the Sky," 26" tall, bronze, 1995

p. 26: "Hope," life size, bronze, 1991

p. 37: "Sunday Afternoon," 20" long, stoneware, 1993

p. 66: "Ring Dancer," 26" tall, bronze, 1994

p. 89: "Liahona," 24"x 24," acrylic on board, 1990

p. 158: "Lollipop," 14" tall, bronze, 1995

p. 178: "Under the Waterfall," 23" tall, bronze, 1994

DIALOGUE

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