DIALOGUE

A Journal of Mormon Thought

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A Journal of Mormon Thought

is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of world religious thought and with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or of the editors.

Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought is published quarterly by the Dialogue Foundation. *Dialogue* has no official connection with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Third-class postage is paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. Contents copyright 2006 by the Dialogue Foundation. ISSN 0012-2157

Dialogue is also available on microforms through University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 and 18 Bedford Row, London WC1R4EJ, England. *Dialogue* is indexed by the *ATLA Religion Database*, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Flr., Chicago, IL 60606, email: atla@atla.com; website: http://www.atla.com; *Dialogue* is also indexed by ABC-CLIO, 130 Cremona Drive, Suite C, Santa Barbara, CA 93117, website: http://www.abc-clio.com.

Submissions: *Dialogue* welcomes articles, essays, poetry, notes, fiction, letters to the editor, and art. Submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition. **Electronic submissions are preferred.** Send attachments in Word or WordPerfect to dialoguemss@aol.com. **Please provide mailing address and phone number**. Submissions may also be made in printed copy. Mail three copies to Dialogue Submissions Office, 704 228th Ave. NE, #723, Sammamish, WA 98074. Phone: (425) 898-9562. For submissions of visual art, consult the editor for specifications at dialoguemss@aol.com or (425) 898-9562. Allow eight to twelve weeks for review of all submissions. Submissions published in the journal, including letters to the editor and brief notes, are covered by our Publication Policy, under which the author retains the copyright in the work and grants *Dialogue* permission to publish. See www.dialoguejournal.com/submissions.

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Mormon Straight/Gay Marriages

I've just had a look at the Fall 2005 issue. I commend you on the way you handled the Ben Christensen/Ron Schow/Marybeth Raynes material ("Getting Out/Staying In: One Mormon Straight/Gay Marriage," 38, no. 3 [Fall 2005]: 121–51) relating to homosexuality in a Mormon context.

These perspectives make a valuable contribution to the dialogue on this subject now available to Latter-day Saints by recognizing the complexity of the interface between doctrine and real experience and by illustrating the damage potentially resulting from oversimplification. Such honest discussion is much needed in the Church. In thus promoting it, your journal lives up to its name.

I like very much your decision to give Ben Christensen the last word. Situated as he is in the existential soup, he deserves it. His response does him credit. My heart goes out to Ben and Jessie (and others like them) and I wish them well.

Wayne Schow
Pocatello, Idaho

Correction of Wording

I wish to comment on the call for papers "on the prospects and problems of persons with disabilities" (*Dialogue* 38, no. 1 [Spring 2005]: 195, and *Dialogue* 38, no. 2 [Summer 2005]: 204). I'd like to point out that the wording in the first sentence, i.e., "the disabled," is considered offensive by many. *Disabled* encourages other people to see the disability, not the person.

The preferred term, which was also used several times in the call, is "persons with disabilities," or "people with disabilities." As a somewhat pedantic English major, I prefer the latter; however, the author of that call seems to think that "the disabled" is interchangeable with "person with disabilities." The terms are not interchangeable.

Whatever term is chosen should put the emphasis on the person, not the disability. I hope that when these issues of *Dialogue* are published, people who are educated about these issues will be called upon to make sure that you've got it right.

Paula Goodfellow
Encinitas, California

Fairness to FARMS

I recommend that *Dialogue* stay away from the view that seems to be common among some in the LDS intellectual community that FARMS is *a priori* wrong about everything it touches. An embarrassing example of this attitude occurs in Bill Russell's review of Dan Vogel's *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet* ("He Was 'Game,'" *Dialogue* 38, no. 3 [Fall 2005]: 188–92).

Russell writes: "Vogel has not written an anti-Mormon book. Contrary to the reviews published in FARMS, Vogel's book is moderate and bal-

anced" (190). The only problem is that, as of the time Russell's review was published, FARMS hadn't published *any* reviews of the book. Not a single one. I realize this kind of knee-jerk reaction plays well among certain readers, but as an academic journal *Dialogue* should rise above it.

FARMS is not a monolith; it is a scholarly clearinghouse. It has published more than three hundred authors, including people like Klaus Hansen and Jan Shipps. It's fine to take FARMS to task for its actual sins, whatever they may be, but not on an *a priori* basis as Russell did.

Kevin L. Barney
Hoffman Estates, Illinois

We Blush

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Dialogue has all the erudition, rigor, and prestige of a top-drawer academic journal. It has the culture, social sensitivity, warmth, and grace of well-written, excellently edited, personal correspondence. That's difficult to achieve.

Larry Day
Lawrence, Kansas

Treasure Lore Revisited

I agree with Larry Morris that Ronald V. Huggins's essay "From Captain Kidd's Treasure Ghost to the Angel Moroni: Changing *Dramatis Personae* in Early Mormonism" (*Dialogue* 36, no. 4 [Winter 2003]: 17–42), should have been more critical of the sources, but Morris's critique ("Folklore Rebutted," *Dialogue* 38, no. 3 [Fall 2005]: vi–x) did little to improve that situation.

While Morris is correct in assessing the sources in terms of firsthand/secondhand testimony and early/late composition, applying these standards is not as mechanical and automatic as he implies. Historical sources and their relationships to one another can be complex, and often there are other complicating factors to consider. Historiography is a disciplined craft, to be sure, but there are no hard and fast formulas. Whereas Morris accuses Huggins of "mismanag[ing] the sources," I found Morris's handling reductionistic, despite his appeal to cultural relativism at the end.

Historical standards are guides in assessing evidence, not apologetic devices designed to dismiss out-of-hand undesirable testimony. The best example of Morris's misuse of historical methodology is his hasty dismissal of Willard Chase's 1833 report of what he had learned from Joseph Smith Sr. in 1827 about Joseph Jr.'s claimed 1823 encounter with "Moroni." Morris argues, "Even if [Chase] recalled the conversation accurately" (and Morris has no reason to doubt otherwise), "his secondhand version at best represents the view of Joseph Sr." What is that supposed to mean? Is Morris suggesting that Joseph Sr. did not accurately report what Joseph Jr. was claiming? Does he have a cogent argument supporting this theory? And doesn't this suggestion undo the pre-

ferred status of what he calls "firsthand accounts"?

Regarding hearsay evidence, historiographer Louis Gottschalk states in his well-known *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method:* "Thus hearsay evidence would not be discarded by the historian, as it would be by a law court, merely because it is hearsay. It is unacceptable only in so far as it cannot be established as accurate reporting of primary testimony" (2d ed. [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969], 165–66).

While Morris declines to discuss Chase's testimony, a closer look reveals that it is a highly credible account since many of its details are corroborated in other independent sources. Even Richard L. Anderson has admitted that Chase's affidavit "contains more parallels to Mormon sources than any other [Hurlbut] affidavit" ("Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reappraised," *BYU Studies* 10 [Spring 1970]: 296). Both Joseph Knight Sr. and Lucy Smith support Chase's claim that Joseph Jr. took the plates out of the box and violated instructions by laying them down; the plates disappeared, then reappeared in the box, and Smith was prevented by supernatural power from removing them again. Knight said Smith cannot "stur" the book, but similar to Chase, Lucy said Joseph was "hurled back upon the ground with great violence" when he tried to retake the plates.

Paralleling Chase, Knight also remembered the instruction for Smith to bring Alvin the following year, Smith's inability to get the plates in 1824 because Alvin had died in the interim, and the instruction to bring the right person. On this last item, Knight seems confused, claiming that Smith looked into his stone and saw that this correct person was Emma Hale "for he had Bin Down there Before with me." However, Smith did not meet Emma until he boarded at her father's home in 1825. Chase, on the other hand, said Smith at first thought the right individual was fellow treasure seer Samuel Lawrence, but later, after meeting Emma, decided she was the right person (Dan Vogel, ed., *Early Mormon Documents* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996–2003], 1:297–98 [Lucy Smith]; 2:66–68, 71 [Willard Chase]; 4:12–14 [Joseph Knight]; hereafter EMD). With such documentary support, Morris would have a difficult time demonstrating that Chase's account is not an "accurate reporting of primary testimony."

Even when Chase departs from Mormon sources and reports that Joseph Jr. "saw in the box something like a toad, which soon assumed the appearance of a man, and struck him on the side of his head," he is supported by Benjamin Saunders's 1884 non-Mormon but friendly testimony (EMD 2:137). Rather than hearing the story from Joseph Sr., Saunders claimed he heard it directly from Joseph Jr.

Although this account meets Morris's requirement for "firsthand" testimony, he dismisses the toad story as a later embellishment without acknowledging support from Chase's 1833 statement. Morris's procedure of dismissing Chase because he is not firsthand and Saunders because he is late is a good example of why general prin-

ciples cannot be applied like inflexible laws.

Nonetheless, Morris was right to question the accuracy of the 1879 account of the Lewis brothers, not simply because it is a late account but especially because it can be demonstrated fairly easily not to be an "accurate reporting of primary testimony." Although their account is similar to earlier accounts that describe Joseph Smith being knocked down and instructed to return with the right person, the Lewises obviously erred when they described the receptacle of the plates as an "iron box" and the guardian of the plates as "a Spaniard, having a long beard coming down over his breast . . . with his . . . throat cut from ear to ear, and the blood streaming down" (EMD 4:303–4).

In *Early Mormon Documents*, I made a suggestion that Huggins and Morris should not have ignored: "This description sounds more like the guardian spirit over Captain Kidd's treasure, which the Lewises may have confused with the messenger Smith confronted trying to get the plates" (4:304 note 21). Obviously, the "spirit" guarding the plates was not a "Spaniard"; according to Cole, Joseph Sr. described this spirit as "a little old man with a long beard" (EMD 4:245), which is similar to David Whitmer's description (EMD 5:45). It therefore seems probable that the Lewises unintentionally conflated elements from Joseph Smith's 1825 attempt to locate a Spanish treasure in the hills above Isaac Hale's Harmony home and his 1823 encounter with the guardian spirit on the hill in Manchester.

Despite possible embellishments and confusions in both early and late accounts, Morris's claim that "accounts emphasizing a treasure guardian came later" (p. vii) is simply not true. Morris makes this statement in reference to Benjamin Saunders's 1884 statement about the toad-like creature and Joseph and Hiel Lewis's 1879 account describing the bleeding ghost. Not only is Morris wrong about the toad story coming later, but "Moroni" was linked to treasure guardians long before the Lewises mentioned the bleeding ghost.

Later, Morris recognizes that the "disappearing book" and the "shock" in Knight's and Lucy Smith's accounts are also reflections of Smith's "folk [magic] culture" (x). I would also add thrice-repeated dreams and the need to follow instructions precisely as folk magic elements. Smith's inability to get the plates in 1824 because Alvin had died seems more like the trick of a treasure guardian spirit than what Smith's contemporaries would have expected of an angel.

However, Morris has overlooked an important element in the story that more than anything pointed nineteenth-century minds toward treasure lore: the claim that the plates were protected by the "spirit" of a dead mortal. As D. Michael Quinn has noted, "It was not customary [in Joseph Smith's day] to use 'angel' to describe a personage who had been mortal, had died, and was returning to earth to give a message to someone," while at the same time "the visit of a spirit messenger to a human was common in magic and familiar to folk perceptions"

(*Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998], 140).

When Abner Cole said in 1831 that "Jo Smith never pretended to have any communion with angels, until a long period after the *pretended* finding of his book" (EMD 2:246; emphasis his), he was claiming that there was a shift in meaning between 1823 and 1827, which may very well be true. Cole had earlier commented that "Jo. made league with the spirit, who afterwards turned out to be an angel" (EMD 2:234). Obviously, for Cole angels were distinct beings from ghosts, or the spirits of dead mortals. Because he failed to note this distinction, Mark Ashurst-McGee's references to "angels" guarding treasures are irrelevant ("Moroni: Angel or Treasure Guardian?" *Mormon Historical Studies* 2, no. 2 [2001]: 47).

According to Gustav Davidson's *Dictionary of Angels*, the "Angel of Treasures [is] Parasiel," and that "Parasiel [is] an angelic name inscribed in Hebrew characters on the 1st pentacle of the planet Jupiter. Parasiel is lord and master of treasures" ([New York: Free Press, 1967], 45, 220). This source also states that "Sedekiah [is] a 'treasure-finding angel' whose name figures on the pentacle of the planet Jupiter" (263). For the astrological significance of Jupiter to Joseph Smith as well as his possible possession of a Jupiter talisman, I refer readers to Quinn's extended discussion in *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (pp. 66–97).

By assuming that Joseph Smith and his non-Mormon critics shared the same definition of "angel," I believe Morris and Ashurst-McGee have been led to ask the wrong questions, which in turn has led them to make the overly simplistic conclusion that the "early witnesses described an angel who appeared in a religious context" and "later witnesses 'defrocked' Moroni." The question to answer is not: Did Joseph Smith transform a treasure guardian into an angel? But rather: Did Joseph Smith expand his definition of angel to include a particular treasure guardian?

This is certainly a better approach than Morris's insinuation that Cole invented the story because he was angry with Smith after their confrontation over the unauthorized publication of extracts from the Book of Mormon in his tabloid. Cole prefaced his statement with "it is well known," so Morris's fabrication-for-the-sake-of-revenge thesis is highly unlikely. Given the differing definitions, the confusion of Cole and the unnamed others is understandable. Yet there is an element of truth in Cole's statement. While Lucy and other family members make it clear that God was involved from the start, I think it's best to regard the word "angel" (as we do the term "Urim and Thummim") as anachronistic to the 1823 setting.

While Morris focuses on possible embellishments in later accounts, he neglects to mention that the opposite shift occurred in Joseph Smith's accounts. In his 1838 history, Joseph Smith falsely described his involvement with treasure digging as a one-time event with Josiah Stowell in 1825 and suppressed the truth that he took a leading role as treasure seer not

only in Stowell's but in many such operations. In fact, the seer stone is never mentioned either in association with treasure digging or as the means of translating the Book of Mormon; instead, there are only the spectacles, euphemistically called the "Urim and Thummim." There is no mention of removing the plates and setting them down, no mention of the plates disappearing and reappearing in the box, no mention of Smith being "shocked" or knocked down while attempting to retake the plates. Instead, he simply says, "I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger."

Again, there is no mention of the requirement to bring Alvin the following year and of Joseph's inability to get the plates in 1824 because Alvin had died; instead, he knows from the first visit that "the time for bringing [the plates] forth had not yet arrived, neither would it, until four years from that time." If this were true, Smith forgot to tell his family, because Lucy mentions their disappointment when Joseph came home empty-handed after his 1824 visit to the hill. Given the obvious shift away from "folk [magic] culture" in Joseph Smith's account, why is it so hard for Morris and Ashurst-McGee to believe that the luminous "angel Moroni" was once a nameless, bearded treasure-guardian "spirit"?

Dan Vogel
Westerville, Ohio

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

Eternal Progression in a Multiverse: An Explorative Mormon Cosmology

Kirk D. Hagen

This article is an examination of the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression within the context of big-bang cosmology, a description of a finite universe that appears to contradict that doctrine. I argue that a multiverse cosmology, a theory that posits a multiplicity of universes, resolves many of the problems posed by big-bang cosmology.

The doctrine of eternal progression is the centerpiece of Mormon theology. This principle "cannot be precisely defined or comprehended, yet it is fundamental to the LDS worldview."[1] While the phrase "eternal progression" is absent from the canon of scripture, it first occurs in the discourses of Brigham Young, who said, "I wish to urge upon the people the necessity of knowing what to do with their present life, which pertains more particularly to temporalities. The very object of our existence here is to handle the temporal elements of this world and subdue the earth, multiplying those organisms of plants and animals God has designed shall dwell upon it. When we have learned to live according to the full value of the life we now possess, we are prepared for further advancement in the scale of eternal progression—for a more glorious and exalted sphere."[2] Statements on eternal progression by Brigham Young and his successors embrace the substance of the doctrine taught by Joseph Smith in his King Follett discourse, in which Joseph declared that "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man" and that "you have got to learn how to be gods yourselves."[3] Echoing this idea, John Taylor remarked, "What is

man, that thou are mindful of him? He is not only the Son of man, but he is the Son of God also. He is a God in embryo."[4]

The doctrine of eternal progression—that the ultimate human potential is to become like God himself—has been reiterated by numerous modern-day Church authorities. Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: "In short, man is a god in embryo. He comes of a race of gods, and as his eternal growth is continued, he will approach more nearly the point which to us is Godhood, and which is everlasting in its power over the elements of the universe."[5] Widtsoe also declared, "What then is eternal progress? It is an eternity of active life, increasing in all good things, toward the likeness of the Lord. It is the highest conceivable form of growth." Although viewed as heresy by the Christian world at large, this uniquely LDS doctrine "was a tremendous addition to Christian belief and thought . . . that gave heaven, often conceived as a static psalm-singing place, a new and desirable definition."[6]

Responding to the criticism that the doctrine deflates the position of God, Apostle Hugh B. Brown rejoined: "We do not mean to humanize God, but rather to deify man—not as he now is but as he may become. The difference between us is indescribably great, but it is one of degree rather than of kind."[7] Speaking of the distinctive views on intelligence espoused by Mormonism, Apostle Stephen L Richards remarked, "In what does the joy of man consist? There are two things: first, an eternal progression in intelligence, knowledge and power that leads to perfection, even as Christ is perfect; and second, companionship with God in his presence and in the presence of his Son."[8]

In contrast to the firm doctrinal tone of earlier sermons on the subject, recent commentaries by Church authorities on eternal progression have taken on a more "family friendly" feel. For example, Apostle Joseph B. Wirthlin stated that "this very moment is part of our eternal progression towards returning with our families to the presence of our Father in Heaven."[9] Elder M. Russell Ballard, also of the Quorum of the Twelve, declared, "There is no greater expression of love than the heroic Atonement performed by the Son of God. Were it not for the plan of our Heavenly Father, . . . all mankind would have been left without the hope of eternal progression."[10] Referring to the untimely death of his sister by a childhood disease, Boyd K. Packer, acting president of the Quorum of the Twelve, observed, "She will not be denied anything essential for her eternal progression."[11]

From one of Joseph Smith's last revelations we learn that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods" (D&C 132:37). Indeed, in the same revelation an equivalent status is promised to all who abide by "the new and everlasting covenant," for "then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them" (D&C 132:19, 20).

If, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, the ultimate future status of the children of God is godhood itself, the question naturally arises, where are these gods? What is the domain of their habitation? Mormon doctrine asserts that they are eternal beings, "from everlasting to everlasting," so how can the universe spatially or temporally accommodate them? Or, for that matter, where is there space or time for the innumerable "intelligences" or "spirits" that have already acquired, or will acquire at some point in their eternal sojourn, a tabernacle of clay? Do *all* these beings exist in our universe, and does Jesus Christ have dominion over just this world or the entire universe? Teachings of latter-day Church leaders indicate that Jesus Christ is, indeed, Lord of the universe. John A. Widtsoe taught that, to determine the relationship between God and man, it is necessary to know "why the Lord is the supreme intelligent Being in the universe, with the greatest knowledge and the most perfected will, and who, therefore, possesses infinite power over the forces of the universe."[12] Marion G. Romney, a counselor in the First Presidency, stated: "Jesus Christ, in the sense of being its Creator and Redeemer, is Lord of the whole universe. Except for his mortal ministry accomplished on this earth, his service and relationship to other worlds and their inhabitants are the same as his service and relationship to this earth and its inhabitants."[13] That Jesus Christ's dominion extends to the universe at large can be inferred from the Lord's teachings to Moses when he declared that "worlds without number have I created," and by revelations to Joseph Smith that "by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (Moses 1:33; D&C 76:24, 93:10). Apostle Neal A. Maxwell, speaking from the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton in California proclaimed, "Way back then, under the direction of the Father, Christ

was the Lord of the universe, who created worlds without number—of which ours is only one. Yet in the vastness of His creations, the Lord of the universe, who notices the fall of every sparrow, is our personal Savior."[14]

The term *universe* in these references presumably alludes to a singular cosmos, the universe in which we live, viz., *our* universe with which the non-astronomer is casually familiar. Similarly, the term *worlds* refers to planets or other celestial bodies, conceivably inhabited by God's children, within that universe. Given this apparent "one Lord, one universe" paradigm, how are Latter-day Saints to frame a "plurality of gods" doctrine within a modern cosmological context of the big-bang model of the universe? Do the gods share a common universe, having dominion over only a fraction of the whole cosmic realm? Do they exist in different dimensions? Different universes?

Referring to big-bang cosmology and claiming that "Mormon doctrine now seems to be a relic of the nineteenth century," Keith Norman states, "Turning our gaze forward in time, science paints a bleak picture of the ultimate fate of the cosmos, in contrast to the optimistic Mormon doctrine of eternal progression. Where is there room or time for a limitless series of exalted beings to organize and people new worlds by natural means, presumably without end? How will such gods operate, let alone exist, in a dead and cold universe, or even a violently expanding and contracting one? Mormons cannot appeal to God to get them out of this fix."[15] More recently, philosophers Paul Copan and William Craig argue that the big bang "is irreconcilable with the traditional Mormon understanding of God as a temporal, material being immanent in the universe. Not only must God, [i]n the Mormon conception, have a beginning, but he must also come to an end, either being swallowed up and crushed into oblivion in the Big Crunch or else literally disintegrated into the cold, dark recesses of outer space—a pitiable deity indeed!"[16]

Is Mormonism's doctrine of eternal progression at odds with the big bang? Does the big bang really imply that the "temporal, material" god of Mormonism has an end of existence coincident with the demise of the universe? Can we find harmony between the central tenet of Mormonism and the crowning achievement of twentieth-century cosmology? To more fully answer these questions, let's briefly examine the history of the big-bang cosmological model and describe its salient points.

The Big-Bang Model of the Universe

According to the noted cosmologist Joseph Silk, "Cosmology is the study of the large-scale structure and evolution of the universe. The study of the origin of observable structures in the universe, ranging from the huge clusters of galaxies down to the solar system, falls in the realm of cosmogony."[17] Astronomical observational evidence, bolstered by theoretical considerations from general relativity and quantum mechanics gathered during the last seventy-five years, has precipitated a single model that addresses the central questions of cosmology and cosmogony. This model is called the big bang. The big bang may be narrowly defined "as a moment in the *finite* past at which our universe had [a] very high density and a very high temperature."[18] From this basic definition, we glean two obvious but very important conclusions: the universe is *not* infinitely old, and the universe has *changed.* Because the big bang is a "moment" in the finite past, the universe must have an age, and because today's universe does not have a high density or a high temperature, the universe must have evolved from one state to the state we observe now. According to the big-bang model, the universe began in an exceedingly hot and dense state and has been expanding and cooling ever since.

Big-bang cosmology owes its beginnings to no single individual or scientific discovery, but two key events early in the twentieth century stand out in the history of its development. The first event was a consequence of Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity. Developed in 1915, general relativity is integral to cosmology because it is a theory of gravity, one of the four fundamental forces of nature. Unlike Newtonian gravity, Einsteinian gravity couples the geometry of space to the distribution of matter and energy within it. Solutions of Einstein's general field equations showed that the universe is either expanding or contracting. But based on his observational belief that the cosmos must be static and unchanging, Einstein introduced a proportionality constant, which soon became known as the cosmological constant, into his original field equations. The cosmological constant is a mathematical term that represents a cosmic repulsion that is proportional to distance, and the evolution of the universe is determined by the competition between the repulsive force and the attractive force of Newtonian gravity. In Einstein's static universe the two forces are in balance. While the cosmological constant is not necessarily ad hoc, it makes the field equations more complicated and less appealing from the standpoint of mathematical elegance and beauty. Such

aesthetic considerations made Einstein initially doubt if the constant could be justified. According to Helge Kragh, professor of the history of science at the University of Oslo, in 1919 Einstein described the introduction of the constant as "gravely detrimental to the formal beauty of the theory."[19] Twelve years passed before Einstein decided that the introduction of the cosmological term had been a mistake.

In 1917 Dutch astronomer Willem de Sitter extended Einstein's analysis by showing that, contrary to Einstein's contention, the static matter-filled cosmological model was not the only solution to the field equations. De Sitter's model was an empty universe; but he showed that, if a particle of matter was introduced at a distance from the origin of a coordinate system, it would appear to move away from the observer, thereby causing a red shift in the light frequencies.[20] But de Sitter described the velocity associated with this motion as "spurious" and not a real velocity caused by the expansion of space. Thus, in spite of the red shift phenomenon built into his model, the de Sitter universe, like Einstein's, was static.[21]

The static models of Einstein and de Sitter stood as the primary cosmological models until 1922 when the Russian mathematician Alexander Friedmann showed that Einstein's field equations included nonstatic solutions. Friedmann's analysis proved that the solutions of Einstein and de Sitter were special cases of a more general solution that included the possibility of a universe with a finite age. With Friedmann's work, we have, for the first time, the idea of an expanding universe originating in a singularity, a big-bang universe. But, as emphasized by Kragh, Friedmann's model was primarily mathematical rather than physical in nature, and he did not attempt to connect his results with astronomical observations of the red shift, which were made as early as 1912 by astronomer Vesto Slipher. Furthermore, Friedmann did not predict or argue that the actual universe is of the expanding type. Thus, while we see the germ of the big-bang universe in Friedmann's model, to credit him with the "discovery" of the big-bang universe would be going too far.[22] Even though Friedmann's work was published in the world's leading journal of physics, his cosmological model was virtually ignored by astronomers, perhaps because it lacked information about observational consequences. Friedmann died prematurely in 1925, and the expanding universe model was promptly forgotten.

In 1927, Georges Lemaître, a Belgian priest and physicist, reproduced Freidmann's cosmology and found that Einstein's static universe

model was unstable, i.e., that the slightest perturbation of the cosmological constant from a special value caused a rapid collapse or a runaway expansion of the universe.[23] In subsequent improvements to the model, Lemaître theorized an expanding universe in which the velocities of galaxies varied in proportion to their distances, the same proportionality relationship discovered experimentally by American astronomer Edwin Hubble a few years later.

Unlike Friedmann, whose cosmological model was a mathematical exercise in general relativity, Lemaître made a serious attempt to develop a physically realistic model. But Lemaître's prediction of an expanding universe suffered the same fate as Friedmann's, but for different reasons. Lemaître published his results in an obscure Belgian journal; and as Kragh notes, "he did not care very much for international reputation and he may have had second thoughts about the soundness of the expanding universe and for that reason did not press the point."[24] But things drastically changed in 1930. With the belated recognition and endorsement of Lemaître's work by the distinguished British astronomer Arthur Eddington, Lemaître's cosmology was "rediscovered" and given its due credit. The Belgian priest suddenly rose to celebrity status in the world of science.

The second key event that helped usher in big-bang cosmology was announced by Edwin Hubble in 1929.[25] Using the 100-inch telescope at Mount Wilson in California, Hubble showed that the nearest spiral nebulae were galaxies of stars like the Milky Way, and he was able to measure the distance to the Andromeda Nebulae and other spiral nebulae. With these measurements, Hubble determined that the frequencies of light emitted by these nebulae were shifted toward the red end of the spectrum, indicating that these distant celestial objects were receding from our galaxy at very high velocities. Using the amount of red shift, Hubble was able to calculate the recession velocities, and his calculations showed that the recession velocity of a distant object increased in proportion to its distance away, a relation now known as Hubble's law. Thus, Hubble discovered what the models of Friedmann and Lemaître predicted years earlier: that the universe is expanding. There was now a fusion of theory and astronomical observation that made the expanding universe a widely accepted concept in the scientific community.

Prepared by his earlier work, Lemaître used Hubble's experimental data in 1931 to produce the first cosmological model based on actual measurements. His model had a constant term that represented a cosmologi-

cal repulsion effect that predicted a universe entering its rapid expansion phase at the present time. Contrary to Einstein, Lemaître believed that the cosmological constant was not a mistake or a superfluous mathematical term but a natural and indispensable part of relativistic cosmology. His model also predicted a "singularity" at a finite time in the past, a high density initial state that Lemaître called the "primeval atom." He even referred to the exit from this initial state as a "bang," but he did not couple this adjective with the word "big." The phrase "big bang" was a nickname coined in 1950 by British astronomer Fred Hoyle, a staunch advocate of the steady-state theory of the universe, who used the phrase as a pejorative connotation for the big-bang model.[26] To Hoyle's chagrin, his derisive label ultimately became the official name for the very cosmology he spent much of his life unsuccessfully trying to debunk.

It is critical to emphasize at this point that the big bang should not be considered as an explosion of a hot dense cosmic mass somewhere *in* space that hurled matter in all directions *though* space. On the contrary, the big bang is the "event" that defines the birth of the universe itself—i.e., the big bang marks the origin *of* space and *of* time. The big bang occurred everywhere at once. According to the theory, before the big bang there was no space, and there was no time. As far as the big-bang model is concerned, the word "before" is meaningless. Asking what came before the big bang is like asking what is north of the north pole. As physicist Paul Davies explains, "People often ask: Where did the big bang occur? The big bang did not occur at a point in space at all. Space itself came into existence with the big bang. There is a similar difficulty with the question: What happened before the big bang? The answer is, there was no 'before.' Time itself began at the big bang."[27]

Furthermore, the expansion predicted by Friedmann and Lemaître and experimentally confirmed by Hubble should not be envisioned as the hurtling of celestial objects *through* space but the expansion *of* space, a phenomenon that may be compared to an inflating balloon whose surface contains a collection of dots corresponding to the celestial objects in the universe. As the balloon fills with air, the surface of the balloon (space) stretches, moving the dots (celestial objects) farther from one another. From the point of view of an observer on *any* dot on the balloon's surface, the other dots move away as the surface stretches. As Hubble observed, light from distant galaxies is red shifted, indicating that these galaxies are being conveyed, as it were, by the "fabric" of expanding space. This is the

correct interpretation of the expansion of the universe according to the big-bang model.

The singularity predicted by Lemaître is a region of space-time where the known laws of physics break down because the curvature of space is infinite. Known laws of physics (Einstein's general theory of relativity) take us back to the so-called Planck time, which is 10^{-43} seconds after the big bang. To understand what happened before this time, a theory that combines gravity and quantum mechanics is required. Presently, no such theory has been successfully developed, but a fairly recent concept called "string theory" may hold some promise.

By the late 1930s, nuclear astrophysics had developed into an advanced theory, and by late 1942 the big-bang model had gained significant momentum among nuclear physicists. In 1946 the Russian-born nuclear physicist George Gamow published a short paper which is regarded by some as the foundation of modern big-bang cosmology. In this landmark paper, Gamow combined two perspectives, the relativistic cosmology of Friedmann and Lemaître and the idea that a process of an explosive character was necessary to account for the existence of the heavy elements (elements other than hydrogen and helium) in the universe.[28]

By the late 1940s, big-bang cosmology had developed into a proper scientific theory with quantitative estimates of how the universe has evolved with time. Around this time cosmologists postulated that the energy released by the big bang should have left a remnant thermal signature, a cosmic "afterglow," in the present universe. They calculated that the temperature of this "background" radiation from the primeval cosmic fireball would today be about 5 K.[29] This thermal signature was finally measured in 1964 by astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson at the Bell Laboratories in New Jersey. Using a radio telescope,[30] Penzias and Wilson found a strong signal at one particular wavelength of the microwave band emanating from all directions in the sky. After months of measurements and consultations with other astronomers, they concluded that their signal was the cosmic microwave background radiation predicted by the big-bang model.[31] They eventually refined their temperature measurement to 2.7 K.

Within a few years after the discovery of the cosmic background radiation, scientists utilized the temperature measurement of Penzias and Wilson, together with improved knowledge of nuclear reactions that convert hydrogen into helium and heavier elements, to show that everything

in the universe was created out of primordial protons and electrons in a two-stage process.[32] First, the light elements were "cooked" in the big bang, and second, the heavier elements were cooked more slowly inside stars. The predicted proportions of hydrogen, helium, and other light elements in the universe were found to be in excellent agreement with measurements taken by astronomers, thereby corroborating the big-bang model.

The next major development in big-bang cosmology came in 1974 when astrophysicist J. R. Gott and his associates showed that the matter density of the universe is less than one tenth of the value required for the universe to be "closed."[33] In cosmology, the geometrical "shape" of the universe is described as either "closed," "open," or "flat." These geometries refer to the "curvature" of space and may be visualized as a sphere (positive curvature), a saddle (negative curvature) and a plane (zero curvature), respectively. Cosmologists use the Greek letter Ω (omega) to denote the ratio of the actual density of the universe to the critical density of the universe. If Ω is greater than 1, the universe is closed, and will some day stop expanding and contract back to a singularity. This event is referred to as the "big crunch." If Ω is less than 1, the universe is open and will expand forever, eventually cooling to absolute zero, resulting in a "big freeze." If Ω equals 1, the universe is flat, precisely balanced between closed and open. A flat universe will stop expanding after an infinite amount of time. The findings of Gott and his colleagues showed that only flat and open universes could be seriously considered at the time.

The year 1980 saw the emergence of a crucial piece to the big-bang cosmological puzzle, a theory called *inflation*. Inflation says that, during the first split second of the life of the universe, a tiny "seed" containing all the mass and energy in the universe was blown up from a size smaller than that of a proton to about that of a basketball. Pioneered by physicist Alan Guth, inflation theory explained or refined several key aspects of the "standard" big-bang cosmological model.[34]

First, inflation explains how the number of particles in the universe grew from a small number to around 10^{90} today. The standard model does not postulate any numbers so large.

Second, inflation addresses the flatness problem, which, as discussed earlier, relates to the closeness of the actual density of the universe to the critical density of the universe. While the issue is not completely settled, there is growing evidence that Ω is very close to 1, so the universe is

flat or very nearly so. The standard big-bang model offers no rationale to prefer one value of Ω over another, but $\Omega = 1$ is a natural consequence of inflation theory.

Third, the standard big-bang model predicts an abundance of "magnetic monopoles" (particles that have only a south or north pole but not both) in the universe, but these extraordinarily heavy particles are nowhere to be found in the cosmos. Inflation theory posits that the number of monopoles was effectively reduced to zero by the enormous expansion associated with inflation.

Fourth, inflation helps explain the uniformity of the universe, which is observed most clearly by measuring the temperature of the cosmic background radiation. The effective temperature is the same in every direction to an accuracy of one part in a hundred thousand, but the standard big-bang model does not contain an explanation for this uniformity.

Fifth and finally, inflation predicts that, while the universe is very uniform, there should be very small deviations from that uniformity due to quantum uncertainties. These deviations were detected by NASA's Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) satellite launched in 1989, and the findings were announced in 1992. The radiometers aboard COBE confirmed the small temperature deviations predicted by the inflation theory and measured an overall temperature of the cosmic background radiation at 2.735 K. The temperature deviations were validated in 2000 by the BOOMERANG experiment, a balloon-borne telescope operating around the Antarctic, and by other balloon-based and ground-based experiments.

In 2003 the first data from the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) were released. The mission of WMAP, a space probe launched in 2001 and positioned approximately one million miles from earth in a direction opposite to the sun, was to provide a higher resolution map of the cosmic background radiation than COBE could provide. To a very high degree of measurement accuracy, WMAP validated the COBE results, providing even stronger observational evidence for inflation. Furthermore, WMAP measurements showed that the universe is flat to within a 2 percent margin of error. Using precise WMAP measurements and other information, cosmologists have also determined that the universe is 13.7 billion years old, plus or minus 200 million years.[35] By combining data from cosmic background radiation measurements and results from the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS), cosmologists determined early in 2005 that $\Omega = 1.01$, plus or minus 0.009.[36] This finding strengthens

the case for a flat universe but suggests that the universe could be closed since Ω ranges from 1.001 to 1.019.

Big-bang cosmology is a tribute to the mathematical brilliance, experimental adeptness, and laborious observational efforts of numerous individuals who pioneered this extraordinary model over the better part of the past hundred years. According to physicist Simon Singh:

> The big-bang model of the universe is arguably the most important and glorious scientific achievement of the twentieth century. Just like many other areas of science, cosmology started by attempting to explain things that had previously been in the domain of myth or religion. Developing, testing, revising and proving the complete big-bang model required a number of theoretical, experimental and observational stages. Yet this does not mean that the model is polished and complete, because there will always be some outstanding issues and some details that need to be filled in.[37]

So firmly established is big-bang cosmology as a scientific reality that noted cosmologist James Peebles stated, "The big-bang theory is no longer seriously questioned; it fits together too well."[38]

Even though the big-bang theory "fits together well," some baffling phenomena have emerged in recent years. In 1998 cosmologists found that the rate of expansion of the universe is increasing, not decreasing as previously thought.[39] Moreover, they have discovered that ordinary matter—the kind of which stars, planets, comets, dust, and other celestial objects consist—constitutes only 4 percent of the ingredients of the universe. The other 96 percent consists of two mysterious entities that astronomers have not yet identified. Approximately 23 percent of the universe is composed of "dark matter," and approximately 73 percent consists of "dark energy," the bizarre energy that is believed to be responsible for the recently discovered accelerated expansion. Scientists know very little about dark matter and even less about dark energy, which is currently being associated with the cosmological constant that Einstein argued was a blunder. A version of this constant now seems necessary to account for the accelerated expansion. According to cosmologists Lawrence Krauss and Michael Turner, "The cosmological constant has reemerged to play a central role in 21st century physics."[40] Martin Rees, the United Kingdom's Astronomer Royal, acknowledges, "It is embarrassing to admit, but astronomers still don't know what our universe is made of."[41]

Rival Cosmologies

The current scientific consensus is that the big-bang model correctly describes the structure and evolution of our universe. But this has not always been so. In 1948 three young physicists from Cambridge University, Hermann Bondi, Thomas Gold, and Fred Hoyle, introduced the modern "steady-state" theory of the universe.[42] The steady-state model consists of two interrelated postulates. First, the universe has always and will always look the same to any observer, regardless of that observer's location in space and time. This postulate is called the "perfect cosmological principle," a name coined by Gold. Second, matter is continuously created throughout the universe, emerging spontaneously out of apparently nothing. Most cosmologists disdained the idea that matter could be created out of nothing, but the steady-state theorists claimed that it was no more bizarre than the notion of matter creation from nothing in the big bang. The steady-state model recognizes cosmic expansion but contains a continuous creation of matter that counterbalances the expansion, resulting in a steady-state universe. The steady-state cosmology of Bondi, Gold, and Hoyle was the primary cosmological rival to the big-bang model; and in addition to being an important theory in its own right, it provoked a major controversy in cosmology by questioning the standard assumptions of the evolutionary theory. The steady-state model forced cosmologists to think more deeply and critically about the foundations of cosmology, and the model was instrumental in the emergence of new observational methods and practices. [43]

After a decade of controversial existence, the steady-state theory was still alive at the end of the 1950s. But the theory failed to harmonize with several astronomical observations, particularly the cosmic background radiation discovered by Penzias and Wilson in 1965, so by 1970 the theory was considered dead by virtually all astronomers except two (Gold and Hoyle) of its three developers and a few steady-state converts who continued the resistance to big-bang cosmology by developing extensions and revisions to the original steady-state theory, such as the quasi-steady state theory introduced by Fred Hoyle, Geoffrey Burbidge, and Jayant Narlikar in 1993.[44]

Among the most energetic opponents of big-bang cosmology was Hannes Alfvén, the Swedish physicist and 1970 Nobel Prize winner for his work in plasma physics. Alfvén rejected the big-bang theory, which he found unscientific and mythical. Alfvén's cosmology was a "plasma uni-

verse" that could be described by the laws of electromagnetism, thermodynamics and particle physics. "Instead of working forward from a theoretically conceived beginning of time, plasma cosmology works backwards from the present universe. . . . It arrives at a universe without a big bang, without any beginning at all, a universe that has always existed, is always evolving, and will always evolve, with no limits of any sort."[45] Alfvén's cosmology received some support from other plasma physicists but was ignored by most astronomers and cosmologists. Eric Lerner has attempted to keep Alfvén's plasma model alive, but serious errors in the model have been identified.[46]

The handful of steady-state and plasma cosmology partisans are not the only big-bang antagonists. In an open letter to the scientific community, more than a hundred scientists from around the world signed a statement by Lerner proclaiming that the big-bang theory "relies on a growing number of hypothetical entities" such as "inflation, dark matter and dark energy" without which there would be "fatal contradictions between the observations made by astronomers and the predictions of the big-bang theory." The letter further asserts that "doubt and dissent are not tolerated" and that "those who doubt the big-bang fear that saying so will cost them their funding."[47]

Mormonism and the Big Bang

Notwithstanding the vocal few who adhere to steady-state, quasi-steady state, plasma, or some other type of cosmology, the big-bang model has passed wide-ranging scientific scrutiny for the last seventy-five years. The big-bang model owes its birth to Einstein's general theory of relativity, which itself has passed numerous experimental tests and is therefore no longer considered merely a "theory." Moreover, the big-bang model has passed every major astronomical test that it has been subjected to, something that rival cosmologies have failed to do. These findings do not imply that the big-bang model is complete, but rather confirm that the model has been sufficiently verified experimentally that there is little doubt about its validity. Science, according to Karl Popper, a philosopher of science, is about theories that are subject to falsification.[48] For a theory to be falsifiable, it must be possible to make an observation that shows the theory to be false. For example, the theory that "all crows are black" could be falsified by observing one white crow. No number of experiments can prove a theory correct, but a single experiment can disprove one. Thus far,

no aspects of the big-bang model have been experimentally falsified. So, if the big bang truly describes our universe, the nature of space and time and perhaps even existence itself, then an examination of the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression within the context of big-bang cosmology may be worthwhile.

Throughout the history of the LDS Church, many authorities have boldly asserted that there should, in actual fact, be no contradictions between science and religion. "Two truths are never at variance," declared Frederick Pack, a University of Utah geologist.[49] John A. Widtsoe, who was academically trained as a chemist, echoed the same thesis when he said, "Truth is truth forever. Scientific truth cannot be theological lie. To the sane mind, theology and philosophy must harmonize. They have the common ground of truth on which to meet."[50] He was expressing a tenet that has been articulated in various words throughout the history of the Church by a number of authorities.

Of the early Church leaders, Brigham Young was probably the most dynamic individual when it came to championing the consonance of science and religion. "My religion is natural philosophy," he said.[51] "In these respects we differ from the Christian world, for our religion will not clash with or contradict the facts of science in any particular."[52] Young emphasized that "every art and science known and studied by the children of men is comprised within the Gospel."[53] In the same vein, Apostle Orson Pratt advocated, "The study of science is the study of something eternal. If we study astronomy, we study the works of God. It is truth that exists throughout universal nature; and God is the dispenser of all truth—scientific, religious, and political."[54]

Of course, the "pro-science" stance is only one of two principal viewpoints currently active in the Church, the second viewpoint ranging from mild to severe "anti-science." Whenever there is an appearance of discord between a Church doctrine and science, the first impulse of many Church members is to immediately dismiss the science. The inaction fostered by this impulse, besides retarding a potentially fruitful dialogue on the science-religion interface, is contrary to the Lord's instruction to

> teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;
>
> Of things both in heaven and in the earth; things which have been,

> things which are, things which must shortly come to pass. (D&C 88:78, 79)

Moreover, it is clear that the Lord desires that we study the natural world, for "all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me" (Moses 6:63).

As pointed out by mathematician and LDS author David H. Bailey, the anti-science viewpoint gained considerable momentum in the 1950s following the publication of Joseph Fielding Smith's book, *Man: His Origin and Destiny* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954). In this book and other publications, Smith promoted a highly literal interpretation of the scriptures that was predominant in the Church for several decades.[55] In spite of the doctrinal literalism that has impeded the science-religion dialogue in the Church during the last fifty years, the compatibility of science and Mormonism is still addressed by Church leaders from time to time. In 1953, Apostle Harold B. Lee stated, "True religion and true science are in harmony. I have always thought it to be a dangerous assumption that there was a clash or warfare between the fundamental teachings of the truths of science and the teachings of true religion. If there is a disagreement, it is because one or the other has not attained to the truth."[56] Apostle Russell M. Nelson, a physician, has stated more recently: "From generation to generation, God has given additional light. Whether truth comes from a laboratory of science or directly by revelation, truth is embraced by the gospel."[57]

Is big-bang cosmology compatible with Mormonism; and more specifically, is it compatible with the centerpiece of Mormon theology: the doctrine of eternal progression? Have one or both of these ideas "not attained to the truth"? Before addressing that question, let's briefly summarize the conclusions of big-bang cosmology, which, for the purposes of this article, may be condensed to six principal points:

1. The universe is expanding and, according to recent discoveries, doing so at an accelerated rate.

2. The universe is nearly flat, but its ultimate fate is unknown.

3. Current laws of physics are inadequate for investigating the very early universe.

4. Our universe has a finite age, approximately 13.7 billion years.

5. The big bang marked the inception of space and time.

6. Approximately 96 percent of the constituents of the universe are unknown.

Concerning the first point, there do not appear to be any doctrines in Mormonism that are at odds with an expanding universe per se. In fact, one may even claim that Mormonism supports the idea by arguing that an expanding universe is required to accommodate the growing "race of gods" spoken of by Widtsoe. This argument assumes, of course, that these gods actually *need* the expanded space. Proponents of the compatibility of the first point would more likely maintain that an expanding universe is required to accommodate a growing number of life-sustaining worlds and therefore a growing number of God's spirit children who have taken on mortality. But star and planet formation, which is required for life, occurs within existing galaxies and is independent of the expansion. God may exist outside of our universe, i.e., outside of our space-time, but assuredly operates, as he sees fit, within it. This issue will be addressed in more detail later in connection with the fourth and fifth points.

As for the second point concerning the ultimate fate of the universe, big-bang cosmology proffers three possible outcomes for the universe, each one corresponding to a different "shape" of space-time. The first outcome is a closed universe ($\Omega > 1$). This outcome is characterized by a universe that eventually stops expanding and then collapses into an infinitely dense hot region, a state reminiscent of the primordial fireball that defined the beginning of the universe. In a closed universe, all cosmic structure is destroyed, thereby destroying all life; and what happens afterward is beyond our current knowledge of physics. However, subsequent big bangs, which result in an "oscillatory" universe, have been hypothesized. The second outcome is an open universe ($\Omega < 1$). This outcome is characterized by a universe that expands forever, ultimately cooling to a temperature of absolute zero. In an open universe, space is infinite, completely black and cold, and therefore lifeless. The third outcome is a flat universe ($\Omega = 1$). This outcome is characterized by a universe that is perfectly balanced between closed and open. A flat universe will stop expanding after an infinite amount of time. The end result in a flat universe is basically the same as an open one—it just takes an infinite amount of time to achieve. As discussed earlier, cosmologists have determined that our universe is very close to being flat. Further studies and measurements are required to ascertain whether this is actually the case.

The ultimate fate of the big-bang universe in *any* of the three possible outcomes spells doom for humans who live in that universe. Within a more limited scientific context, however, this point is meaningless for humans—at least, for those who live on this earth—since long before the demise of the universe, the earth will be scorched by an increasingly hot sun as it transforms into a red giant in the next few billion years. Assuming that we are still here, survival will require that we find a way to protect ourselves by altering the sun somehow or leaving the solar system. Presumably, our work on earth in the mortality phase of our eternal sojourn will have been completed long before this perilous event.

The claim by Copan and Craig that God would be "swallowed up and crushed into oblivion in the Big Crunch or else literally disintegrated into the cold, dark recesses of outer space" arises from the false notion that God, having a tangible body, is susceptible to the same external physical effects as human beings. As modern revelation states, God has a tangible body of flesh and bones, but God is a *resurrected* being with a "glorified" body whose physical properties we know almost nothing about. The suggestion that God is subject to destruction in a "big crunch" or a "big freeze" is based on a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of God's materiality in Mormon doctrine.

The third point stated above concerning the inadequacy of contemporary physics illustrates that "the universe is full of magical things, patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper."[58] Einstein's general theory of relativity is enormously successful in describing gravity. Likewise, quantum mechanics is enormously successful in describing the behavior of subatomic particles. What is lacking, however, is a theory that incorporates or unifies gravity and quantum mechanics into a single consistent theory capable of describing the universe prior to the Planck time. Some scientists believe that string theory is the key to uniting gravity with quantum mechanics.[59] In any event, our inability to describe the universe before 10^{-43} seconds after its birth simply says that our physics is a work in progress and does not suggest any discord between Mormonism and big-bang cosmology.

The fourth point, that our universe has a finite age, is problematic for Mormonism. The big-bang model postulates a cosmos with a *beginning*, a cosmos whose birth occurred approximately 13.7 billion years ago by current estimates. In Mormonism, there is *no* ultimate beginning, but an eternity, which is endless time. The definition of "eternal" here is an infi-

nitely long "time line" and not a contracted definition of a "very long" period of time or an appellative reference to God. Eternity, or eternal existence, means that existence has no beginning and no end. Existence just *is*. Joseph Smith taught: "Is it logical to say that the intelligence of spirits is immortal, and yet that it has a beginning? The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end. That is good logic. That which has a beginning may have an end. There never was a time when there were not spirits; for they are co-equal [co-eternal] with our Father in heaven."[60]

According to modern-day scripture, God is eternal. "For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name" (D&C 19:10). Also, Doctrine and Covenants 20:17 reads: "By these things we know that there is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting." And again, we read, " . . . which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end" (D&C 20:28). Moses 1:3 states: "And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold I am the Lord God Almighty, and Endless is my name; for I am without beginning of days or end of years; and is not this endless?"

These verses are to be understood within a broad doctrinal context of eternal progression, which claims that God is a progressive, eternal being. God has always existed, but not always as a god. Joseph Smith taught, "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. We say that God Himself is a self-existing being. Who told you so? It is correct enough; but how did you get it into your heads?"[61] Joseph Smith also taught, "Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be" (D&C 93:29).

If man and God, who used to be a man, are eternal beings, where were they prior to the birth of the universe? Did they exist outside of time that came into being with the big bang? How can Mormonism claim the existence of eternal uncreated intelligences when big-bang cosmology purports a universe that is 13.7 billion years old? By human standards, 13.7 billion years is a very long period of time, but it is not an infinitely long period of time and hence does not describe the endless existence of intelligences and gods posited by Mormonism.

Is the difficulty posed by the fourth point concerning the finite age of our universe relieved if premortal and postmortal entities exist outside

of time? Does God exist outside of time? According to Kent Robson, "Scriptural passages that ascribe eternity to God do not say or imply that God is independent of, or outside of, or beyond time. Nor do they say, with Augustine, that God created time out of nothing."[62] Verses in the LDS canon of scripture that refer to time do not provide a conclusive answer. Doctrine and Covenants 130:4 reads, "In answer to the question—Is not the reckoning of God's time, angel's time, prophet's time, and man's time, according to the planet on which they reside?" This verse suggests that God operates within or is associated with *a* time but apparently not angel's, prophet's, or man's.

From Abraham we read, "And the Lord said unto me, by the Urim and Thummim, that Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob" (Abr. 3:4). Again, a time of some sort is associated with the Lord, but the Lord's time, or at least the reckoning of it, is described as being vastly different than Abraham's. Similarly, Figure 1 of Facsimile 2 in the Book of Abraham refers to Kolob as the "last pertaining to the measurement of time." Contrast these words with those of Alma, who said, "Now whether there is more than one time appointed for men to rise it mattereth not; for all do not die at once, and this mattereth not; all is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men" (Alma 40:8). The last part of this verse implies that the measurement of time is not associated with God at all. (But it seems that the word "only" should follow the word "men" instead of the word "time" if the implied interpretation is to be strictly conveyed.)

It is interesting to note that, in each of these scriptures, time is discussed in the context of its reckoning or measurement. All the verses, with the exception of Alma, suggest that God does indeed measure time, but that God's measurement is somehow unique. The verses even suggest, as do other verses in the Bible, that one thousand years for man is equivalent to one day for God (Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8). Whether we should interpret this man-to-God "equivalency" of time literally is questionable. The large disparity in time spans may be symbolic of the enormous difference between God's time and man's time, or it may be a symbol for the "timelessness" of God. After all, when Jesus exhorted his disciples to forgive "seventy times

seven," he did not mean that they should forgive their brother exactly 490 times (Matt. 18:22).

Perhaps God always exists within *a* time, but the time in question may or may not be *our* time, depending on the divine activity in which God is involved. If true, this suggests that God's power transcends time in the sense that God is not restricted within one temporal system. In this way, God can be outside of time because God can be outside of *our* time, the only time with which we are familiar. From the scriptural record, our understanding of God's relationship to time is unclear. The relationship to time for premortal and postmortal spirits is likewise unclear.

Another difficulty posed by the fourth point is the doctrine that attests to the eternal nature of the elements. Doctrine and Covenants 93:33 states, "For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy." In both mortal and resurrected states, a human being is a dual entity consisting of two kinds of "matter," spirit and element. The first kind of matter refers to the kind that "can only be discerned by purer eyes" (D&C 131:7).

The second kind of matter refers to common stuff, the materials of which stars, planets, dust, and other objects in the cosmos, including us, consist. For a resurrected being, however, the second kind of matter is "glorified," having physical properties beyond our present level of understanding. According to big-bang cosmology, the second kind of matter arose from the primordial fireball a finite time ago. Light elements were cooked in the big bang, and the heavy elements were forged later by nuclear fusion processes inside stars. Assuming that these elements are the same as those referred to in this verse, it is difficult to see how they can be eternal unless we extend their identity infinitely backward in time, through the singularity, to other realms of existence. Joseph Smith said, "Anything created cannot be eternal; and earth, water, etc., had their existence in an elementary state, from eternity."[63] If the elements have existed in an elementary state, from eternity, the big-bang model alone is inadequate to explain it.

The difficulty posed by the fifth point, that the big bang marked the inception of space and time, is similar to that posed by the fourth point. Physicist Paul Davies explains, "The universe did not always exist. . . . Just as the big bang represents the creation of space, so it represents the creation of time."[64] Because the universe has a finite age, it also has a finite size.[65] This fact, too, may pose a dilemma for a theology that embraces "a

vast society of eternal beings."[66] If the big bang marked the inception of space and time, what of the endless gods of Mormonism? "Before" the big bang, where/when were these gods? And what of *our* God, the father of Jesus Christ? Was God *created* in the big bang, or did God *cause* the big bang? The first notion seems repugnant and subverts the very meaning of a divine omnipotent being. But if God caused the big bang, he must have operated from within a separate space-time because the big bang marked the inception of our universe, the space-time that God created. According to the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression, God was created by a prior god, and that god was created by a still prior god, and so on into the infinite past. How could this endless chain of deities, and their associated innumerable worlds inhabited by mortal children, be facilitated by a single universe of finite size and age?

The big bang gave birth to a single universe, the universe that *we* occupy, the universe over which Jesus Christ, as LDS Church authorities have stated, has dominion. What is the domain of the other gods posited by the doctrine of eternal progression? If our universe is the only one, the gods must have established a subdivision of or hierarchical structure to the universe in which each god has dominion over his own parcel of the cosmic real estate. Because the big bang produced a single universe, every god must share it, and the cosmic parcels are too small to accommodate "worlds without number" (Moses 1:33). The idea of a single finite universe occupied by a multitude, perhaps an infinite number, of gods and other eternal beings seems untenable.

The sixth point, that 96 percent of the constituents of the universe are unknown, is like the third point in that it illustrates that science is a human activity that methodically advances, revealing new knowledge along the way. Cosmologists anticipate that the mysterious entities called dark matter and dark energy will eventually be identified and incorporated into the big-bang model. Inasmuch as we do not even know what these entities are, it is difficult, if not impossible, to associate them with Mormon doctrine in any meaningful way at present.

Another point, not mentioned above, that some people affiliate with the big bang is *creatio ex nihilo,* the doctrine that the universe was created out of nothing. While traditional Christian theologians and some philosophers subscribe to this doctrine, Mormonism flatly rejects it.[67] The logical essence underlying this rejection is perhaps best summed up by Apostle James E. Talmage, trained as a geologist, who said, "Man's con-

sciousness tells him of his own existence; his observation proves the existence of others of this kind and of uncounted orders of organized beings. From this we conclude that something must have existed always, for had there been a time of no existence, a period of nothingness, existence could have never begun, for from nothing, nothing can be derived."[68] Likewise, astronomer Hollis Johnson explains that "it is difficult to imagine that nothing exists anywhere. Creation from nothing is clearly a fantasy devised by certain theologians, perhaps in a misguided attempt to glorify God by making of him a fantastic magician."[69] Cosmologists theorize that the universe arose from a quantum vacuum, an entity seething with energy and elementary particles, which, as Martin Rees advises, is not "nothing." He states, "Indeed some physicists already claim that our universe evolved essentially from nothing. But they should watch their language, especially when talking to philosophers. The physicist's vacuum is a far richer construct than the philosopher's 'nothing': latent in it are all the particles and fields described by the equations of physics."[70] Similarly, in a review of Copan and Craig's book, Blake Ostler, a theologian and attorney, makes an extensive refutation of their *creatio ex nihilo* thesis.[71]

While the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression is not at odds with most aspects of big-bang cosmology, there are difficulties in harmonizing the doctrine with a single universe that is spatially and temporally finite. Interestingly, the steady-state theories discussed earlier harmonize better with the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression for the simple reason that the universe posited by these theories is eternal. Furthermore, the continuous creation of matter in these models could provide the mechanism whereby "worlds without number" are formed to facilitate the introduction of the children of the gods into mortality, but the steady-state theories subsume *ex nihilo* matter creation. But even putting the *creatio ex nihilo* issue aside, the steady-state theories, through failures to harmonize with astronomical observations, have been scientifically dismissed, leaving the big bang as the only viable cosmological model.

How then to best reconcile Mormon doctrine with big-bang cosmology? In his refutation of Copan and Craig's *creatio ex nihilo* thesis already mentioned, Ostler appeals, in part, to a multiverse proposal, a cosmological theory that might relieve the difficulties posed by big-bang cosmology. The rest of this article explores some of the promising solutions that the concept of a multiverse provides.

Multiverse Alternatives

Mormons may not have to, as Norman says, "appeal to God to get them out of this fix." On the contrary, science may supply the answers. Incongruities that exist between the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression and big-bang cosmology may be mitigated if we frame the doctrine within a multiverse cosmological model. The term *multiverse* originated in 1960 with Andy Nimmo who was then vice chair of the British Interplanetary Society, Scottish Branch. His definition was "an apparent universe, a multiplicity of which go to make up the whole universe."[72] This original version of the term was based on a specific dictionary definition of the word "universe," which means "all that there is." Over a period of misuse in scientific and science fiction circles, cosmologists and astronomers have largely redefined the term "multiverse" as "the set of all possible universes throughout time, including our observable universe."[73] Although this current definition is the opposite of its original one, the new definition has become entrenched in the literature and is the definition used here.[74]

Recent developments in cosmology suggest that *this* universe—the universe in which we live, the universe generated in the primordial fireball known as the big bang—may not be the only one. What we conventionally call "the universe" could be just one member of an ensemble of "universes." Some cosmologists have even intimated that there may be an infinite number of members in the ensemble. Martin Rees explains: "Our entire universe may be just one element—one atom, as it were—in an infinite ensemble: a cosmic archipelago. Each universe starts with its own big bang, acquires a distinctive imprint (and its individual physical laws) as it cools, and traces out its own cosmic cycle. The big bang that triggered our entire universe is, in this grander perspective, an infinitesimal part of an elaborate structure."[75]

The multiverse thesis may be the most profound idea in cosmology since the big bang itself and would therefore possess penetrating scientific ramifications. Theoretical physicist Steven Weinberg, in a conversation with colleague Michio Kaku, stated, "I find this an attractive picture and certainly worth thinking about very seriously. An important implication is that there wasn't a beginning; that there were increasingly larger big bangs, so that the [multiverse] goes on forever—one doesn't have to grapple with the question of it before the big bang. The [multiverse] has just been here all along. I find that a very satisfying picture."[76] Martin Rees

elaborates, "It now seems an attractive idea that our big bang is just one of many: just as our earth is a planet that happens to have the right conditions for life, among the many, many planets that exist, so our universe, and our big bang, is the one out of many which happens to allow life to emerge, to allow complexity."[77]

At first thought, one might suppose that the idea of multiple universes is the product of science fiction or a wild conjecture, a version of "cosmology gone wild." Referring to multiverse theories as "frivolous fantasies," mathematician Martin Gardner remarks: "Many top physicists and cosmologists now defend the wild notion that not only are universes as common as blackberries, but even *more* common. Indeed, there may be an infinity of them!"[78] In defense of multiverse theories, Paul Davies states, "The multiverse is not an idle speculation, but a natural consequence of developments in fundamental physics and cosmology."[79]

Different individuals have proposed their own version of a multiverse theory. Each version reflects a different physical mechanism, but they all hypothesize a type of "universe" or "parallel world" that lies outside our own. Three multiverse theories, advocated by different cosmologists, hold some prominence in the current multiverse milieu:

1. The "eternal inflation" theory of Alexander Vilenkin and Andrei Linde
2. The "ekpyrotic" theory of Paul Steinhardt and Neil Turok
3. The "cosmological natural selection" theory of Lee Smolin

Before elaborating on the implications of a multiverse for Mormonism, let's briefly describe these three multiverse theories.

At present, the most prominent multiverse theory is an extension of Guth's inflation concept incorporated in the big-bang model that was introduced by Alexander Vilenkin and Andrei Linde.[80] Their multiverse theory is called the "eternal inflation" or "chaotic inflation" theory. Especially championed by Linde in recent years, the theory states that our universe is just one particular "pocket universe" that was randomly spawned as an "inflationary bubble" by a fluctuation of the quantum vacuum. One inflationary universe sprouts other inflationary bubbles, which in turn produce other inflationary bubbles that become universes. The result, according to Linde, "is a chain reaction, producing a fractal-like pattern of universes. In this scenario the universe as a whole is immortal. Each particular part of the universe may stem from a singularity somewhere in the

past, and it may end up in a singularity somewhere in the future. There is, however, no end for the evolution of the entire universe."[81]

The ekpyrotic theory of the multiverse, recently introduced by Paul Steinhardt and Neil Turok, proposes that our universe arose from a collision of two three-dimensional worlds or "membranes" ("branes" for short) in a space with a fourth spatial dimension.[82] The name for their model comes from the Greek word "ekpyrosis," which means "conflagration." Unlike the big-bang universe, which begins with nearly infinite density and temperature, the ekpyrotic universe begins cold and nearly vacuous. According to the model, which is based on recent ideas from string theory, the collision of two branes ignited the hot big bang, and the universe evolved from that point as we observe it today. The big bang "is just the latest in a cycle of cosmic collisions stretching infinitely into the past and into the future. Each collision creates the universe anew. The 13.7 billion-year history of our cosmos is just a moment in this endless expanse of time."[83]

The cosmological natural selection theory of Lee Smolin suggests that "baby" universes can sprout from existing ones through the gravitational collapse of black holes.[84] When a star implodes to form a black hole, a space-time singularity occurs inside the hole. Smolin proposes that a quantum description of this phenomenon leads to the nucleation of a tiny new region of space that is connected to our space by a wormhole. The wormhole is eventually severed, thereby disconnecting the baby universe from its "parent" universe. The baby universe inherits the physical laws of its parent but with random variations, similar to genetic drift in biological systems. This process continues ad infinitum, with baby universes cosmically evolving to produce their own progeny. Smolin suggests that our universe is the product of this "cosmic Darwinism" and that "our universe is creating new universes through the mechanism of black hole production."[85] In Smolin's model, the big bang is the outcome of the collapse of a black hole in a previous universe, and every black hole in our universe is giving rise to a new universe.

While each of these multiverse theories has a rational basis in physics, they possess a common underpinning in biology. Davies explains that the "principal observational support for the multiverse hypothesis comes from a consideration of biology. The universe we observe is biofriendly, or we would not be observing it. This tautology develops some force when account is taken of the sensitivity of biology to the form of the laws of phys-

ics and the cosmological initial conditions—the so-called fine tuning problem."[86] Our existence depends on our universe being rather special, a "Goldilocks universe" if you will, where the physical constants of nature are "just right" to admit and sustain life. If the values of the physical constants were only fractionally different from what they are, the universe would have either immediately collapsed or expanded so rapidly that stars could not have formed. In short, had the recipe imprinted at the time of the big bang been even slightly different, we could not exist.

Martin Rees offers three interpretations for the fine-tuning of our cosmos. The first interpretation is simply that our universe is a coincidence, a "happy accident." This interpretation, according to Rees, is unsatisfying because "we still wonder why the unique recipe for the physical world permits consequences as interesting as those we see around us." The second interpretation is divine providence, i.e., that the universe was "designed" by God. Our universe is fine-tuned because God willed that it should be so. The third interpretation is based on the idea that there are many universes of which ours is just one. Rees explains that "the cosmos maybe has something in common with an 'off-the-shelf' clothes shop: if the shop has a large stock, we're not surprised to find one suit that fits. Likewise, if our universe is selected from a multiverse, its seemingly designed or fine-tuned features wouldn't be surprising."[87]

In the context of Mormonism, the first interpretation parallels a hypothesis claiming that the earth and human beings are accidents, products of random cosmic and biological processes; it would therefore have to be rejected. The second interpretation is entirely consistent with the Mormon worldview that God organized a place for his children who kept their "first estate" (Abr. 3:26). If God organized the earth and countless other worlds within the universe, it seems reasonable that God framed the universe itself. The creation accounts in the scriptures, however, describe the organization of the earth and its immediate environs only but not the universe as a whole (Moses 1:35). For those who do not believe in providential design but still think that fine-tuning demands an explanation, the third interpretation becomes an attractive alternative. But to the believer in a cosmic designer, the second and third interpretations do not have to be mutually exclusive. In Mormonism, the third interpretation is not a circumvention of the second but rather an explanation of how the doctrine of eternal progression harmonizes with a multiverse cosmology. The multiverse hypothesis still admits God as the architect of the universe

while mitigating the inconsistencies between the doctrine and the big-bang model. For science, a compelling reason to consider a multiverse cosmology is to avoid a theistic implication of fine tuning. For Mormonism, a compelling reason to consider a multiverse cosmology is to attempt a reconciliation of modern cosmological ideas and the central tenet of Mormon doctrine.

Scientific circles regard the multiverse hypothesis strictly from a nontheistic perspective, as a possible explanatory hypothesis for a universe that is extraordinarily fine-tuned for life. The multiverse hypothesis has thereby become another plank in the scientists' platform on which they can argue that the origin of the universe can be explained by science without invoking a "god of the gaps." But philosopher Robin Collins of Messiah College argues that contemporary cosmology might not only be compatible with theism but might even suggest a theistic explanation of the multiverse. Collins claims that theism is perfectly compatible with the multiverse hypothesis because "God is infinitely creative," so it makes sense that a physical reality much larger than a single universe would reflect this attribute of God. Collins also maintains that an infinitely creative God might create these universes by means of some sort of universe-generator, since such a creation would be more elegant and ingenious than simple *ex nihilo.* Furthermore, God would be glorified, not in just one universe, but in countless others.[88]

This non-Mormon assessment of the multiverse hypothesis conveys a parallel to one of God's statements to Moses, when he said, "The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine" (Moses 1:37). In a Mormon multiverse cosmology, God does indeed manifest his infinite creative prowess in the respect that God (any god along the infinite chain of gods) creates children, some of whom progress to become gods, who in turn create their own universes and children, some of whom progress to become gods, and so on, forever. Each universe in the ensemble of universes becomes an extension and continuation of the creativity of every "ancestral god" in an eternal family of deities. The creativity and glory of each god increases exponentially with the production of new universes. In this cosmology, the multiverse is a hallmark and witness of the infinite work and glory of God and the dwelling place for an infinite number of eternal progressing beings.

The multiverse is eternal, but, consistent with the big-bang model,

each member of that multiverse is not. As Linde remarks, "In thinking about the process of self-reproduction of the universe, one cannot avoid drawing analogies. . . . One may wonder, Is not this process similar to what happens to all of us? Some time ago we were born. Eventually we will die . . . but . . . humanity as a whole . . . may live for a long time."[89] One must admit that, in the context of the Mormon eternal family paradigm, Linde's analogy is striking. A human being, like the multiverse in which he or she exists, is a member of an eternal family, an endlessly progressing and improving society. In a multiverse cosmology, the whole of existence conforms to the same familial pattern. Even universes are born, live, and eventually die, but the multiverse continues. The essence of a Mormon multiverse cosmology is beautifully captured in the Lord's statement to Moses: "And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words" (Moses 1:38).

In a Mormon multiverse, a being who progresses to godhood brings about a universe for which that god has dominion. To provide suitable worlds for their children, the gods endow their universes with the required physical properties (constants of physics) to sustain life. In Mormon theology, gods exist "simultaneously," so separate universes coexist in the eternal multiverse. In a given multiverse "epoch," each universe in the ensemble may be anthropomorphically characterized as a "newborn," a "child," an "adolescent," an "adult," or a "senior citizen," depending on its age—i.e., the time that has passed since its own big-bang "birth" into the multiverse "family." A universe may even be characterized as "deceased" if the universe has experienced the big crunch or big freeze and is therefore no longer capable of sustaining life. The spirit children of the god of a given universe presumably must finish their mortal probation, progressing to the degree of glory prepared for them, long before their universe fulfills its purpose. The children who achieve the highest degree of glory—those who achieve godhood—eventually bring about their own universes and populate them with their children. And the cycle continues, eternally.

Multiverse Muddle?

Multiverse theories are not without problems and criticisms. Both scientific and philosophical arguments have been employed against the multiverse hypothesis. Paul Davies enumerates six arguments against the

multiverse concept, but for the sake of brevity, I will summarize only his three principal ones.[90] The first argument is that a multiverse cosmology is not science because the "other universes" cannot be observed; thus, their existence cannot be considered a proper scientific hypothesis. After all, we are unable to observe all of *our* universe, let alone *other* universes. However, Davies cautions that, while direct confirmation of other universes may be precluded, other indirect tests may be utilized. For example, Smolin's cosmological natural selection theory, which predicts that universes are produced via black holes, could be indirectly tested in cases where physical conditions favor black hole production.

Incidentally, Smolin points out that his multiverse theory is falsifiable (and therefore real science), while criticizing Linde's eternal inflation theory as "an interesting speculation."[91] Whereas the first argument asserts that a multiverse cosmology is not science at all, the second argument asserts that it is *bad* science. Some physicists argue that the job of scientists is to provide fundamental explanations for observed phenomena without making reference to observers, i.e., without resorting to anthropic reasoning to explain the fine-tuning of our cosmos.

The third argument says that a multiverse merely shifts the problem up one level. Multiverse proponents are often vague about how the values of the constants of physics are selected across the ensemble of universes. If there is a "law of laws" or "meta-law" describing how these values are assigned from one universe to another, then we have only shifted the problem of cosmic bio-friendliness up one level because we then need to explain where the meta-law comes from. Moreover, the set of such meta-laws is infinite, so we have replaced the problem of "why this universe?" with "why this meta-law?"

Other problems with the multiverse hypothesis have been advanced, including an objection based on Ockham's Razor, which, in its original form, says that "entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity."[92] A modern variant of Ockham's Razor states: "Of two competing theories or explanations, all other things being equal, the simpler one is to be preferred." Some argue that the multiverse hypothesis is a blatant violation of Ockham's Razor for the basic reason that one universe is simpler than two or more universes. Along with Gardner, they claim: "Surely the conjecture that there is just one universe and its Creator is infinitely simpler and easier to believe than that there are countless billions upon billions of worlds, constantly increasing in number."[93]

Ockham's Razor is an interesting philosophical injunction, and many phenomena may meet the condition stipulated therein, but Ockham's Razor is not a law of physics nor is it equivalent to the notion that simplicity is truth or perfection. The Lord apparently ignored Ockham's Razor in the design of the universe, for the muon, an elementary particle, "exists for no known reason and has no known function."[94] Our cosmos is simpler without it, and yet it exists. Ockham's Razor is a heuristic argument that does not necessarily provide correct results, a loose guide for choosing a scientific hypothesis that contains the fewest unproven assumptions. Hence, its forcefulness against a multiverse thesis is uncompelling.

One of the most serious and potentially damaging objections to the multiverse hypothesis is that it posits an infinite set of actually existing universes. Can there really be an infinite set of actually existing "objects" of any kind, particularly entire universes? According to mathematicians George Ellis, U. Kirchner, and W. R. Stoeger, "We suggest that, on the basis of well-known philosophical arguments, the answer is no. Because we can assign a symbol to represent 'infinity' and can manipulate that symbol according to specified rules, we assume corresponding entities can exist in practice. This is highly questionable." Quoting mathematician David Hilbert, Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger write, "Our principal result is that the infinite is nowhere to be found in reality. It neither exists in nature nor provides a legitimate basis for rational thought." They continue:

> This is why, for example, a realized past infinity in time is not considered possible from this standpoint—because it involves an infinite set of completed events or moments. There is no way of constructing such a realized set, or actualizing it. Future infinite time is also never realized; rather, the situation is that whatever time we reach, there is always more time available. Much the same applies to the claim of a past infinity of time; there may be unbounded time available in the past in principle, but in what sense can it be attained in practice? The arguments against an infinite past time are strong—it is simply not constructible in terms of events or instants of time, besides being conceptually indefinite.[95]

Notwithstanding the apparent strength of the philosophical argument against an infinite set of actually existing universes, Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger provide (in a footnote) a possible way out of the problem by invoking quantum cosmology "to have time originating or emerging from the quantum-gravity dominated primordial substrate only 'later.' In other words, there would have been a 'time' or an epoch before time as such

emerged. Past time would then be finite, as seems to be demanded by philosophical arguments, and yet the timeless primordial state could have lasted 'forever,' whatever that would mean. This possibility avoids the problem of constructibility."[96]

In his refutation of Copan and Craig's *creatio ex nihilo* thesis, Ostler contends that the "infinity arguments . . . do not apply" to multiverse chaotic inflationary theories "because they posit realities that are temporally discontinuous." He argues that, because "there is no continuous time metric between two space-time epochs" in a chaotic inflationary multiverse, the infinity arguments brought to bear on an eternally existing multiverse consisting of separate bubble universes do not apply. Each bubble universe has its own time metric that is not shared with the others, so each bubble universe is finite in the past, but the multiverse is eternal.[97] Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger echo this point, explaining that "in the case of a true multiverse, there is not even any possibility of any indirect causal connection of any kind—the universes are then completely disjoint and nothing that happens in any one of them is causally linked to what happens in any other one."[98] Ostler further points out that the quantum vacuum, from which bubble universes chaotically arise according to Linde's chaotic inflationary model, is quiescent in the sense that it does not "causally" initiate the bubbles. Thus, our concept of cause and effect does not apply, rendering the infinity argument illegitimate.[99]

The timelessness of quantum events pointed out by Ostler and Davies qualitatively parallels the statement of Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger that time as we know it may have emerged from the "primordial substrate" only after an epoch of some kind had passed. The primordial quantum vacuum cannot be characterized spatio-temporally, so until a big bang is quantum mechanically initiated, neither space nor time can be associated with the quantum vacuum in any way. In other words, time does not "start" until a big bang occurs. "Before" that event, there is no time because the primordial quantum vacuum cannot be temporally characterized; quantum events have no causal properties. This explanation points to a possible way for "local" universes to have a finite age and for the multiverse to be eternal without running into the argument of an actual past infinity of time.

But, contrary to Ostler, Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger assert that universes generated via chaotic inflation *are* causally connected, which would indicate that the argument of an actual past infinity of time may still ap-

ply. A "true" multiverse, they claim, is a "completely causally disconnected multiverse," and not a multiverse generated by chaotic inflation, which Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger call a "multidomain universe." Speaking of universes with regularities in their properties, they contend that they "are, instead, products of a single process, as in the case of chaotic inflation. A common generating mechanism is clearly a causal connection, even if not situated in a single connected space-time—and some such mechanism is needed if all the universes in an ensemble have the same class of properties, e.g., being governed by the same physical laws or meta-laws." They also state that "the idea of a completely disconnected multiverse with regular properties but without a common causal mechanism of some kind is not viable. What are claimed to be totally disjoint universes must in some sense indeed be causally connected together, albeit in some pre-physics or meta-physical domain that is causally effective in determining the common properties of the universes in the multiverse." Ellis, Kirchner, and Stoeger conclude that the "existence of the hypothesized ensemble remains a matter of faith rather than proof. Furthermore, in the end it simply represents a regress of causation. Ultimate questions remain."[100]

Whether universes generated through chaotic inflation (or by any other quantum-mechanical mechanism for that matter) are "caused" by quantum events and are therefore causally connected deserves closer examination. Despite the stochastic properties of quantum events, one could argue that a quantum event can still be the cause of an observed phenomenon. Because a quantum event is random and unpredictable does not mean that it does not constitute the cause of an effect. It may be much easier to argue that a quantum event, owing to its intrinsic random and chaotic character, cannot be classified as an effect than it is to argue that a quantum event cannot be classified as a cause.[101] Indeed, Davies explains that "quantum events are not determined absolutely by preceding causes."[102]

Radioactive decay is an example of a quantum event. If we constructed a device that detonated a bomb by the random decay of an alpha particle, would we conclude that the detonation had no cause simply because it resulted from a quantum event? Quantum events are not determined by preceding causes, as Davies points out, but quantum events can themselves be causes.

But what about an actual infinity of universes? Ostler does not specifically discuss the infinity argument in the context of "objects" but only

of time. If a multiverse consists of an infinite number of universes and if we assume that we could satisfactorily address the infinity of time problem, we still run into the argument against an actually existing infinity of "things." More importantly, if the claim made by mathematicians and philosophers that an actual infinity of things is impossible, is the entire doctrinal superstructure of eternal progression dashed? If the claim is true, how can there be an infinite number of progressing beings? How can there be an infinite number of worlds? Perhaps the argument does not apply to the multiverse as a whole. Universes in the multiverse are not observable by inhabitants of other universes, so other universes cannot be counted by them. Thus, the number of objects could still be finite because each local universe has a finite size and thus a finite number of objects within it. This explanation may or may not relieve the tension, but short of some other interpretation or mathematical/philosophical loophole that abates the contradiction, we may have to wait for an acceptable answer.

Primarily because inflation is a scientific concept more fully developed and supported by astronomical observations, the eternal inflation or chaotic inflationary theory of Linde is the prevailing multiverse model.[103] According to Linde's model, bubble universes are spawned *ad infinitum* into the future, but he admits that the "situation with the very beginning is less certain."[104] The jury is still out on whether Linde's multiverse is truly in a state of eternal inflation without a beginning. Cosmologists Arvind Borde and Alexander Vilenkin claim that a "universe . . . in a state of eternal inflation without a beginning . . . is in fact not possible in future-eternal inflationary spacetimes as long as they obey some reasonable physical conditions." In their analysis, Borde and Vilenkin show that eternal inflation "does not seem to avoid the problem of the initial singularity (although it does move it back into the indefinite past)." They admit, however, that this conclusion primarily rests on an a central physical assumption and that "it would be interesting to . . . determine the exact conditions of [the] assumption and to investigate the possibility of relaxing it."[105] Consequently, the doctrine of eternal progression is conceivably in harmony with Linde's eternal inflation theory, albeit the question of a multiverse without a beginning is still open to scientific analysis.

What about the ekpyrotic theory of Steinhardt and Turok and the cosmological natural-selection theory of Smolin? The ekpyrotic theory

was introduced more recently and is therefore less developed than Linde's eternal inflation theory. Unlike the eternal inflation model, the ekpyrotic model is an outgrowth of superstring theory, which posits that space has up to ten spatial dimensions. Steinhardt and Turok describe our universe as a "brane" (membrane) flapping in the "breezes" of the ten-dimensional cosmos. Using the complex equations of string theory, their model shows that the big bang resulted from the collision of two branes that reside less than the width of a proton away from each other. In the moment just before a collision, the forces between the branes cause them to ripple. As a result, the two branes do not collide all at once, but instead the peaks of the ripples collide first. This uneven collision generates the small variations in the cosmic background radiation we observe today. The stupendous fireball (big bang) generated by the collision drives the branes apart, causing them to cool, resulting in a phase transition that unleashes a force that makes the universe expand. This force is still at work today and is, in fact, responsible, they suggest, for the mysterious dark energy that cosmologists hypothesize is responsible for the accelerated expansion. In the ekpyrotic model, the cycle of brane collisions, which produces the universes, is eternal. The big bang "is just the latest in a cycle of cosmic collisions stretching infinitely into the past and into the future." Other calculations by Steinhardt and Turok suggest that we are "at the beginning of a very long process that will eventually result in what appears to be an empty universe."[106]

The ekpyrotic theory, like any theory that postulates an eternal multiverse, runs into the same infinity argument discussed earlier. It is interesting to note, however, that the ekpyrotic theory predicts an endless expansion that results in an empty universe, a universe that cannot sustain life. Such a universe could only facilitate the progression of eternal beings in their mortal phase until matter in that universe becomes too tenuous. Whether an empty universe could serve any purpose for intelligences, spirits, or gods is another matter.

The cosmological natural selection theory of Smolin is patterned after the model of natural selection in biology. His theory was originally motivated by asking the question, "Where in science is there a successful solution to a problem of explaining improbable complexity?" Smolin hypothesizes that certain universes in the multiverse population are reproductively active. He suggests that, in those universes where black holes form, a child universe is created inside the event horizon of the black hole.

In this multiverse model, a child universe inherits almost the same values of the physical constants possessed by its parent, where slight variations of the values are akin to genetic drift in biological systems. Smolin asserts that the values of the physical constants that maximize black hole production (and therefore the birth rate of child universes) are also the values that permit the existence of life. He also suggests that the reproduction is not perfect but that random changes occur in the values of the constants. Thus, Smolin's model postulates reproduction with inheritance and mutation. Furthermore, Smolin claims that his theory "explains the values of all the parameters that determine low energy physics and chemistry: the masses of the proton, neutron, electron and neutrino and the strengths of the strong, weak and electromagnetic interactions."[107]

In his paper pitting the cosmological natural selection theory against the anthropic principle, Smolin is critical of other multiverse theories, claiming that eternal inflation is "supported neither by observation nor by firm mathematical results within a well defined theory of quantum gravity." Comparing the structure of the eternal inflation multiverse with his "bouncing black hole" multiverse, he states that a multiverse fashioned after his theory "looks like a family tree. Each universe has an ancestor, which is another universe." In contrast, in the eternal inflation multiverse, "each universe has the same ancestor, which is the primordial vacuum. Universes themselves have no descendants." In a critique of string theories, Smolin also claims that "a key problem has been constructing string theories that agree with the astronomical evidence that the vacuum energy (or cosmological constant) is positive."[108]

Smolin does not explicitly state whether his model posits a "first" universe or whether black holes have been producing child universes infinitely into the past because his model makes no assumption about what that "first" universe would have been. This means that "any universe in the collection, no matter what its own parameters are, is likely to spawn in time a vast family of descendants that after a while are dominated by those whose parameters are the most fit for producing black holes."[109]

The most striking aspect of a multiverse described by the cosmological natural selection theory is its structural resemblance to a biological system with parents and posterity, an earthly version of the "eternal family" structure in Mormonism. This aspect is attractive because the same familial structure found on earth and in the eternities is imitated in the multiverse itself. A form of this structure is present in the other multiverse

theories too, but Smolin's theory seems to come closer to the mark in the respect that his theory even includes cosmological inheritance.

Concluding Remarks

The doctrine of eternal progression is the central tenet of Mormonism, a worldview that depicts the eternal existence of an infinite number of progressing beings who, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, may ultimately become gods. The big-bang model is the currently accepted cosmological model of the universe, but some aspects of this model are inconsistent with the eternal progression doctrine. A single universe with a finite size and finite age cannot facilitate an infinite number of beings who have no beginning or end in time. An infinite spatial-temporal domain of some kind is required for an infinite number of eternal beings.

Recently developed multiverse theories, which hypothesize an ensemble of universes that could be eternal, may mitigate the situation. In a Mormon multiverse cosmology, a being who progresses to godhood brings about, either through one of the universe-generating processes described here or through some other process, a universe for which that deity has dominion and care. In this cosmology, our own universe is such a universe.

In fairness to Keith Norman, who underscores the conflict between Mormon doctrine and big-bang theory, he does allude to "other dimensions" and the possibility of "alternate universes existing in those other dimensions of reality" and claims, quite correctly, that "such ideas are highly speculative." He even says that "infinite universes could also allow for an endless regression of gods."[110] Norman made these comments twenty years ago when multiverse theories were in their infancy, or, in some cases, did not yet exist. Today these theories, while still speculative, are on firmer scientific ground.

As pointed out earlier, the primary tension between the eternal progression doctrine and a theory that hypothesizes an eternal multiverse is the mathematical/philosophical argument against an actual temporal infinity. While it is difficult to comprehend the notion of infinite time, it is even more difficult to comprehend how there can be an ultimate beginning, a time at which there was no existence. Clearly, there is *something* now, so how could there be a time when there was *nothing?* As Talmage said, "From nothing, nothing can be derived." Even though the concept

of infinite existence is difficult to grasp, it seems vastly more reasonable and logical than the alternative that existence sprang from nonexistence. If the beginning of a thing is postulated, then the cause of that thing is demanded, and so on into the past, leading to an infinite regression, which naturally leads to the idea of endless existence captured by the doctrine of eternal progression.

The thesis that a multiverse theory is needed to harmonize the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression with cosmology is controversial and incomplete. Moreover, the physical and mathematical principles underlying multiverse theories are complex and, in the opinion of some scientists and philosophers, largely speculative. The major scientific challenge with any multiverse theory is *verifiability*, which ultimately means that the major challenge is *observability*. Scientists cannot authoritatively state that other universes exist without observing them. Particle physics, a branch of physics dealing with subatomic particles, has largely advanced by theorizing the existence of such particles and then detecting them later in carefully designed experiments. How does one design experiments to detect other universes? Perhaps we will never detect other universes directly but only infer their existence from indirect evidence.

If other universes are never detected (which is entirely possible), it does not mean, from a logical point of view, that they do not exist. The maxim, "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence" applies here. Astronomer Owen Gingerich states, "In science, then, as in life generally, we do our best to create a picture that makes sense even when we don't have all the pieces of the puzzle in hand. The same principle applies to religious faith."[111] Echoing this idea, Hollis Johnson states, "It is essential to realize that both the scientific and the religious canons of knowledge are incomplete, and it would be wrong to assume that either gives definitive answers about the other."[112] Archaeologists have not discovered any metal plates with reformed Egyptian characters in the Americas, but they could still exist in this region. Even if these relics are never found, the Mormon believer accepts the Book of Mormon, with its description of Nephites, Lamanites, and other ancient peoples, by faith.

If other universes are never found, the believer would have to take on faith the concept that an eternal domain of some kind exists to affirm a core Mormon doctrine. The Latter-day Saint who wrestles with the science-religion interface in any form (cosmology, organic evolution, cloning, etc.) may take some comfort in the words of Elder Neal A. Maxwell,

who declared: "It would be unwise, of course, for the Church to tie itself to the provisional truths of science at any point in science's unfolding history. Ultimately, scientific truth will align with divinely revealed truth; meanwhile we can applaud genuine scientific advances, noting them without depending overly much upon them."[113]

In a Mormon multiverse cosmology, many questions remain open. Are there communication and movement of the gods and other premortal and postmortal beings between universes? When a universe experiences a big crunch or big freeze, does the god of that universe generate a new universe or "relocate" to another universe fit for carrying out the "great plan of happiness" for a new household of spirit children? Did God, our Father in Heaven, achieve godhood in this universe or a prior one? If God was exalted in a prior universe, how many universes has he governed? Jesus Christ is the redeemer for this universe, but is he the redeemer for others? Are some universes "stillborn" in the sense that they do not have the required values of the physical constants for a universe capable of sustaining life? Because the multiverse is infinite, are there replicas of us in other universes as postulated by the replication paradox?[114] Cosmologists speculate whether the physical laws are the same across the ensemble of universes, but what about the spiritual laws? Are the spiritual laws "multiversal" or just "universal"? As multiverse cosmologies develop scientifically, these questions and others will stimulate much discussion.

On some level, a Mormon multiverse cosmology is a beautiful construct that imbues even physical reality with familial relationships. That universes have "ancestors" and "progeny" like the progressing beings that inhabit them is wondrous to ponder. As Andrei Linde quips, "Universes can have babies—it's nice."[115]

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thing, even if only a set of physical laws. This leads one to wonder, "Where did the laws come from? Are the laws of the multiverse eternal? Can we say that the laws just *are?*"

102. Davies, *The Mind of God,* 61.

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Without Purse or Scrip in Scotland

Polly Aird

"There were . . . many traveling preachers, men full of the holy ghost . . . who travelled without purse or scrip, whom no buffetings, insults, hunger, or blows could daunt, who feared nothing that man could do, heaven's door being always open to them."[1] Thus wrote Hubert Howe Bancroft, nineteenth-century chronicler of the American West, regarding Latter-day Saint missionaries. More recently, in an article about the funding of LDS missionaries in nineteenth-century Europe, Richard Jensen has observed that "proselyting without purse or scrip took on the qualities of a myth, not necessarily untrue, but sometimes not tethered firmly to the ground."[2] This paper examines missionary efforts in Scotland and tethers the myth to the actual experiences of those who went to gather new converts.

My intent is to focus on the Scots themselves, not on the Americans who arrived, received much attention, and were sometimes treated like near royalty.[3] The Scottish traveling elders were often recent converts who had been quickly ordained and sent out as missionaries in their own country. They took up their assignments with ardent faith but without fanfare, sometimes leaving families to be supported by the local members of the Church. Exploring the experiences of these men can give a realistic picture of how going without purse or scrip worked for the humble laborer in the field.

There were two types of Scottish missionaries. First were the Sunday missionaries, those who went out on their one day off a week to preach and spread tracts in surrounding towns. As these men lived at home and worked at their normal occupations throughout the week, going without purse or scrip did not apply. The second type was the travel-

ing elders who left their homes to preach, often in areas with no members of the Church.

The period when the greatest number of traveling elders were sent out and which can thus give the best picture of their experience is the 1840s and early 1850s. This decade and a half saw the greatest growth of the Church in Scotland: from 80 members in 1840 to 3,257 in 1850. Baptisms then began to drop off; and between 1855 and 1859, membership declined by more than 50 percent.[4] This decline was the result of three events: the announcement of polygamy, which reached Great Britain in January 1853 and turned many potential converts away in disgust; the Mormon Reformation, which reached Europe in 1857, shifted attention almost completely away from itinerant preaching to an examination and revival of current members, and resulted in many excommunications; and finally, the "gathering to Zion," when many members immigrated to Utah where the church was building "the Kingdom of God."[5]

Another reason for focusing on this early period is that Britain increasingly looked askance at vagrants who wandered the countryside asking for food and shelter. Local inhabitants took alarm at men who had no place to sleep except in the open. The government stepped up its enforcement of the vagrancy laws, consolidated charity giving, and insisted that able-bodied men work for their living. Those who avoided employment were considered "idle and disorderly persons" and could be imprisoned and set to hard labor.[6] Although the traveling elders worked diligently at their missions and were certainly not shirkers, they were affected by the hardening public attitude.

I want to address several questions in this paper: What did "without purse or scrip" really mean? How did it work in practical terms: Where did money, lodging, food, clothes, and family support come from? Can we peel back the legends, peer through the veils of time, and glimpse what missionary life was really like—their sufferings as well as their joys? And finally, how should we measure success?

For this study, I read twenty-nine diaries or reminiscences by Scots about their experiences in the 1840s or early 1850s. Of these, twenty-one included an account of missionary work, but six were Sunday missionaries only, leaving thirteen who were traveling elders in Scotland.[7] Eight of the thirteen left detailed accounts of the practicalities of their mission life. These are the main sources I have used, along with occasional additions from the briefer accounts. The eight covered the country widely: two were

from the Glasgow Conference (that is, western Scotland), and four were from the Edinburgh Conference (eastern Scotland).[8] The other two had missions in both.

In addition to personal writings, I have found thirty-seven quarterly or half-yearly reports from the Glasgow Conference and twelve from the Edinburgh Conference for this period. They vary from holograph minutes in the early years to separately published reports starting in 1849; some of the published reports in particular contain accounts of traveling elder experiences. Before 1851, conference reports were published in the *Millennial Star,* the LDS newspaper in Great Britain.[9] Besides these reports, the *Star* included various other mentions of traveling elders, usually letters from conference presidents or instructions from the British Mission president. Perhaps over time other accounts will come to light which will add to our understanding of mission life and modify the conclusions reached here.

The original model for the missionary program comes from Luke 10:1–7, which tells of Jesus sending out believers, two by two, as missionaries. He directed them to go out, for "the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. . . . Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes . . . and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give." Joseph Smith, founder of the LDS Church, reiterated this biblical passage in Doctrine and Covenants 84:86: "Therefore, let no man among you, for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the church unto the ministry, from this hour take purse or scrip, that goes forth to proclaim this gospel of the kingdom."

Just what does this injunction mean? A "scrip" in Jesus's time meant a bag or sack in which to carry provisions. Taken literally, the missionaries were to go forth, preach the gospel to strangers, and depend on the charity and hospitality of those willing to listen.

These passages, however, could also be taken as directional or instructional, thus permitting the missionary to combine the stranger's hospitality with that of local members, or to go with funds raised in the conference. Richard Jensen cites the "classic example" of the Quorum of the Twelve on their mission to England in 1839–40. Brigham Young, president of the Quorum, began a publication program with borrowed money and, from the profits of selling copies of the Book of Mormon, hymnals, tracts, and the *Millennial Star,* not only repaid the loan but secured room

and board and most of his clothing.[10] These early missionaries to Britain thus understood the injunction directionally, not literally.[11]

Except for the example of the Quorum of Twelve, the Church gave no further definition or instruction. Orson Pratt during his third term as president of the British Mission repeated the charge once more: The elders were to go among the Gentiles across the land and warn the people to repent of their sins. "Let the Elders go forth without purse or scrip, as they did in the days of Jesus, and as they have done since the early rise of this Church." Pratt continued with the promise that God would take care of them: "You shall prosper—your way shall be opened, none shall perish for want of food, or go naked for the lack of clothing. . . . When you are turned away, and not fed for a day or two, do not despair, the Lord will provide for you in due time, if your faith fail not."[12]

For a man with a job, going on a mission required significant sacrifice and faith on his part to leave his work when unemployment was widespread and the government gave no relief to poor able-bodied men or their families. In this period in Great Britain, and especially in Scotland, the working classes—from which the Mormon converts were overwhelmingly drawn—suffered mightily. The 1840s experienced repeated strikes and periods of unemployment. These years brought continual emigration from Ireland and the Highlands into the central industrial belt of Scotland, caused by a combination of potato famines in Ireland and the Highlands and the Highland Clearances. The influx made congested cities worse by several factors. The standard of living, measured by health, education, and housing, dropped. Rising competition depressed wages for all workers. In addition, Scots of all classes were struck with a new cholera epidemic in 1848 on top of recurring outbreaks of typhus and typhoid.[13]

On the other hand, answering a call gave a man a sense of importance with a title and an urgent role in a church that was linked to a living prophet—this in a period when the average working-class laborer could look forward to a life only of continual drudgery. The traveling elders felt themselves connected in a real way with the prophets of the Bible. As chosen members of God's people, they bore a weighty responsibility to go out and be "doers of the Word, and not hearers only."[14] In addition, following Jesus's injunction to go without purse or scrip made the Mormon elders feel superior to other clergy who received a salary. To them, relying on God to supply their needs was certain evidence that Mormonism was the true faith.

What were the experiences of the laborer in the field ripe for harvest? The eight men who left good records of their missions were, taken alphabetically, John Duncan, Andrew Ferguson, William Gibson, Henry Hamilton, William Athole MacMaster, Peter McIntyre, James Ririe, and Matthew Rowan.[15] Three of them—Duncan, Ferguson, and Rowan—were coal miners. The occupations of the rest ranged widely: a woodturning artisan (Gibson), a factory worker (Hamilton), a rope maker (MacMaster), a store keeper (Ririe), and a gardener, bookkeeper, and laborer (McIntyre). Four—Duncan, Hamilton, Ririe, and Rowan—were in their early twenties. Ferguson, Gibson, and MacMaster were in their early thirties. The last, McIntyre, started his mission of several years at age fifty-three. Four of the men were married with families: Ferguson, Gibson, MacMaster, and McIntyre.

Gibson, Ririe, Rowan, and probably MacMaster were specifically called on their missions. Duncan and Hamilton responded to the appeal of Edinburgh president James Marsden in the spring of 1851 for thirty or forty volunteers. The last two, Ferguson and McIntyre, appealed to Church authorities to go. Ferguson had had a motivational dream; and McIntyre, who had already gone on three preaching forays into the Highlands on his own initiative, went to Glasgow to Franklin D. Richards, president of the Scottish Mission, and his brother Samuel to express his fervent desire to go back. He received their blessing.[16]

Two of these men must have presented unique sights. John Duncan, having had measles when very young, had poor eyesight. Then when he was playing with other young coal-miners while on strike, a ball hit him, blinding one eye. The third catastrophe was a mining accident at age fifteen that crushed one leg so badly it had to be amputated below the knee. He walked thereafter with a wooden leg. In contrast to this handicapped young man was Peter McIntyre in his mid-fifties. He gained a reputation for being a zealous preacher in Gaelic, the language of the Highlands; and sometimes up to two hundred would press around him crying, "Preach to us!" and, "Preach to us again!" He appeared so different from other ministers that many considered him insane. By his own account, he was "light of flesh," he ate hardly anything, his clothes and shoes were worn out, and his voice was hoarse from continual preaching. When he met with Franklin D. Richards, the latter only gazed at him and did not speak for ten minutes.[17]

I will consider what the traveling elders had to say about money,

lodging, food, clothes, transportation, costs of renting halls and advertising, and support for their families, and finally what they did when money or hospitality ran out. In all the missionary accounts, their difficult times are the ones they wrote about most. Many routine days were expressed only as, "I went there and preached, I went here and preached, I stopped there all night." It is not possible to calculate the proportion of ordinary days to trying ones. Obviously it varied from individual to individual as well as according to how each viewed his experiences. Nevertheless, every one of the traveling elders relates a number of real hardships.

Money was needed for transportation, bridge tolls, clothes, mission costs, and food and lodging when hospitality could not be found. As people all over Scotland were very poor, they did not have much to give. Duncan was pleased to get even half a penny and often had less than three pennies to his name. McIntyre was given pennies also, but they sometimes added up to a shilling or two after he had preached to a crowd. Rowan speaks of once receiving the relatively grand sum of a five-shilling piece and on another occasion, a half crown (two shillings, sixpence).[18]

A few traveling elders had so little success in procuring hospitality or money that they were reduced to begging. Matthew Rowan described what happened with two who were sent into the Highlands at the same time as he and his companion in the summer of 1849: "Elders [Hugh] Fulton and [Samuel] Lindsay who were sent out with us to Argyleshire [sic] and who laboured on the Campbelltown side, got along rather worse than us. They got into a system of begging more than anything else; and they soon had the County, or rather their part of the County, begged out and they had latterly to lie out in the open air and anywhere else they could creep into at night, and before their Mission was up they had to return."[19] Fulton and Lindsay, Rowan and his companion, and McIntyre were all in Argyllshire; Rowan was occasionally getting relatively substantial donations and McIntyre enough pennies to add up to shillings. It thus appears that the difference among them must have come, not from the poverty of the district, but from the missionaries' respective talents or lack of talents in attracting people to listen to them and making them sympathetic enough to be generous.

Begging and the other hardships the traveling elders experienced must have quickly made the regional church leaders realize that the missionaries needed backup funds, especially if they were going into areas where no members lived who might be counted on to give food and lodg-

ing. Church publications tell of no set way of raising money, and no direction came from Church leaders in America. Instead, the methods varied over time according to who was president of a particular conference or over Scotland. Among the ways instituted were to collect donations weekly in branch meetings, usually with a plate near the door; social evenings to raise money; a subscription among the members; council members assessing themselves; and later, drawing from tithing funds.[20]

Besides receiving Church support with which to pay for their needs, the traveling elders were taken in, fed, and in other ways provided for. This was especially true when an elder worked in an area where other members—who were invariably generous—lived. But finding a place to spend the night in an area where no members resided was frequently extremely difficult. Peter McIntyre, who had been born in the Highlands and spoke Gaelic and thus, one would think, would have had an easier time there, said that often, even in the worst weather, no one would take him in. His explanation was, "None could give me a bed, as they considered a minister would require a better bed than they could furnish." This, he speculated, was the reason the missionaries had such a hard time finding lodgings in the Highlands, and perhaps, he conjectured, it was also true in the Lowlands.[21]

McIntyre described one night in the Highlands after a stormy, wet winter day and after he had tried but failed to get shelter with the aunt of Robert L. Campbell, a traveling elder who was preaching in the Glasgow area. There was only one house left to try and night was fast approaching. He hurried on, meeting a man who was a lodger at the house who did not think the owner would take him in. Nevertheless, McIntyre, having learned from the lodger that the owner was a widow also named McIntyre, went in and told her he shared the same name. "She then said, 'I cannot deny you all I can do, but you must sleep in the entrance.' This was a porch between the outer door and the kitchen, where a bed was kept for beggars, and the swine lay there at night. I sat down thankful." On another day McIntyre "waded through two rivers of cold snow water, the rain was heavy, but I did not complain," and found refuge with a shepherd in his hut. The next day he walked twelve miles, waded through another frigid river, and came to a mountain farm village. Here "I was made welcome when I told my name, as this farmer was of the same clan." His Highland name gave him entrance to lodging on other occasions as well.[22]

Sometimes elders were forced to sneak into some spot for the night. James Ririe, traveling in the Perth area, said that there were two roads he could take to his next destination. "On the lower road there was a big shed for the farmer's fuel [peat]. As the house was some distance off in the dark, no one could see me, and I used to make that shed my bedroom and walk off at daylight." John Duncan and two companions were likewise forced to find some shelter "from the falling dew," and got permission from a farmer to stay in an old outbuilding where they tried to sleep on a little rotting straw.[23]

One night Duncan found a cart parked under a roof and "just went smothely [sic] in that no one might hear me . . . , thanking God I had got such a good place where I could lie and hear the rain pelting on, and pity my poor brethren perhaps some of them would be glad to be in such a place as me." He tried to sleep, but the cart was so hard that his hips hurt, and finally, "Morning came happily." But upon arising he was so cold he could not make his teeth stop chattering until someone finally took pity and gave him tea. Ririe also climbed into a cart; it had green hay in it and he covered himself up. "How long I slept, I know not, when one of the men that had been off to see his girl came home. He was going to feed his horses ere he went to bed. When he came to lift the hay, he gathered up my feet and legs which brought me into a sitting position. I do not know whether he or I was the most scared. However, after I got awake enough to make explanations, he said 'I sleep alone and you can sleep with me.'"[24] Sleeping several to a bed was common in those days.

Others besides the elders who were reduced to begging were sometimes forced to sleep in the open. After being refused a bed in a gentleman's country house in Fifeshire and being further refused permission to sleep in a cart, Duncan, being very tired, tried to sleep next to a stone wall, but the horses and sheep kept him awake. He finally gave up about 2:00 A.M. and walked to the next town. Finally he found a member of the church "and not having been in bed for 3 nights, I got to bed for 2 hours." On another occasion, he and two companions, after not finding a bed or an inn that was cheap enough, decided to "take the grass for our bed, our Bibles for our pillow and the umberalla [sic] for our covering." By 4:00 A.M., they got up because they were shivering from the cold, danced about to warm up, and moved to a rock wall to finish out the night. Ririe spent some nights in the open by a hay stack. Henry Hamilton wrote that he and two companions could not find a bed and were so tired that they lay

down on the moor, but it started to rain so they went on until they found a shed. Sleep eluded them there too as it was so cold and their clothes were wet, so they walked on until they got to Aberdeen at 4:00 A.M.[25]

Matthew Rowan tells of one night's unpredictable lodgings in the Highlands. He was preaching in Argyllshire. Finally, someone extended him hospitality for the night. A typical old-style Highland cottage made of rock and turf with a thatched roof, it had no chimney; the smoke from the peat fire in the center of the main room curled through a hole in the roof. Rowan was given an armful of straw to throw down beside the fire and a sheet and blankets, and he lay down to try to sleep.

> But then, Oh! what did my eyes behold! Mice, yes, mice, in shoals running out from beneath an old oak chest at the head of our pallet. . . . Now I am naturally as much afraid of a mouse as I am of a bull-dog, and how I was to lie on that bed really I did not know. . . . No sooner had . . . I lain down than a whole bye of Mice scurried through our bed. . . . I put my head under the blankets, and tucked myself in, in order to defend myself. This keeping my head under the clothes I found to be more than I could endure; for it being the Summer Season, consequently warm, before I would have my head in five minutes, I would feel almost suffocated. . . . I could not go to sleep for a length of time, but at last I dropt over, and while I did sleep, my Spirit was troubled with the thoughts of ugly predatory rats, mice and such like vermin being about me. About 3 o'clock, daylight was visable [sic] and . . . the mice retired to their holes. I got into a comfortable doze, when all at once I was aroused by feeling something on my face; and what was this but a hen with her brood of chickens that had come out from under the same old oak chest, and walked right over my face! This, I thought, was too bad by one half, and I would lie no longer nor no more on that disagreeable and miserable bed.[26]

This experience was perhaps only slightly better than sleeping out in the cold or rain. Rowan and the other traveling elders did not always have such troublesome lodgings, however. In fact, at one place in Argyllshire, Rowan and his companion were invited to stay with a widow named Mary Stuart who would "receive us with all that warmth of feeling, and hospitallity [sic] peculiar to a Mother in Israel." Whenever they came that way, she "would make us have her bed while she would make one on the floor for herself. On our getting into bed she would come and tuck us up, speak Motherly words to us (She always called us her dear children) and would otherwise express her care and love for us."[27]

Gibson's "journal," which was actually written sometime after his mission, skims over where he stayed, while MacMaster traveled closer to

home and was able to retreat there for the night or stay comfortably with Church members. A number of the elders, particularly Rowan, often stayed in inns or lodging houses. Usually such places were too expensive for Duncan, but he was delighted to find one for four nights for a shilling and threepence, which made him exclaim, "Happy, happy, happy[!]"[28]

Finding food could also be a daily challenge. Fellow Saints would invariably feed the elders; but if they were traveling in an area without Church members, they often had to go without. James Ririe wrote that, while traveling north of Dundee, he looked forward to staying in a house where he had lodged before and he counted on being able to get supper, bed, and breakfast for the sixpence in his pocket. But the house was full. As there was snow on the ground, he couldn't sleep outside, so he took a bed in the next cheapest lodging house. That, however, cost him his whole sixpence, so he had no supper and no breakfast the next day. "I was quite hungry, not having had anything from early breakfast [the day before]." It took him until almost noon to finish tracting in that town, and then he started for a member's house twelve or fifteen miles away. "On the way I got quite hungry and tired. I went into two or three houses on the roadside in purpose to ask for something to eat, but I never could ask. I could ask for a drink of water, because that was quite gentlemanly, but I never in all my travels could ask for bread. Why, a missionary preacher with good clothes on and to ask for bread[!]"[29]

Some traveling elders were driven to forage for food in the woods or in a farmer's field. Ririe wrote that, while working in the Montrose area in 1849, "I had taken a few shillings with me, but ere that two weeks were past, we had to sleep by the side of a straw stack and pick wild berries from the woods, and steal at night green horse beans from the fields for our food." Duncan told of having only a two and a half penny loaf of bread from Monday until Thursday, and "being very hungry I went into a turnip field, pulled one and eat it, came to another and did the same and sat in the field and eat it. I did not care although the man had come, I justifying myself by . . . Mark 2:23–28." This passage tells of Jesus defending his disciples who plucked heads of grain on the Sabbath against the Pharisees' charge that they were breaking Jewish law. The next evening, being hungry and tired again, "I sat down by the waysides and read the Bible. Being seated beside turnips I took one for supper and some wheatheads, and was thankful, thinking what a blessing it was that I had them."[30]

Another time Duncan was with two other traveling elders, Hugh

Gowans and Robert Watson, in the Fifeshire countryside with only a little bread as provisions. "We then went to a wood and partook of some bread after asking the Lord to cause it to multiply like the loaves and fishes as we had eaten none from leaving Bro. Issetts in Contal the day before." Duncan's next sentence reads only, "After reading the Scriptures and praying several times we left the wood in quest of water." Presumably, the Lord failed to multiply their bread. Similarly, Andrew Ferguson reported that Duncan's sometimes companion, Hugh Gowans, had a particularly hard time as much of his territory was along the coast among fishermen. "He labord there for 3 mounths [sic] diligantly for he was a faithfull young man with little success not even baptizing one & suffered much for want of food."[31]

Perhaps the most startling account is by Isaac McDougald and Samuel Lindsay who were preaching in towns of southern Lanarkshire. Their report to the Glasgow Conference stated that they "had found the people very righteous, so much so that they would not give them anything to eat at times. At one time they had been so hungry that they had tried what virtue there was in *snails* and *heather,* but soon found they would not do instead of oat cake."[32] Oatcakes along with oatmeal were staples of the Scottish diet.

Yet people could also be kind, and the elders were often given milk, sometimes alone or with bread or a biscuit. McIntyre was often given food and once potatoes and fish, which he "ate with a good relish." One generous woman made up a packet of bread and cheese for him when he left; Rowan likewise was once given "meat in our pocket handkerchiefs for the journey." McIntyre and Rowan's successes may have been the result of Rowan's approach: "We had an idea that if we could get preaching, some of our hearers would supply us with both [food and lodging]; and truly I can testify that we *lacked for nothing.*"[33]

The traveling elders also needed clothes. If they were in an area with a branch of the Church, the members usually supplied them with the necessary items. Andrew Ferguson regularly mentioned the clothes he received: In October 1852, one branch gave him a new top coat, which cost a little over £1. He then "borrowed" £2 to buy a pair of pants and a vest, "for my clothing was very far gone." The next August in Dundee, a Sister Alcock gave him two linen shirts, since "in great need I was." A month later in Dundee, "Bro. McKay made me a preasent of one pare of boots. god bliss him for this act of kindness." William Gibson reported that the

Edinburgh branch gave him a new hat and a pair of pants. Rowan, laboring in an area without members, wrote that the soles of his boots gave out, and he hobbled along as best he could for five miles until the next town where an old cobbler patched them. The patches soon tore off the uppers and he was in a worse state than before. He prayed that he might get a new pair, and in a day or two a postal order came from his brother-in-law for fifteen shillings, which was enough to buy new boots. He "felt to thank the Lord for them, and with them walked on in the Service of the Lord."[34]

A constant theme of all missionary journals was their motion. They were continually traveling from one place to another; going home for a visit, particularly if they had families; and attending conferences. MacMaster went nearly everywhere by train, canal boat, steamboat, stagecoach, or ferry, probably because he was working in an industrial area where many Saints lived who could help him with the fares. Most elders, however, had to choose between paying for public transportation or covering the more basic expenses of food and shelter, which left them to journey on foot.

Ferguson wrote that, on the whole, "the brethrine was very kind to me in giving me mony to asist me in travelng from place to place durg my so jurn amoungst them." But on some occasions he was forced to walk for lack of money. Twice, in going from Aberdeen to Dundee to attend conference, he traveled fifty-two of the seventy miles on foot: "Feet was very sore & the days was very warm which renderd our Jurny very fartigen." He did not say how many days it took him. At one conference he was assigned a new mission field about fifty miles northwest of Aberdeen. "Here was almost a world, as my fild of labour, & there was no way of traveling but on foot or stage coaching it but the letter [latter] being very high Price, the former was the only alternitive." Ferguson complained little about such arduous journeys, and in fact seemed to take a certain pride in them, noting once that he had walked fifteen miles so that he "might save the expences of training [i.e., going by train], to donate to the biliding of the [Salt Lake] Temple." He showed his dedication again a month later: "Very tired, having traveled about 24 Milles & fasted, but the blissing of god was with [me], bearing me up."[35]

John Duncan had a particularly trying time, often walking sixteen or eighteen miles on his peg leg. On one occasion he recorded feeling blessed to have received a ride in a cart as his stump had developed blisters. In the wee hours of another morning after not having been able to

sleep near a rock wall, he started walking and then heard a cart behind him. It turned out to be four coal carts going to a pit for a new load, and he was able to get a ride. "Surely the Lord has been good to me this morning," he exclaimed. On another occasion when he was walking through the rain, he thanked God that he had a road to travel on. In spite of his handicap, Duncan took a train only once for a cost of three pennies.[36]

In the summer of 1850, James Ririe was also short of cash and thus forced to walk a longer way: "From Perth to Blairgowrie, one road was fifteen miles, but on this road there was a toll bridge for foot passengers. It cost me half a penny to cross. The other road to Blairgowrie was nineteen miles. I often had to go that road, four miles extra for the want of that half penny." William Gibson in 1847 found the canal boats between Edinburgh and Glasgow were much cheaper than the trains, though it took three times as long, "yet as saving all the money I could was an important consideration with me, I often went by them."[37]

In July 1849 Matthew Rowan and his companion Andrew Galloway tried to cross Loch Fyne to get to Inverary in Argyllshire; they had asked some fishermen to take them across but had been refused. Although they had only one shilling between them and the fare for the ferry was a shilling each, Galloway asked the ferryman if he would take them across for half price because "that was all we had; and that we were on a Mission to preach the Gospel, without purse and scrip, and we had appointed to preach in Inverary that evening. Still he refused to take us across; remarking that the 'days of preaching without hire were gone by, and it would not pay his rent to cross us for a sixpence each.'"

Discouraged, they sat down beside the loch and wondered what to do next. "We remembered the circumstance of Peter getting a piece of money out of the mouth of a fish in order that our Master, Jesus, might pay tribute to someone on his way, but it was not likely that a similar miracle was going to be performed in our behalf." Finally they went back along the shore and, giving up on crossing the loch, got lodgings in an inn for the night. The landlady asked them to lead the family worship that evening, which Rowan did and worked in some preaching on Mormonism. Afterwards the landlady gave them biscuits and warm milk for supper without charging them, "after which we went to bed, thinking that we had not done so ill, nor been so ill-done by, today, after all."[38]

Besides transportation, money was also necessary for most things related to performing their mission, particularly renting halls or rooms in

which to preach and printing notices to post to invite people to hear them. In summer it was possible to preach outdoors; and when they were unable to hire a hall, that was the favored method, with someone often lending chairs on which they could stand. Matthew Rowan wrote that, on his very first day of preaching, the landlord of the inn where he and his companion James Hay had stayed brought out two chairs for them to stand on and "2 servers or covered plates for the purpose of taking up a collection for us." In winter, if missionaries could not afford to rent a hall, they spent their time "in spreading the work in a more private manner among the people. Visiting from house to house, private conversation, and tract distributing . . ."[39]

The elders frequently mentioned "placarding" a city or town as their primary way to announce a series of lectures or a sermon by an elder. Sometimes this technique met with great success, as it did for Andrew Ferguson in Dundee when about five hundred attended their meeting in March 1853. "The reason of so meny strangers preasent was, that we had Play carded for some days Previous, the city, intimating, that we would have on that evening a number of Elders from the vallie, who would diliver a Lecture on Polygamy, as is belived in, & Practised by us at the saints Location viz: Salt Lake vallie." Not surprisingly, the titillating subject, which had been announced in Great Britain only two months earlier, enticed people. But at other times Ferguson met with little success: "Altho the vilige had been Play carded for some days Previous, yet there were only 4 Strangers Present all day."[40]

Another way the elders advertised their meetings was to hire the town crier or a drummer. Ferguson more than once mentioned hiring the crier to announce a meeting, and Duncan hired a drummer who charged him sixpence. William Gibson gave an account of a battle between himself and those opposed to Mormonism, each employing the crier's services: "Went to Clackmannan & learned that the Town Crier had gone through the town with a proclamation to the people telling them to burn the tracts they had got from the Latter-day Saints, for they contained Soul ruining heresy. I then sent him through again to tell the people that I would preach to morrow & to come & hear for themselves. He did so & soon after he went through with another proclamation for the people to turn out & prevent me from poluting [sic] the town & with an intimation to me that if I attempted to preach at the Cross [town center], I would be stoned."[41]

Pamphlets were another cost. Usually the conference would pay for them, and the traveling elders would offer them for sale, returning the money to the conference to be invested in new books and pamphlets. The traveling elders spoke sometimes of selling pamphlets or of leaving several at a house, then returning a few days later to answer questions, pick up the pamphlets, and leave new ones.[42]

Some of the most intractable problems came less from traveling without purse or scrip than from inadequate support for the family left behind. Orson Pratt had admonished the wives and children of traveling elders to "fast and pray for their fathers and husbands . . . and not hold them back through fear of want," with the promise that their lives would be preserved, they would be blessed spiritually and temporally, and they would soon be gathered to Zion as the result of the men's missionary labors.[43]

Of the traveling elders of this study, four had families: Andrew Ferguson had a wife, three children, and two stepchildren; William Gibson had a wife, five children, and at least for a time a father-in-law to support; Peter McIntyre had a wife and grown children, some of whom returned home when sick or unemployed; and William Athole MacMaster had a wife and five children. Three of the four—McIntyre, Ferguson, and Gibson—told of their families experiencing real privation while they were out in the field.

McIntyre wrote: "When I arrived in Greenock [I] found my wife in sore trouble, bed-fast in fact, as the brethren had discontinued the four shillings a week that they had promised to allow her, so that she had nothing to support herself with." On another occasion, he wrote, "On my arrival at home I found my family in a very poor condition. It being winter my wife had been under the necessity of pawning many things for food, even to my watch."[44]

Ferguson, who went home to see his family in August 1852 after an absence of six months, found that they had been suffering, were in debt, and, "were all very bad of [off] for clothing so much so that I was almost ashamd to Look at them. My Wife had sold one chist [chest] of fine Drawers for £2.10, to asist the famely." In spite of their precarious situation, Ferguson affirmed his staunch faith that God would help them, but then added, "we stood much in need of it at this time for winter was setting in fast, & all required shous [shoes], clothng &c." A little over a year later, he recorded, "Wrote a letter to my wife, & sent an order with one pound ten

shillings, to lift clothes that she had to pawn, since I came out to preach."[45]

The families worked as best they could. Ferguson's wife was a straw hat maker and a son by her first marriage helped support the family as a coal miner. But two years later, the stepson was out of work and the "famely was very badly of [off] for Provisions." More than five months later, the stepson was still out of work, causing hardship for all at home, but Ferguson's fervent faith did not fail him: "For my part I do not care how much we may have to suffer, if only we can have the blissings of god to asist us in overcoming all things." Even Ferguson, however, occasionally admitted that God's support in making "all things come out right" was not timely. On one visit home in April 1853, he wrote, "They were all well in helth, but very poor having sufferd a good dale since I left them last. When I went in they had nothing to eat, no & My Wife told me that she had got nothing that day &c. This was like a dager going into my hart."[46]

The help that married traveling elders received for their families was often from individuals rather than from the branch or conference. Ferguson in particular mentioned a number of individuals who helped the family. In October 1852 he wrote, "Davidson made me a preasent of 3 pounds to give my famely, & on the same day, one Sister Rottery also made me a preasent of £2 pounds, which was £5 in all. This was a great blissing to my famely." In August 1853, he gratefully acknowledged, "Bro James Christie gave me 12 S [shillings] to Purchis a New gown to my Wife, which thing she stands much in need of. The Lord put it into his hart, to do so, & may god my heavenly Father bliss & prosper that man, for his liberalitys to me."[47]

William Gibson likewise attested to the generosity of one "Sister Peters who kept a store." This woman "was very kind to us & brought my wife many little things for our comfort which otherwise we could not have got." Gibson added that the Edinburgh Branch in 1846 gave him a little less than ten shillings a week to support himself (including traveling expenses), wife, and five children. "But we had been used to poverty & to live on little & we did not mind it much, although many times before going out to visit some of the branches, I had to go to bed to allow my only shirt to be washed or my only pants to be mended, but we felt cheerfull & happy because we knew it was for the cause of God."[48]

What did the traveling missionaries do when money, hospitality, or help from the Saints ran out? Some, such as Duncan, finally went home to

find work, for as James Marsden, the president of the Edinburgh Conference told him, "God did not require me nor any other man to starve ourselves to death." Gibson and McIntyre both took sabbaticals from their missions for a period to earn money to support their families. In another instance, William C. Dunbar was called in "for a season" because of "family indisposition and lack of means." At least two men—Ralph Nephi Rowley and James Mair—were called back from their missions by their wives because their families were in need. In still another way to manage, Matthew Rowan, a miner, not being able to preach much in the winter season for lack of money to rent a hall, went to work in an ironstone pit near where he was living in Ayrshire on those days when he did not have a meeting. "By my labour I supported myself, in board and lodgings, and clothing; and paid to the help of the work as well."[49]

James Ririe was also called in from his mission, but for a different reason. Crandell Dunn, the president of the Edinburgh Conference, asked him to return to Aberdeen to help the president of the Aberdeen Branch raise money for the branch by going to work. For seven weeks Ririe tried to find work, but it was a period of high unemployment: "I had a hard time of it. There were but few Saints or friends where I could get a meal. I had no money. I was running in debt every night for my lodgings. I visited my friends until I thought I would wear my welcome out. I walked the streets in Aberdeen so that in passing the bakery shops, the smell of the bread made me sick." Finally through a friend he had known from a prayer meeting before his conversion to Mormonism, he obtained a job at a comb factory where he earned initially only two and a half shillings a week. He rented a garret room and "got a shilling's worth of coal, some oatmeal, some molasses and started housekeeping." He continued, "I lived on oatmeal and molasses until I got more wages and then I treated myself to one cent's worth of skim milk a day." He never specified, but it seems doubtful that he was able to add much to the treasury of the branch.[50]

Turning from the experiences of the traveling elders to an assessment of their labor, can one measure their success in going without purse or scrip? Historian Frederick Buchanan shows that the number of converts in this period rose dramatically. While it is easy to assume a direct correlation between the work of the traveling elders and the increase in baptisms, it would not be entirely correct. There were other more telling factors, foremost of which was Orson Pratt's prolific output of pamphlets

in this period. His writings were cogent and convincing and led many formerly skeptical British to convert. Scottish convert T. B. H. Stenhouse wrote that Pratt's "influence spread like a consuming fire among the Saints. . . . He aroused the ambition and excited the zeal of young and old to spread abroad the new faith, and armed as they were with his arguments, they scoured the country and invited discussion wherever they went." The excitement that Pratt aroused was multiplied by Eli B. Kelsey, president of the Glasgow Conference. He devised several vigorous programs to distribute Pratt's pamphlets by the thousands, primarily through the Sunday missionaries and several women's societies.[51]

The greatest success of these efforts lay in Scotland's central industrial belt, not in the rural regions where the traveling elders were most often sent. There, baptisms were few. McIntyre mentions baptizing only seven or eight persons during several missions covering about four years. Duncan and Hamilton, in the four months of their missions, do not mention a single baptism; and according to Ferguson, neither did Hugh Gowans, all three having been sent out at the same time in the Edinburgh Conference. In contrast, Gibson mentions that, while he was president of the Edinburgh Conference, 1,539 members were baptized, although he is not claiming them as personal conversions.[52] These baptisms were in the industrial region and were due in great part to the work of Sunday missionaries and women's organizations in spreading Pratt's pamphlets. Nevertheless, Gibson no doubt had more success than the other traveling elders, for his field of labor was almost entirely in the central, industrial area, and his skill in debating attracted large crowds.

Ferguson also had some success: "We sucedded in Baptising a few here & there," and went on to say that in one place they had baptized most of the eighteen members. His diary mentions other baptisms, usually single ones, but sometimes two people. In a letter he wrote to Franklin D. Richards, he said, "Our Laborurs is not attended with so meny Baptisems, but there is a time to sow, and we ar trusting to God for a rich harvast very soon." Of the others, Ririe says he baptized twelve or thirteen in one area, but Rowan mentions no baptisms and MacMaster only one.[53] Added together, these successes are few and one can safely conclude that the number of conversions was more a function of where a traveling elder was sent and how talented he was in speaking, not of his having gone without purse or scrip.

Another way to look at success is whether the traveling elders were

able to live up to the scriptural model. This depends on how the missionary interpreted Jesus's words. If taken literally, as four of them appear to have done, success in obtaining the hospitality of strangers was directly related to the missionary's talent in attracting people. McIntyre secured bed and food by his preaching ability, speaking Gaelic, and sharing the same surname as many of those he went among. Duncan's hardships may have come, at least in part, from his interpreting Christ's injunction too strictly and walking almost everywhere in spite of his wooden leg. In addition to his handicaps—amputated leg and blind eye—he also had an aversion to speaking to crowds in the open. Even though he had been out for two months and was used to speaking to people, when it came to standing up in the center of town to preach, he wrote that he "would fain preach, but cannot think about doing it in such a bustle."[54] Ririe found it impossible to beg when he ran out of money, and then could not find work to support himself. Hamilton also appears to have tried to follow the model quite literally.

In contrast are MacMaster, Gibson, and Rowan, who appear to have taken the scriptural model more as a general direction. MacMaster took public transportation everywhere, lodged with his family or other Church members, and had little difficulty raising money from Church members because he was in an industrial area with established branches. Gibson also had a successful mission, but it was most likely due to his debating ability. Rowan was able to stay with a grandmother and other family members or, when there were no relatives in the area, in inns paid for with money from those who heard him preach.

When interpreted literally, going without purse or scrip was not a success as far as providing food, shelter, clothes, and money for the Mormon traveling elders in Scotland was concerned. All eight men of this study told of real hardships. When supplemented with stories in conference reports and by those who wrote briefer accounts, the picture is quite consistent. Certainly the elders' writings show that much of their time in the field was taken up with how to find something to eat and where they would spend the night. Such concerns at times appeared to demand precedence over the purpose of their mission.

A final and perhaps more important measure of success is how the traveling elders viewed their missions. Some—Hamilton, MacMaster, and Ririe—gave no indication. Gibson gives the impression of being quite pleased with his talent in debates and proud of how many joined the

Church during his presidency of the Edinburgh Conference. Rowan wrote that his mission gave him a "*practical confidence*" in God; he also expressed pleasure that he and his companion became close friends. In contrast, Duncan felt that the thirty elders sent out by James Marsden failed in their attempts to convert "the stuborn [sic] sons of the Scottish Isle from the Presbyterianism of their fathers," and that "after two or three months hard work, twenty-eight had returned home, some without their overcoats, others their boots, others their watches, all put in the pawn shop to raise money to get home on." He was asked to go on another mission, but candidly said he "would rather dig coal for a living than preach."[55]

Ferguson never said explicitly how he viewed his mission, but his diary shows that his life took on a new meaning and that he gained a sense of self-importance. At one point he wrote that there were "meny evidences that god was in all my measur, for god has blissed me greatly, & the councel & saints do se it." McIntyre also felt greatly rewarded. Writing in 1850, just two or three years after his last mission when he had turned sixty, he said, "I had a great deal more joy when I preached from village to village, cold and hungry, not knowing where to lay my head, than I have now, with plenty of food, raiment and ease."[56]

The approach to missionary work had to change as the British government and people became less tolerant of able-bodied men who would not work to support themselves, no matter how lofty their cause. Thus the era of going without purse or scrip gradually came to an end, taking on, as Richard Jensen observed at the beginning of this paper, "the qualities of a myth, not necessarily untrue, but sometimes not tethered firmly to the ground." Certainly, the portrait of the traveling elders given at the beginning of this paper in the quotation from Hubert Howe Bancroft does not hold up in its positive and simple definitiveness. The experiences of the Scottish missionaries varied widely, and all at times were daunted by real suffering. But perhaps it is right in its portrayal of the missionaries' steadfastness, for all shared feelings of dedication to God and to their work, and their hard times do not appear to have diminished their faith, for all of them immigrated to Utah.[57]

Notes

1. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah, 1540–1886* (San Francisco: History Company, 1889), 142.

2. Richard L. Jensen, "Without Purse or Scrip? Financing Latter-day Saint Mis-

sionary Work in Europe in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Mormon History* 12 (1985): 13.

3. One example will illustrate how differently the two types of missionaries fared. Two Americans, who had each been president of the Glasgow Conference, received what appears to be excessive donations from the conference members for their respective trips home in 1849 and 1850: Eli B. Kelsey was given £85 and Harrison Burgess £58. This was at a time when it cost approximately £20 to travel independently from Liverpool all the way to Salt Lake City. At the same quarterly conference when Burgess's gift was reported, a little over £7 had been donated to the traveling elders' fund. How many such elders this fund was meant to support is unspecified; but in the conference six months previous, thirteen are named. The figure for Kelsey appears in *Report of the Glasgow Quarterly Conference, Held in the Merchants' Hall, Hutchison Street, Glasgow, June 24th, 1849,* LDS Church Archives, 2. The sum for Burgess is from the *Report of the Glasgow Quarterly Conference Held in the Mechanics' Institution, Canning St., Calton, 1st January, 1850,* LDS Church Archives, 2. For relative costs of getting to Utah, see Polly Aird, "Bound for Zion: The Ten- and Thirteen-Pound Emigrating Companies, 1853–1854," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 70 (Fall 2002): 302.

4. Frederick S. Buchanan, "The Ebb and Flow of the Church in Scotland," *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles 1837–1987,* edited by V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter (Solihull, West Midlands, England: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), 274–77.

5. For the Reformation, an excellent study is Paul H. Peterson, "The 1857 Reformation in Britain," in *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain,* edited by Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorp (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), 211–23.

6. Mark Neuman, "Beggars and Vagrants," *Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia,* edited by Sally Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), 71.

7. Two others spent their missions entirely in England and are not included here; another three were primarily in England, but also had missions in Scotland.

8. In 1850, the Dundee Conference was split off from Edinburgh, and, in 1853, the Kilmarnock Conference from Glasgow. For the purposes of this paper, however, each will be included with its original conference.

9. The *Star* was published initially monthly, then semi-monthly, and finally weekly. After 1851, it printed only statistical tables and minutes of the general conference for the whole of the British Mission.

10. Jensen, "Without Purse or Scrip?" 4.

11. A third interpretation of the scriptural model might be metaphorical: Rather than strictly taking no money or food, the men were charged to go with perfect simplicity and trust, unburdened by worries or material cares and being

single-minded in urgently warning the people of Christ's Second Coming. Although some may have acted this way, it is unlikely that they consciously understood Christ's words in such a manner.

12. Orson Pratt, "General Instructions to Pastors, Presidents, and Elders," *Millennial Star* 19 (April 11, 1857): 232.

13. For more details on the hard times of this period, see Polly Aird, "Why Did the Scots Convert?" *Journal of Mormon History* 26 (Spring 2000): 91–122.

14. Rex Thomas Price Jr., "The Mormon Missionary of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991), 26; "Mormonism," *Edinburgh Review* 99 (April 1854): 383.

15. These personal accounts are John Duncan, Journal, 1851–61, typescript, LDS Church Archives; Andrew Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography, 1852–1880," online typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/Diaries/image/4264.pdf (accessed March 2005); William Gibson, Journal, 1841–February 1854, holograph, LDS Church Archives; Henry Hamilton, Journals [1851]–1900, holograph, LDS Church Archives; William Athole MacMaster, Diaries, 1848–87, holograph, LDS Church Archives; Peter McIntyre, "Autobiography," typescript, LDS Church Archives (on p. 29, he says he wrote the missionary part in 1850); James Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," in *Our Pioneer Heritage,* compiled by Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 9:338–76; Matthew Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account of the Rowan Family," typescript, Utah State Historical Society, 1853.

16. Hamilton, Journals, 5; Ferguson, "Diaries," 13; McIntyre, "Autobiography," 23.

17. Ibid., 16, 23–28. Franklin D. Richards was keeping a diary during this period but does not mention this meeting with McIntyre.

18. Duncan, Journal, June 28 and 30, September 4, 1851; McIntyre, "Autobiography," 16–18; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 34, 35.

19. Ibid., 38.

20. Conference minutes, March 28, 1847, Manuscript History of the Glasgow Conference, Scottish Mission, LDS Church Archives; "Conference Minutes, Glasgow," *Millennial Star* 10 (November 15, 1848): 344; Orson Pratt, Editorial, *Millennial Star* 12 (February 14, 1850): 57–58; Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 33–34, 114, 129, 133; Edward Bunker, Letter to F. D. Richards, *Millennial Star* 17 (August 25, 1855): 540; Jensen, "Without Purse or Scrip?" 5–6.

21. McIntyre, "Autobiography," 16.

22. Ibid., 25–27.

23. Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 350; Duncan, Journal, June 28, July 16, 1851.

24. Duncan, Journal, September 3-4, 1851; Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 350.

25. Duncan, Journal, June 30, July 1 and 25-26, 1851; Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 347; Hamilton, Journals, 6-7.

26. Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 38.

27. Ibid., 35.

28. Ibid., 22, 24, 26, 29, 32; Duncan, Journal, September 4, 1851; see also July 11, 1851.

29. Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 348.

30. Ibid., 9:347; Duncan, Journal, September 9, 10, and 11, 1851.

31. Duncan, Journal, July 24, 1851; Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 31-32.

32. *Report of the Glasgow Quarterly Conference, June 24th, 1849*, 4; emphasis in original.

33. For gifts of milk and bread, see Duncan, Journal, July 4, 9, and 26, September 25, 1851; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 29, 31, 32. For gifts of food, see McIntyre, "Autobiography," 16, 24; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 34, 39; emphasis his.

34. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 43-44, 112, 123; Gibson, Journal, 94; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 39.

35. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 31, 38, 44, 107, 122.

36. Duncan, Journal, July 1 and 31, August 11, September 18, 1851.

37. Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 350; Gibson, Journal, 75.

38. Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 20-32.

39. Ibid., 23; "Tract Distributing," *Millennial Star* 15 (October 29, 1853): 713.

40. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 65, 80.

41. Ibid., 86, 129; Duncan, Journal, July 30, 1851; Gibson, Journal, 93. See also Hamilton, Journals, 27.

42. Eli B. Kelsey, Letter to Orson Pratt, *Millennial Star* 10 (September 15, 1848): 285; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 30; Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 32-33; Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 347-48; Hamilton, Journals, 9.

43. Orson Pratt, Editorial, *Millennial Star* 19 (April 11, 1857): 232-33.

44. McIntyre, "Autobiography," 23, 28-29.

45. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 39, 132.

46. Ibid., 12, 68, 91, 142.

47. Ibid., 44, 108. This gown was an ordinary dress, not a fancy item.

48. Gibson, Journal, 67.

49. Duncan, Journal, September 28, 1851; Gibson, Journal, 28; McIntyre, "Autobiography," 14, 23; "Conference Minutes, Edinburgh," *Millennial Star* 9 (November 15, 1847): 345; "Conference Minutes, Edinburgh," *Millennial Star* 10

(July 1, 1848): 198; Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 110. Ferguson described Mair's wife as manifesting "a dissatisfied spirit" and added disdainfully, "You would think that a world of sorrows & difficults [sic] presents before her." Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 28.

50. Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 350–51.

51. Buchanan, "The Ebb and Flow of the Church in Scotland," 274–76; T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints: A Full and Complete History of the Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Shepard Book Company, 1904), 10; Eli B. Kelsey, three letters to Orson Pratt published in the *Millennial Star:* 10 (September 15, 1848): 28; 10 (November 15, 1848): 350; and 11 (March 15, 1849): 92.

52. McIntyre, "Autobiography," 29; Duncan, Journal, September 5, 1851; Hamilton, Journals, 5–32; Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 31–32; Gibson, Journal, 71.

53. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 4, 17–18, 38, 82, 137, 138, 140, 144, 149, 212, 214; Ririe, "James Ririe–Archibald McFarland," 347; Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 9:347; and MacMaster, Diaries, 18.

54. Duncan, Journal, August 13 and 14, 1851.

55. Rowan, "A Concise Historical Account," 39, emphasis his; John Duncan, Autobiographical letter to A. J. Holmes, May 30, 1902, LDS Church Archives.

56. Ferguson, "Diaries and Autobiography," 119; McIntyre, "Autobiography," 29.

57. That they emigrated is the reason their writings have survived. What is not known is whether there were others who went out as traveling elders who did not remain faithful and did not emigrate. It is an unanswerable question.

Patriarchy or Gender Equality? The Letter to the Ephesians on Submission, Headship, and Slavery

Carrie A. Miles

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, JUNE JORDAN, a well-known poet at a prestigious university, published *Kissing God Goodbye* (New York: Anchor Books, 1997). She gave a reading from it in San Francisco that I heard broadcast on National Public Radio. Citing the Bible, Jordan listed what she perceived as God's numerous offenses against women, suggested that God has "more muscles than he knows what to do with," called him the author of patriarchy and slavery, and finally dismissed him as "*That* guy?" Her audience received the poem with roaring approval.

Christianity, along with other monotheistic religions, is indeed considered anti-woman and patriarchal, even by many of its practitioners. But was the early Christian movement patriarchal? Can we really, like this poet, lay the blame for patriarchy at its feet? A few New Testament scholars are now proposing that, rather than participating in and advocating patriarchy, the early Christians sought to overturn it.

In this paper, I bolster those arguments with insights about the origins of the structure of the traditional family found in the work of economist Gary S. Becker. I elaborate on his approach to locate patriarchy's source not in God, religion, or even in male malevolence, but in the economic conditions of pre-industrial, agriculturally dependent societies. The family practices of ancient Rome, which dominated the known world at the time of Christ, offer a classic example of just such an economically determined patriarchy. I then contrast the structure of patriarchy with a

key passage from the writings of Paul of Tarsus, Ephesians 5:20-6:9.[1] Paul, the early Christian leader who wrote the majority of the documents that were eventually compiled into the New Testament, is widely considered to have supported both slavery and the subordination of women. I will show that, to the contrary, his intent was not to promote but to repudiate patriarchy. In its place, Paul endorsed family relationships that rested upon (and helped promote) an alternative economic and social equilibrium, one that drew upon a distinction between behavior impelled by material constraints versus those with religious or spiritual motivations. The most succinct expression of this distinction is found in Jesus's injunction that humankind should not live by "bread alone" but by "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

A Treatise on Patriarchy

In the dichotomy between spirit and flesh, patriarchy, especially the patriarchy of the Roman Empire, is very much on the "bread alone" side of this question. I follow S. Scott Bartchy, professor of Christian origins and New Testament history at UCLA, in defining patriarchy as not just the rule of men over women, but as the rule of a few men over *everyone* else, male and female.[2] Patriarchy thus entails not only the subordination of women and children, but also the subordination of most men. This repressive social system has its roots in the economic conditions that prevailed prior to the Industrial Revolution in the United States and western Europe. However, it must be noted that conditions very similar to ancient patriarchy continue today in most of the rest of the world. In such pre-industrial societies, households produced pretty much everything they consumed, even though they might engage in trade. Until well into the nineteenth century, for instance, American households purchased metal tools and salt, which generally could not be produced at home, but grew or made everything else.[3]

In his foundational work, *A Treatise on the Family* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), Gary Becker traces the origins of what economists call the sexual division of labor—the pattern of men and women performing different tasks—to the demands of such production, specifically to its demands for many members. In such economies, a young couple might start off alone, but hired servants, took on apprentices, or acquired slaves as soon as they could possibly afford them.[4] A better source of labor than servants, however, was children. Servants

tended to shirk, and their loyalty was often in doubt. Even the wealthy were considered to be putting their lives at risk if they had no one to care for them in illness but servants.[5] Children, in contrast, were much more likely to be devoted to the family's welfare, if for no other reason than that it was also their own. Moreover, children did not have to be paid and could be "produced" at home. Economist Adam Smith estimated that, in colonial America, a child's labor contributed 100 (English) pounds sterling to his family before he left home, a substantial sum of money in those days.[6]

The difference in fertility rates between an industrialized nation, where the average woman bears fewer than two children, and that of an agricultural nation like Uganda, where the average woman bears seven, reflects not so much a greater love for children or the relative unavailability of birth control as it does a greater need for help with farming and the household. In addition, in the absence of governmental or private programs to care for people in their old age, disability, illness, or widowhood, children are a critical source of support and care. While in the United States today infertility is viewed as mostly a personal heartbreak, in an unindustrialized nation, a couple's inability to have children can be an economic disaster.

Between the need for large families and high rates of child mortality, women were under a constant obligation to bear children. American fertility figures from 1800 indicate that one-quarter of the women of childbearing age gave birth each year[7] and that the average early nineteenth-century American woman, like the contemporary Ugandan, gave birth to about seven children during her lifetime.[8]

In a pre-industrial economy, child-bearing and child-rearing are women's most important tasks. However, there are still innumerable additional demands on a woman's labor. Becker attributes traditional family structure and the sexual division of labor to these continuing demands on a mother's time.[9] In addition to the need for frequent pregnancies, until the late 1800s, there was no substitute for human breast milk. Infants who did not have a human nurse died. These factors limited the kind of work that women could sensibly do. Families quickly learned to divide up work so that mothers could do the tasks that were compatible with pregnancy and lactation.

Spinning was the consummate female task, as it was easy to put down when a child needed to be picked up. The next steps in clothing

construction—weaving and sewing—were similarly compatible with child care. Consequently, home sewing became "women's work."[10] Cooking was a time-consuming task in the absence of pre-processed foodstuffs. Mothers, already housebound, were the logical persons to supervise the mixing and baking of bread and the lengthy processes of roasting and boiling that put food on the table. Women grew vegetables for household use, and in some circumstances, particularly in the absence of the plow, did the farming as well.[11] Women nursed the sick and the aged, processed herbs to make medicines, and supervised family hygiene, important and often time-consuming tasks in a world rife with deadly infections. In the United States, farm women often kept the financial accounts. Wives supervised the work of slaves involved in commercial production in the wealthy households of ancient Greece and Rome, and less wealthy women kept the shops where such family produce was sold.

As a result of these accommodations for child bearing, women's labor bound them to the house in a way that men's did not. What a society defines as "men's work" is determined by what is left over after the women do what they can with children present.[12] Thus, when fishing can be done close to home, fishing is women's work. When catching fish requires extended periods away, men become the fishers. Historically, men rather than women were the hunters, blacksmiths, long-distance traders, sailors, and warriors. After all, one could not go to war, to sea, or to Parliament, work a forge, or plow a field with a nursing infant in arms and young children in tow.

Domestic Specialization and Women's Subordination

For most women, their "domestic specialization" was not a problem. Few men had a choice about what they would do in life either; historically, 90 percent of the population, male and female, were peasants. Aside from childbearing, men got stuck with the nastiest and most dangerous work. Ultimately, however, it is the constraints of scarcity and the resulting need for women to bear children that allowed men to become dominant over them.

The very thing that made a woman valuable—her unique ability to bear children—also made her dependent.[13] The things that a wife and mother produced may have been essential to her family's survival, but she produced them for one particular household and for one particular set of people—her own family. A woman's most valuable product, children, was

of most worth to their own father. In a sense, this made a woman's husband and household her employer. She could change employment only at the price of a major and risky disruption in her life. She could certainly work in someone else's household, but there she would be a servant, not mistress of the house. Women who left their marriages under these circumstances left all that they had produced in the first household, including, most likely, their children, who were often considered to belong to their fathers.

In contrast, the husband's skills were more flexible. Less tied to the household, he could change employers far more easily than a wife could. This broader base of demand for men's labor made husbands less dependent in the marital relationship.

I am extending Becker's analysis since he does not, as far as I know, equate the results of this sexual division of labor with the word *patriarchy.* His analysis does, however, explain the historic subordination of women to men on several levels. Woman's domestic, family-centered roles meant that she would have less impact on the community than a man. This was true not so much because she was isolated—women may be just as visible in rural or small-town life as men—but because historically many of the government and business issues that determine civic power were of little concern to her. Politics usually did not affect home life directly and so were literally none of women's business. Few busy housewives had time for such concerns. Indeed, ancient Jewish law, recognizing the value of a mother's time, excused women from many of the religious obligations placed on men.

The expense of education (which Becker does note) compounded women's indifference. Few women knew enough about political (or religious) issues to begin to think of holding political or church office, or of even voting. For a woman to have a working knowledge of war and the military—both historically important components of political power—was unthinkable. Analogously, since it has no direct impact on their work, women in pre-industrial economies tend to have little interest in long-distance trading or manufacture outside of the home.

Furthermore, the fact that men were more likely than women to have access to cash and property also contributes to women's less powerful position within the family. In patrilocal societies, new brides move to their husbands' residence, thus guaranteeing that he owns the home and property. Similarly, men's greater freedom to engage in trade gives them

greater access to the cash proceeds from the sale of household products. In Uganda, for example, women grow and harvest the cash crop, coffee. Men take it to market—and they may or may not share the cash they obtain with their wives.[14]

Although many academic theories about gender claim that men became dominant over women because of man's superior size, strength, and aggression, historic family structure is better understood as based on a unique *female* characteristic: women's ability to bear children. As the only member of the marriage who could bear and feed children, women would still have ended up specialized to the home even if they had been bigger and stronger than men.[15] Although she may hold considerable power within her domestic areas of concern, a housewife had little decision-making authority or ability outside it. Thus, the strong economic need for women to bear children results in the economic realities of separate spheres for men and women and in women's subordination to men in family, society, government, and church.

Christianity and Roman Patriarchy

Christianity began as a small Jewish sect within Israel, a once-sovereign nation that was, like the rest of the known world in the first century, ruled by Rome. The Roman Empire was itself dominated by a class known as the "patricians," the powerful and wealthy men of the citizen class. This citizen class made up only a tiny proportion of the Roman population; but in Roman law, everyone else existed only to serve them. Ancient Rome was a highly agonistic (competitive, honor/shame) culture, in which promoting and preserving one's personal and family prestige were of the utmost importance. This culture required exacting revenge for all slights and injuries, and continual social contests to gain honor for oneself at the expense of others.[16] This struggle for power, honor, and respect had very real consequences in Rome, especially for people who did not achieve it. It is estimated that one third of the population of cities around the Mediterranean were enslaved, another third were former slaves, and most of the rest were "free" (never-enslaved) people who lived in dire poverty.[17] Patricians held life-and-death authority over their slaves and children, though not over their wives. In short, Rome was very much a "kill or be killed," "eat or be eaten" economy.

Households, among those wealthy enough to have a house, were also places of business, sheltering not only the patrician, his wife, and his

children (including grown children and their families), but also his slaves and production workshops. The Latin word *familia* referred to such households, often with the interactions between master and slaves considered more salient than those within the nuclear family itself.

Part of the Apostle Paul's reputation for supporting patriarchy comes from what some scholars perceive as similarities between his writings on the family and the "household codes" of conduct written by Greek and Roman philosophers like Plutarch and Aristotle.[18] While these secular writings enjoined obedience upon slaves, children, and wives, they were actually addressed to the family patriarchs themselves, encouraging them to "rule" or "govern" well those under their control. Some scholars see the texts labeled Ephesians 5:20–6:9 as the author's mirroring of these codes to assure secular authorities of the respectability and conformity of Christian family life.[19] This passage is the main source of an infamous Christian injunction, phrased in the familiar King James version as:

> Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.
> For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. . . . : and he is the saviour of the body. . . .
> Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. . . .
> Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. (Eph. 5:22–23, and 6:1, 5)

But a careful reading of this passage—one that does not take it out of its literary or social context—shows that, rather than supporting patriarchy, Paul was standing it on its head. As a leader of a very small, suspect sect, Paul could not hope to change the Roman social order. Instead, in this letter he asked each of the three pairs addressed—masters/slaves, fathers/children, and husbands/wives—to radically transform the meaning of these legal structures, renouncing the requirements of the flesh to achieve a higher spiritual goal.

Submission

Paul's treatise on the family is part of a larger discourse praising God for his forgiveness and munificent provision. The verse immediately preceding the passage under consideration begins: " . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father, being subject to one another in awe of Christ . . . " (Eph. 5:20–21).[20] Thus the first step in understanding the later passages that seem to endorse patriarchy is to recognize that the injunctions for the submission of

wives and the obedience of slaves and children are part of a general instruction that everyone–husbands/fathers/masters included–submit to or be subject to each other.

A major impediment to understanding this passage, however, is the negative connotations that "submission," "submissive," or "be subject to" have in English. In English, to be submissive means to be obedient, docile, inferior, meek, quiet, numb, in need of guidance, or childlike. For example, a recent book on marital relationships defines submission as giving in to another's control: "Submission comes from a position of weakness. . . . Submission means enduring aversive behavior from your partner because you have or believe you have no alternative."[21] In contemporary usage, being submissive is more likely to be regarded as pathological rather than desirable.

In Greek, however, the language in which this letter was written, the word translated "submit" or "be subject to" lacks these connotations. It does not even mean to "obey." Nor does it mean to agree with someone or to give up one's own preferences. The root of the word that the King James translators rendered as "be subject to" (or alternatively, "submit yourself to") is *hypotasso: hypo* = "under" (e.g., hypodermic needle) and *tasso* = "to locate, put, or place." Together, they mean "locate or place under." *Hypotasso* is sometimes translated "put under."[22]

To understand what Paul meant when he asked his Christian readers to "put themselves under" each other, it is necessary to be aware of an important property of verbs known as "voice." English retains two voices: active and passive. The active voice shows the subject of a sentence performing the action in the sentence (e.g, "I teach Spanish."). In the passive voice, the subject receives, not performs, the action of the verb: ("I am taught Spanish."). The active form of "subject" or "put under" would be: "I will subject you to my own will," with its connotations in English of putting someone under my heel, trampling him underfoot, or pressing my thumb down on him. In the New Testament, no one was ever instructed to "subject" (active voice) anyone else. In fact, the Gospels record Jesus expressly forbidding his followers to "subject" other people. One example of the many such injunctions is found in Mark 10:42–44 (RSV):

> You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them.
>
> But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant,

and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

In Ephesians 5:21, Paul clearly does not use "subject" in the active voice—so consciously or not, English speakers read it with passive meaning, in which the subject of the sentence is acted upon. To be passively "subject to" someone means to accept his domination, to do as he tells you, to give up, to be under the other's thumb, or to be trampled underfoot. Again, in English, passively accepting subjugation is not regarded as healthy or desirable.

But the word used in Ephesians 5 is not in the passive voice, either, but in the Greek middle voice, in which "the subject acts, directly or indirectly, upon itself."[23] An example is: "I teach myself Spanish." In the middle voice, the subject of the sentence is also the recipient of the action. *Hypotasso* in this instance is in the middle voice, and in this sentence means, "All of you place yourselves under one another" or "all of you subject yourselves to one another."

In instructing Christians to subject themselves to one another, Paul was not urging them to exercise power over anyone or to yield to the exercise of power over them. Instead, he is asking Christians to voluntarily place themselves below other people, to, as he writes elsewhere, "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others as better than yourselves. Let each one of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3 RSV). His purpose here was not to support the lines of authority laid out in patriarchy, but to perpetuate Jesus's revolutionary teachings denying his followers the use of authority or power over other people.[24] In asking Christians to "subject themselves to one another," Paul asked them to opt out of the agonistic struggle for honor, prestige, control, and wealth that characterized Roman culture. Further, he writes that Christians are to do this "in awe (or respect) of Christ," because this is what Jesus himself did, continually placing himself below others, taking on the role of a servant and eventually submitting to a shameful death for the sake of his followers.

Slaves and Masters

To more easily understand how Paul's teachings in Ephesians 5–6 challenged the family structure of the ancient world, I am going to follow Laurence R. Iannaccone's example and start by looking at the most extreme of the power-based relationships: master/slave.[25] Slavery as it was practiced in the Roman world differed in important ways from its later

practice in America. For one thing, Roman slavery was not race-based. Although historically slaves had been war captives, by the first century many slaves had been born into that estate. Others entered slavery more or less voluntarily, selling themselves to pay debts or to obtain one of the high-status jobs that could be held only by slaves. Some entered slavery simply to escape the grinding poverty that was the lot of most freeborn people, as it was often better to be a slave in even a moderately wealthy household than to be a poor freeman.[26] Many slaves earned their freedom after a period of twenty or so years of service; and for some, entering slavery was a calculated attempt to rise in the status hierarchy, as manumitted slaves of Roman citizens became Roman citizens themselves.[27] Slaves could own property, including other slaves, and form families. Furthermore, because their masters dressed them to suit their occupation, it was not readily apparent whether an individual was enslaved or free.

Despite the voluntary nature of slavery for some, slavery was desirable only compared to the alternatives. Neither male nor female slaves had control over their own bodies, and the sexual use of slaves by masters was taken for granted.[28] Masters also held life-and-death authority over them and could kill one summarily. Slaves could not legally marry, and the families they formed could be broken up at the master's pleasure. But slavery was a fundamental social institution in the ancient world and the basis of many business relationships. Indeed, if one was born to a poor family with no social connections, selling oneself into slavery may well have been the best or only way to upward mobility.

The Ephesians 6:5–8 text urges:

> Slaves, obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling in singleness of heart as to Christ;
>
> not in way of eye-service as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the soul,
>
> with good will serving as slaves as to the Lord and not to men,
>
> knowing that whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

Read alone, this passage seems to support the accusation that Paul favored slavery. He seems to be telling slaves not only to obey their masters, but to serve them wholeheartedly, and promising that God would reward them for their servility. However, before accepting this interpretation, consider Paul's very next words: "Masters, do the same to them, and

forbear threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him" (Eph. 6:9).

Paul expected slave owners to "do the same"—to serve their slaves! Significantly, he also wrote that masters should refrain from threatening their slaves. Slaveowners held coercive and economic power over all members of their household. Slaves did their masters' will not from free choice, but to avoid punishment and further their own agendas. Paul directed Christian slave owners to give up the coercive, power-laden aspects of their interactions with their slaves. They must do this because they too had a master who did not coerce them. If God does not treat slaveholders as slaves, Paul wrote, Christian masters must treat their slaves with the same respect that they are shown.

Reconsidering Paul's directive to slaves in light of his instructions to masters, an alternative to the common reading becomes apparent. Paul is drawing a distinction, once again, between living by the flesh and living by the Spirit. He was not commending servility (the world) but urging slaves to opt out of the worldly struggle. Their masters "according to the flesh" may command their labor and must be obeyed, but the enslaved person's "fear and trembling," "singleness of eye," and "service from the soul" can be for the *Lord,* not for their masters. Slaves are no longer to live in fear of their master's coercive power or strive to please their masters to enlarge their own power base (i.e., no longer practice "eye-service as people-pleasers"). In the choice between "bread" and "faith," faith must win. Although legally enslaved and bound to obey their earthly masters, in the spiritual realm they were slaves of Christ; and as they served God from the soul, God would provide for them himself. The bottom line, Paul told both slave and master, is that "he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven," and in that realm one's earthly status of "slave or free" made no difference.[29]

Children and Fathers

In a similar way, at first glance Paul also appears to accept the social order regarding children:

> Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
>
> "Honor your father and mother"—this is the first commandment with a promise:
>
> "So that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (Eph. 6:1–3)

Note that Paul instructed children to honor and obey their mothers as well as their fathers. In the next passage, however, Paul addressed just the fathers: "Fathers, do not provoke the anger of your children, but bring them up [or nurture them] in the admonition and instruction of the Lord" (v. 4).

In a pre-industrial economy, a major motivation for marriage was to produce children who would serve their fathers—work for them, care for them when sick or aged, increase the family honor, run the family business, etc.[30] Under Roman law, fathers held much the same coercive authority over children that masters exercised over slaves. Fathers could order the abandonment of an unwanted newborn or kill a disobedient child. Further, sons—at least those who wanted their inheritance—remained under their fathers' authority until their fathers died. This meant that fathers had control over their sons as long as they lived (and in later forms of Roman marriage, over their daughters as well.)[31]

As with slaves, Paul asked fathers to give up their coercive rights over their children and the power that came with controlling material resources. The patriarch was not to exercise his superior status over his children to exploit or oppress them ("do not provoke your children to anger" or "do not exasperate your children"). Rather, fathers were to use the obedience their children offered to "bring them up in the admonition and instruction of the Lord." Paul turned around the patriarchal assumption that the purpose of having children was to serve their fathers, and directed fathers to serve their children instead.

And as in Paul's instructions to slaves and masters, he asks for a transformation not just in the fathers' motivation but in those of the children as well. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Obedience and honor are not a matter of doing whatever it takes to keep their parents placated until the father's death released them from that duty. Rather, obedience and honor are a matter of doing right in God's sight—obeying fathers "in the Lord," not because of the laws or customs that kept them in perpetual subordination.

Husbands and Wives, Heads/Bodies

Paul's well-known injunction that "wives submit to their husbands" is not surprising, since the context makes it clear that submission characterizes the entire Christian community. In fact, the instructions to the wife are the last element in a long sentence that begins even before verse

18 where he asks the Christians to "be filled with the spirit," and then explains how: "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father, being subject to one another out of respect for Christ, wives to your own husbands as to the Lord" (Eph. 5:18–22).

Thus, seen in context, the injunction "wives to your own husbands" is not a freestanding commandment in a sentence of its own, as it appears in the KJV and as its usual printing in most English Bibles suggests. Some translations even begin a paragraph with a subheading reading something like "The Submission of Wives" between verses 21 and 22 or between 20 and 21. Rather, Paul's instructions for wives are simply another example of the broader point he is making that the Christian community should emulate Christ by refusing to seek status and power over each other. Verse 22 does not even contain a verb but is only a dependent phrase to verse 21: "Submit yourselves to one another." The admonition that wives and, a few verses later, children and slaves, submit "as to the Lord" is a further reminder that they submit themselves out of respect for Christ:[32]

> For the husband is head of the wife as also Christ is head of the church, himself the savior of the body.
>
> But as the church submits itself to Christ, so also wives, in everything, to their husbands. (vv. 23–24)

Just as *hypotasso*, "submit yourself," presents a problem for contemporary readers in understanding what Paul was saying, the English meaning of another word—*kephale* (kef-a-LAY), head—also creates problems. The trouble with understanding what Paul wrote is not the word's translation from Greek into English. *Kephale* is perfectly translated here. It does mean "head," literally, and there is no other way to translate this word into English. Rather, the confusion over its meaning arises because "head" has metaphorical meanings in English that it did not have in first-century Greek. When an English speaker reads "head" in this passage, he or she automatically understands it to mean "ruler," "leader," or "one having authority over," as in the "head" of a corporation. With this understanding of *kephale*, the patriarchal interpretation of Paul's writing flows inevitably: "Wives, submit to your husbands, because he is your ruler, just as Christ is the ruler of the Church."

But *kephale* cannot be translated as "boss" or "ruler" or even as "servant-leader," because, while "head" can mean "authority" in English, it

did not have that connotation in Greek when Paul wrote to the Ephesians.[33] There was another word for "ruler" or one who has the right to tell others what to do: *arche* (ar-KAY). This word is used many times in the New Testament when the writers were designating someone who held authority over others. If Paul had meant "boss" or "leader" in his reference to man as head of the woman, he could have used *arche, kyrios* ("lord," the word used for a slave's master as well as a title often given to Jesus) or *despotis* (the word translated as "lord" in Luke 2:29, Acts 4:24, and Rev. 6:10 or as "master of the household" in Luke 13:25).[34] Any of these three words convey the meaning of "authority over" far better than *kephale.*

Furthermore, "authority over" makes no sense in the context of the rest of the instructions to husbands. As we will see below, in verses 25–33, Paul draws a series of parallels between Christ's expressions of love for the church and a husband's expression of love for his wife. None of these expressions has anything to do with authority or rule.

So if Paul was making a statement about power or authority relations between men and women here, just what did he mean by *kephale?* As Greek scholar Richard Cervin wrote, "He [Paul] does not mean 'authority over' as the traditionalists assert, nor does he mean 'source' as the egalitarians assert. I think he is merely employing a head-body metaphor."[35]

The original readers of Paul's letter to the Ephesians would have understood what he meant by the head/body metaphor because he uses it throughout this letter. In its opening sentences, Paul tells his readers that God's purpose is to unite or bring together all things in heaven and earth in Christ (Eph. 1:10). The word translated "to gather together in one" (KJV), "to unite" (RSV), or "to bring together" (NIV) is literally "to head up" or "to bring several things together under one head."[36] This sense of the "head" uniting, integrating, and nurturing the body is explicit in Ephesians 4:15–16, which the RSV translates as: "We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, *joined and knit together* by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, *makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love"* (emphasis mine).

An earlier part of Paul's letter (Eph. 1:23) is particularly useful in understanding how Paul saw the power relations between the head and body: "[God] has put all things under his [Christ's] feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all." This sentence from earlier in the same letter as the

passage under consideration makes it clear that the relationship between the head and the body is not one of dominance and subordination. The things that are subjected (the word translated as "put . . . under" is *hypotasso* in the active voice) are not "put under" the head, but under the *feet*, that is, below the entire body. The head does not subject the body but reigns together with it: "For all things are yours . . . and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:21).

Ephesians 5:23 equates Christ's headship with his role as "savior." In the language of Roman patronage, a savior is someone who provides a great benefit for other people.[37] In other words as Paul uses the term, the husband who is the head of his wife in the same sense that Christ is head of the church does not "rule over" his wife or even "lead" her, but instead serves her, facilitating their unity, growth, and "upbuilding in love." Verses 23–24 read: "For the husband is head of the wife as also Christ is head of the church, himself the savior of the body. But as the church submits itself to Christ, so also wives, in everything, to their husband." This passage is not a rationale on why wives should passively allow themselves to "be [actively] subjected" by their husbands, even though it is often read that way. Rather, it is an assurance that wives no longer have to seek their own self-interest against their husbands, because their husbands' purpose is now to emulate Christ in providing great benefit to them.

Directives to Husbands

Marriages in Greco-Roman culture were, as they were under patriarchy in general, not love matches. Rather, fathers arranged them to promote their own business and political interests. Roman patricians were reluctant to raise more than two children, and few were willing to raise daughters at all. Fathers had the right to decide which of the children born in their households would be raised and which would be given away or, more likely, exposed (abandoned outdoors). Between an unwillingness to raise daughters and a high death rate among women in general, the Roman population sex ratio was greatly skewed, with perhaps as few as seven women to every ten men. Consequently, young girls—averaging ages twelve to fourteen but sometimes as young as eight—were married to men in their late twenties and thirties.[38]

Wives were suspected of giving first allegiance to their family of origin and tended to be viewed with suspicion by their husband's family until they produced a son, at which point, presumably, they shifted their loy-

alties for the sake of their child. Husbands and wives did not expect to be emotionally close. If someone wanted an intimate confidant, he or she was more likely to go to a brother or sister than to a spouse.[39] Divorce and prostitution were rampant, and a long-lived woman of the citizen class might be widowed or divorced and remarried several times.[40]

With this historic background, let us return to Paul's directions to husbands in Ephesians 5:25–33. This passage elaborates on their role as head by continuing to draw on the analogy between Christ's unity with the church and the marriage relationship. Note throughout how he uses the head/body imagery to encourage unity and self-sacrifice rather than to define any kind of marital power hierarchy.

Love

Verse 25 reads: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up on behalf of it." "Love," like "head," is a word into which English speakers in our century read too much. Greek had three words that are translated "love," and none of them meant the complex emotion we call romantic love today. *Eros* was erotic love; *philos* love for a brother or sister; and *agape,* the word used here, meant caring concern for another person.

When Paul told men to "love" their wives, he was not talking as someone at a modern marriage retreat might, instructing couples on how to rekindle romance. Rather, he was telling men to treat their wives with *agape:* selfless, caring concern. In urging that a man care about his wife as he does himself, Paul seriously challenged patriarchal motives for marriage (v. 28), in which men took wives chiefly to serve their own needs for a legitimate heir and for household management.

Giving Yourself Up

The passage continues through verse 30:

> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loves the church and gave himself up for her [26] in order that he might sanctify her [the church], cleansing her with the washing of the water of the word, [27] so as to present the church to himself in glory, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind, but in order that it might be holy and unblemished.
>
> [28] In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.
>
> [29] For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and cher-

> ishes it, just as Christ does for the church, [30] because we are members of his body.

Paul thus enjoined husbands to emulate Christ in sacrificing themselves for their wives, treating their wives with the same respect that they have for themselves. Here he used the same imagery that he used only a little earlier in Ephesians 4:16—of Christ as head nourishing the church in order to upbuild it in love. In the same way, husbands are to nourish and cherish their wives—to help them to grow in love.

Note that the kinds of behavior Paul advocated here were far from being typical male roles. The Roman man was expected to be virile, dominant, and "macho." "Nourishing and cherishing" were not typical "guy" behaviors in the first century. And remember that Paul was asking men in their late twenties or thirties to love and care for someone as insignificant as a twelve-year-old girl just because she was his wife.

Paul's next statement quotes the creation account in Genesis 2:

> "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."
>
> This is a great mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Eph. 5:31-32)

In patriarchy, it is women who expected to leave their parents and become part of their husbands' families. Roman wives literally moved in with the husband's family. In contrast, while Paul here required adult children to continue to honor their parents "in the Lord," he stated quite clearly that a husband's primary allegiance in the household is not to his parents but to his wife. This attitude represented a radical challenge to ancient patriarchy, which demanded that an adult child's loyalty *always* lie first with his family of origin.[41]

The Response of Wives

In completing his instructions to husbands, Paul added another admonition to wives: ". . . each of you should love his wife as himself and a wife should respect her husband" (v. 33). Readers of this passage often ask why husbands are enjoined to "love," while wives must "respect," a word which seems to assume male superiority. Further, why did Paul designate the husband and not the wife as head?

Perhaps this is because the things that Paul asked husbands to do—to love another as they loved themselves, to upbuild another person, to nur-

ture, serve, and cherish—were feminine roles. Service was expected of wives and mothers. A wife might not love her husband romantically, but "caring concern" was her job. Her care had no particularly Christian meaning, because even the pagans expected her to devote herself to her husband and children.

But for a husband to do these things? In a patriarchal culture, a woman of any ethnic background might well think less respectfully of a man who began treating his household in the ways that Paul described. A wife's own prestige and material well-being depended on her husband's performance of his gender-stereotyped role. Marriages in the time when Paul was writing were arranged matches, set by contract. Although emotionally the beneficiary of a man's renunciation of the role of patriarch, a wife could well consider it shameful for a powerful man to turn down the power and privilege to which he—and she as his wife—was entitled. A Christian man, however, would have a difficult time following Paul's instructions if his wife withdrew her respect for him.

Paul asked husbands to sacrifice everything they had been raised to expect in a macho, agonistic culture that valued status, public praise, competition, winning, and position above all else. The sacrifice they are asked to make explains why he placed the husband, not the wife, parallel with Christ in the head/body metaphor. When Paul asked wives to respect their husbands, he uses the same word he used at the beginning of the passage to refer to the Christian's attitude toward Christ. Wives were to respect (*phobos*) their husbands, just as Christians were to submit to each other out of respect (*phobos*) for Christ. Historically, conservative Christian theologians have argued that, since Christ is superior to the church, this parallel between Christ and the husband implies that Paul assumed the husbands' status to be superior to that of their wives.[42] But although the church should delight to serve Christ, Jesus's ministry made it clear that he came, first and foremost, "not to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45). Paul here encourages Christians to relinquish their claims to hierarchical status out of their respect for Christ who, as Paul wrote elsewhere, "though he was in the form of God, counted not equality with God a thing to be seized (or stolen), but emptied himself, *taking on the form of a slave*" (Phil. 2:6; emphasis mine).

Spiritual Capital

As New Testament scholar Gordon Fee wrote about another passage

of Paul's, Galatians 3:28 ("There is no Jew nor Gentile; no slave nor free; no male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus"): "Such a revolutionary statement was not intended to abolish the structures [of Roman society], which were held in place by Roman law. Rather, it was intended forever to do away with the significance attached to such structural differences, which pitted one group of human beings against another."[43] This passage in Ephesians performs exactly the same function. The admonition to "submit to one another out of respect for Christ" was intended to *destroy hierarchy and privilege* and bring about the *unity* of the entire Christian community.

These injunctions, together with the teachings of Jesus and other New Testament writers, demanded a revolutionary, even frightening, change in the way believers were to treat each other. This change offers one of the strongest examples of the benefits of "spiritual capital," a notion being promoted by the John Templeton Foundation, a nonprofit organization that makes grants to promote the study of religion. Spiritual capital is a concept analogous to "social capital" as explicated by James Coleman and Robert Putnam.[44] Social capital builds on the idea of "human capital," the concept that individuals and societies have a stockpile of resources consisting of individuals' knowledge and skills.

Spiritual capital refers to the particular human capital that is motivated or shaped by religious or moral beliefs. Spiritual capital enables the adherents of a particular religious or moral system to behave according to its norms (the "spirit") *despite* the fact that these norms deviate from the behaviors and practices rewarded by the economic and social structure in which these people are embedded (the "flesh"). Spiritual capital enables a society to maintain values, behaviors, and practices that transcend ordinary economic incentives, such as refusing to hold slaves even when doing so proves profitable or staying to care for the victims of plague when everyone else is running away. As Rodney Stark has shown, although this kind of spiritually motivated behavior means sacrificing one's self-interest, it can yield benefits for groups and entire societies in the long run.[45]

Within this framework, an economic model of the family helps us understand why the first-century family looked the way it did. But just because a practice or attitude is economically viable (or even economically "efficient") does not mean that it is good. Becker notes that, for families struggling with scarcity, the unequal provision of resources to boys, even to the point of killing newborn girls, is rational,[46] but he does not there-

fore claim that it is good. "Indeed," writes Laurence R. Iannaccone, a student of Becker's, "economists like Becker routinely emphasize that they are engaged in a form of 'positive' economics that *deliberately* sidesteps 'normative' issues. (Whether they succeed is, of course, a subject of heated debate.) The point to keep in mind is that even the most enthusiastic 'Beckerian' economist–i.e., Becker himself–does not equate efficiency with morality."[47]

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul made it clear that Christians are supposed to be living by a different standard than they had in the past. In a materially driven culture, men strive for honor, prestige, dominance, power, and wealth, things that are in short supply. But Paul (as well as Jesus, the Apostle Peter, and others whose teachings are captured in the New Testament) taught that Christians did not have to strive for those things. God had already and would continue to care for them himself, if they lived by faith in him rather than in the worldly status hierarchy. Note that in this passage, mutual submission is a direct manifestation of "giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" for this all-sustaining munificence. Paul radically redefines the believers' motives, shifting their decision-making from one based on secular competition for scarce worldly resources to one based on the infinite resources available to those who live by the Spirit.

These teachings had a profound effect over time, transforming the structure and interpersonal patterns within the ancient family. Christianity forbade the exposure of infants or abortion, which under Roman law could be ordered by men and which often disabled or killed the pregnant woman. It raised the age of marriage for girls, raised the status of women in general, disallowed the sexual double standard, required both husbands and wives to be monogamous, outlawed polygamy, opposed and ultimately eliminated slavery, put slaves and women into leadership positions in the church, allowed marital separation in the interest of peace but discouraged divorce, and encouraged people to remain single if they so chose. As Rodney Stark demonstrates in *The Rise of Christianity*, a significant factor in the explosive growth of the early Christian movement was that it treated women so well. A proper appreciation of the early Christian view of marriage must begin by contrasting it with the corrupt family practices of the culture in which it was embedded. Within that culture, Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 7 that a person, especially a woman, did not have to marry was both revolutionary and liberating.

Although inescapable economic and technological limits continued to constrain families and the sexual division of labor until after the Industrial Revolution, the Christianized family differed dramatically from the *familia* of the Greco-Roman world. The so-called "traditional, patriarchal" Victorian family that provided so much fodder for mid-twentieth-century feminist critiques (including that of the poet quoted in the introduction) was neither traditional nor patriarchal when compared to the practices that preceded Christianity.

Patriarchy or Gender Equality?

The title of this paper posed the question whether New Testament teachings are patriarchal or egalitarian. My conclusion about the patriarchal half of the question should be clear. The early Christian leaders opposed patriarchy, slavery, male domination, or any attempts to control or exercise power over other people, even in marriage. But were they gender equalitarians? Certainly equality of all kinds (race, class, *and* gender, according to Galatians 3:28) lies at the heart of Christian practice, but I don't find much evidence that achieving equality in itself was the *goal* of early Christian leaders. Rather, the equal and caring treatment of all believers, Jew or gentile, slave or free, male and female, was seen as one of many ingredients necessary to achieve the ultimate eschatology of union of the church with Christ.

This definition of equality would not satisfy a secular feminist, nor would secular feminism please an early Christian. In fact, the perspective promoted in Ephesians might denounce mid-twentieth century's secular liberation movements as more evidence of the "worldly" struggle for power. As believers strive to live lives that reflect an "awe of Christ," gender equality means nothing unless it is joined with submission—the abandonment of striving to exercise power over each other. In this sense, New Testament Christianity sought to create a world that relied upon the transformative capacity of living by the Spirit and, hence, one that material considerations alone can neither explain nor sustain.

Notes

1. Some scholars argue that Ephesians was not written by Paul himself, but by someone writing in his name. However, the discussion of who really wrote Ephesians is irrelevant here. Regardless of authorship, Ephesians is part of the biblical canon. Without engaging in that controversy, I will refer to Paul as its author.

2. S. Scott Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy: The Apostle Paul's Vision of a Society of Siblings," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 29, no. 2 (1999): 68–78.

3. Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

4. In a great many societies, such as in much of Asia, couples did not go out on their own but joined a preexisting, extended household.

5. Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 64.

6. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776; reprinted, New York: Modern Library, 1937), 70–71.

7. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Birth Rate: Total and for Women 15–44 Years Old," *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975).

8. Table 93, "Characteristics of Women Who Have Had a Child in the Last Year, 1995–1998," *Statistical Abstract of the United States,* retrieved on December 2005 from www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/statab/sec02.pdf. Uganda data from http://www.geographyiq.com/countries/ ug/Uganda_people.htm.

9. Becker, *Treatise on the Family,* 38; all of chap. 2.

10. When looms became heavy pieces of equipment that were rented for limited periods of time ca. eighteenth century, men did the weaving.

11. Ruth Bleier, *Science and Gender: A Critique of Biology and Its Theories on Women* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984); Becker, *Treatise on the Family,* 43 note 6.

12. Karen Sacks, *Sisters and Wives: The Past and Future of Sexual Equality* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), 93.

13. Although I'm not sure that Becker draws this conclusion in so many words, it is easy to deduce from his book. This line of reasoning is analogous to economic analyses of "firm-specific" versus general human capital. See also Margaret F. Brinig and Douglas W. Allen, "'These Boots Are Made for Walking': Why Most Divorce Filers Are Women," *American Law and Economics Association* 2, no. 1 (2000): 126–69.

14. A friend from Idaho tells a story about her parents that illustrates the possibility for struggles over cash. Her parents were cattle ranchers who depended on the annual sale of cattle for the next year's supply of cash. One year when the money came in, my friend's father got to it first and lost the entire year's profits gambling. His wife was furious. The next year, she got hold of the money first and bought herself a fur coat.

15. Even sexual dysmorphism, the tendency for males of many species to be bigger than females, makes more sense when seen in terms of feminine rather than masculine needs. Men are not larger than women because they need to be stronger to protect them; women are smaller than men to preserve scarce calories

for the requirements of pregnancy and nursing rather than supporting body mass.

16. Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy"; David deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Culture* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

17. Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminister John Knox, 1997), 76; S. Scott Bartchy, *First Century Slavery and I Corinthians 7:2* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 58; Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 151–56.

18. Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women, and Wives* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 167–68; David L. Balch, "Household Codes," in *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament,* edited by David E. Aune, Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study, No. 21 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 25.

19. Balch, "Household Codes," 26–29. Since this letter's earliest manuscript, it has been attributed to Paul. The Christian congregation to whom it is addressed lived in Ephesus, an ethnically mixed Greco-Roman city in modern Turkey. In the contemporary controversy about gender roles among evangelical Christians, the "traditionalists" or "complementarians" (as opposed to Christian feminists or equalitarians) have used Ephesians 5 and 6 to support the notion of the "chain of command" (with God over man, man over his wife, and the couple together over their children), an idea with which the Greeks and Romans would have been comfortable.

20. All citations from this point on of Ephesians 5 and 6 in this article are my own translation, based on Alfred Marshall, *The RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1975).

21. Andrew Christensen and Neil S. Jacobson, *Reconcilable Differences* (New York: Guilford Press, 2000), 124.

22. For example, the Revised Standard Version of Ephesians 1:22 translates a passage containing *hypotasso:* "And he has *put* all things *under* his feet."

23. F. Kinchin Smith and T. W. Melluish, *Greek,* Teach Yourself Books (series) (London: St. Paul's House, 1972), 128.

24. S. Scott Bartchy, "Jesus, Power, and Gender Roles," Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, Summer 1994; audiocassette SL94-190 in my possession.

25. I draw heavily on Laurence R. Iannaccone, "Women and the Word of God," 1980, unpublished typescript, for his insightful analysis of the slave/master, child/father, wife/husband relationships.

26. Bartchy, *First Century Slavery and I Corinthians 7:21,* 47.

27. Ibid. Bartchy recounts the story of the heir to the throne of a tributary kingdom voluntarily entering slavery because it was better to be a Roman citizen than king of a lesser realm.

28. A common pagan practice was to "expose" or abandon unwanted infants.

Many of these children died, but some were picked up by slave traders and raised as slaves. Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World,* 65; and Bartchy, *First Century Slavery and I Corinthians 7:21,* 45. Prostitution was a common fate of these children.

29. Elsewhere Paul instructs Christians not to sell themselves into slavery (1 Cor. 7:23), equates slave traders with murderers (1 Tim. 1:9–11), and strongly urges a Christian master to free his slave and accept him back as a brother (Philemon).

30. Bartchy, "Jesus, Power, and Gender Roles."

31. Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68.

32. This ambiguous phrase has been interpreted a number of ways. For example, Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World,* 184, believe that Paul was telling wives and slaves to submit to their master as if he were the Lord. Finding this directive unacceptable and inconsistent with Paul's other writings, they therefore dismiss the letter to the Ephesians as the work of a "deutero-Paul," i.e., a false Paul who wrote in imitation of the original.

33. Richard Cervin, "Does *kephale* (Head) Mean 'Source' or 'Authority over' in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal," *Trinity Journal* 10, NS 1 (1989). *Kephale* appears to have acquired this metaphorical meaning of "ruler" later, although Cervin notes that, while a modern Greek speaker agreed that *kephale* could mean "top authority" in modern Greek, he thought it sounded "a little funny." Ibid., 19 note 29.

34. Brian Neuschwander, "Women as 'Master of the House,'" *Priscilla Papers* 14, no. 3 (Summer 2000), retrieved on December 2005 from http://www.equalitydepot.com/browseproducts/Priscilla-Papers-Volume-14–Issue-3.html.

35. Cervin, "Does *kephale* (Head) Mean," 19.

36. Heinrich Schlier, "Anakephalaiomai," in *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* edited by Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1964), 681–82.

37. DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Culture,* 140–41, writes, "The tendency of New Testament authors to speak of Jesus as 'Savior' is also in keeping with his role as benefactor, for the term was applied as an honorary term to great and powerful figures who brought a city deliverance from an enemy, provided famine relief and removed other threats to the well-being and stability of a group of people."

38. "J. C. Russell (1958) estimated that there were 131 males per 100 females in the city of Rome, and 140 males per 100 females in Italy, Asia Minor, and North Africa." Quoted in Stark, *The Rise of Christianity,* 97; see also 105.

39. Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68. Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, A History: From Obedience to Intimacy or How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York: Viking, 2005), 65, 73, 83, notes that many affectionate letters between Ro-

man husbands and wives have survived (82) but that the "emphasis on mutual harmony and love in Rome was nothing like the mutuality that most modern people expect in marriage," a fact that Coontz partially attributes to the widespread acceptance of promiscuity on the part of husbands (82). She cites a funeral oration in which a widower acknowledges that long marriages ended by death rather than divorce were rare (80). See also Stark, *The Rise of Christianity,* 122. Stark cites Roman censor Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus, who noted that many men resisted marriage, as "we cannot have a really harmonious life with our wives." Stark then quotes Beryl Rawson: "One theme that recurs in Latin literature is that wives are difficult and therefore men do not care much for marriage" (117). For the contrasting and overriding importance of ties between siblings in Rome, see David DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 166–70.

40. See Stark, *The Rise of Christianity,* 117 (prostitution); 104 (pressure on widows to remarry); Coontz, *Marriage: A History,* 65, 80 (frequency of divorce and remarriage); J.P.V.D Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits* (New York, Barnes and Noble Books, 1962) (on ease of divorce in late Roman Republic); Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World,* 62 (commonness of divorce). Augustus passed laws forcing widows and divorced women to remarry or face substantial fines. Balsdon, *Roman Women,* 221.

41. Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68; Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World,* 57. The absolute right of fathers (*patria potestas*) was a fundamental principle of Roman law. See also Coontz, *Marriage: A History,* 78 (on fathers' discretion to raise or expose a newborn). She continues: "Sons as well as daughters remained under their father's power until he died. So did *their* sons and daughters. A man gained the rights of a father only after his own father died. The word *familia* encompassed everyone under the patriarch's authority or attached to his household. It even included slaves and freedmen who bore the family names of their former owner" (79). The patrician heads of households "were not *in* families; they ruled *over* them" (79). A marriage entered into without the father's consent was not valid (79).

42. For examples of such reasoning, see Wayne Gruden and others associated with the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, www.cbmw.org. See also their book, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood,* edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossways Books, 1991).

43. Gordon D. Fee, "The Cultural Context of Ephesians 5:18–6:9," *Priscilla Papers* 16, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 7.

44. James Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology,* 94 (July 1988): 95–120; and Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

45. Stark, *The Rise of Christianity,* in general, esp. 74–75, 165, 212. However, Laurence R. Iannaccone in a personal conversation, pointed out that one problem with the "spiritual capital" is that "spiritual" encompasses an overly broad range of behaviors and practices. I once read a magazine article on women's use of time that classified activities such as gardening, reading, or going to the movies as "spiritual" pursuits. English speakers often use "spiritual" to mean the opposite of physical or material, but such a definition is impossible to operationalize. For "spiritual capital" to have a beneficial effect, content must matter. After all, it is not as if the Romans did not hold spiritual values or have morals. The obedience of all members of a family to the patrician was the height of Roman morality. In the New Testament, however, "the Spirit" refers solely to God's spirit. This is a much narrower range of "spiritual goods."

46. Becker, *A Treatise on the Family,* 192–94.

47. Laurence R. Iannaccone, private correspondence, 2005.

CELEBRATING FORTY YEARS

Retrospection and Assessment

Levi Peterson

OUR READERS MAY RECALL the announcement of our commemoration of *Dialogue*'s fortieth year in our last issue. In keeping with that announcement, we publish here two retrospective statements from earlier editors of the journal. One is a brief editorial by Robert A. Rees, published in 1974 in defense of a controversial issue on doctrine regarding persons of black descent. The other is a summary by Mary Lythgoe Bradford as she relinquished her editorship to Jack and Linda Newell in 1982. Other reflections on *Dialogue* by former editors, board members, or contributors will follow in later issues.

Also in keeping with our announcement, we publish here a sobering personal assessment by Molly McLellan Bennion of the status and experience of Mormon women in the Church today. We chose to feature women in the Church as a part of our observance of *Dialogue's* fortieth year because no fewer than four past issues of the journal were devoted entirely to that topic,[1] to say nothing of single articles and essays on the topic in many other issues. Other reflections and assessments on the subject will follow in later issues this year. In question is whether the attention paid to this subject by *Dialogue* and other forums of similar bent has had an ameliorating effect on the status of women in the Church.

Note

1. Vol. 6, no. 2 (Summer 1971); Vol. 14, no. 4 (Winter 1981); Vol. 23, no. 3 (Fall 1990); and Vol. 36, no. 3 (Fall 2003).

The Possibilities of Dialogue

Robert A. Rees

First published in Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought *9, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 4–5.*

The most important thing about a man is what he thinks; the next important, his contact–giving and taking–with the thoughts of others. –Hugh Nibley

In a remarkable essay entitled "Beyond Politics" in a recent issue of *BYU Studies,* Hugh Nibley makes an exciting observation: God not only desires a free discussion with [his children], he encourages it. Further, it is an essential part of his modus operandi for our return to his presence. In his own translation of John 1:1, Nibley illustrates how indispensable this concept was to the very order of things: "In the beginning was the *Logos* [counsel, discussion], and the *Logos* was in the presence of God, and all things were done according to it . . ."[1]

Nibley then points out that Satan was not cast out of heaven for disagreeing with God, but for refusing to continue in a free discussion and examination of ideas and by resorting to violence in an attempt to get his own way and enforce his ideas on others. Nibley contrasts Satan with such prophets as Abraham and Enoch who entered into vigorous dialogue with God over things they did not understand or thought unfair. He says, "God did not hold it against these men that they questioned him, but loved them for it: it was because they were the friends of men, even at what they thought was the terrible risk of offending him, that they became the friends of God."[2]

It is clear from the scriptures that God not only invites our free discussion with him ("Come now, and let us reason together," he says [Isa.

1:18]), but expects us to enter into free discussion with one another, especially on those subjects which are of ultimate concern to us.

It was in the belief that such discussion was vital to Mormonism that *Dialogue* was established in 1966. As Wesley Johnson said in his introductory editorial in the first issue, one of the purposes of *Dialogue* was "to help Mormons and their neighbors develop understanding and concern for each other through an exchange of ideas; and perhaps most important of all, to help Mormons develop their identity, uniqueness, and sense of purpose by expressing their spiritual heritage and moral vision to the community of man."[3]

Dialogue is committed to the belief that where people have an opportunity freely to enter into discussion with one another, where ideas can be presented and challenged without fear of reprisals or intimidation, where brothers and sisters as well as friends and neighbors can talk and listen to one another, not only is there a greater opportunity for increased understanding, but also for new discovery. Such dialogue has the possibility of expanding our minds and spirits, of enlightening us.

To be fearful of such dialogue is to be fearful of ourselves, and yet it is clear that many in the Mormon community have such fear. A good illustration of this fact was the experience we had with the special issue of *Dialogue* dealing with the LDS Church's banning men of African descent from being ordained to the priesthood, which included Lester Bush's important historical study documenting that this policy developed, not from a specific revelation, but from a variety of social and personal forces after Joseph Smith's death.[4] When we were planning that issue, there were those who felt that the material to be included in it should not be published. One prominent Mormon scholar remarked that, while the material was factual, it would be better if people did not know of it. Some warned that there could be dire personal consequences for those of us involved in the editing and management of *Dialogue* if we proceeded with publication.

The issue was handled, we feel, openly and responsibly. Prior to publication Bush showed his article to two General Authorities, discussed it with them, and told them of his plans to submit it to *Dialogue*. In addition, he furnished them and the Church Historian's office with a compilation of all his research and background material. Mormon historians who saw the article in draft form praised its thoroughness and objectivity. The fact that it shared the Mormon History Association's prize for the best article

published in 1973 (as well as *Dialogue*'s first prize for Social Literature) speaks well of its soundness.

We did not print Bush's article because we agreed or disagreed with it, but rather because we felt it was an extremely important piece of historical research on a subject of great moment. Due to the controversial nature of the subject matter and in keeping with our general editorial philosophy, we invited three scholars to respond to Bush. The exchange is, we feel, the most significant public discussion of this subject in the history of the Church.

The effect of our publishing this exchange was to clarify many points of misunderstanding and dispel much of the myth that has circulated in the Church regarding the Negro doctrine, and, further, to put the discussion of this subject on a more rational (and hopefully more spiritual) level. Hugh Nibley, who was one of the respondents to Bush, defended the discussion in these words: "Though the mind of the Lord is confirmed by an imponderable feeling, one is required, before asking of the Lord and receiving that feeling, to exercise his own wits to the fullest, so that there must be place for the fullest discussion and explanation in the light of the Scriptures or any other relevant information."[5]

We rehearse all this here because it illustrates *Dialogue*'s *raison d'être.* We are committed to the proposition that by reasoning together we have nothing to lose and much to gain, that where free discussion abounds truth will be better served. *Dialogue* exists as a forum with possibilities for enlightenment. Those possibilities are enhanced when there is an unconstrained climate for expression and exchange of ideas and feelings. We are committed to the belief that one of the chief responsibilities of the gift of free agency is that we use our minds and spirits to search for and embrace truth. This involves responsibly questioning, exploring, and challenging—ourselves, each other, and, perhaps at times, even God.

Notes

1. Hugh Nibley, "Beyond Politics," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 1 (Autumn 1974): 5; brackets his.

2. Ibid., 6.

3. G. Wesley Johnson, "Editorial Preface," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1966): 7.

4. Lester E. Bush Jr., "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," 8, no. 1 (Spring 1973): 11–68. See also his own account of this experience: Lester Bush, "Writing 'Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview'

(1973): Context and Reflections, 1998," *Journal of Mormon History* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 229–71.

5. Hugh Nibley, "The Best Possible Test," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1973): 74.

Famous Last Words, or Through the Correspondence Files

Mary L. Bradford

First published in Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought *15, no. 2 (Summer 1982): 11–21.*

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, I have been engaged in various dialogues best understood by a quick trip through the editorial correspondence files, a sort of diary (or dia-log) of my term as editor. In that fragmentary record I grope for a synthesis that eludes me. Whenever someone politely asks me what kind of journal *Dialogue* is, I usually fall back on words like *quarterly, intellectual,* and *scholarly.*

But I am never satisfied with that description. What I would really like to do is put together a paradox, beginning with this year's Memorial Day family home evening when my husband, two sons, my daughter, and I reminisced about certain family members who had passed on. Chick and I went from there to outlining our own funeral and burial plans. (He wants the whole Tab Choir at his funeral; I want to be cremated and deposited in one of my hand-thrown pots.) At one point I picked up the red issue of *Dialogue* and began reading aloud from Claudia Bushman's "Light and Dark Thoughts on Death." She describes in loving detail the preparation she and her sisters made for their mother's funeral—the sewing of the clothes, the dressing of the body. I found that I was crying as I read, for all the world as if I had not been the one to shepherd the article through its several stages of the publication process. Claudia herself had once chided me for what she felt was undue emphasis on the personal voice, announcing her own intention to avoid such unworthy self-disclosure. Yet here was Claudia writing in this scholarly intellectual journal

about one of the most intimate of all experiences, and here was I weeping as I read it.

I don't like to think of myself as the kind of critic who pronounces something good if it makes her laugh or cry, but I can't help getting personal about the experience of taking *Dialogue* into my home and nurturing it for six years. When I think of Claudia and the countless others who wrote for it or worked on it (sometimes against their better judgment), I feel such a combination of pain, guilt, elation, joy, regret, and fatigue that to describe *Dialogue* as an intellectual scholarly journal is just not good enough. And when I consider the passion and the energy that went into the founding of it and its continuance for fifteen years, I can only think of another friend of mine who once cried out in frustration, "I must worship in my mind!" Worship is emotional, spiritual, passionate—and yes—intellectual. So is this enterprise called *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.*

As I look back through the years by reading back through the files, I hear a whole collection of dialogues, perhaps beginning with my father's rather puzzled question, intoned when he first heard of my ascendancy to the editorship: "Why did they pick you?"

This question has never been answered to anyone's satisfaction—certainly not mine. When Bob Rees and the other two members of his executive committee called me from L. A. one summer midnight in 1976 and I put the question to them, Bob said, "Because you have so many friends there who will help you."

This didn't seem a good enough reason to shoulder such a momentous burden, so I took him up on his offer to fly to L. A., to be entertained at the homes of the executive committee. I met with the volunteers, visited the office—I even sat in Fran and Tom Anderson's jacuzzi. When I returned home, I received a follow-up call from Tom, the business manager. "Mary, you didn't ask any of the right questions." How could I? I didn't know enough to ask questions. I was dazzled—dazzled by the southern California sun and the heady notion that the journal on which I had served for so many years might be entrusted to me. It seemed like a call—it was a call—a conference call in the middle of the night from three men. How could I resist? But it was also an opportunity to reach beyond myself, and an opportunity to work with some of the most gifted people in the Church. When I later asked Bob Rees what he had enjoyed most during his term as editor, he replied, "The people."

But I was not ready. I would have to talk to some of these people—especially to my own family.

"I like thinking about you and what you're doing and Chick and what he is doing–that unified ambivalence." (Letter from Vivien Olsen, December 1976)

After the call from L.A., panic set in. I just assumed that my husband would save me. He was after all my bishop; we still had three children very much at home; I was working practically fulltime teaching for the government, and I was traveling quite a bit. I told Chick what an impossible thing it would be for us, describing in detail the pros and cons as I only dimly understood them. He listened politely and said nothing. After my investigative trip to L.A., we went to dinner at our favorite French restaurant—on me. He let me tell him all about the trip. I lamented that I was already filling several impossible roles—wife of a bishop, mother of teenagers, government gobbledygook eradicator. Why not take on the *possible* for a change? He listened sympathetically and said nothing.

A bit miffed, I went on to interview possible volunteers. Lester Bush and Alice Pottmyer seemed to appear magically without being recruited. I had worked with Lester on his groundbreaking article: "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," 8, no. 1 (Spring 1973): 11–68. I felt close to his family. Alice was the editor of our ward newsletter, and I knew of her considerable experience in publishing before her marriage. Royal Shipp took me to lunch, presented several persuasive arguments on why *Dialogue* needed *me*, and volunteered as business manager. (Later when I asked my mentor Lowell Bennion for advice, he said, "Take it only if you can turn over the business part to somebody else.")

After calling forty or fifty other close friends and relatives, I again approached Chick. "I think we would have to move the office into our home. What do you think of that?" He said, "Well, the bishop's office upstairs—the *Dialogue* office downstairs—celestial, telestial." I went off muttering to myself. What was I doing—setting up a cottage industry?

Later Chick admitted that he had hoped I would finally refuse, but he hadn't been able to bring himself to exercise such unrighteous dominion by presuming to advise me on such an important matter. He was to be repaid for this remarkable act of forbearance by becoming really attached to the Thursday night *Dialogue* crowd and the product they helped create.

As for our children, they grew up during the *Dialogue* years. Some of

their more difficult teenage dramas were enacted around the *Dialogue* schedule. In a rebellious mood, Lorraine once cried out, "I will never be an editor as long as I live. I think it's stupid." But she became a good summer secretary-editorial assistant. Scott was an excellent proofreader, and Stephen our eldest, introduced himself to classes at BYU as "Son of *Dialogue*." (I think it only fitting that the Son of *Dialogue* was chosen to present the BYU Honors Professor of the Year Award to Eugene England, Father of *Dialogue*.)

"Dialogue now seems more like a beehive than a marathon" (Letter from George D. Smith, April 1978).

"The main reason we are solvent is not the number of subscriptions but the willingness of our volunteers to kill themselves off saving us money. With Dialogue in my house, a couple of paid part-timers (paid very little, I might add) and me working night and day, we can safely say that Dialogue comes out of our hides" (Letter to Jill Mulvay Derr, April 1981).

Comprised of as many as forty or as few as two, our volunteer organization was always open to anyone professing the slightest interest in our enterprise. Readers from afar could look us up for an evening; newly married couples moving into the area could call on us for an instant support group; single men and women could stop worrying about marriage for awhile and devote themselves to our nonsexist activities; people from all professions—doctors, lawyers, housewives, accountants, chemists, computer freaks—anybody was welcome to stuff envelopes or proofread copy. In fact the stuffing parties were some of our more memorable evenings. We could sit around and chew on M&M's and Church gossip. One night Gene Kovalenko flew in from California and serenaded us with Russian folk songs while we readied the renewals for mailing. We sponsored several "firesides" too—Mark Leone with the inside story of his *Roots of Modern Mormonism;* William Collins, writer and librarian from the B'hai faith in Haifa; Leonard Arrington and other historians on eastern tours; editors from other publications—Roy Branson and crew of the Seventh-day Adventist quarterly *Spectrum,* past editors of *Dialogue* like Gene England, Wes Johnson, Bob Rees, and Gordon Thomasson; and present editors of *Sunstone, Exponent II,* and *Utah Holiday.* There was such a variety of meetings with such people that we became known as the *Dialogue* salon.

A real bonus was the opportunity to know our supporters in the Reorganization or RLDS Church (now Community of Christ). Some of them served on our board. Others wrote for us: Paul Edwards, Bill Russell, Alma Blair, Claire Vlahos, Howard Booth, and others. Our relationship with them was cemented by our trips to the Mormon History Association's annual meetings in Kirtland, Lamoni, and Palmyra, delightful excursions that opened our eyes to the shared heritage outside our own circle.

"Working with an all-volunteer group is really challenging, especially when you have a professional-looking product to put out. The other day two other women and I went to visit a printer's establishment–Alice Pottmyer, our publications specialist, and Judy McConkie, our art editor. The man got almost through his tour of the plant before he told us how important it would be to bring our bosses to see it too. He turned and said, 'You do have bosses, don't you?' We looked at each other a minute, then pulled ourselves up to our full height and said, 'We are *the bosses!'"* (Letter to Carolyn Person, July 1976).

Not only was it difficult to convince ourselves that we were really in charge, it was difficult to know how to manage so much good help. After one particularly grueling evening in which about thirty of us sat around and debated policy and procedure, Royal took me aside for a bit of advice. "Mary, this many people can't make decisions. You can listen to all their ideas, but only a few can actually decide." From then on, we tried to organize around some division of labor. Though our group seldom disagreed on anything of importance, we did decide that, since the work was being done out of my home with my name on the masthead as editor and on the legal papers as president of the corporation, the buck would have to stop with me. But it was also decided that anybody willing to work could speak up about anything. Volunteers read manuscripts, copy-edited, proofread, typed, stuffed envelopes, and gradually sorted themselves into various specialties. Our group turned over several times, but several stayed on the board after moving away, and others learned enough from the experience to better their careers because of it.

I always knew, however, that the volunteers were vastly overqualified for the work and that I would never really be able to take full advantage of their skills. This was especially true of our paid workers—the managing editor, the administrative secretaries, the artists, the BYU interns. We ex-

pected them to do something of everything with precious little direction from anybody. When I think of Benita Brown and Sandra Straubhaar working on advanced degrees (Sandy finished her Ph.D. while working for us), I can't help but feel a bit guilty. Betty Balcom performed such a variety of professional duties that we finally gave her the title "Renaissance Woman."

Our group also thrived because of the persistence of our five-member executive committee—which we grew to think of as the perfect team. Lester and I created a planning and editing approach that I can only describe as a superlative friendship. Our talents and interests contrasted but blended. Alice's photographic memory, her delight in the daily flow of life, and her ability to recognize the importance of certain tasks that others deemed unimportant kept the office going. Royal's good sense and Dave Stewart's legal mind kept us out of many a scrape. During our quarterly meetings after dealing with the latest monetary crisis and reporting on the next issue, we liked to fantasize about the future. After several of these sessions, we came to think of ourselves as a "transitional" group—or to paraphrase the Bradford of Plymouth Colony, "even as stepping stones unto others for the performing of so great a work." We often marveled that we were having to run so hard just to stay in one place, but we reasoned that we were making it possible for the next group to lift *Dialogue* to a truly professional level with a real office and real money.

"Bob Rees's response to the media issue was luke to say the least. He marked the errors in his copy and sent it back with the words, 'You must have learned a lot.'. . . An artist friend says it looks as if it had been designed by a committee. Well, it was!" (Letter to Bill Loftus, September 1977).

Even though the first issue to be completed by our group (Vol. 10, No. 3) looked tacky, there was something heady about the fact that it was our very own issue with articles we had planned, solicited, even written ourselves. We had actually sat around a table and designed and pasted it up. Karen Moloney, our first BYU intern, was to describe the "curious pleasure of seeing ideas turned into print." Although the issue was embarrassing in many ways, it helped turn our fledging group into a cohesive family, and we even today feel affection for our deformed child.

"We believe that the main thing is to bring out the magazine regularly, boo-boos and all" (Letter to Bill Loftus, September 1977).

As we struggled to learn our craft, we sometimes cursed the standards *Dialogue* had set for itself. "Why," we exclaimed, "did Gene and Wes and the others have to start so high on the hog?" Why hadn't they patterned *Dialogue* after the *Reader's Digest* instead of the *American Scholar?* Why the perfect binding, the high-quality paper, the glossy covers, and the fine art? It went against nature to be producing such a silk purse on such a shoestring. We spent hours studying the work of previous editors lined up on the family room shelves. We envied Rees his knack with art; we envied Gene and Wes their chance to be first in so many ways. We talked into the night about articles that had made a difference in our lives, and finally we began to realize that we too could set standards and build on them. They weren't too different from past standards, but we gradually learned to forgive ourselves for our growing pains—even for the typos that cropped up like buzzing insects no matter how many times we proofread.

Our ability to do increased as our numbers diminished, and we were able to enjoy what we were doing. We found that our main obsession was to work with those writers who were willing to make the sacrifices necessary to publish in the "unsponsored sector."

"It is too bad you are so averse to editorial suggestions. It may be news to you that the best novelists—as well as the popular authors on the newstands—have all been edited, sometimes drastically, though presumably with the author's permission. . . . Sometimes an editor can help you tell your story better" (Letter to hopeful writer, September 1981).

"At your request, we are returning your manuscript. You were right: it is not Dialogue material" (Letter to another hopeful writer, June 1979).

Writing rejection letters was the most painful part of my job. I was so doubtful of my own abilities as a critic and yet so anxious to develop writers that I sometimes wrote letters that were not only curt but cruel. In rereading these letters, I find that I also sounded deceptively confident and aggressive. And I was always apologizing: "It is really embarrassing to have to write and tell you that we seem to have lost your poems," or "I apologize for the editorial wheels. They grind exceedingly fine, but they grind ex-

ceedingly slow." I found that some of the worst moments came when I found myself rejecting work I had actually solicited.

Most of the rejected took it in good part, but the following response from one writer whose solicited review was rejected probably expresses the feelings of many others: "You have put me to a good deal of trouble and effort for nothing and you wasted a good deal of my time. My time is not yours to play games with, and I'm afraid I do resent your having decided that it was." Fortunately, for every letter like that one—branded on my conscience with a hot iron—there were others like this from Robert Egbert: "When an editor writes a letter of rejection, I'm sure she must assume that receipt of that letter will bring distress and at least mild depression to the author. For me, the opposite was true. Though I was disappointed that you did not accept my story, I was so pleased with your other comments and with your useful analysis that I have been on a day-long high."

Various staff members kept trying to help me with the task of writing rejection letters, and some of them were very good at it—Lester, for instance, and Sandy Straubhaar. One night Greg Prince appeared, took a look at the manuscripts sitting in the bin by my desk and said, "I suppose you think if you leave these here long enough, they will ripen into something wonderful?" He then proceeded to compose a few pithy paragraphs which he assured me I could use in form letters of rejection. Somehow I could never bring myself to do it. It now seems to me that it is a good deal kinder to send a well-written, good-natured rejection letter than to agonize over custom-designed letters sent too little and too late.

I suppose it was natural that I would agonize most over fiction and poetry. I think that in some cases we may have succeeded in actually causing a work to disappear by requiring too many revisions. Better to publish an imperfect story in the cause of keeping the creative process alive than require the author to do so much revision that his work goes up in a cloud of blue smoke. Former board member Kevin Barnhurst assures me that I shouldn't worry—that words are written on paper, not carved in stone, and that the author can always go back and retrieve an earlier draft. But I am unconvinced. Won't the author lose heart?

"I was surprised at the number of reactions to my piece in Dialogue. For a magazine with limited and specialized circulation, Dialogue certainly seems to be getting around" (Letter from Merlo Pusey, March 1977).

Merlo Pusey's comment expresses the reality that *Dialogue* is read by a far larger number than those who actually pay for it. I call these "shadow readers." These are they who check it out at the library (sometimes failing to return it), borrow it from friends, or otherwise "see" it and remark on it. To them reading is a God-given right, like breathing, so they fail to make the connection between reading and money. Because of the generosity in the lay-church mentality, because of the fact that many Church publications are subsidized, and because *Dialogue* is expensive by Church standards, many readers simply will never make the connection. I understand and sympathize with that mentality myself. I have to be physically restrained by my staff from giving *Dialogue* away as I have gradually given away my personal library over the years. But I have finally overcome my shyness at asking for money for *Dialogue*. I am no longer shy about mentioning it at church. If we can raise food at the stake farm, why can't we raise food for the mind?

"Don't give up on me, honeybun. I haven't given up on you, even though I feel you are a hostage of the establishment" (Letter from Sam Taylor, March 3, 1981).

"Well, I should keep my big mouf shut. I'd no sooner mailed off my churlish note to you than the latest Dialogue arrived–and it was exactly what I'd been screaming for. Once again the mag was a journal of Mormon thought. As such, long may it wave" (Letter from Sam Taylor, March 17, 1981).

Vivien Olsen's characterization of my relationship with my husband as "unified ambivalence" seems to apply to readers' perceptions of *Dialogue*. We never knew whether we were being perceived as Iron Rodders or Liahonas. After writing to a lapsed subscriber to ask why he had departed from the fold, I received this reply: "I cancelled because you have been avoiding controversy." Another reader penned this note on his renewal notice: "Please save yourselves some money and send no more notes. Your publication lately is so similar to official Church publications that I can't tell the difference." Of course the minute we published material that could be called "controversial"–as in the Sonia Johnson articles–we were pronounced a "sounding board for apostates." One letter, published in *Sunstone*, inducted us into the "unholy triad" along with *Sunstone* and *Exponent II*. In my response I stated, and I still believe, that "we are dedicated to free inquiry within the boundaries of decency and documentation. In

fact, we believe so profoundly in the gospel of Jesus Christ that we trust it to withstand inquiry from such as we."

This constant juggling act, this keeping the faith while keeping on, was always difficult and we were not always adept at it. On the whole, though, we held our own.

Many in the Church publishing world seem unable to make distinctions among the various publications. Some actually think of us as competition for the *Deseret News* and other profit-making periodicals.

Our journal is difficult to summarize, as I have already said. When a prospective reader asks for a sample copy, we are often at a loss to know what to choose. Should we send him or her the one with the First Vision on the cover and the Sacred Grove inside or the Sonia Johnson issue? *Dialogue* needs to be read over a period of time. It should be seen in the aggregate before a judgment can be made. Many times our readers spoke from their own emotional needs when they wrote of our objectivity or lack of it. I am always comforted, however, by the many thinking Mormons who are unafraid to face diversity of opinion and are not taken in by labels. I am fond of the Arrington-Bitton analysis of the Liahona-Iron Rod dichotomy in *The Mormon Experience:* "Conservative Mormons include many highly educated individuals who emphasize strong reliance on the wording of scripture, the authoritative structure of church government, and a church-centered social system. Liberals emphasize the boldness and innovative character of the Restoration, faith in the essential goodness of man and his possibilities of eternal progression, and the church's commitment to education and the resulting emphasis on rationality. The checks and balances give Mormonism both stability and progressivism."[1]

"We all know what happened in June 1978. I like to think some of us 'heretics' helped bring the announcement about. . . . God must love heretics. His Son was the greatest" (Letter from John Fitzgerald, July 1978).

The question of whether or not we should publish the work of "heretics" and other apostates was always being debated among us and our readers. Though we have no intention of becoming a sounding board for apostates or anyone else with an ax to grind, we think active Church members might have something to learn from those who leave, if only the reason for their leaving. Is it worthwhile to engage in dialogue with only those with whom we already agree?

But of course balance is important—and one person's balance may be another person's heresy. Believing that objectivity is the hobgoblin of weak minds, we nonetheless tried to be fair to various thinkers within the Liahona-Iron Rod dichotomy. The most controversial issue published during my tenure was the one carrying interviews with both Sonia Johnson and Fawn Brodie. Although it was almost accidental and coincidental that the two appeared together, we did think it instructive to run them. I prefaced this issue with a very carefully written page outlining the difficulties and the logistics of our decision to publish, which as far as I can tell, went unread. Although the issue is very popular, I am still asked the question, "Why did you have to deal with the Sonia Johnson case at all? Why not let it die?" As if we could in good conscience ignore the most sensational excommunication in recent history with its attendant effect on the Church's public image and the questions it raised about Church trials and women's rights!

"I think this is an exciting time to be the editor of Dialogue, knowing as I do how the previous editors suffered over the black problem. Surely this [revelation] will release much energy in the church, creative and otherwise" (Letter to Stanton Hall, June 1978).

If this life is indeed a testing ground, certainly my life with *Dialogue* has been an impressive test for me. I have had to marshal every resource of mind and heart in order to do my job, and certainly working on *Dialogue* has released energies I didn't know I had. But it has also led to the suppression of certain talents I thought I had. For instance, I have not written a poem worth showing to anybody since I first took the helm. It seems that I can't write poetry and edit, too. A letter from one of my pen pals, Mary Jane Heatherington, expresses the problem:

> I've got this desk that used to be a teacher's desk. . . . It's got one of those liftup drawers where you have your typewriter down inside and the desk is flat on top. When you pull up on the handle, the typewriter comes rising out of the bowels of the desk all ready for action. Every time I raise up the door and get my typewriter out, it reminds me of the Green Hornet—bar—ooo—mmm! But mostly I get depressed and put her back when I can't get her to do right. I've been in a snit for months, not writing anything.

I replied that "my typewriter is always sitting out—a silent reproach

as I glide by. I can't even get it to disappear. It simply reminds me of my lost dreams, my sleeping ambitions."

I suppose that I realized I was putting certain ambitions on the back burner, but I also realized the possibility of becoming a creative editor as well as a creative writer. I soon discovered the same satisfaction when a new issue comes off the press as I would have felt if I had written the whole thing myself; more so, in fact, because the issue represents the work of so many other good minds I have helped into print. So, although I never did live up to all my own ambitions for myself, I revel in the satisfaction I used to feel in the classroom with its feedback from inquiring minds. I also took delight in that gift of friendship Bob Rees had mentioned. I call it a gift because I believe it is just that—an undeserved gift bestowed by a kindly God. No matter how difficult the tasks, how cross and irritable I became, no matter how inefficient and uncommunicative, how downright cantankerous I was, my friends always came forward whenever there was work to be done and even when I just needed moral support or a touch of therapy. If certain talents of mine have gone underground, I do not mourn them.

"I am sorry that you are thinking of giving Dialogue up. The healthy thing which Dialogue has always stood for—an independent, intelligent, cultivated but ultimately faithful study of Mormonism—is at stake. The editor of Dialogue should be neither too orthodox nor too liberal. A precise mixture of both qualities is essential" (Letter from Levi Peterson, August 1981).

During the last two years or so, I began noticing certain alarming traits in myself. Not only was I fatigued and restless, but I had taken to referring to *Dialogue* as "*my* journal" and its board as "*my* board." The fact that Stephen could introduce himself as "son of *Dialogue*" was probably only a harbinger of things to come. Soon I would lose all touch with reality and grow into one of those obnoxious characters who can't tell the difference between herself and her job. It was time to quit.

But how? One of the weaknesses in our system seemed to be that retiring editors must go out and seek their own replacements. So I called the executive committee together and asked if any of them wished to take it over. They assured me that they were as ready as I to pass on the torch. Thus began the research that would lead us to decide it was time to move *Dialogue* to Utah.

This was heresy to some. Several of our staff and many readers were adamantly opposed to settling in the center stake. I myself had been one of those who felt I could do a better job at a comfortable distance from the rumor mills of Utah. We were dedicated also to the ideal of dispersing ourselves enough so that we could more effectively "examine the relevance of religion to secular life." Washington, D.C., had been a good vantage point for "point" men and women to stand, being a crossroads and a network for Mormons and those interested in studying Mormons. But continuing financial problems kept reminding us that we would need to publish where publishing was less expensive and where there might be a chance to move it out of our homes and more nearly into the professional marketplace. Since most of our subscribers and many of our writers are still in Utah and neighboring California, we reasoned that perhaps the time had come to try it in Utah. When I asked Bob Rees's opinion, he said, "Is it time for *Dialogue* to go home?"

Of course, the primary consideration was and always would be the caliber of volunteers who would agree to take it over. Since we are unable to advertise for paid professional labor, we would count on the belief that the spirit of *Dialogue* still lives, a spirit of unstinting dedication to an ideal.

I thought. I made lists. I prayed. And one morning I felt inspired to call Fred Esplin, one of *Dialogue*'s faithful board members. I asked him if he would agree to head up a search committee composed of other faithful board members in Utah. Fred's low-key, friendly personality, his wide contacts, and his excellent organizing skills were just what we needed. So with the aid of attorney Randy Mackey and other long-time supporters, he formed a research committee and finance committee to find candidates and make recommendations. When I arrived in Utah three months later, we had a good list of prospective editors and some reasonable printing and office bids. The work that went into these lists convinced me that *Dialogue*'s spirit was still alive and well in Utah.

"After we checked into the Ramada Inn in Ogden, we were greeted by Paul Edwards and Doug Alder. Doug said, 'Mary, you really pulled off a coup–getting the Newells–they're wonderful!'" (Letter to Carole Lansdowne describing the MHA meeting, May 1982).

In the age of the family, the choice of a husband-wife team as *Dialogue*'s co-editors seems inspired. When I interviewed the Newells, they

had only one stipulation—that Lavina Fielding Anderson come with them. When Fred and Randy agreed to stay on, joined by Allen Roberts, *Sunstone's* former co-editor, and Julie Randall, our efficient BYU intern, the new group was ready to set up an accessible office in downtown Salt Lake City. All that remained was a ritual farewell dinner to convince me that I could say good-bye without fear or anxiety. In another letter I wrote, "There is real activity and electricity being generated by the next group. I no longer worry about giving it up."

Note

1. Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 335.

A Lament

Molly McLellan Bennion

Eight times the Lord lamented that it grieved him to lose the branches of His vineyard (Jac. 5). Surely it grieves him to lose the women who have left the Church or quietly disengaged from active Church involvement. It grieves me. I miss them terribly.

When I joined the Church in 1967, I had just found *Dialogue* on the shelves of a college library. That discovery profoundly influenced my decision to join the Church. Soon after, Mormon women formed study groups to explore the implications of the women's movement on their religious lives, and scholars mined the rich history of nineteenth-century Mormon women. Sunstone started its symposia, and we met and dialogued with the researchers, thinkers, and writers enriching and exciting us all. I brought Mormon scholars to my Houston home where friends and strangers gathered to explore gospel doctrines and Church history. Later in Seattle, I began chairing a satellite Sunstone Symposium, and 250 people came. Women organized national and regional retreats, attracting many active Mormon women eager to discuss the female and the gospel with strangers. For about twenty years, I felt part of a community of seekers and finders. We who needed to know, who loved to learn, and who found new questions at the end of each new answer were not alone. It was a heady time.

The headiness is gone. Today Church is the loneliest place I regularly go. Not that I don't enjoy associating with the Saints of my ward and stake. I do. I have known some of them more than eighteen years, and I know them to be honorable and good people. We have served and blessed each other, and we will no doubt continue to do so, as often out of real love as dutiful commitment. Yet I am lonely at church for I so rarely see any person—and most particularly for the narrow focus of this essay, any woman of any age—with whom I feel comfortable discussing my intellectual and gender interests. Most of those women are gone. Women who

worked tirelessly in the Church for decades are gone. Women, like my own daughter, who are raising young families are gone. Women who have just stepped out into the adult world are gone.

And it is not just a phenomenon of inner-city university wards like mine. Nationally and locally, many women of all ages are gone. The 250, half of whom were women, who once came to each Northwest Symposium have dwindled to 55. Some are still active in the Church; many are not. Some of the women who once wrote intriguing and valuable papers for the three women's issues of *Dialogue* and other Mormon publications are gone or no longer expressing themselves publicly. Perhaps they no longer consider the historical, sociological, and religious issues that compelled them two decades ago. But I do, and I need their insights to do it well. Perhaps they have silenced themselves for fear of criticism or even sanction. As I understand the scriptures, a respectful and loving fear of God is all the fear he encourages. Other fears must be minimized lest they shackle and shrink the human soul.

Some of the missing attend other churches. Some have found nontraditional spiritual outlets. Some express no interest in religious issues. But they are not the chaff. We are not better off without them. We need them. And I think they need us, but then I still believe in the godliness of Mormon doctrines and ordinances. But if I forget for a moment the importance of those ordinances, I must admit that many of the women we have lost seem to be living admirable Christian lives. The goodness of those I know personally moves me to worry more for my own salvation than for theirs, even as I believe Church activity could be a blessing to them and know they could be a blessing to us. Many I know are godly women who sincerely sought, but could not find, a home in Mormonism. Many had been born and raised in the Church and could at first not imagine life without it. So why are they gone and why are others dangling one foot out the door?

My answers must be tentative for my sample is personal and anecdotal, not scientific. I rely on my perceptions and the perceptions of others. Those conclusions are somewhat faulty, no doubt, but real enough to cause some to make the dramatic decision to leave the Church. It is time for a scientific study of the absent. Roughly 75 percent of my university-centered stake is inactive. But I want to know more than how many they are. I want to know *who* they are and, in their own words, why they are no longer with us. In the meanwhile, in the tradition of the three

women's issues of *Dialogue* and their rich assortment of short personal essays, I offer this lament for the women no longer present or honestly vocal.

Some women have found it difficult to see themselves in the Church. We all need role models. We need to see ourselves or our potential selves in our leaders. In the same way that elementary schools need some male teachers to help boys value learning too, we need female religious leaders to help us value ourselves and our religion. Those few we have are seldom seen. Their backgrounds, personalities, and strengths are never chronicled like those of male leaders. We know them little so they are less available as role models.

One of my best friends in the Church and her family of six left as she and her husband, both lifelong members, compared the respect and encouragement they perceived the Church organization giving their daughters with that which it gave their sons. The boys were as visible as their leaders whether reporting on the exciting river rafting trip or passing the sacrament. My friends felt girls were just expected to be silent and present. It wasn't a message they wanted their girls to hear so they left.

For good and ill, women are in the workplace. For most it is an economic necessity. For others it is a passion without which they do not think they can fulfill the measure of their creation. Rarely as an objective—more as a byproduct—in the workplace we are validated and encouraged. We all want to be where we feel respected, and I know women who do not feel respected at Church. Decision-making, team-building, raises, promotions, letters of commendation, and hearty praise from co-workers all feed our need to develop our talents, to make a difference, and to be recognized for our contributions. Success spurs us to embrace greater challenge and make greater contributions—until we get to church.

Inside the walls of our chapels and classrooms, most of the talents we have developed and yearn to share with our brothers and sisters seem not to be wanted. The Church encourages us to use our leadership talents in the wider community when the needs of our children are met. That's good, but it doesn't totally erase the pain of knowing that the Church itself just doesn't want the same leadership talents. Yes, we hear from the pulpit that women are valued. We just do not see that value in action often enough.

In every ward I have ever attended, some of the women who came to sacrament meeting did not attend Relief Society. Just prior to my call as a

Relief Society president, one of my past stake presidents, informed that I rarely attended Relief Society, asked me why. I explained that my choice was a painful one. On the one hand, women's college graduate that I am, I love women. I love dialoguing with women. I have real compassion for the gender-based realities and decisions of our lives. Women have been critical sources of understanding my own nature and my life. Other women have helped me understand my place in the universe better than have any men. So I missed being with the women. Yet when I attended, the cruel pressures to make my sisters "Molly (and they didn't mean me!) Mormons" and the mind-numbing boredom I suffered wounded me. Furthermore, boredom is exhausting. I want to leave Church refreshed and invigorated, healed from the wounds of one week and energized to face the challenges of the next. Instead, I join many other women in leaving my Sunday meetings weary, frustrated, demoralized, and hungry, both spiritually and intellectually. Frequently, only the sacrament and the joy of being among good people feed my spirit.

My conversation with that stake president happened twenty-five years ago. Things have changed. Some are better. Where my Relief Society president then would not help me find a part-time babysitter so I could attend law school and practice law, my Relief Society president today sends such help-wanted notices to each sister by email. But some things are worse. Then our lessons quoted women and expressly used examples from women's lives. Today we learn excellent principles by valuable exposure to modern prophets. That is good. But we must learn those principles with rarely a mention of a woman or a gender-specific challenge, experience, or blessing. Lesson after lesson bears no expressly female imprint. That makes it more difficult for some women to see themselves in the Church. That is not good. Quite comfortable with the new concept of eternal gender, I do not believe that women are just junior men. We are not the abbreviated versions possible out of a mere rib. Consequently our lives and issues cannot simply be assumed or extracted from those of men. They deserve their own space.

One of my favorite inactive sisters is a very elderly woman. As her remaining years shrink, she can no longer abide the very maleness of our meetings. Her priesthood-holding husband beat her for decades, and she is simply too uncomfortable where maleness so pervasively trumps femaleness. She longs for female faces and voices. I understand, yet I miss her perceptive comments and her intelligent wit.

But should women need role models in a religious context? Some would argue that the Lord directs priesthood holders to do just what he would do for women. They would argue that the status quo is, by definition, the work of the Lord. Whether we expect priesthood leaders always to do exactly what the Lord would for women depends on our view of the revelatory process. It does seem to be a process. Free agency usually necessitates process. The Lord works with our readiness for revelation as well as his own timetable. He is not a great puppeteer. He gives us, leader and follower alike, plenty of opportunity to grow by trial and error so that we may come to him with the right questions and answers to earn the next revelation. Programs and customs evolve with the leaders charged to administer them. It is naive to think either that any idea coming from headquarters is the Lord's dearest desire or that the suggestion of change is heresy. It is heresy to believe in the infallibility of anyone.

So if we cannot count on the Lord to force all leaders to develop policies perfectly suited to maximize the growth of each of his children, can we count on him to inspire every priesthood holder to understand, in consultation only with the Lord, any number of other men and perhaps a few women, the needs and desires of every woman he serves? Hardly. Again free agency, that most precious and frightening of doctrines, argues for more elusive and harder-fought understandings.

My husband and I have been married thirty-eight years. We love each other deeply. We each know the other better than does anyone else. Yet we are so often amazed at the new things we learn about each other. Many of those discoveries are gender based. We approach feelings and issues differently because of varying knowledge, experience, and biology.

In the heat of the women's movement, I thought there were fewer differences between men and women than I do now. Research and experience document for me that, although there are fewer differences than sexists would claim, there are some apparently biological differences no amount of equal rights would erase. Those differences do not argue against equal rights and opportunities; they just exist. *Vive la différence!* My husband and I find that biologically based differences are frequently the most difficult to anticipate and understand. It is important that we listen and try to empathize with each other. It takes love, consultation, time, and humility. If my husband's priesthood has not been sufficient to teach him my needs and desires, if he could not shortcut the hard work of understanding how best to be my partner by relying on priesthood revelation on

demand, how can I expect inspiration alone to teach priesthood leaders how best to serve women, either in general or in particular, without intensive consultation with women? Some who have left the Church did not see Church men taking the time and care to understand and serve women well.

The lack of role models and of evidence that women's input is considered at every level of decision making are not the only reasons we have lost wonderful women. Some women have left as they grew older and felt the fear of running out of time to make life count. Church meetings often seem lengthy, inefficient, repetitive, and a waste of precious time. Faced with fewer opportunities for service and heightened frustration with LDS meetings, women look for other avenues of social service.

They also look to understand and connect with God. Sometimes our institutional life fails to create a climate of spiritual seeking and finding. A spiritual malaise may be building in our ranks. Hungry for spiritual connection, some of my friends have turned to other religions and New Age systems. I see no reason not to study and borrow from those traditions to enrich our ways. If we believe there is truth in many quarters, we should be comfortable seeking that truth. But what message are we sending that convinces our sisters that they must leave to explore the new fields of spiritual awakening? There are no doubt many answers, but one may be that we have brutally truncated the source list for gospel learning. Manuals that once included source material from women, Mormon and non-Mormon, no longer do. The Church magazine is increasingly a series of articles by the Brethren, excellent in their own right, but nonetheless not female and not inclusive of other sources of wisdom. Do these changes tell us if we venture outside the scriptures and sermons from General Authorities that we are already fading from true blue? I think they do.

We also repeat the same lessons in the same ways. It's another source of the boredom that people who value life's import and brevity find so frustrating. Those oft-repeated lessons move very superficially through the scriptures on our four-year rotation. How about a year-long course on Paul, the lives of modern prophets, notable women in Church history, the women of scripture, Old and New Testament archeology, comparative religion, particular modern challenges to living a female Christian life, or any number of fascinating subjects?

Some women have left because they believe women should have the priesthood. My own view is analogous to the arguments for and against

the ERA. When my stake Relief Society president asked me "unofficially" to join sisters lobbying against the ERA, I said no. I also said no to friends lobbying for the amendment. Although I did favor the ERA, I didn't think it necessary to oppose Church policy publicly to see the positive changes I supported for women. (I also could not support, privately or publicly, participation in the lie of an "unofficial" protest group riding on a bus filled by Church request and funded by no one would say whom.) Though I thought the ERA would hasten equal rights, I believed the equal protection clause of the Constitution would do the trick. That has proved to be the case.

Just as the equal protection clause provided an alternative to the ERA, everyone's more closely living the gospel of love provides an alternative to priesthood ordination for women. Like the ERA, ordination seems like a fast track to actualized equality, but the practical effects of equality are possible without it. Having the priesthood would give some women reason to stay, but I don't believe it is necessary to ensure that women view themselves positively and have ample avenues to serve and grow.

I can believe God preferred to have men hold the priesthood at this time. I don't know why, and I will continue to pray that it be otherwise, but I don't know why not either. Practical arguments can be made for both. That list is long and would require another, much longer, essay. We could, for instance, weigh the inevitable good from using more of women's talents against the downside of exposing us all to the risk of unrighteous dominion, something we observe few people can resist. But the pros and cons of priesthood for women do not determine my conclusion that the absence of the priesthood for women should not be a reason why women should leave the Church any more than it is an excuse to dismiss and marginalize them. The point is: I don't think whether or not women hold the priesthood should make any important difference in the functioning of the Church or in our spiritual lives. Our challenge is to live the gospel, to see that, regardless of priesthood, each person is and feels loved, that each person is helped to be all she can be, and that each person has ample opportunities to share her gifts.

It is here that we are falling short. We can succeed without an extension of the priesthood to women. For example, the priesthood is necessary for ordinances, but it does not seem necessary for many teaching and administrative posts. Even if it were, women could be included in consultation and appear on every podium much more than they are now.

Women could be prominent in general conference. High counselors could often invite women to speak with them; bishops could use women as the closing speakers as often as men. Women could conduct meetings at which men presided and pass the sacrament blessed by men. Women could be used to lead special projects and exercise spiritual gifts. We could create greater symbolism and greater opportunities to serve without changing the priestly functions of the male priesthood.

I once had a bishop who understood this well. He called a woman to be his secretary and attend all bishopric meetings. He told me she was actually included to be another counselor, a voice for women, because this wise, dedicated, and highly educated man realized that, whatever his gifts and inspiration, he so often needed the instant advice of a similarly wise woman simply for the different perspective and avenues of information she brought to the table. I believe the Lord was pleased. We ban women from the councils of power in ignorance of our need for their gifts, their need to share them, and their need to see other women using their gifts. What in the status quo argues persuasively against the benefits of such a change?

My closest friend in my ward recently began attending Quaker meetings. I miss her whenever I am in church, but most poignantly when there is an empty seat beside me in Relief Society or when the seat is filled by a darling young woman who does not read Church history or theology or, for that matter, much more than a gothic novel. Of course, she may well be a finer Christian than I. I would most likely enjoy getting to know her and learning valuable lessons from her. But she cannot fill the void. I remain lonely and saddened by the loss and waste of the strong souls no longer with us.

ART

"Astonished Each Day": An Interview with Richard J Van Wagoner, Utah Artist

Levi Peterson

Note: *This interview, conducted by* Dialogue's *editor, introduces Richard J Van Wagoner, whose art is featured in this issue. Richard is a retired professor of art from Weber State University, where he and Levi sat on many a committee and council together. Richard and his wife, Renée Hodgson Van Wagoner, live in Pleasant View, Utah.*

Levi: I've heard you use the term "realistic" in relation to some of your paintings. What do you mean by it?

Richard: Possibly because I've been termed a realist by art historians at Utah's universities, I've let the label stick, but I've diverged into different interests throughout my career—some abstracts here and there, particularly during the last fifteen years in which I have worked with surrealism or what I like to call super-reality. Certainly most of the art that I've made over the years is realistic—the urban and highway paintings being the most prevalent. Perhaps someone else could describe the form of my art better than I. My work certainly could not be called naturalism (naturalism being the assumption that nature is perfect as is, so don't change anything—copy it as it is, be like a camera) because I am not interested in painting things exactly as they are. I do a lot of editing of the subjects that I paint. It comes naturally. It's just the way I work. The essence of what I've chosen to paint comes to me most of the time without thinking much

about it. That essence is often simplification or strong contrasts that help satisfy my subconscious intent.

Of course, given this approach, it's not difficult to recognize the objects in my work. I use all of the spatial devices that cause the third dimension to be effected on a two-dimensional plane. It's not difficult to recognize how these devices are used by different realists. This process becomes part of the form that allows us to recognize the artist even if there's no signature on the painting.

Levi: You've painted hundreds of scenes depicting automobiles, highways, and trains. Why your fascination with such topics?

Richard: The easy answer is because there's no other subject matter so prevalent for the average American—other than looking at the TV. It should be painted by someone. I like to paint it for lots of reasons. We could ask the question: Are autos and highways beautiful? Probably not in the typical sense of what most people consider beautiful. To me, however, this subject matter is a great opportunity to paint shapes, lines, and patterns that I find can be highly unified and realistic when composed in the right way. It offers an opportunity to paint the "now" of our lives in a powerful combination of shapes, light and dark, lines that bind the parts together and with color and values that simplify and emphasize the structure and pattern of our existence.

Levi: You have also painted landscapes and still-life pieces. I assume you see such subjects as an exercise in technique. Do you also see them as a means for expressing personal emotion?

Richard: From a teacher's point of view, at least mine, still-life painting is a necessary activity, particularly for the beginning student. A group of objects that hold still and possess the elements of design—shape, value, texture, color, line, size, and direction—makes drawing and analysis much easier for the student and the teacher. I have stashed in drawers and portfolios watercolor still-life paintings that are demos illustrating procedures in watercolor painting, layout, and compositional design. It is from still-life that I sometimes diverge into semi-abstraction by changing sizes and shapes to make better relationships within the composition. This activity challenges the student's ability to see visual relationships that have greater unity and interest than can be achieved by making realistic or naturalistic paintings.

Landscape painting is a recreational activity. Getting away by myself or with Renée just to paint is wonderful. I liked it best when we had the

old camper. Renée reads while I paint (usually watercolor) or sketch. To empty my brain of procedures is part of the liberating factor. Nature's rhythms take over, and the painting often takes on a calligraphic quality. I'm about due for another painting trip.

Levi: You've also done some abstract painting. A layperson like myself is pretty easily puzzled by abstract painting. What's the payoff for an artist in such painting? What would you say that you're after when you're doing an abstract painting?

Richard: Abstract painting is not much different from realistic painting. How could that be, you might ask? When I paint realistically, it's possible to recognize the imagery and subject matter; but when I paint abstractly, it seems that nothing is recognizable in the composition. The commonality between the two is that, in order for any work of art (realistic or abstract) to work well, there must be a significant internal form. In other words, "beauty" has very little to do with subject matter but everything to do with structure and visual organization. My free intuitive response in the choices of visually putting down color, shape, line, proportion, texture, value, and direction without making reference to recognizable images frees me completely to concentrate on that which is most important—the form of the painting. One could say that all great art, even the realistic, is abstract.

Great art through the centuries is abstract even when we recognize the subject matter because it is possible to find an internal structure that gives the art its beauty. It's sad to say that much of the realistic art made today is poor art. Most of the attention goes toward trying to make a thing look real, with little regard to the structure.

I alluded to abstraction when I talked about how realistic subject matter can be distorted yet stay recognizable. This kind of modification leads the artist to semi-abstract art; and of course we have seen much of this kind of art over the last 130 years—after the artists later called Impressionists began to use paint in an independent, fresh manner. They rapidly stimulated many new directions in painting. Among those establishing important, semi-abstract movement are Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, and Cézanne.

My own preference in making abstraction is called nonobjective painting. The title gives the clue to the approach. I try to rid myself of any preconceived notions as to what the painting is about, and I try to maintain this focus from beginning to end. This way my full attention is given

to form and color. It's a great exercise for tuning up your intuitive skills. I put a shape, color, or value some place on the canvas and then ask myself, "What does the painting need?" I respond as best I can by putting another shape, color, or value in a different place on the canvas, and I keep following this process until I can't find anything else to do, which may mean that the painting is awfully good or awfully bad. At least, it was a lot of fun.

Levi: Turning from art to autobiography, would you say that you had a typical boyhood and adolescence? What about your parents? What signs of an interest and ability in art did you demonstrate at an early age?

Richard: I was born in March 1932, in Midway, Utah. The family moved to Los Angeles when I was a few months old and then to Salt Lake before returning to Midway where we were pretty much like pioneers—no electricity, running water, or indoor bathroom. Twice a day, my older brother Drew and I walked about a quarter of a mile to a spring at the fish hatchery for fresh water. We walked down with an empty pail in each hand and full pails on the way back. We didn't have many baths, which to us was great! We always had dogs, cats, and rabbits to tend and play with. We usually took care of a few horses and a couple of cows.

My mother, Winnie Jones, was a beautiful woman. In fact, she was a movie star. She was in two early western movies made near Zion National Park. The movie company wanted her to be in more. However, her father, Bishop Philetus Jones of Rockville, put a stop to her career. Luckily for me, Dad, Arthur William Van Wagoner, was helping build the Zion Tunnel, near Rockville. He was a returned missionary, so when he met this beautiful young movie star, and they fell in love, he qualified as an acceptable candidate for her hand. They lived relatively happily ever after.

These were difficult times. The Great Depression had begun. The scarcity of jobs forced Dad into the mines of Park City. Several times, he told about horrifying events that occurred while he was working. Once the elevator in the main shaft broke loose and crushed two men to death. Another time there was a knife fight, which left one man dead.

I started first grade in the old Midway Elementary schoolhouse, a great old building that no longer exists. I started my art career in this place drawing horses and airplanes. They were simple at first—just the side view of each. But I developed the ability to observe critically the contours of the horse and the perspective of the airplane. I look back on these early years as very important. These were the days before teachers were thinking about design and abstraction, so realism was the primary objective. I was

convinced that my horses and airplanes were better than anyone else's. I never stopped drawing; and by the time I was in junior high school, I had decided to become an artist. Youth, romanticism, and ignorance helped me make this decision. My Grandpa, William H. Van Wagoner, helped solidify the decision by paying fifty dollars for two landscape paintings that I had painted with leftover model airplane paint. After this munificent purchase, I became aware, as the years went by, that paintings do not sell like hot cakes.

High school provided many opportunities to use my art abilities. Painting scenery for plays and making posters for student elections used a lot of my time. But I was also trying to make serious paintings in art classes and at home during these school years. A couple of my paintings were portraits of latter-day prophets—George Albert Smith and David O. McKay. The George Albert Smith portrait hung in the bishop's office in Layton First Ward—but only because my dad was the bishop, I suspect.

Levi: You've been a lifelong member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Has your experience with Mormonism been typical of many Utah-born Mormons? Have you pursued what you would consider Mormon themes in your painting?

Richard: Possibly to my detriment, the kind of LDS art that is purchased and published by the Church is not stimulating or of interest to me. In fact, I have sometimes been distressed, even angered, by the highly sentimentalized portrayal of religious themes that seem to be edited so as to cause the viewer never to be challenged or to encourage questioning. If I'd made a lot of money doing illustrations for the Church, my answer might be different. But again, had such been the case, I would probably have entirely missed what I consider to be the true nature of art.

Art, particularly in today's world, is the antithesis of inflexibility. The Church can use only one kind of image—that which perpetuates its cause. There is no place for the asking of questions. Fortunately, many LDS artists *are* asking questions, moving in personal and investigative directions, and creating new and personal forms.

Levi: You and Renée have raised three sons and two daughters, with whom you stay in close touch. Would you agree that you are a home- and family-centered person? Did you enjoy doing things as a family when your children were small? How has your family influenced your art? Conversely, how has your art influenced your family?

Richard: Renée and I have been married for fifty-three years. She be-

came pregnant with Christine—Christy—several months into our marriage and became so ill that she had to give up the admirable position she had attained as secretary to the dean of the department of elementary education at the University of Utah. Wow, did my life ever change! I worked for the trucking company Pacific Intermountain Express (PIE) six days a week from 4:00 P.M. till 12:30 A.M., getting home after 1:00 A.M. It took seven quarters to complete my degree.

We had our children over a long period. Nick, our youngest, was born when Christy, our oldest, was seventeen, with Kelly, Dru, Rick, and Rob in between. It's inevitable that parents worry about how well they did with their children. I certainly have. I was somewhat limited in my interaction with the kids because of Church callings. I taught many Sunday School, MIA, Scouting, and Aaronic and Melchezidek Priesthood classes. I also served three stake missions, was in the stake mission presidency, the elders' quorum presidency, was high priests' group leader twice, counselor in three different bishoprics, and bishop for five years plus serving on three different high councils. I'm currently family history consultant.

As a result of these demands on my time, Renée shouldered the responsibility of getting the children ready for church and taking them to and fro. Her load was the heaviest, but she was steadfast in her work and, in addition, took on her own callings, which she performed beautifully.

We tried to be the perfect Mormon family by following the counsel of Church leaders—family home evening and the whole bit. In reflecting on training our children, I believe that we were too rigid in our demands and counsel. Nevertheless, our greatest achievement is that we have children who place love and service to each other above differences of opinion, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and monetary success. I truly believe that our family is profoundly Christian in the truest sense of the word, for they seem to look upon all people in this same manner. They are nonjudgmental.

Renée and I remain active and both serve as called. Renée is unwavering in her devotion and service to the Church, the family, and her fellow human beings. My greatest joy is my association with my family. I try to make no distinction between members of the Church and nonmembers.

I drew or painted Renée and the children from the time we were first married, but I don't believe that these paintings can be accused of being sentimental or saccharine. From the beginning, my interests have been

structure and form with a propensity toward contrast of light and dark. My MFA thesis was "The Figure in Landscape," and I relied heavily on family members as subjects in this series of paintings.

Levi: You became an instructor in art at Weber College in 1959 and continued teaching there while it evolved into a four-year college and eventually into Weber State University. You rose in rank to professor of art and served many years as chair of the art department. All along you have continued to paint. Have you thought of yourself more as a teacher than an artist or, conversely, more an artist than a teacher?

Richard: That's a difficult question. Both my career in teaching and my experience in making paintings have evolved and merged into a personal way of teaching and, I think, in making my art more personal. In the early days, I taught more the way that I had been taught: All students made a painting by following a certain series of steps. No exceptions. We see this kind of pedagogy on television several times a week. It continues to have an enormous following. But it produced quite a number of students whose paintings looked a lot like mine, and I started to question my teaching methods. I began to see qualities that I admired in the art of those who worked more independently. The problem with learning to make art this way is that one runs the risk of never seeing more deeply into the world to obtain greater insights into the nature of beauty and to develop a personal, inventive manner of painting.

Of course, you've got to begin somewhere. Art has an intellectual side. You've got to develop your artistic vocabulary and repertoire. Studying the masters is one of the best ways to understand that seeing the world through your own personally educated eyes, as the masters did, is required to make great art. In this philosophy, trying to understand your environment is a never-ending process.

To answer the question as simply as possible, I moved to a critique system that I used for perhaps the last twenty years I taught. I involved my students in the discussion as much as possible. The activity was a blend of what and how the student was doing mingled with visual examples from art, nature, and human-made objects, along with some demonstrations of specific problems related to drawing and procedure. I became more satisfied as the years went by because I could see improvements in the diversity and quality of the students' art, thinking, and energy. My art also improved—probably not everyone would agree with this assessment—because I was applying the same principles that I was teaching in my own work.

Neither the art of my students nor my own has identical form or subject matter—which in my opinion is a monumental achievement.

Levi: In your retirement, you and Renée have moved into a spacious condominium. Would you tell us how you have accommodated your art in these living quarters?

Richard: I encouraged and justified the purchase of a large condominium because of all the wall space that could be used to show art, primarily my own. In a sense, it's like having a regular art gallery except that I'm not inclined to be a salesperson. It is also a place to decorate with color and form. I haven't yet found the correct way to get people to come and visit without offending them by suggesting that they buy a piece of art. I also underestimated the work involved with changing the art around. I want to spend the time I have left making art and letting someone else do all the busy work. It seems that I must paint whether I make money or not. The condo is a very nice place in which to live, and I can be happy with that fact. It also accommodates a studio space in which I love to work.

Levi: Your son Nick came out as gay during the 1990s. You and Renée have proved very supportive parents to Nick, reassuring him of his place in your esteem and affection. Here's what you said in a pamphlet you published in 1996: "The night of our realization was a turning point in our lives. To this day, nothing looks as it did, feels as it did before. We suddenly found ourselves in a hostile, foreign land where no one spoke our language, and we no longer understood theirs."[1] Since then you and Renée have became very active in promoting tolerance and acceptance for homosexual persons. You've spoken in meetings, written statements and pamphlets, and established a monthly meeting for gays and lesbians in your home. Do you and Renée feel that your efforts have been successful? Are you satisfied with having made them? And how did Nick feel about your activities?

Richard: Renée and I always discussed our plans concerning gay activities and work with Nick. He has been completely supportive, to the point of participating in meetings and events. He completed his Ph.D. in cell biology at UAB, then moved into its medical school where he is now in his third year of residency in internal medicine.

To have grown up in a Latter-day Saint family in which my parents held nearly every ward and stake position—my dad was a high councilor—meant that I obtained a galvanized testimony of the gospel. I also be-

came a bishop among other callings. Renée was less active during her teens; but at about the time of our marriage, she began to study and obtained a testimony stronger than my own. I'm handicapped with many weaknesses—no one knows that better than I—but I always had the assurance that striving to overcome my sins would some day allow me to achieve eternal life with my family. During those years, I didn't need to think or analyze—just obey.

It may sound strange, but I think Nick's being gay was the best thing that could have happened to our family. The world did become a "hostile foreign land," but Nick had lived in this land all of his life. I am amazed at the excellence of his life, his goals, and his love of others. He and his partner are an example and joy to our family. I've learned truths that I never suspected were out there, and I have changed from being a homophobe to a person who loves and accepts gay people. In fact, I believe (at least, I hope) that my love and generosity have expanded to include *all* people, even homophobes.

Have our efforts been successful with gay people and also in helping change the attitudes of heterosexual people? Definitely yes! It's not a swift process, but attitudes are unquestionably changing. Renée and I have worked for thirteen years with gays, lesbians, and their parents. They and we have been watching the progress. But there's plenty of work yet to do. We're optimistic that changes are coming that will make our society better.

Levi: I've noticed a marked difference in your painting before and after Nick's coming out. Although you've chosen a wide variety of subjects for your paintings, your art seems to me to be much more clearly invested with ideas. Would you agree with this observation?

Richard: The highway and urban paintings were a great success—not financially, but in terms of getting into juried exhibitions and receiving awards. I was very interested in making them; but when our realization of Nick's homosexuality confronted us, my concentration vanished. The new paintings that came about were invested with ideas gone wild.

It's amazing how quickly a new kind of thinking started taking place within me. I was angry and confused. It seems that my work was becoming editorial, political, and educational. Not many people liked these new works, but they were difficult to ignore. Two galleries were brave enough to give me one-person shows, the Eccles Community Art Center in Ogden and the Salt Lake Art Center.

The burst of energy that produced this startling direction in painting began to dissipate about three years ago. Although I'm presently engaged in a work of similar genre, I've actually found myself again becoming interested in making some highway paintings. But I am leaving the door open for whatever.

Levi: As I've talked with others about these paintings, I have called them symbolistic. Do you find that term apt or would you choose a different word?

Richard: You're right. These works use objects in a context that give a meaning—not necessarily the same meaning to everyone, but that doesn't matter. I delight in the idea that people may interpret the paintings differently than I intended. Art history is full of art that is difficult to place in the correct context, and yet we still enjoy those pieces because of our ability to relate them to our own experiences.

Levi: When you began your career, did you have a vision of what you would like to do or become? At seventy-three, are you surprised at the direction your art has taken? Would you tell us a little about the evolution you feel you have undergone as an artist?

Richard: I'm sure that I'll die feeling that I have not achieved enough with my art or with my life in general. Early on I knew I wanted to make art, and I've explored several directions and mediums. Teaching art is one thing I don't regret because it opened my mind to see the variety, beauty, and power of visual form in this world and in my mind.

I'm astonished each day at the variety of information and situations that present themselves to me. To see and think and form opinions and work at my art is about all I can do, but I wish that I knew more and could help solve the world's problems. Actually I haven't given much thought to where I've been and where I'm going. One thing I believe is that I haven't yet done my best art.

Levi: As of this moment, you have been hard at work for some months on a new painting that uses computer graphics. Tell us about this project? Are there other ways it represents a new direction for you? Has it speeded things up in your painting?

Richard: In many ways, the computer has made problem-solving much faster. It's been a boon to graphic design, illustration, linear perspective, animation, and all kinds of designing. I've worked hard to stay abreast of three programs: Cinema 4d, PhotoShop, and Turbo Cad. More than once, I've been able to speed up the layout of pieces that require a

fair amount of linear perspective. Cinema 4d makes laying out linear perspectives even faster. (Cinema programs get their names because they're used to make part or all of a movie. *Spider Man* is an example). These programs are fun to play with, but I have to admit that they take a great deal of study and experimentation to use effectively.

The months that I spent working my way through Cinema 4d taught me several important things. First, it really works well in providing layout and a dynamic point of view in a composition. Second, it's quick in supplying ambient light and gives me flexibility in composition and rendering. Third, I can make and remake color decisions really quickly. Fourth, it's easy to create new shapes and forms, but the results are a little too mechanical for my taste. In fact, if an artist can draw well, it's probably better to render human figures the old-fashioned way—with pencil and paintbrush using a real model. Fifth, it's possible to get objects of all kinds that are as realistic as a photograph, but sometimes they're complex and time consuming. Sixth, you can save a lot of time by photographing images and models, and then manipulating them by using either the computer or pencils and brushes in the traditional way. This combination of media takes less time and less money.

I don't intend to abandon traditional ways of making art right now (and I don't intend to make movies!), but I've used the computer programs because of their speed and power. I particularly like the speed of reproducing as many finished products as desired. But I just don't find computers as much fun as being out of doors and making a painting with a brush. My answer about which direction I'm going is that I am not closing any doors. I'll use whatever process suits me at any given time.

The painting you asked about revisits the subject matter depicted in an earlier painting about artificial insemination. The painting is perhaps more surreal than any I have done so far and makes references to mythology. The color is intense. The surface is broken down into many shapes, the undraped female figure being most prevalent. There are also several babies. It's a happy scene, and I hope it'll be enjoyed as much for its physical qualities as for its controversial subject matter. I've changed the title several times and it will probably end up being called "Untitled." I laid it out on the computer, and you're right. It's taken longer than I expected. I've been working on it about a year.

I started it just before a hip replacement operation and kept working on it during my convalescence. Too many ideas began floating around in

my head, and I started making dramatic changes to find out which image would work best. I'd already used the computer to make the basic composition and then transferred it to a canvas using oils. It seemed logical that I didn't need to use the computer for changes at this point. Perhaps I was wrong and I should have gone back to the computer. Possibly I will. Or maybe I just can't get out of the old-fashioned way of doing paintings and will revert to a traditional procedure.

Anyway, the end is not in sight, but I'm determined to complete it. It's a learning process and it interests me. Of course, I've been working on other art along the way.

Levi: I've found meanings in some of your paintings that you say you didn't intend when you painted them. Does it trouble you that a painting can be interpreted in ways far removed from the artist's intention?

Richard: The most important objective for me in my dialogue with viewers of my art is that they react, positively or negatively, but with an inquiring mind. Very few gallery visitors even make the effort to understand what the artist is trying to convey and so, of course, they miss information that might be interesting and valuable. Some people want the artist to provide a visual experience that is pretty, familiar, and noncontroversial. For many people, art is merely decoration or reinforcement of the status quo—and I'm not very interested in supplying that kind of experience.

Images of all kinds (realistic or abstract) evoke various feelings and meanings. Juxtaposed in a composition, they make other metaphors possible. So much of today's art is made with the intention that a person will react in whatever way his or her experience dictates. I may have intended a particular meaning for a work, but I'm delighted when someone sees a different and personal connotation. Neither I nor the viewer has failed in this situation. It is possible for an individual to bring only his or her experiences to the painting, but it's not impossible to bring questions and analysis to a work of art. I love it when people interpret my work in ways other than I intended. I learn from the patron. It's great when a person inquires about why I made the piece.

Levi: Would you tell us the circumstances in which you painted *Emergence* [Plate 1]?

Richard: Emergence started out as a demonstration in an advanced illustration class. The students had used several different procedures in doing the head and figure. When I introduced working with "total wash" in selected areas of the composition, the students requested that I give a

Emergence,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 21 x 29 in.,
1975, courtesy the artist

Boy's World,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 24 x 36 in. 1970,
courtesy McKay-Dee Hospital

San Pedro Wharf,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 22 x 30 in.,1968,
courtesy Jim Simister

Waiting for the Parade,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 4 x 6 ft., 1982, courtesy
Rick Van Wagoner of
Snow, Christensen & Martineau

Dawn,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 8 x 8 in., 1985,
courtesy Bonnie and Denis
Phillips

East on Twelfth Street,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 24 x 34 in., 1978,
courtesy State of Utah

The Organ Bank,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 4 x 6 ft., 1984,
courtesy Springville
Museum of Art

Abstract, untitled,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 24 x16 in., 1974
courtesy Dr. Jeff Hill

The Traveler,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 22 x 28 in., 1973
courtesy the artist

Silvery Moon,
Richard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 38 x 50 in., 1995
courtesy Mark D. Quayle

Trip with Renée,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 24 x 32 in., 1994,
courtesy the artist

The Allele Madonna,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 36 x 48 in., 1994,
courtesy the artist

Self Portrait, Self Portrait, Self Portrait,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 36 x 42 in., 1996,
courtesy the artist

Remembering I–15,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 32 x 44 in., 1984,
courtesy the artist

Enough Is Enough—I Quit,
RIchard Van Wagoner,
watercolor, 28 x 42 in. 1983,
courtesy the artist

Fast Freight,
Richard Van Wagoner,
oil, 24 x 34 in., 1983,
courtesy the artist

demonstration of the head. I sketched from a photograph of my eldest daughter, Christy, a beautiful girl and excellent subject. I sketched her image on a piece of 300 lb. Arches paper and then painted the image in a short time (perhaps fifteen minutes) as speed is required in this approach.

Because there was a lot of white paper left, the students were curious about how I could make this into a painting and asked me to continue. I was interested because I liked the head and began to add a variety of objects that had their own intrinsic value. The painting turned out to be surrealistic, which was okay with me because it was, after all, just a demonstration. When people began to draw their own interpretations about the painting's meaning, I learned a lot about how people like to translate a painting according to their own experiences. I made this painting at least twenty years before I began the surrealistic series about homophobia.

Levi: I've interpreted your *Self Portrait, Self Portrait, Self Portrait* [Plate 13] as a reflective introspection about the roles you assumed as an academic personality. However, I believe you intended a meaning quite different. What did you wish to express in this painting?

Richard: This painting is a tough one for the viewer to get a handle on. As you have pointed out, I did play several academic roles at WSU: professor, advisor, committee member, and department chair. My intention with the painting was, in a joking way, to tell my psychiatrist how it feels to be manic depressive (bipolar 2), mostly depressive. I was diagnosed with this condition rather late in life, and medications have kept me pretty level, I think. The painting has three images of myself: the first me is driving the car, the second me is sitting in the passenger's seat oblivious to what is about to happen, and the third me is outside in front of the car about to be run over. Renée is in the back seat with her hands up, bracing herself, and also suggesting that the brakes should be applied.

The three Dicks are in separate worlds, the two insensible and uncaring, the third aware of the catastrophe but unable to do anything about it. My psychiatrist thought it was a pretty good description. Renée thought so, too. The question is, who in their right mind would make a painting like this?

Levi: One of your most startling and gripping paintings is *Galileo's Recantation* [cover]. It features windblown crosses, a lonely automobile on what might be a vast salt flat, a brooding sky, and a shrouded Galileo who looks something like yourself. Would you explain the idea you hoped to convey to your viewer in this painting?

Richard: This is a large watercolor that most people seem to like, even though many don't have a clue what it refers to. It's about the suppression of thought and scientific investigation by a church or other powerful organization. In the seventeenth century, Galileo's support of Copernican astronomy and his own discovery of new planets in the solar system were at odds with the Catholic Church's teaching that the earth was the center of the universe and that the sun revolved around it. Threatened by the Inquisition with torture and death, he recanted his views.

Galileo's Recantation presents Galileo at the front right, holding up his hand in a sort of traffic-stopping gesture toward a highly decorated building, suggesting a church that continues to mislead the people. It is as if Galileo is recanting his original recantation. To further emphasize the untruths pronounced and upheld by the church, several empty shrouds hang on crosses as if crucified, lining the way to the contemporary church.

If viewers can't accept this explanation of the painting, I have no problem with their creating a personal version. In fact, it pleases me to think that my paintings help people interpret experience in a variety of unpredictable ways.

Note

1. Richard J Van Wagoner and Renée H. Van Wagoner, *A Hostile Foreign Land* (Salt Lake City: Family Fellowship, 1996), 3.

FICTION

The Walker

Matthew James Babcock

> *Our firsts and lasts were leaves burned*
> *the hour we left.*
>
> *–Ted Hughes*

You could say that my life and The Walker's life—well, it's all been a question of firsts. And to be honest, I thought for a long time that it was always going to be that way.

Until now.

See, ever since I bumped into The Walker—well, found out who he was (we've never really been introduced although I feel like I know him better than myself, my daughter, and even my wife, Sage)—he's been around. Around at all my firsts. First love, first driver's license, first hot dog with my dad in Candlestick Park on vacation—you know, the usual momentous occasions in your life that go down in your memory as "Firsts."

First biopsy.

It's like he's been around forever. Until now.

Which is why I'm worried. I haven't seen him in a while. I look out the window at the glazed December streets, and he's not there. I drive through town—down past the flashing blue and pink neon arrow on top of the Westwood Cinema, Ace Hardware, the John Deere lot, the courthouse—and I don't see him. I guess it's because now I'm actually *looking* for him, you know? It's like now that I'm looking for the guy instead of trying to avoid him he's not there. I miss him, actually. I miss seeing his red and black mackinaw, his grizzled sunken face—kind of grandfatherly. Even though I've always known he's a nut. Seriously, absolutely whacked out of

his skull. It's still been comforting, though—creepy and comforting—to see him whenever I've experienced some "first" in my life.

And I haven't had a first in a while—excluding my wife's recent trip to the doctor's office. So I can't figure out why he's gone, why he hasn't come shuffling around our place in his dirty gray irrigation boots, his orange hunter's hat with the earflaps pulled down, his breath blowing out plumes of evening mist, like some dark night train, endless, timeless. Seriously, the guy's a legend in my book. Just as powerful, just as memorable. A full-blown mythic legend.

Only I haven't seen him for a while.

And that's a first.

I can't stop looking for him. Three or four times a day I part the Venetian blinds in our living room and look out at the hardened December streets, hoping to see his face in the wreaths of Christmas lights, hoping to see him hanging outside the Clean Spot Laundromat next door, cupping a cigarette in his hands, looking off into the frozen dawn for some lightning-colored shard of truth, some answer to it all, like he was always able to give me from a distance. A close distance—always.

"Who are you looking for?" Sage asks me, whenever she catches me staring out the window.

"Nobody," I say, turning and smiling at her.

But he wasn't nobody—still isn't. He's The Walker, and he hasn't walked my way for a while now, now that I'm looking for him, which is a first. And I hope it's not the last.

So what do you do? What do you do when it's a Saturday morning, early, and it's almost Christmas, and a legend has died in your life—well, is on the verge of dying—and you and your wife are waiting for the results of her biopsy to come back from the lab at the hospital in Pocatello? What do you do? I mean, in a way, this is a first. A big first. What do you do when the doctor said the earliest you could find out the results would be Monday or Tuesday? Tuesday at the latest, he said. And so you sit, staring out the window, talking to each other but knowing that it's almost Christmas, which a long time ago was another first, a first for everybody involved—a worldwide first. And all you can think about is, "Hey, this could be it. This could be the last time we're going to look at each other, the last time we're going to say things like, 'Dear' or 'I love you' or 'What are you looking for out the window—I'm right here.'"

What do you do when your wife could be on the verge of dying, and

all you can think about is some crazy guy you saw walking around and around in circles in the North Park, back when you were just a fourteen-year-old kid taking a driver's education course?

Maybe it's because whenever you run bang up against something that's going to stop time for you, you cling to everything you've ever felt to be timeless in your life, like you're clinging to some kind of talisman that will stay the elements, stop time, ward off evil.

Like The Walker always seemed to do.

So what do you do?

I'll tell you what you do. You get up in the early predawn hours of December, you throw on whatever you find in one of your late grandfather's old war trunks—boots, hat, coat—and you take a walk down to the nearest park and sort it out.

You do what I do.

* * *

First Driver's Education Course—September 23, 1984. 11:45 A.M. Jerome, Idaho. My hometown. That's where I first met him: The Walker. I was taking my first driver's ed classes, and we were driving around the old North Park, which was right across from Main Street, facing Towle's Motel, and the old, gray stone church—Lutheran, I think, or Presbyterian—where I attended kindergarten when I was five years old. We—me and my friends, Samantha Barnes, Greg Ainsworth, and Brett Thueson—were all driving this white Dodge around the North Park, trying to get Joe Mattie, our driver's education teacher-cum-football-coach, to pass us so we could get our licenses. Joe Mattie was a Boston transplant. Don't ask me how he got out to our side of the world, but he did.

See, I'd never met any driver's ed teachers from Boston, anyone from Boston, for that matter. So, it was kind of a first for me, too. Actually, I think you'd've been hard pressed to find anyone in my town who even knew where Boston was, or what country it was in. Back in the early seventies—or so the story went—Mattie had redshirted at Idaho State in Pocatello as a middle linebacker and shattered the record for tackles in a single season, a record which still stood at the time of my first driver's education course and which maybe even stands today. So we were all in this white Dodge, trying to get our licenses, and Joe Mattie made me pull up around the North Park, around past Towle's Motel and my old kindergarten church.

"Let's see ya parahllel pahking," he said. "Right heah, right heah."

"Right here?" I asked.

"Yeah, right heah. Parahllel pahk. This is good."

So, I parked. He pulled out his clipboard, jotted some notes.

"You should always check ya mirrah," he said, looking at me, tapping the rearview mirror with his coach's forefinger.

"My mirror?" I asked, looking at Samantha, Greg, and Brett in the back seat.

"Yeah," he said. "Always check ya mirrah. All right, let's go. Remembuh S.M.O.G."

"Signal, mirror, over the shoulder, go," we chanted in chorus.

"Ah," he smiled widely, looking around at us. "Youse guys are learning. That's good, that's good."

Then he saw something.

"Hold it," he said. "See that?" He pointed at something out in the North Park.

Greg, Samantha, and Brett craned their necks to see.

"Where?" I asked.

"The Walker," he said, pointing over to an empty space between some pine trees and oil drum garbage cans whose dented lids were chained on.

Only he said it like this: "Wahkuh."

"The Walker's been there," Joe Mattie said.

For a while, we sat there staring at something he saw but we didn't, staring and not saying anything until he finally told me to signal, check my mirror, check over my shoulder, and go back to the high school parking lot.

On the way back, we listened to his story. I drove, and Samantha Barnes checked how many times I checked my rearview mirror.

"The Walker," Joe Mattie said. "He just walks. Around and around. I saw him once when I was a kid growing up in Boston. It was down in this park near my house, the house I grew up in—Schmidt Park, I think it was called—I can't remembuh now. Anyway, it was where they had all the swings and World War II tanks and stuff, you know? Yeah, he was down there, even way back then. He wore the same thing—this orange hunter's hat with earflaps, and this red and black mackinaw, like a lumberjack's jacket. Jeans, I think, old jeans. And he wore irrigation boots, this kind of gray, muddy-colored rubbuh. And he'd walk. All night. Around and

around. Eventually, he wore an oval into the grass, and the park commission, the local city council, made him stop doing it because they said he was wrecking their grass, see. But that's it. He'd walk around and around, wearing a brown oval, like a race track, into the grass. First and last time I saw him, though. First and last. I guess, that is, until now."

Then we were back out at the high school, perfectly parallel parked.

"All right," Joe Mattie said. "Next time, we'll do highway driving. Take you out past Cindy's Restaurant on I-84 and let you merge."

"Woo," Brett Thueson said. "Can't wait to merge."

And I didn't want to let it show on my face because, well, I was in the company of my friends, people who had an opinion of me. But I *had* seen what Joe Mattie had seen: an oval like a race track worn into the park grass by the tan cinderblock restrooms and oil drum garbage cans, about fifty feet long, compassing two pines trees, like a scaled-down high school track circling a football field.

So I didn't say anything.

Which was a first.

But I went down that night. That night, I pried my bedroom window open—I was dressed in jeans, white high-tops, black hooded sweatshirt, my parents' Kodak Instamatic in the front pocket. I crawled out into the window well. It was a September night, breezy and just warm enough. The stars were out, and I could hear the crickets serenading me with a thrill all the way down in the North Park and beyond. Quietly sliding the window shut behind, I scrambled up out of the window well. I jogged down the driveway.

It was about midnight. But I was wide awake. There was this—I don't know—energy—humming in my body, like I was about to do something I'd never do again. But that's the power of firsts. There's these things we only do once, well, things we're *supposed* to do only once, things we *really* do only once, if we're honest with ourselves—marriage, love, the birth of a child, scoring a touchdown against the South Fremont Cougars in sudden death, having biopsies, waiting at home for biopsy results from the hospital in Pocatello—these are the things that we'll never do again in the same way, never again at the same level of wonder, awe, or terror.

That's their power. They have the force, instantly, to change us forever. And that's a long time. Really: forever. Most of the time, we spend our forevers looking back at what we wish we could do again for the first time: first once again, we want to kiss someone beautiful who loved us

outside the high school Valentine Formal on February 14, 1986; first once again, we want to take the ball on a 60 Strong Draw and bulldoze through the defense and break out into the open for a tie-breaking touchdown and clutch come-from-behind victory at homecoming; first again, we want to be married, fall in love, start a career, have a child. We want to relish the firsts over and over again, to savor them like luscious white fruit, which is of course impossible.

So we take early morning walks in the winter of adulthood to simulate these firsts in our minds. We sneak out our own windows at night, hoping to take a picture of this first, hoping even to secure it, to preserve it—to *steal* it—for ourselves so we can keep it forever. But eventually, we find out what I found out that night, which is what I'm still finding out: first is also last. First will always be last. Like with kisses, loves, biopsies, and waiting for lab results to come back from Pocatello by Monday, or at least Tuesday. That's what Sage's doctor said.

We find out this.

Firsts last forever.

That night, I jogged down Avenue C, turned right at Garfield, passed the old silver water tower that loomed like a mute skyrocket in the wide open September midnight, and jogged down Avenue B to the old North Park. My weighted breath clung to my lungs, vapory and sweaty. It was a football player's breath, the breath of a young kid trying to hang onto his firsts forever, trying to keep a catalog of first events, ones he never wanted to let die, ever. I jogged past Lonnie Ambrose's house, past Pat Towle's.

And there I saw him.

It was just like Joe Mattie's account of his Schmidt Park, but it was my North Park.

He wore an orange hunter's hat with the earflaps down, and he wore gray muddy-colored irrigation boots with yellow and red bands around the tops. Jeans, lumberjack's mackinaw. With a kind of staggering but steadfast purpose, he was walking around and around, treading an oval track into the grass, as if his very next step would right all the awkward angles in the universe.

I wondered: How long had he been there? How long would he stay? How could he wear a track into the grass overnight? But had it been only overnight? Who was he?

I raised my Kodak Instamatic, aimed it.

But the lens was fogged, so I lowered it and reached for a loose T-shirt tail to swipe it clean. When I looked up and aimed it again, he was gone. Then he was standing beside me, holding my parents' camera, lowering it, shaking his head *no.*

"Why?" I asked, pulling the camera away.

"Nobody takes a picture of me," he said.

I couldn't see his eyes, but I could smell his breath. It didn't smell bad exactly, just redolent with time, fragrant with age, like cedar and fresh moss. I could smell things I'd never smelled before in someone's breath. I could smell it all: movie popcorn, a canyon wind, the breath of every December and June that had been and would ever be, peppermint, the smell of a newly cut football field, the breath of children and the breath of marriage vows, and the wind that breathed life into Adam. It was like Eden. But it was the North Park. And there was no Eve.

His voice was young. I mean, by the looks of him, The Walker had to be about seventy, maybe even a hundred. He wore his orange hunter's hat pulled down, so I couldn't see his eyes, but I knew they were under there—checking me out, admonishing me, lecturing me for trying to take a picture of a living legend, for trying to preserve the unpreservable. He shook his head, *no,* again.

Calmly, he took back my Kodak Instamatic, which shimmered and changed to star-colored vapor in his hands, and then he said something, rubbing the gray stubble on his hollow cheeks. Well, he started to say something, but then he stopped. I could tell he was trying to make it right, trying to make whatever he was going to say the most momentous occasion of my life. He rubbed his chin, looked off toward the weedy west fringe of the North Park. A police car rushed by, cutting the night in half. Above us, the opal streetlights fizzed and hummed, mobbed by white moths. Turning back to me, he shifted his weight from foot to foot. Unnerved, I examined his old hunter's hat, the mackinaw, the mud-colored boots.

What a weirdo, I thought. *Weird-oh.*

Then I realized why he'd been waiting.

"Not a weirdo," he said. "Just somebody trying to keep it alive."

"Keep *what* alive?" I said, laughing.

I mean, hey, I was fourteen. I had no respect for eternal, meaningful things.

"What alive?" I prodded. "What's 'it'? There's no 'it.' You're a guy in

rubber boots who walks around when he should be sleeping. You know, you're probably freaking a lot of people out in this town. What are you talking about—'Keep it alive'? What's that kinda crap?"

He made a gruff sound in the cellar of his throat, as if clearing my impertinence from the concrete floor of the cosmos.

"Just remember," he said, tightening his hat down with both hands. "You heard it from me first."

Then The Walker walked away.

And I went home and never told my parents about how I lost their camera.

* * *

First kiss—Jennifer MacKenzie. February 14, 1986. Jerome, Idaho. 548 East 16th Street. Sometime around midnight. Jennifer and I were standing outside her mom's house, and we'd been standing outside for about an hour. Seriously, an *hour.* What had we been talking about? Who even knows, man! I can't even recall, now as I sit here—trying to think about how the lab technicians in Pocatello are undoing the little vials that contain four small samples of tissue from Sage's left breast—I can't recall what, if anything, happened in that hour. But she was beautiful—Jennifer, now, as she was back then. Beautiful, as Sage is to me now. And as Sage was last night and every night and as she will be every day and night to come. Which is kind of a first, isn't it? Another first, right here, right now (where *is* he then?).

I mean, how can I in the same flurry of memory and vision see my first kiss and my first and last love both as paragons of beauty, as standards of the same paradoxical thing? Is it possible? Can old codgers in hunter's hats, mackinaws, and irrigation boots really turn your parents' Kodak Instamatic to thin, immaterial vapor? Man, who knows? All I'm telling you is what happened to me. All this stuff, for the first time in my life. That's all.

So, yeah, it went this way: Jennifer MacKenzie and I are standing out under this sheet-metal carport, just outside her mom's house. Her mom, who's single herself, is blasting some Stevie Ray Vaughan—"Darkness, Darkness"—or something like that. I've got this blue ball of electric energy, like a valentine dynamo, churning pink and red and yellow and white, down inside my stomach and chest, and Jennifer MacKenzie, all dressed up in her pinkish white satin Valentine formal, is smiling her beautiful smile, smiling with her beautiful teeth. I've already spent an hour out talk-

ing with her under her mom's carport, but it's time to go, and she's smiling and laughing and thinking I'm funny (I *am* funny, of course, really funny for the first time in my life). She guides my hands to the slender satin dream of her waist and pulls me to her—well, I pull, too. Our hips are close, our stomachs are close, and she's absolutely the sweetest, starriest human I've ever been close to. And her lips. Man, her lips. I can feel her lips on my lips, her teeth close to my teeth. She says this one thing, "Mm." Like she just tasted something warm and delicious, like a sweet roll slathered in icing, warm out of the oven. Just like that. Not sexy. Not lustful, really, either. Just "Mm." And man, let me tell you, that's something I'll never be able to bring back, nor should I really, I guess, except here.

But the stars were out, and we were leaning back against her mom's house out over there on the north side of town, out north of Gayle Forsythe Park, past the new baseball field complex, the pitching cages, the high school, and out beyond that was nothing but potato and sugar beet fields and doddering Holsteins and the absolute edge of the universe where God first put his pencil to his clipboard and made a few notes that set the whole thing in motion, perhaps even putting down a few things that had to do with me and Jennifer MacKenzie, perhaps saying nothing more than "Mm," perhaps with the pencil tip in his mouth, thoughtful, perhaps writing down "Positive" or "Negative" when he came to the part about a lab test in a hospital in Pocatello. "Breast tissue," his notes probably recorded. Date: December 12, 1998.

But man, that "Mm"—that's all it took. Stevie Ray Vaughan was blaring out "Darkness, Darkness" inside Jennifer MacKenzie's house, the stars were out, my body was absolutely jumping with love and energy, and I could feel the beginnings of a universe in the lack of space between our bodies, between Jennifer's soft Valentine's Day formal and my rented créme tux. It was all there—the beginnings, the holding, the "Mm." Then there was a little wet click, a release, and our lips were plucked apart; she was looking at me, smiling, laughing, wetting her lips with her tongue, and loving me—yeah, really loving me—just for that moment out on her mom's carport under the broken light fixture and the swirling mayflies. Really loving me. And I was loving her.

Then it was her mom.

"Jenn," her mom called, Stevie Ray wailing in the background. "It's time to tell your friend to go home."

"Friend?" I asked. "Am I your friend?"

"Well," Jennifer said, rolling her eyes up to the stars. "It's my mom, you know."

"Yeah," I said. "I'll see you at school."

"Okay," she said. "Bye."

"Bye."

Then the screen door opened, and Stevie Ray took her—her beautiful satin glide and flow, her perfume, her lips, her "Mm." Then I was behind the wheel of my parents' Volkswagen Rabbit convertible, still feeling Jennifer MacKenzie's lips on mine, still feeling her waist, her firm wired-in stomach, her hands pulling my hands, her tapping heart drawing my body and soul up to somewhere way above the potato fields and carports and moms and stereos. I put the Rabbit in reverse, pulled out of her driveway.

That's when I saw him—The Walker.

I'd remembered to check my mirror.

In the night, in my rearview mirror, he stood behind me, wearing the usual: hat, mackinaw, boots. There was a flash: no camera. But he held his hands up, fired off a burst of white light between his fingers and walked off.

Next day at school, Jennifer told me that instead of me she liked Jeff Poole who drove a red '67 Mustang and wasn't afraid to smoke pot.

Mm.

Years later, in a college apartment, Sage would blow Jennifer MacKenzie's first kiss out of this known universe and keep it going, satellite-style, on forever. And I'd go walking out all night afterwards, absolutely sleepless, looking for some drifter in an orange hat, mackinaw, and boots.

* * *

First funeral with military honors—Gavin A. Dupree, physics professor and retired colonel. My grandfather. October 15, 1998. Rexburg, Idaho. I remember that I stood in the reception line near the casket down at Flamm Funeral Home on Mohawk Drive. The whole family was there—parents, uncles, aunts, cousins. And our cute red-headed daughter, Shanda Dee, in a white lace pinafore and carmine bow, bouncing in Sage's arms. Sage was wearing a black satin dress and a pearl (fake—gift from me) necklace. About halfway through the reception, an old guy no one knew shuffled through the line. He shook hands with my entire family, smiled. He wore new jeans, had his hair slicked back with Grecian For-

mula. He'd shaved, but it looked like he hadn't shaved in a while—there were a few bloody nicks in the pliable flesh of his neck and cheeks. He shook hands with me, stopped and looked in my eyes, squinted and cocked his head back as if sizing up a new recruit.

"Knew your grandfather," he said, popping a blue breath mint in his mouth. "Always wanted to get back down and see him. But I guess it's too late. Had some things of his, things I always meant to give back."

"Mm," I said, casting sidelong glances at my parents, my Aunt Janet and Uncle Terry. "Like, what things?"

"A trunk," he said. "War things."

Then he turned thoughtful, wet-eyed. I realized he was still shaking my hand, a methodical up-and-down hydraulic motion, like our handshake was the thing pumping the tears out of his eyes.

"We were in the 3rd Infantry Division together," he said. "At the reduction of the Colmar Pocket. January 19, 1945. First time an infantry division was ever given the Presidential Citation. First and last, thank God. Used to go out fishing with him, too. Hunting once in a while. Chopping wood. He loved to get out. Used to see him walking down at Davis Park at all hours. We'd go together sometimes, too. Loved to get his exercise, eh? He was a good man. You'll take the trunk, won't you?"

"Sure," I said, releasing his hand.

"Good," he said, pointing over to where the old war trunk rested on the blue foyer carpet. Next to the trunk stood a pair of irrigation boots, under the hanging coats and umbrellas. "Right over there."

At the funeral's end, he was the only one lingering around, so we coaxed him into taking a picture of the whole family.

"Sure," he said, grinning. "Anything for the family of my old war buddy. Squeeze in, now."

And I wasn't sure if the flash came from the camera or his smile.

Weeks later, Sage and I were sitting on our living room couch, playing with Shanda and flipping through some photographs of the funeral.

"Hey," Sage said, stopping at one. "Look at this."

"What?" I asked.

"This," she said, pointing at a picture—it was a group shot. The whole fam damly.

"It's the family," I said. "So what?"

"Who's that guy?" she said, pointing to an old man in the back row. He had slicked back hair, a mile-wide grin, hollow cheeks.

"One of my grandpa's war buddies," I said. "Gave me the trunk."

"What's he doing in the picture?" Sage asked, wide-eyed.

"Came to the funeral," I said, shrugging and looking at her. "Remember? He was one of the last guys there. One of the first guys—first and last."

"Yeah," Sage said, pointing again at the picture. "But what's he doing *in* the picture? He took the picture. What's he doing *in* it?"

* * *

First home run—July 23, 1981. Jerome Recreation District Baseball Field. Down off Main Street, north of Shaefer's Dry Cleaners and the Northside Tavern. First and last home run, really. Chris DeLucia was pitching for the Gano-Dehlin Huskies, and I was batting for the Volco Blockbusters, coached by Kurt Burton's dad, Ted, and Jeff VanDerBruyn's dad, Lyle. Anyway, it was a full count, and—no, the bases weren't loaded—but I was up to bat, and Chris DeLucia, that hot head, was pitching. The Huskies were up by one, and I remember that Mike Welch was dancing out on second base, not sure if he wanted to try and steal, not sure if he wanted to try and let me hit him in. My coaches, Lyle and Ted were, I think, trying to signal for Welch to steal third and home, probably, because I wasn't a very strong batter. So, anyway, I was digging down in the batter's box there on the old Little League field, where all the games used to be played before they built the fields out at Gayle Forsythe Park, only a quarter mile from Jennifer MacKenzie's mom's carport of love.

So, I was digging in, looking just as flashy in my gold and green uniform as Chris DeLucia in his royal blue Huskies uniform. He was in eighth grade. So was Mike Welch. I was in seventh. And it was pretty simple. He rifled a fast ball, and I swung. I felt a solid *crack*. This feeling of connectedness that bloomed in the shaft of the bat, shot up my arms and chest, and carried the ball and me way out over the A&W section of the pea-green home run fence.

And that was it.

"Great job, son," my dad said, slapping me on the back.

"Way to go!" Ted Burton shouted, high-fiving me.

"Nice!" Lyle VanDerBruyn barked.

"Woo hoo!" Mike Welch said, slapping my hands in the dugout. "That's a first!"

Then we rode down to the A&W for free victory root beers in Lyle

VanDerBruyn's white Econoline van. It was the van we all secretly coveted—red pinstripes, fur-lined seats, tinted bubble windows, mini-fridge with poker table and cup holders inside, sleeper cabin on top, shiny chrome ladder and covered spare tire bolted on the back doors. On the way, all the windows got rolled down, and as we cut through the town's main intersection and only stoplight, we chanted, "We're number one! We're number one!"

Afterwards, however, I rode my bike back down to the Little League field, past the Northside Tavern, and out into the overgrown grass behind the home run fence, looking for the ball. The field was deserted. I leaned my ten-speed up against the fence's faded ads: Ace Hardware, A&W, Jerome Floral. I walked back and forth. I knelt in the heavy windblown grass. But I couldn't find it. Nothing.

"Hey, kid," he yelled.

I turned.

It was summer, and so he had his mackinaw slung over his shoulder, his hat crammed in his back pocket. His jeans were tucked into his boots. Of course, back then, I had no idea who he was. His hair was light brown, receding, like a wisp of grass across his sweaty forehead. His face was sunken, like a desert floor. Thin, tan—a skeleton with skin. A skiff of silvery stubble glazed his jaw, like snow on summer grass. He squinted, tossed me a baseball.

Then he held his hands up in front of him, holding an invisible camera.

"Click, click," he said, smiling.

"Thanks," I said, glancing at him only for a moment.

Then I turned and ran for my bike, hoping it would be the last time I'd ever see him.

And since we're on baseball . . .

* * *

First pro game with my dad—June 12, 1983. 4:35 P.M. Candlestick Park: Oakland A's versus San Francisco Giants. On vacation with my parents. I don't know why my dad and I went to the game. See, I was born in San Francisco while my dad was going to medical school. So, I think it was something we felt we just had to do for some reason, some kind of father-and-son ritual that everybody has to do at least once. Another first and last. And so we went. We sat in the sun all day, watched a pretty bad

game, ate hot dogs, and then we rode the city bus back to our room at the Best Western, and my dad told me about all the hard times my mom and he had endured when they were first starting out: the bills, the low pay, the lack of furniture, the little crackerbox apartment up in San Francisco's Mission District.

On the way back to our motel, we laughed nervously at a roistering gang of drunk guys who sat up in the front of the bus. The group was laughing loudly—they were schnockered is what they were—preaching, chucking a baseball back and forth, clapping, laughing so hard they choked. Eventually, the ruckus got so bad that the driver told them to cut it out or get off the bus. That quieted them down.

Then, a thin guy in a stupid-looking orange hat got up, cleared his throat, reached his hand out to all the tired, dirty people on the bus, and said, "I hope everyone on this bus—is blessed."

My dad looked at me, and the bus went silent. Immediately, the drunk crew collapsed into heaps of spasmodic choking laughter, grinning, rolling around, punching each other. The guy with the orange hat seemed to be the ringleader.

"Yes! Yes!" they shouted. "Amen, brother! Almighty!"

At the next stop, the driver booted them off. I watched—as the bus pulled away—as the guy in the orange hunter's hat talked to his buddies, who were heavier than the first guy: two of them African American, one Caucasian. His two African American friends sported navy blue coveralls, and the other man—a short, red-haired guy—wore a T-shirt and jeans. I watched as they disappeared out the dirty back window of the bus, as the guy in the orange hunter's hat pulled a lumberjack's mackinaw out of a blue Adidas duffle bag. Also, a pair of irrigation boots. They laughed and laughed, falling over each other, leaning on each other's shoulders, slugging each other in the gut.

"Weird-*oh*," my dad said. "You know, some people just don't know when to give it a rest."

"Yeah," I said, rolling my eyes, pretending to agree. "I know."

I remember feeling like I'd seen the guy in the orange hunter's hat before. But I didn't really think about it until a few weeks before this Christmas when I sat in the living room of my own house, looking out the window for somebody I knew but had never been introduced to, thinking this: biopsy, Pocatello, Monday, or maybe Tuesday.

* * *

First airplane ride alone—March 12, 1987. TWA flight #1109. I was an American exchange student going to stay in Germany. New York City to Frankfurt. The plane was a DC-10, and about halfway into our ascent, a guy in the seat behind me tapped me on the shoulder and handed me a magazine. It was a copy of *Photography.*

"Want this?" he asked. "I'm not going to use it."

I didn't see him, but I could smell his breath.

I was too drowsy to realize what was going on, and so I just mumbled, "Sure," taking the magazine. Then I fell asleep. Somewhere over the Atlantic, I woke up and started leafing through the magazine. The cabin was filled with the steady nighttime rush and hum of a long flight. I looked out over the wing, over the streamlined blue clouds sheathing the planet. I could see lights like shattered fragments of December tinsel in the distance—below, above. I thumbed through the magazine in my lap, not really paying too much attention. Then, in an ad for Kodak, I saw a picture of a boy and girl, dressed in formal dance attire, kissing under a sheet-metal carport's broken porch light. I recognized the faces, the time. The ad said: "All this can be yours forever!"

Startled, I flipped the magazine closed and unbuckled my seatbelt. Kneeling in my seat, I looked back over, trying to see who'd given it to me. In the seats behind sat three women, all sleeping.

"Excuse me?" a stewardess asked, stepping closer. "Is anything wrong? Can I help you?"

I shook my head.

"No, thanks, " I said, sighing. "I'm just tired."

"Well, try and get some sleep. It's a long flight."

* * *

First airplane ride with Sage—November 30, 1993. Logan, Utah, to Rochester, New York. We were going to see her parents. In Salt Lake, we switched from our tiny prop plane to a Boeing 737. Seated in aisle 14, Sage and I held hands. We'd just been married, you know? So, just after takeoff, a familiar-looking woman in a blue and gold stewardess's outfit came down the aisle.

"Can I get you two anything?" she asked. "Pillow? Blanket?"

"No, thanks," Sage said. "We're all set."

"No, thanks," I said, recognizing the eyes, reading the gold, winged name badge pinned to her navy blue uniform lapel. "No, thanks, Jennifer."

Then I smiled and nodded to Sage. "We've got everything we need."

In Rochester, home of Kodak, I stayed up all night, watching Sage sleep soundly in our motel bed at the Braidwood Inn. The sheets were navy and royal blue, some green and gold swirls woven in, too. I stood near the coffee table, the complimentary notepad and pen in my hands, trying to describe exactly what was going on outside our room. "There he is," I wrote. "He's out there. He's out there right now."

My thoughts, in blue ink, rambled across the pad's cream-colored surface. "He's walking, not anywhere. Around and around and around. She can sleep, but I can't. He's just walking around. He's wearing the same thing: this hat, orange with earflaps, like he's some deerhunter or something. He's got irrigation boots on—this flat, stale gray, muddy color, and the tops are red and yellow. Like, I don't know, like, where's he going to be irrigating, I'd like to know? He's got this mackinaw on, too, like some lumberjack." Then, in mid-thought, I put the paper and pen down. I walked to the window, parted the dusty brown curtains.

Down below our window, he stood in the parking lot between a green Ford pickup and a black Mercedes. He was waving up to me—to us.

Then he started walking again, wearing a path into the grass beyond the parking lot.

In the morning, he was gone.

"What were you doing up all night?" Sage asked me, emerging from the shower in a towel. "Couldn't sleep?"

"Nothing," I said. "I don't know—"

"What's wrong?" she asked, coming nearer, letting her towel fall.

"Nothing," I said.

"Nothing?" she asked, pulling me to her. "I know what nothing is, and this isn't nothing."

"It's just that this is a first," I said. "You know what I mean?"

Her eyes searched mine. Strangely, they were the eyes of someone who'd never been kissed.

"A first," I continued. "We'll never pass this way again type of thing? You and me—us. Never again. It's epic. I don't know. I just couldn't sleep."

"You're a weirdo. You know that?" she said, pulling me closer.

"Yeah," I said, pulling her to me, holding on. "I do—mm."

And since the subject is firsts . . .

* * *

First of all firsts—November 23, 1993. 10:00 A.M. Logan, Utah. We'd just gotten out of our car, and the guests and family were all somewhere else, probably still down gabbing at the Bluebird Cafe. We were walking up the steps of our new apartment—it was a dive, really. Some guy who worked for Century 21 had bought it—nothing but a big shack—and had slapped a fancy name on it: VanDyke House. Problem was, it was nothing but a fire trap: bad wiring, one door, and only two windows. But it was $275/month, with utilities, and so we'd taken it. So, we got out of the car and walked toward the steps, and I was feeling like I'd done this before somewhere, only there was this feeling that this was a moment I'd experience only once. But somehow I felt like I'd get to experience it over and over again, like I'd be able to have this first again sometime down the road when all the towns and cities and baseball fields and airports collapsed and burned and flared into a tiny blurred point of light in God's great ever-developing photograph: I'd get to have this again. This first would be my last and last me forever.

We walked, smiling, up the steps one by one, not saying anything, Sage in her white satiny wedding dress, me in my tux. At the door this time, however, there was no music, no Stevie Ray Vaughan. Certainly there was no darkness, darkness. There was only this light that would last forever, pouring through the little screen window (there were bugs, dust—hey, it was $275 a month). But light, and this first forever. This time, I was able to go inside. I didn't have to stay outside the home because it was my home, our home. And Sage smiled, laughing up at me with her eyes.

Outside, Logan showcased its own mundane November day. Thanksgiving was on the way. Curved puffs of snow capped the tall, mangled arbor vitae outside, I noticed. I heard some kids call, "Hey, wait up!" I heard cars drive by, the humming of an endless engine in me. Then, the streets were empty. Inside, Sage and I were dressed, but then, little by little, we weren't. She was leading me, and then I was leading her, and there was this lightness, lightness, walking around and around our cheap $275/month apartment, inside and out. In the bedroom, I remembered to check my mirror. I saw the curve of my own body in the mirror, the curve of hers, like I'd never seen before, like the very edge of the world it-

self, curving both away from us and toward us, all of it like a continually developing photograph that some day would include lab results coming back from a hospital in Pocatello on Monday, Tuesday at the latest. Ours, first. Lasting forever.

That afternoon, when I woke up, I looked outside in the parking lot behind VanDyke House. The snow was melting off the glittering blacktop. I didn't see him.

A trio of auburn sparrows chirped on a cold, black telephone wire outside. Droplets of sparkling, sun-filled water dripped from the wire, near the birds' feet.

"Biopsy!" they chirped.

That day, we took a walk down Logan's Center Street, past the huge nineteenth-century houses, the Needham Mansion. We ate chicken noodle soup and club sandwiches at the Blue Goose Restaurant. We bought each other chocolates and gifts at Coppin's Hallmark. We walked to Merlin Olsen Park, down by the river, and we walked around and around, holding hands, talking, creating the universe with our words.

"Look!" Sage said, pointing to a worn path in the park's north corner. "Somebody's walked around there, around those trees."

"Yeah," I said, looking at the brown oval in the grass. "Weird."

* * *

First child—December 22, 1997. 2:11 P.M. Baby girl. Redhead. Name: Shanda Dee. Johnson City, New York. Helped into our car that day by a security guard in mud-gray boots, grizzled beard. Friendly but restless, in a hurry himself. Took a photograph of us at Sage's request.

* * *

First thought—December 12, 1998. No.

Last thought—December 12, 1998. Yes, positive.

First thought again—December 12, 1998. The results will take forever. A few weeks until Christmas. Maybe I'll take a walk. Just down to the park so I can sort things out.

* * *

So what do you do?

You do what I do.

I grab the first thing I can find to wear—I don't really see what it is that I put on, just some old stuff from one of my grandfather's war trunks—a hat, a coat, some boots. Like a man with purpose, I stride out into the December chill. Outside, it's freezing. It can't be more than two or three degrees above zero. It's early, gray. Saturday morning. No one is out. No cars on the street. Sage is sleeping; little Shanda Dee is sleeping, too. The roads, all up and down 100 West—perhaps throughout the whole town—are encased in dull gray ice. At the end of our driveway, my head down, bundled up, I take a right. At the corner stop sign, I hang a left, walking down past NAPA Auto Parts, Papa Kelsey's, and Rose Photography Studio.

I don't know what else to do, so I walk. I walk past the business district, trying not to slip on the ice, trying to keep up a pace, trying to keep warm, trying not to think things like: biopsy. Things like: lab results. Or things like: maybe. I walk, trying not to think things like: Pocatello, Tuesday. I walk on legs of stiff ice past a row of old houses behind the Rec Center. All the lights are off, I can see. Here, the street rises into an incline, and I have to lean into the hill, like a draft horse trying not to skid backward. I glance up, and a razor wind whips down the street, blowing through the threads of my pitiful excuse for a coat. I think: *It's so dark. I'm freezing! Maybe I shouldn't have come,* I tell myself. *Maybe.*

At the professional plaza and the doctors' offices, I take a left, walking briskly down through the parking lot, passing a few empty cars. Once out of the parking lot, I turn right, heading up Main Street. Heading where? To the park. Smith Park, the one down at the end of Main Street, by the hospital. Tuesday, I think, walking. Or maybe Monday. Perhaps. I am thinking and walking but trying not to think, just walking and remembering how to parallel park, how to make sure to check over my shoulder, give a signal, and then go. I check over my shoulder, lope across the street, hands jammed in pockets like a drifter. *That's the procedure,* I rehearse to myself. *It has to be in that order,* I think, walking.

At Smith Park, I cut through the middle of the snow, passing between the tennis courts and the old 1901 Best Brand steam tractor, the jungle gyms and swings. I walk, thinking: *biopsy.* It's a tumor, they said. About the size of a quarter. But to me, it sounds like a baseball-sized lump in Sage's left breast, and I want to rear back and take a Hank Aaron crack

at it, sending it out over the A&W sign and beyond, right out of the known universe.

I walk, thinking, not knowing where I am walking, head down, my face freezing into a mask gritting its teeth. Tuesday, I think. Or maybe Monday. Would it be Wednesday, though? Could it actually take that long? I cram my hands deeper into the scratchy pockets of the musty coat I'm wearing. My chilled knuckles ring like they've been rapped by baseball bats. My bitten ears sting. The park is empty, blanketed with perfect snow. All around, I see nothing but black December sky, the dimmed houses, and their shoveled walks. Walking, I feel hypnotized and dazed by the way it all swerves around my head in an endless looping puzzle of stars and questions, around and around. Houses, sky, December, biopsy—one revolving and forever-developing picture. Soon, however, I sense that the sky is softening, warming, lightening. But it isn't my thoughts. It's true.

I stop walking.

I look around, down at my feet.

I find that I'm standing on what looks like an oval track in the snow, standing where some heavy-footed, downtrodden person has walked in restless agitation around and around. The walking has worn a path into the snow, even down to the frozen grass.

Then I see the sky has turned the rosy, frozen blue of a December morning. I hear giddy laughter to my right, and I see two kids, a boy and a girl in winter clothing. They are holding a brand new sled and a camera. They are looking at me.

A flash—they take my picture.

"Hey!" I shout, running after them. "What are you doing?"

"Get out of here!" the boy yells to the girl, grabbing her red sweater and pulling her by the arm. Like startled deer, they bound toward a nearby house. As I run, I sense that they were making fun of me, and so I hustle after them across the snow of Smith Park, lifting my knees high like a linebacker hoofing it through the tire drill.

Before they can escape into the house—a small, pale brick house with a clean-shoveled walk—I catch them both by the shoulder and spin them around. Brother and sister, I think to myself, vetting them up and down. But when I look closer, I see that they are teenagers: boyfriend and girlfriend. In love, too. I can smell the love. Like the first light and wind reflected off the first December snow. Immediately, I realize the camera and the sled they carry are newly opened gifts to each other.

"Thought you were Santa Claus, mister," the girl says, smiling. "Haven't we seen you before?"

"I live around here," I answer, circling a finger in the air. "Down past Main."

"Thought you were Saint Nick, dude," the boy laughs. "Well, gotta go."

"What were you doing out there?" the girl asks, hanging on her boyfriend's arm. "My mom almost called the cops on Thursday."

"Yeah," the boy says. "My dad *is* a cop. I almost called *him*."

"Well," I say. "I don't know—just walking. I got a lot on my mind."

"Walking!" the boy bursts out. "Just!"

"A lot!" the girl laughs. "We almost called the cops!"

I look at them. They are looking at something, looking at me. They see something I don't.

Then I look at their house. My reflection, in the big living room window—it's like some distant close-up. I check my mirror, check it again. I see myself in the house's mirrored front window, a club-carrying prehistoric firestarter preserved in ice. I see the clothes I'm wearing: some bum's crazy getup. It looks like I haven't shaved for days. I look fifty. My right hand flies to my face, and the teenage lovebirds twitter and chuckle again as I probe the stubble on my sunken cheeks. I watch as the reflection in the window mirror adjusts the orange hunter's hat; screws it down more tightly on his head with both hands; fixes the earflaps; buttons up the mackinaw; stamps his cold feet in the mud-colored irrigation boots to get some blood circulating through his tingling toes. The young couple laugh and smile at me as I stand, transfixed, by my own image, by my own first impressions of myself.

"Uh, yeah," the boy whispers out of the side of his mouth to his girlfriend, tapping his temple. "This is a first. Let's cruise, huh? Saint Nick's, uh, a little loose upstairs?"

He tugs at his girlfriend's arm. But she holds on for a question.

"Really," she says. "What were you doing? What are you *doing?*"

And even though her boyfriend laughs at me, mocks me right there in my boots, I say it. And it is delicious to me, like something I've never tasted before.

"Mm," I say. "Just trying to keep it alive, man. Keep it alive."

The Dissonance of Absolution

Gary G. Hernandez

THE PHONE RINGS ONCE. I think about hanging up. The phone rings twice. I begin to believe my luck might hold out. The third ring proves me wrong. Something is amiss when grown children, adults I think we're called, are afraid to call their parents. I wonder if my kids will be afraid to call me. A child-parent relationship is a bizarre mixture of love and fear, respect and resentment—not quite what I was taught it should be, but exactly what it seems to be.

"Hi, Mom, what's up?" I act surprised as if she were calling me and I were happy about it.

"Hi, *mi hijo,*" she beams back, pronouncing the words in one fluid utterance—"meeho." I get the uneasy feeling that her enthusiasm is as feigned as mine. I set the thought aside. At the moment I have potential conflict and certain discomfort to get through.

"What's up?" I ask again, giving away the fact that I need to talk about something I don't want to talk about.

"Oh, nothing. Your dad's out in the yard pulling weeds," she says. There's a practiced pause and then, "So, what's up?" Ah, the old, double return repeat. Sly, my mother. I try to evade with some mundane chatter.

"Not much. Work as usual." It's like moving the pawn two spaces out from the knight: typical, doomed, and uninspired.

"How are the kids?" she says with syrupy grandmother intonation.

"They're doing well," I reply.

"That's great." More syrup. She's a pro. There's no waiting this one out. I have visions of Mel Gibson charging the line in *Gallipoli.*

"So, Mom, we've been doing our genealogy. I think we're about as far as we can get." It seems like a good start. She tells me about a conversation she had with her elder sister a few weeks ago and how she said something or another about a dead person who may or may not be related to

me. I let her go on, figuring I'm setting up that all-essential rapport, making her feel comfortable so that she'll be more inclined to acquiesce.

"Wow, that's interesting," I say a little too quickly. "So anyway, we have the genealogy completed for a couple of generations back and we wanted to go ahead and do the temple work for your parents."

Heavy silence.

"You want to do what?"

"Temple work, Mom. You know, baptism and such."

"I know. And you know your grandfather and grandmother were Catholic. They were baptized in the Catholic Church." Her voice is ill humored and impatient.

"I know, Mom," I say, "but we want to give them the opportunity to get baptized in our church. You see, we believe that when people die, they—"

"They're dead, Gabriel." The invocation of the middle name is never good.

"We do it by proxy. They have a choice to accept it or not. You see, we—"

"No, I don't see. I don't like this." Another silence and I'm too uninspired to fill it. "I have to go," she says abruptly. "Your father just came in. Don't mention this to him. "Bye." A click and a buzz.

Feeling a bit stunned, I consult my daily planner, perhaps seeking some direction as to what to do next. Teleconference at 11:00 A.M., it says, and then lunch at 12:30, meetings in the afternoon. Targets to be hit, plans to be made, deadlines pending: the story of my adult life. I'm struck with the irony of being a forty-one-year-old man standing in a spacious office in Los Angeles feeling very much a castigated child.

* * *

My mother says that she and I were extremely close when I was a child. She says that when I turned seven, I drifted away.

I have a memory of my mom when I was about four. We were living in Fayetteville, North Carolina. My dad was in the military, a Green Beret. He wasn't a particularly warm man. I remember hiding under my bed as I heard his heavy boots booming on the wooden floors when he came home. In a visceral sense, I was afraid of my dad. During those years, my mother was my sole source of warmth and nurturing. I had an older brother, but he spent a lot of time plotting my physical demise. When I

was an infant, he tried to throw me in the trash can. Thankfully, my mother caught him.

At any rate, the memory begins with my mom and me looking over our vegetable garden. It was a sunny Carolina day. We were about to head inside when my mom challenged me to a race to the house. Even though I had the advantage of being a boy and having really fast shoes, I doubted I could trump my mother's superior stride. Nonetheless, I took the challenge and off we went. My mom kept up with me with apparent ease while I was putting everything I had into it. As we neared the finish, my mother fell back. I knew she had let me win. She, of course, insisted she hadn't let up at all. What I remember was that it was important to her that I feel good about myself. I guess that's what my mother means when she says we were close: we played, she sacrificed, and I clung to her.

The falling away, on the other hand, can be represented by any number of adolescent episodes—being caught smoking, shoplifting, drinking, doing drugs—basic rebellion stories all sharing a common plot: I rebelled, she held her ground, and I pushed her away.

It has been thirty-seven years since I raced my mother in our yard in Fayetteville, North Carolina; twenty-eight years since she caught me smoking in our bathroom in New Orleans, Louisiana; eighteen years since I told her in a mall in Springfield, Virginia, that I had joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

At the time of the disclosure, I was working on my M.A. in English literature, studying the likes of Lacan, Derrida, and Barthes—people whom my parents had never heard of and whose ideas they would think irrelevant to just about anything. I lived in a different world—a world without the *Reader's Digest*, a world devoid of talk-show hosts, a world filled with grandiose ideas, social critiques, and impracticality.

So my mom and I were walking around Springfield Mall when I saw a missionary who had taught me. I introduced him to my mother. Afterwards she wanted to know how I knew him. So I told her that I met him through the Mormon Church, which I had joined just a few months before.

"Oh my God, *mi hijo*," she said in alarm, "don't tell your dad." I suddenly heard the booming of my dad's boots on hardwood floors—if only I had a bed to scoot under. At that moment, no postmodernism posturing could save me, no semiotic unscrambling could restore my reason, and not even Freud could talk me down from my instinctual recoil.

"Okay," I said, a little disappointed and a little scared and a little angry. In a gross misjudgment I had not anticipated that my mother would care what religion I practiced. My trouble has always been in failing to understand that people invest expectations in others without informing them. In the heart of every Catholic mother lies the hope that her son will enter the priesthood; in the heart of every Mormon mother lies the hope that her son will become a bishop.

Two years after our conversation, I was married in the D.C. Temple, while my mother and father waited in the visitors' center.

* * *

My telecon is over, and I'm now having lunch with some colleagues. One of them says she once knew a Mormon who said he used to baptize the dead. I nod in acknowledgement—acknowledgement that I know what she's talking about and that I know the conversation is dropping headlong into a topic that I sincerely dislike—religion.

Napoleon is quoted as saying that "religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich." Comic genius, that man, master of irony. That pretty much sums up my take on religion. Not the words, the irony. On one hand, I hold religion to be as infantile as Freud declared it to be; on the other I recognize that I'm quite the infant. I once told my father-in-law in a moment of challenge/confession/discourse that I thought religion was a psychological crutch. He surprised me by agreeing. He then added that air was a crutch for living, but he needed to breathe. We had a laugh, and he left his words to haunt me.

Along those lines, when I was in fourth grade a nun told our class that one of the mysteries of God that the human mind could not comprehend was that God has been here forever. She said that as humans we have to believe that everything has a beginning. She smiled and added, "This will bother you for the rest of your life." Damned if she wasn't right. Thus began my struggle with religion: superstitious hogwash versus eternal truths.

So my work colleague goes on to say that her friend would get into a jacuzzi with a bunch of dead bodies floating around and baptize them. She says she was totally grossed out and has since avoided contact with him. She adds that she knew I wasn't that type of Mormon. We order orange chicken and lemon shrimp and laugh about work. I think everyone at the table realizes she got it a little wrong, but I don't see the sense of

jumping in the mud to try to clean things up. An opportunity lost to convert an entire lunch group, I know, but my inner struggles sometimes weigh on me more than guilt and the promise of eternal rewards.

* * *

Later that day, my wife and I are driving on a Los Angeles freeway on the way to dinner. We're on the 210 to be exact, wide-open lanes, wide-open throttle—well, not quite, but the feeling is you could if you really wanted to. The average speed is about ninety, and we're a little above average at the moment.

My wife says something like, "Did you talk to your mom about doing temple work for your grandparents?"

I say something like, "Uh huh."

She, "And?"

I, "She kind of freaked out."

"Like how?"

"Like she got off the phone real quick and sounded pissed off." I ease off the accelerator and switch out of the fast lane. I nervously change the radio station to another station playing identical innocuous music.

"Did you explain to her what temple work was all about?" My wife turns the volume down. Not good. My parents always turned the radio down when they wanted to have a serious talk with me.

"I tried to, but it's not like we had a long chat." We pass a couple of cars. "Maybe we should call the missionaries and have them give my parents the discussions."

We both laugh.

* * *

I wake up at 3:00 A.M. My wife is sleeping soundly. My heart is jittery and there are tears on my face. I'm wrapped in the after-shivers of a dream. I dreamt that I ran into a friend whom I had not seen for years. We were in Red Rock Canyon in Nevada, which happens to be the last place I saw her. We were walking toward her house. Smooth sandstone stretched all around us. Her house was about a hundred yards off, a one-story affair squatting in the desert heat. I asked how her husband was doing. She stopped, took me by the arm, and looked me in the eye.

"He died last year," she said evenly.

An awful tugging erupted in my chest—grief. I gave her a hug and wept, babbling things like "I'm so sorry." The desert and she and the house then shifted and swerved into the surrealistic horrors that generally make up my dreams. And that's when I woke up.

The dream has ended but the feelings continue—feelings of loss, remorse, and hurt. I want to wake my wife and tell her—to hug her, to have her tell me it's all right—but I just lie there and let the emotion ebb out of me and onto my wet pillow. I can't remember the last time I felt like this; or rather I can't remember the last time I let myself feel like this. It's a relief and a burden all at once. I am shamed and I am joyful.

* * *

I'm at work again. It's afternoon. I make the decision to talk to my dad anyway. It goes something like this:

"Hey, dad, how's it going?" Same poised enthusiasm that I used with my mom but with a little more confidence. It's that confidence that a son has when talking to his dad, a male thing, a secret patriarchal language that men blink at when confronted by women but partake of expertly when amongst themselves.

"Oh, pretty good. What're you up to, son?"

"I wanted to do some temple work for Mom's parents. It's some religious stuff we do in our church. I'd like to do it."

"Religious stuff?" he says like he took a drink of something too sweet. "This isn't going to cost me 10 percent of my income, is it?"

"No, it's just a ceremony type of thing. It doesn't cost a thing. You don't even have to be there." I have a good feeling about this conversation.

"So what do you need, some sort of permission slip?"

"Well, actually nothing. I just wanted to let you know, kind of a courtesy thing."

"Oh, okay, but don't mention it to your mother. She thinks you joined a cult." A silence that isn't awkward and then, "How's the car running?"

A new batch of memories comes to mind, things like my first car—a 1972 Mustang Mach 1 with a 351 Cleveland and a Holley 650. It was hard to tell who loved the car more, my father or me. And there's ditching a few classes at college to have a drink with my dad in a bar in Waco, Texas. "I don't know how I feel about you skipping classes that I paid for," he said as we drank the beer he paid for. There's also the time when I told him to

get back in the house and leave me the f— alone, that I didn't need his help working on my car. I was brandishing a large crescent wrench. He went inside and bragged about it to his friends later.

"Running great," I say. "She's got about 30 thousand miles on her. You know, right at that point when everything's broken in but the compression's still tight. She's humming. It's really a quick car, handles well, too."

"Oh, boy," he answers, and we start gloating about engines, torque, and horsepower.

I feel out of sorts after I hang up, a feathery melancholy, not at all like I think I should feel. My wife will be thrilled. Theoretically my dead grandmother will also be thrilled. My mother will eventually catch wind and she won't be so thrilled. Maybe that's it, a little cognitive dissonance to tread in for a while.

For right now I check my planner: Project meeting at 4:00 P.M. and then a business dinner at 7:00 P.M. Later tonight I'll dream of fishing with my dad in some odd place like a busy freeway or out an office window. I'll wake up in the middle of the night and feel empty or cold or lonely. I'll want to wake my wife, but I won't.

A National Conspiracy?

Robert S. Wicks and Fred R. Foister, *Junius & Joseph: Presidential Politics and the Assassination of the First Mormon Prophet* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005). xii + 316 pp.

Reviewed by Michael W. Homer

Robert S. Wicks and Fred R. Foister selected the title *Junius & Joseph* to emphasize their thesis that Joseph Smith's death was a political assassination. The authors point out that the *Junius* tracts were "issued by *New York Tribune* publisher and political adviser Horace Greeley, who oversaw the national effort to promote American Whig presidential candidate Henry Clay" (7). Thus the title could as well be *Junius versus Joseph* since the authors believe they have demonstrated that the Mormon prophet's assassination was "the deadly result of a Whig-backed conspiracy that arose when it was determined that the Mormon prophet's candidacy [for President of the United States] might well disrupt the outcome of the 1844 presidential election" (5).

The authors state their theses as follows: "that Joseph Smith's murder, rather than being the deadly outcome of a spontaneous mob uprising, was in fact a carefully planned military-style execution. . . . And second, this study presents incontrovertible evidence that the effort to remove the Mormon leader from power and influence extended well beyond Hancock County (and included prominent Whig politicians as well as the Democratic Governor of the state), thereby transforming his death from an impulsive act by local vigilantes into a political assassination sanctioned by some of the most powerful men in Illinois" (5).

The authors' discussion of Illinois and national politics, as well as Joseph's reaction to these events, are well done. And even though they place great emphasis on Joseph's presidential ambitions, they do not ignore the fact that it was the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor* which unleashed the hatred of Joseph's detractors, who used this event as an excuse to detain and kill the young prophet. They also demonstrate (as did Dallin Oaks and Marvin Hill in *Carthage Conspiracy*)[1] that the Mormon prophet's murder was "a carefully planned military-style execution" rather than a "spontaneous mob uprising." Thomas Sharp, who claimed to be a Democrat, but who really wanted to sell newspapers and hoped to capitalize on a heavy dose of anti-Mormonism, was the real mastermind of Smith's murder. After Smith was arrested and detained in Carthage for ordering the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, Sharp rallied militia members to Carthage where they

met, planned, and carried out the murder of Smith and his brother. Many of these murderers were motivated by fear that Joseph had too much political power in Hancock County and in surrounding Illinois counties.

But in my opinion, the authors have exaggerated the significance of Joseph Smith's declaration that he was a candidate for the U.S. presidency. The authors argue that even before Smith announced his intention to seek that office he had "power over the ballot box in Hancock County" during the elections of 1843. Thereafter the Whigs and Democrats in Illinois entered into "an uneasy alliance" with the intent of opposing "Joseph Smith's autocratic rule" (48). His entry into the presidential race the following year "was not simply one more third-party candidate for the presidency of the United States." He was the mayor of Nauvoo but also "the charismatic founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (1). As such he was prepared not only to "secure redress for the injuries suffered by the Saints" but also "to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth" (15–16).

While Smith would have been one of the earliest third-party candidates had he lived (William Wirt of the Anti-Masonic Party ran in 1832 and James G. Birney of the Liberty Party ran in 1840 and 1844), it is doubtful that anyone outside the Mormon community took his candidacy as seriously as the authors contend. Although *General Smith's Views* was widely distributed by Mormon missionaries (108), there is little evidence to suggest that either Whigs or Democrats on the national level felt threatened by Smith's intention to seek high office. Nevertheless, the authors insist on characterizing mainstream candidates as "forces in opposition to General Smith's presidential campaign" when they discuss the campaigns of Whig candidate Clay and Democratic candidate Polk even though there is little to suggest that either national candidate considered himself to be running against the Mormon prophet (110).

While Wicks and Foister recognize Sharp's complicity and that John C. Elliott and Levi Williams, who both had local connections, were the two individuals who led the assault on Carthage Jail, they also insist that there was a wider conspiracy. But their argument that "the effort to remove the Mormon leader from power and influence. . . . included prominent Whig politicians as well as the Democratic Governor of the state" and that it was "a political assassination sanctioned by some of the most powerful men in Illinois" is dubious. For example, they place great emphasis on a statement made by Stephen Markham, Joseph Smith's bodyguard, that he broke up a secret tribunal at Carthage on the night before Joseph Smith's murder and that "there were delegates in the meeting from every state in the union except three" (165–66, 265, 271). One wonders why the authors rely on this statement to suggest a broad geographical conspiracy when Markham did not ultimately obtain the document and could not identify the state affiliations of those who attended the meeting. Inexplicably, the authors also seem to consider "the presence of undercover deputy U.S. Marshal John C.

Elliott at Carthage" as evidence of a broader conspiracy (271). Elliott was actually a close associate of Sharp who had been a deputy sheriff and constable at Warsaw.

At the conclusion of the book, they rely on "sociograms" to connect "conspirators" with Joseph Smith and Henry Clay. Based on those connections, they argue that "Clay's men" conspired to kill the Prophet. Relying on this most circumstantial of evidence, they conclude that "the initial decision to assassinate Joseph Smith was more than likely made by Whig political managers in Illinois, quite possibly at the suggestion of Abraham Jonas, O. H. Browning, or G. T. M. Davis" (269). They suspect Jonas because he was a local Whig leader, because he supplied a printing press to the publishers of the *Expositor,* and because Governor Ford appointed him to act as a liaison with the Mormons following Smith's murder. They suspect Browning primarily because he was a Whig and represented the men who were indicted for Smith's murder. Davis is suspected because he was Whig, was present at the Hamilton House the night before Smith's death, and because he authored a booklet claiming that Smith's murder was not motivated by politics (267–69). While their conclusion that these men were part of the conspiracy is premised on circumstantial evidence, it is also true that, even if these individuals did conspire to kill Smith, it does not prove that there was either a statewide or a national conspiracy or even that it was directed primarily through the Whig Party.

It is even more difficult to accept the authors' suggestion that the conspiracy may have extended beyond Illinois. They speculate about the possible involvement of "national Whig leaders" such as John J. Hardin, Jacob Burnet, and even Henry Clay, stating that their involvement "remains an open question" (269). They seem surprised that Henry Clay never commented on Smith's death (265), when it would have been surprising if Clay *had* commented on Smith's death, either positively or negatively. One wonders what audience any presidential candidate in 1844 could have addressed on that subject hoping to benefit his campaign? Even more surprisingly, they question whether Stephen A. Douglas, or even Sidney Rigdon, may have been part of the conspiracy. They are quite suspicious of Rigdon because of "the disturbing fact that there is no record of Rigdon ever having made a campaign speech in support of Joseph Smith." Rigdon's motive for conspiring to murder Joseph, they posit, was Joseph's love interest in Rigdon's daughter Nancy (270).

Although *Junius & Joseph* is a good read when the authors are focused on marshalling evidence, many of their conclusions and most of their suspicions are not grounded in the facts. The best discussion of the assassination of Joseph Smith remains the second chapter of Oaks's and Hill's *Carthage Conspiracy.* I would also recommend Chapter 29 and the epilogue of Richard Bushman's *Joseph Smith: Rough Rolling Stone* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005) which discusses some of these same events and makes more careful conclusions.

Note

1. Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy, The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

A Trader and His Friends

Will Evans, *Along Navajo Trails: Recollections of a Trader,* edited by Susan E. Woods and Robert S. McPherson (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005). 264 pp.

Reviewed by Deb Thornton

"Imagine." Will Evans's evocative text begins with an invitation to the reader to enter the Welsh immigrant's bull pen, roll a smoke with free tobacco plugged on the nailed-down lid of a lard can, and listen to any number of detailed accounts of the history and mythos of the denizens of the Colorado Plateau's upper reaches. Evans first claims to be a raconteur, then mentions that he is honest. In addition to his ready supply of the mercantile goods, the trader offers a wealth of stories, vivid descriptions of the faces and voices of his neighbors: the Dineh, the People, the Navajo.

Imagine a nineteen-year-old and two other men making what they believe to be the first wheel ruts on northern New Mexico's Hogback with two wagons, hauling the inside and the outside of what will, in a few days' time, become the Sanostee Trading Post. The December 1898 snow accumulates inside the new walls before the men can attach the roof; they shovel snow from inside the building, install a stove and shelves, and open for business. As planned, the young Welshman remains to mind the store, and the others depart to replenish the wagons.

The unremitting snow accumulates, burying alive the abundant Navajo livestock, causing economic setbacks that will require years of recovery. The Welshman will mind his snowbound post for months, melting water from drifts, trading dwindling supplies with the Navajo, and spending his lonely hours writing. The Navajo who come with Christmas greetings will receive apples and candy—he gives all that he has.

The wheel ruts carve what becomes a road, one of many Navajo trails in the Four Corners area. Having weathered the harsh storm and its catastrophic aftermath, the Welshman will not retreat with the spring thaw. For the next half century, Evans will be a trader and more, standing at the economic hub of a culture in rapid transition: "He is their creditor, advisor, and at times, their midwife and undertaker. He supplies them with flour and coffee, sugar and salt; he measures out their cloth, fits their feet with shoes and stockings, clothes them with shirts

and trousers, shades them with hats and umbrellas, protects them with coats and shawls, dispenses their medicine and soft drinks, satisfies their sweet tooth, weighs their nails and bolts, and supplies their tools," and, tellingly, he concludes, "Very little money enters into these transactions" (45). The concept of currency is called into question early in the manuscript, and it remains a numinous notion throughout the give-and-take described in the balance of the text. Nickels and dimes are assigned different colors. Language becomes currency. Intra-cultural respect becomes currency.

Evans will also be included in the spiritual life of those around him. From the Dineh, Evans will collect material goods, stories, songs, photographs, and social images. He will make the most faithful and detailed record that he can, and he will plant stories within stories, layering voices, quoting the compelling narrators as they tell their own stories of the forced march to Fort Sumner, the Beautiful Mountain uprising, healings, journeys, and skirmishes with Anglo "authorities." He will lament the scarcity of water; he will condemn the government's futile attempt to Anglicize the Navajo in a single generation, and he will decry the devastating economic effects of the government-ordered reduction of livestock in the 1930s.

Perhaps it is a coincidence that precisely nineteen years after the nineteen-year-old carved the wheel ruts, he established his own trading post in Shiprock, in which he set aside a museum space and covered every conceivable surface with Navajo designs. And from his bull pen, he begs his reader to imagine. A world unfolds in three sections: the events, the people, and the culture. The boundaries are permeable because the people create the events and manifest the culture, which is shaped by history and living symbol. The reader is offered lavish glimpses of many aspects of Navajo culture that Evans witnessed: birth, maturation, childbearing, illness, death, and the rites and ceremonies that accompany crucial junctures. Throughout the book one learns delectable tidbits about his trading practices and his appreciation for the individuals he encountered and the broader economic circumstances of their lives. He repeatedly mentions with respect the work of Mrs. Mary Eldredge and Mrs. H. G. Cole, who established a Methodist mission near Farmington and dedicated their lives to helping the people of the Four Corners. At one point, he muses about the fact that the Navajo do not use the still sharp arrowheads that dot the earth (132); later he writes that the people eschew any contact with the dead and dying (228), but he does not tie that fact back to the disuse of arrowheads.

When possible, Evans collects accounts of witnesses to historical events, attempting to preserve the authenticity of the narrative voices. Particularly vivid are accounts of the infamous long march to internment in the Pecos in 1864. They witness the hardships of the punitive relocation as well as of Yellow Horse's clandestine hunting expedition and a warrior's incursion into Comanche territory.

Starvation and smallpox ravaged the displaced persons, and the cultural injunction against handling the dying and the dead left many parents with the heartbreaking task of abandoning nearly deceased infants along the trail.

Also notable is Evans's detailed version of the Beautiful Mountain uprising, compiled from first-hand accounts. In 1913, the government agent, William T. Shelton, attempted to end the practice of polygamy among the Navajo. He dispatched policemen to arrest Little Singer and his three wives; they returned with the women only. Little Singer, son of the formidable traditionalist medicine man Bizhóshí, formed a band that forcibly removed his wives from their few guards, and all retreated to Beautiful Mountain, a landscape that afforded sound protection for a standoff. Shelton ordered the troops in, and rumors ran amok that the Navajo had threatened to kill the Anglo traders. In the end, leaders from all parties converged to diffuse the tension; and after a prolonged humiliating lecture from General Hugh Scott, the Navajo returned home and continued to practice polygamy. The traders involved, Evans concludes, "agreed it was too difficult to end a custom that had been practiced for centuries. Education, not force, was the better remedy" (103).

The final event Evans highlights also underscores the unseemly practices of government agents. In the 1930s, the Soil Conservation Service deemed that Navajo overgrazing was responsible for soil erosion causing the silt backup that threatened Hoover Dam. John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, ordered livestock reductions that shattered the Navajo economy. Evans notes that the promised remuneration for the losses never arrived and that no money was spent to tap into water resources that could have provided a sound economic base. The New Deal brought nothing but a raw deal from which the people never fully recovered. Evans includes one emblematic account of goats being "practically confiscated," then "shipped . . . butchered and processed, then sent back to the Navajos as canned goat. What a waste this dole was when freighting is considered—and the fact that the people used practically everything but the goat's bleat" (107).

The section entitled "Navajos I Have Known" reveals Evans's interactions with mainstream as well as historical figures. He is particularly fascinated by medicine men, who often emerge as leaders, and he gives accounts of the men as well as the ceremonies and cures for which they gained fame. Documented in some detail are Costiano, practitioner of the complex Night Chant; Ugly Man, the bear-mauled rainmaker; and Fat One and his son, who banished the works of witchcraft. Evans acknowledges several miraculous healings and maintains that faith is the primary ingredient of most of the healings he witnessed. Evans's respect for politicians is evident in his description of Sandoval and Bizhóshí. Evans delights in Black Horse's yanking tufts from the beard of an Anglo agent trying to impose education on the people, and he laments the murder-suicide of a couple who chose to die rather than surrender their polygamous relationship. A more

personal glimpse of Evans's assistant Dan Pete, whose delousing practices are revealed and slightly reviled, is followed by Pete's first-person renderings of Ute creation stories and explanations about why Navajos eat neither fish nor fowl.

The most compelling glimpse of person and culture may be in the story "A Dedicated Medicine Man," which begins with a description of Evans's construction of a school near Tohatchi. He includes a discourse on how adobe bricks are made and ends with an account of how Tall Man, the great medicine man, cured a child by crafting from a root four emblems of an animal the boy's mother had seen when she was pregnant with the boy. Four times Tall Man performed the ritual of breaking the animal effigies and burying the halves in the desert. The boy was cured. Evans confesses, "I tried much later to find one of the broken images but failed. It is just as well that I did not. What right had I to pry into the sanctity of his belief?" (162).

That very question resonates through the culture section of the book. Evans provides detailed accounts of Navajo daily life, the food, clothing, marital customs, family life, and other mundane activities. He also discusses the commercial processes of weaving and silversmithing, trades with which he was intimately familiar. He could be gullible; the documentation shows that he sometimes misinterpreted gestures. Somewhat more controversially, Evans assesses the morality of the people and describes various sacred ceremonies he was invited to attend. He was permitted to copy numerous sandpainting designs, and he includes parts of chants and describes in detail several of the most sacred ceremonies.

The latter acts are subject to a great range of assessment: One person's grateful idea of preservation can amount to another's perception of blasphemy. Evans, quite rightly, notes that the ceremonies will be lost to unwritten history if they are not preserved in some form, and shamans visited him to refine or remember various sandpaintings. At the same time, he traverses sacred terrain casually, and few believers would wish their sacred rites to be so exposed to the world. Should Evans have splashed the sacred designs on the sides of buildings and on table tops? The reader must decide.

The book was intended to be published half a century ago; and had it been, the amateur folklore and charm of the narrative would now be viewed as one man's intricate view of the people he worked among for half a century on a seam between two very different cultures, one dominant and one indomitable.

Its recent publication, however, seems to have necessitated the scrutiny of the manuscript through a twenty-first-century lens. The unsigned introduction, presumably written by the editors for this printing, flops all over itself to establish a Mormon context for Evans, while his manuscript makes but two mentions of the religion (one to a Mormon bishop, and the other to an account of a Relief Society shipment of clothing sent to the destitute Navajos one Christmas), and it is not clear from the text that Evans was Mormon. He does not identify himself as such,

and he scarcely acknowledges his private life or that of his wife, Sarah Luella Walker Evans, and their four children. This is a book that looks outward; and like all labors of love, it has its flaws, but its heart is in a solid place. Evans does not pretend to be an anthropologist, a folklorist, or a social critic; he is a trader, observer, and storyteller deeply steeped in one time and one place—a location he found needed recording.

Also included in the introduction are quotations from a series of letters that indicate Evans's biases and a latent racism. Both are less evident in Evans's *Navajo Trails* manuscript. No hardened racist could have endured the first savage winter, much less abide for fifty years among people he despised. He is no less a product of his time than is the reader. Evans does not cloak himself behind a veneer of objectivity, and that is one of his book's virtues. The author(s) of the introduction should trust readers to sort through the moral issues for themselves.

The introduction so strongly brands Evans an apologist that I steeled myself for a load of pious pap, but I found nothing of the sort in Evans's writing. Similarly, the editors' italicized introductions to the three sections were annoying impositions between the reader and Evans's text. Arriving at Evans's own text (p. 37) provides instant relief. The endnotes helpfully point to scholarly works, but the editors' imposed scholarship often creates dissonance with Evans's finely textured writing.

Finally, among the book's many virtues are the abundant photographs—including the exquisite work of William Pennington, whom Evans hosted and guided. The words and photos give the reader a sense of the time and place, the very different world of a century ago. Like a bee collecting desert nectar, Evans gathered narratives in all weathers, blending them into his sweet and pungent story of souls alive in the slender meridian between starvation and prosperity, between history and mystery.

NOTES OF INTEREST

An Open Letter to Nathan Oman

Robert A. Rees

DEAR NATHAN:

I appreciate your "An Open Letter to the *Dialogue* Board" (38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 227–29). I consider it a sincere and thoughtful expression of an ideal I share: a more balanced, diverse, and inclusive dialogue about Mormon religion and culture. As a former editor of *Dialogue* (1971–76), I am pleased that, as you say, "you care a great deal about the health and public reputation of Mormon intellectual fora" (227).

You identify what is a core problem for such fora, not only for *Dialogue*, but for all avenues of Mormon expression—how to foster balanced, responsible discourse. I am sure you recognize that the problem lies not just with *Dialogue* but with all venues that publish Mormon material.

You suggest that the problem might be solved were *Dialogue* editors "to solicit articles aggressively from well-known, established, conservative scholars" (229); but as far as I know, the editors have been doing that from the journal's inception. I know that I made a number of attempts to get conservative scholars to participate. Some did, but that was before there was an official pronouncement about "alternative voices" (which, fairly or unfairly, many assumed was code for *Dialogue* and *Sunstone*) or the prohibition against CES and BYU faculty publishing in *Dialogue* and *Sunstone* (the only such prohibition in American higher education, as far as I know). Cutting off a large portion of available conservative voices has made it difficult for *Dialogue* to achieve the balance it desires. I was always disappointed when conservative (or even moderate) scholars refused our invitation. (For more of my thoughts on "The Possibilities of Dialogue," see my 1974 editorial reprinted in this issue, pp. 97–100).

Thus, far from *Dialogue*'s editor or board "writ[ing] off its image problems" (228), engaging in "self pity" (229), or "washing its hands" (228) of the problem you identify, they have been trying for many years to persuade their more conser-

vative brothers and sisters to join the dialogue, generally without much success. *Dialogue* has also been soliciting material from the young scholars you reference in your letter, as evidenced by the special cash awards it has inaugurated for younger writers.

I do think you contribute to the problem rather than help solve it when you speak of the rising generation of young Mormon scholars as "loyal and faithful Latter-day Saints" and suggest that there is some truth to the perception that *Dialogue* is "an in-house journal for the disaffected Mormon community" (228). It might surprise you to know that many if not most of those who contribute to the journal also consider themselves "loyal and faithful Latter-day Saints." I don't know what the profile of the journal's current readership is; but not too many years ago, a survey revealed that the average *Dialogue* reader had a profile of faith (as measured by such things as sacrament meeting attendance and tithe paying) superior to the Church average. I don't know everyone on the current staff, board of directors, and editorial board; but a significant majority of those I do know consider themselves to be faithful members of the Church.

The degree to which I believe you misunderstand *Dialogue* is seen in your contention that articles on controversial subjects by conservative scholars and commentators would make "aging, liberal, cultural Mormons . . . absolutely furious." You say, that *Dialogue* "need[s] to be thinking in each and every issue whether or not you have published something offensive to this group" (229). This practice, would, you contend, counterbalance *Dialogue*'s "willingness to offend conservative or orthodox Mormons" (229). Such sentiments demonstrate, I believe, a fundamental misunderstanding of *Dialogue*'s mission. From its inception, *Dialogue* has been committed to publishing *responsible* scholarly and other expressions, not regardless of whether they might offend particular individuals or groups, but whether they contribute something worthwhile to our understanding of what it means to be honestly and openly engaged with our minds, hearts, and spirits with our religion and its multiple intersections with history and with the world.

I take my own experience as editor as a case in point. Elsewhere I have recounted the difficult decision I faced in publishing Lester Bush's landmark study on the historical origins of what used to be called "Mormonism's Negro doctrine."[1] Considerable deliberation, thought, and prayer (not just by me but by our board of directors and editorial staff) went into that decision, particularly because we knew it might offend some Church leaders and members. Not only were we not indifferent to how Bush's "shaking of the foundations" study would be received, but we also took precautions to soften the effect by making sure that some General Authorities knew what we were doing and by also inviting three reputable scholars to respond to Bush. The fact that I was threatened (not officially but nevertheless seriously) with Church disciplinary action made the decision even more difficult because I then, as now, value my Church membership. But I also

value the process that that particular decision (and many like it that I and other editors have wrestled with for forty years) represents—a willingness to take risks so that true dialogue might take place.

One of the problems the editors of the journal face is that any criticism, no matter how well-founded or sensitively presented, will inevitably be seen by some as heretical or "evil speaking of the Lord's anointed." Another is that some Mormon scholars and writers withhold their manuscripts based only on the perception that the Brethren would disapprove of their publishing in a nonofficial or nonsanctioned journal, even though there has been no such specific prohibition. (One of the dangers of the contemporary Church is that legions are more than eager to tell us what the Brethren think or wish on any given subject.)

You have respectfully issued a challenge to the editors and Board of Directors. I would like, in turn, to present a challenge to you and to the young scholars and intellectuals you claim to speak for as well as to the "established, conservative" scholars you identify in your letter: If you are dissatisfied with *Dialogue*, work to change it. If you have important things to say, including about what you see as *Dialogue*'s imbalance, submit them. If you want to defend orthodox teaching and practices or enter into true dialogue with heterodox points of view, send in your manuscripts. I am confident that the current editor and editorial board will treat them with the same respect and fair consideration they give every manuscript.

Because you openly challenge the *Dialogue* board, I respectfully suggest a few things that you might do personally:

1. Since you contend that the way in which young scholars and intellectuals perceive *Dialogue* "is not entirely fair" (228), help make it fair by becoming better informed about *Dialogue*'s modus operandi and especially about the attitude of the editors toward a more balanced journal.

2. Help your young friends understand that, even though they may not be aware of it, they owe a debt of gratitude to those who have kept *Dialogue* alive over the years. You and they enjoy a religious culture that no longer withholds priesthood ordination to blacks, that has seen greater respect for the rights of women, that is not as homophobic as it once was (even though there is still a long way to go), that enjoys amicable relations with the Community of Christ (formerly the Reorganized Church) that has revised some of its teachings about the descendents of Lehi, that discusses real problems (divorce, child abuse, mental illness, etc.) more openly than it did a generation ago, that has removed some offensive publications from circulation, that is more respectful of scientific discovery, that is more balanced politically (though still imbalanced toward the right), that is vigorously engaged in interfaith work, and, perhaps especially, that is more open about its history and more honest about its institutional failings. *Dialogue* is not responsible for all of these progressive changes, but I believe that history will show it has played a role in all of them.

3. Since you are sincerely concerned about the state of Mormon scholarship, instead of being a "sometime subscriber" (229), become as consistent a subscriber as you are a reader. Even if you don't agree with everything *Dialogue* publishes (as I certainly don't), if you read it, support it. I assume you subscribe to other Mormon publications without necessarily agreeing with everything in them. Also, get your young friends to subscribe.

4. Solicit articles from "LDS grad students and other young people who care about such things," those "talented young intellectuals who [as you say] will be the leading Mormon scholars of this generation" (228)—and perhaps you might be willing to alter your statement to read "*among* the leading Mormon scholars," since some of those whom I could count among this number presently contribute to *Dialogue*.

5. Help arrange the kinds of articles you mention in your letter—by Lynn Wardell, Louis Midgley, and Daniel Peterson. In fact, I will make it easier for you: I am willing to engage in a dialogue with any (or all) of these scholars on the subjects you mention. I'm serious. These are lively topics that could benefit from thoughtful, respectful dialogue. We could do what I used to do as editor: Get several scholars in a room, turn on the tape recorder, share the microphone, and record, transcribe, and publish the results.

6. Send an open letter to the editors of FARMS, *BYU Studies*, FAIR, and similar publications encouraging them to solicit articles from more liberal/progressive scholars. Use the same logic with them that you include in your letter to the *Dialogue* board.

I attended the Christmas Eve 2005 service at San Francisco's Grace Cathedral and was struck by the speaker's statement: "We have to understand that questions unite us and answers divide us." I believe that Latter-day Saints should be (but often are not) united by the overriding questions facing the modern Church in the first decade of the twenty-first century: Can we be open to the truth, no matter where it may lead us? Can we reconcile our enormous wealth with the immense poverty and suffering in the world? Can we become more pluralistic politically and socially? Can we find successful solutions for the increasing percentage of single members? Can we become more engaged in working for social justice in our own and in other cultures? Can we be less hierarchical and patriarchal? Can we live together peaceably despite our differences? Can we integrate the riches of other cultures (including other faith traditions) with the Anglo-Americanism that presently dominates the Church? Can we become more successful in eradicating racism, sexism, and the other "isms" that plague us? Can we accommodate the relational needs of homosexuals? Can we be bolder in challenging governmental policies that lead to corruption, war, torture, and grinding the faces of the poor? And, ultimately, can we as individuals and as a religion foster the kind of discipleship of which B. H. Roberts spoke a century ago when he said that the disciples of

Mormonism, "growing discontented with the necessarily primitive methods which have hitherto prevailed in sustaining the doctrine, will yet take profounder and broader views of the great doctrines committed to the Church; and, departing from mere repetition, will cast them in new formulas; cooperating in the works of the Spirit, until they help to give to the truths received a more forceful expression and carry it beyond the earlier and cruder stages of its development"?[2]

These are the questions your generation must find unity in addressing.

Come, my young friends, join the dialogue, and let us reason *together.*

Hopefully and heartfully,
Robert A. Rees

Notes

1. Devery S. Anderson, "A History of *Dialogue.* Part II: Struggle toward Maturity, 1971–1982," *Dialogue* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 22–27.

2. B. H. Roberts, "Book of Mormon Translation: Interesting Correspondence on the Subject of the Manual Theory," *Improvement Era* 9 (July 1906): 712–13.

CONTRIBUTORS

POLLY AIRD is an independent historian living in Seattle, Washington. She is descended from five Scottish families who converted to Mormonism in the 1840s and came to Utah in the 1840s and 1850s: the Adamsons, Airds, McAuslans, McLeans, and Muirs. She is currently working on a biography of her great-great-uncle, Peter McAuslan.

MATTHEW JAMES BABCOCK, a former substitute teacher, free-lance proofreader, and assembly-line worker, has taught composition, literature, and creative writing at BYU-Idaho for seven years. His stories and poems have appeared in many publications. He and his wife, Missy, have three daughters. In fair weather, he bikes to work. In foul, he walks.

MOLLY MCLELLAN BENNION, an attorney, is a member of the *Dialogue* Board of Directors, chair of the Northwest Sunstone Symposium, and a teacher in the Relief Society.

MARY LYTHGOE BRADFORD lives in a retirement condo in Leesburg, Virginia, near her daughter and four of her twelve grandchildren. She is working on a novel and a poetry collection. She is the author of *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian* (Salt Lake City: Dialogue Foundation, 1995) and *Leaving Home: Personal Essays* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987) and hopes to continue working on *Dialogue* for the next forty years.

KIRK D. HAGEN did his undergraduate work in physics and holds a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering. He is a professor of engineering at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, and the author of two engineering texts and numerous engineering papers. An active member of the LDS Church, he resides in Centerville, Utah.

GARY HERNANDEZ works for a major oil company and resides in Ascot, England, with his wife, Maggie, their three children, and a pet snake. He has published fiction and nonfiction in obscure and otherwise infrequently read journals. He received his English literature master of arts from George Mason University and his M.S. in technical writing from Utah State University.

MICHAEL W. HOMER is a practicing trial lawyer in Salt Lake City and chair since 2003 of the Utah Board of State History. He is the author of "Masonry and Mormonism in Utah, 1850–1984," *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Fall 1992): 57–96; and "'Similarity of Priesthood in Masonry': The Relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (Fall 1994): 1–113. He is the recipient of the Lowell L. Bennion Editor's Award, the T. Edgar Lyon Award of Excellence, and the John Whitmer Historical Association Best Article Award.

CARRIE A. MILES, a frequent speaker at Sunstone symposia, is the author of *The Redemption of Love: Rescuing Marriage and Family from the Economics of a Fallen World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2006) and coauthor with Laurence R. Iannaccone of *Male and Female in Christ* (San Jose, Calif.: Lem Press, 1999). She holds a doctorate in social and organizational psychology from the University of Chicago and is currently a senior research fellow at the Consortium for the Economic Study of Religion at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. She and her husband, Laurence R. Iannaccone, have two grown children. This paper is taken from *The Redemption of Love* and was presented at the 2005 annual meeting of Society for the Scientific Study of Religion/Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture. Used by permission. She thanks Laurence R. Iannaccone and Anne Mikkola for their comments and suggestions.

ROBERT A. REES, a past editor of *Dialogue* (1971–76), has taught literature at the University of Wisconsin, UCLA, and UC Santa Cruz. He was also a Fulbright Professor of American Literature at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania (1995–96). A poet and essayist, he has served as an LDS bishop and member of the Baltic States Mission presidency, and is Director of Education and Humanities at the Institute of HeartMath in Boulder Creek, California.

DEB THORNTON, who lived and studied literature in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in the early 1990s, is an Associate Professor of English and Literature at Utah Valley State College in Orem, Utah.

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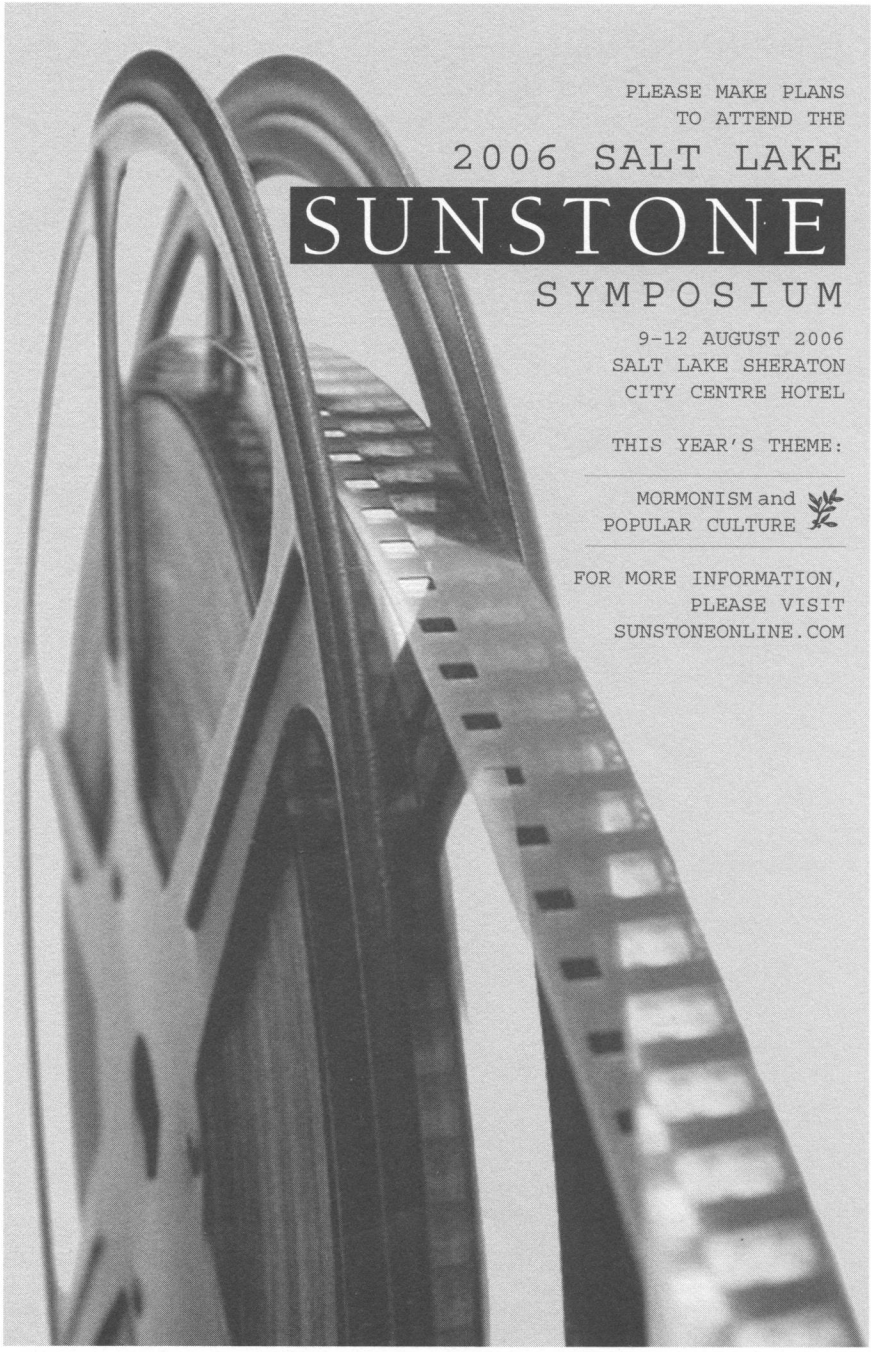
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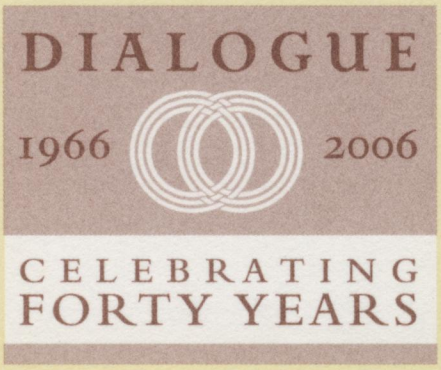

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