DIALOGUE

A Journal of Mormon Thought

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. 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.

Subscriptions and Advertising: Information about subscriptions and advertising is available on our website and at the Dialogue Business Office, P.O. Box 58423, Salt Lake City, UT 84158; phone or fax (801) 274-8210; or email: dialoguejournal@ msn.com.

See our website at

www.dialoguejournal.com

Contents

LETTERS

European Mormons and Napoleon Mormons

Due to my interest in religion I'm in the habit of browsing periodicals of various faiths. This has greatly broadened my perspectives as I do pastoral counseling as a Christian. It was thus I came upon the winter 2005 issue of *Dialogue.*

The first article to catch my eye was Walter E. A. van Beek's ("Mormon Europeans or European Mormons? An 'Afro-European' View on Religious Colonization" 38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 3–36). He articulates well the concerns and realities of Americanisms in Mormon culture abroad. This and the next two articles expressed my dismay over past missionary efforts that all too often wiped out indigenous beauty and customs, imposing Western ways. (Devyn M. Smith, "The Diverse Sheep of Israel: Should the Shepherds Resemble Their Flocks?" 38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 56–74; R. John Williams, "A Marvelous Work and a Possession: Book of Mormon Historicity as Postcolónialism" 38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 37–55.)

But I was delightfully impressed with the "Personal Voice" of Cetti Cherniak ("*Napoleon Dynamite,* Priesthood Skills, and the Eschatology of the Non-Rational: A Nonwarranted Physiotheologic Analysis," 38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 129–140). I am most often surrounded by ultra-rational and highly intellectual publications with very little balance. Such is not the case here. "*Napoleon Dynamite*" is an excellent foray into theologizing our pop culture! First, the idea of right brain/left brain approaches is absolutely correct as a means of evaluating our theological approach, worship styles, importance of ritual and symbol, etc. In our area I see many churches bringing back rituals thrown out by the Reformation.

Jesus taught most frequently with stories and parables. It was a pleasure to see intelligent and playful comparisons of characters in a movie and everyday happenings to theological concepts and symbols, e.g., Pedro as Peter. I giggled, I agreed, questioned, pondered, and even argued with the author as I read it. I have rarely been so engaged by a piece. Indeed, can it be an accident that Mexicans and African Americans are moving into Utah and Idaho? Any good theology engages the participants, enticing them to stretch and grow. Ms. Cherniak is profound and proficient, with a delightful, humorous style, too.

I am impressed with the overall quality and broad scope of *Dialogue,* but in all honesty, "*Napoleon Dynamite*" is a dynamite piece. Bravo! Keep it up.

Chaplain Monica Cichon, B.S.M.T.
Goshen, Indiana

Napoleon Is Dynamite

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the most recent issue. The "Mormon Europeans" piece was smart and insightful (Walter E. A. van Beek, "Mormon Europeans or European Mormons? An 'Afro-European' View on Religious Colonization" 38, no. 4

[Winter 2005] 3–36) and the critique of the Alma 36 chiasmus is an important (if controversial) corrective (Earl M. Wunderli, "Critique of Alma 36 as an Extended Chiasmus," 38, no. 4 [Winter 2005]: 97–112). My favorite article, though, has to be the Cetti Cherniak essay: "*Napoleon Dynamite*, Priesthood Skills, and the Eschatology of the Non-Rational: A Nonwarranted Physiotheologic Analysis," 38, no. 4 (Winter 2005): 129–40.

I didn't understand about half of it, but I didn't mind, because the half I did understand alternated between being brilliant and hilarious. That's the kind of thing you simply won't read anywhere but in *Dialogue*. It is an absolute gem. I wonder if you could provide more information about the author, who seems to be a fascinating person.

Patrick Mason
South Bend, Indiana

Note: Cetti Cherniak is a wife, mother, and grandmother, a certified auto mechanic, electronics and optical lab technician, herbalist, Vipassana meditation practitioner, and fiction writer. She has a B.A. in Slavic languages and literatures from Indiana University and pursues graduate studies in systematic theology at the University of Notre Dame with an emphasis in aesthetics.

Mormons for Reincarnation

In Kent Condie's article, "Pre-Mortal Spirits: Implications for Cloning, Abortion, Evolution, and Extinction," 39, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 35–56, he quoted Brigham Young on the topic. I looked up the full quotation, which reads: "President Young said when some people have little children born at 6 & 7 months pregnancy & they live but a few hours then die they bless them, name them etc[.] but I don't do it for I think that such a spirit has not [had] a fair chance FOR I THINK THAT SUCH A SPIRIT WILL HAVE A CHANCE OF OCCUPYING ANOTHER TABERNACLE AND DEVELOP ITSELF. THIS IS NEW DOCTRIN [SIC] YET IT LOOKS CONSISTENT" (Brigham Young, quoted in Wilford Woodruff, in *Waiting for World's End: The Diaries of Wilford Woodruff*, edited by Susan Staker, on *Infobase Library*, CD-ROM [Orem, Utah: Infobase, 1998]; emphasis in original).

Brigham Young opened a door wide enough to drive Hinduism into Mormonism. I have often thought that reincarnation would solve all the problems which Condie alluded to. If we have only one life, there would seem to be too much arbitrariness and too many injustices in assignments, gifts, and chances. If we have as many lives as needed to get it right, then one bad one, or a natural or intentional abortion, or other unfortunate event will not affect the ultimate outcome of the course of our eventual karma.

I have collected substantial heat for this suggestion, but here is Brigham affirming my supposition. Brigham said that he thought people needed a "fair chance." Now, his idea of a fair chance was something longer than a few hours. My idea of a fair chance is a whole lifetime or many lifetimes—time enough to get it right, as many times as it takes to progress onward to some nirvana like the celestial kingdom.

I have often thought that it would

be perfect symmetry if we, who helped in the creation of this world, were the spirits who matured as the world matured through all these long, long years.

The problems of the last judgment and reward of heaven or hell after only one life are pointed out in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. I was absolutely shaken by the vision of this cruel god who would damn souls for eternity for poor judgment or even true love. It is like dying for not seeing a stop sign, only this death is eternal. We Mormons are somewhat more forgiving than Dante's Catholicism, but not much.

Therefore I vote for reincarnation along with Brigham Young.

Bob Wrathall
Scotts Valley, California

More on Premortal Spirits

Editor's note: This letter was initially posted at Dialogue Paperless, Letters (Spring 2006), http://www.dialoguejournal.com/and is printed here with the author's permission.

Kent C. Condie's article on premortal spirits ("Premortal Spirits: Implications for Cloning, Abortion, Evolution, and Extinction," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 39, No. 1, [Spring 2006]: 35–56) centers on a problem concerning the relationship between our physical bodies and our premortal spirit bodies. Traditionally, Mormonism has argued that these two bodies look alike. However, our physical bodies are largely a result of the particular parents we have and the genes they pass on to us. How can these two ideas both be true? One possible explanation is that the entire genetic history of the earth was predetermined, but this is unworkable in the context of Mormon theology, so Condie rightly rejects it. Instead, he offers two possible explanations which I paraphrase as follows:

1. God does not create spirit bodies until conception, when the genetic make-up of the physical body is known.

2. God creates generic spirits that are not predestined for a specific physical body.

The first possible solution strikes me as untenable for the following reason: Although our physical bodies are *largely* a result of our genes, they are not *fully* determined by our genes. Thus, even if God waits until the moment of conception (or thereabouts) to create our spirit bodies, he still does not have enough information to know what our physical bodies will look like. For example, the appearance of our physical bodies can be greatly influenced by poor nutrition, by disease, or by disfiguring accidents.

This means that even if God does wait until conception to create a spirit body, Mormon theology will still have to account for differences between the appearance of that spirit body and the physical body it inhabits. That is, we will still need explanation 2 or something like it.

As a defense of explanation 1 against this criticism, one might be tempted to argue that the spirit bodies God creates are not "supposed to" match our physical bodies with respect to disfiguring injuries. For example, if a person loses a limb in a farming accident, no one expects that this amputa-

tion will affect the person's spirit body. On the contrary, we take comfort in the fact that this limb will be restored in the resurrection, and we assume that the spirit body has the limb throughout. This argument, taken to its logical conclusion, seems to suggest that our spirit bodies do not match our physical bodies as they are in mortality but rather our physical bodies as they are in the resurrection when they are restored to their "perfect frame."

While this may seem like a good way to account for differences between spirit and body due to a lost limb, it doesn't really solve the original problem. Lost limbs are straightforward differences, but what are we to say about the effects of nutrition on our height and features? Do we sweep these under the rug in a similar way by assuming our resurrected bodies look as we would have had we been properly nourished? The problem with this approach is that it treats all the differences in appearance due to accidents of life as unimportant, while treating differences due to the accident of our genetic make-up as all-important.

It seems to me that our theology will have to account for differences in appearance between our spirit bodies and our physical bodies. If explanations 1 and 2 are the only possibilities we can think of, we should start getting comfortable with 2.

Stephanie Corey
Forest Grove, Oregon

British Non-Mormon Writes

Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from a letter sent to the business office with a subscription request. We thought Mr. Baker's perspective would be of interest as it refers to the international church.

I guess everyone has a different story to tell, so as a non-Mormon I'll try and explain how I first made my acquaintance with Mormons. Many years ago when I was attending a Catholic school operated at the time by the Jesuits in the city of Leeds, which is in Yorkshire, a group of us students, all about sixteen years old, used to walk to the town hall at lunch time to listen to open air speakers. Catholics were one group that regularly spoke, another day it might be the British Communist Party, another day those against vivisection, and on another day, some American Mormon missionaries. It was very interesting for a group of impressionable youths to listen to such diverse views and to heckle the speakers occasionally.

The Mormons made a good impression, though to my recollection none of us were really convinced. The things they had in their favour were that they were American, their accents were different, they looked good, they were friendly, and we liked them as individuals. Their leader was called Calvin Smoot, which sounded very exotic in industrial Yorkshire. Besides this was the novelty value that they were the first Americans we had met and they spoke with fluency and confidence. (We were all at the tongue-tied stage.) Furthermore, they had this strange message about the international migration of a group of Jews to America. It was all new to us. The Jesuits we asked about the missionaries explained what they perceived as the

weaknesses in Mormon views (e.g., the Asian origin of Native Americans, anachronisms in the Book of Mormon, etc.) but they didn't try to dissuade us from going to listen to them.

After leaving university, I became a geography teacher, which may also help account for my interest in the history, geographical distribution, and culture of the Mormons as a people. I then worked, until I retired last year, for the British Ministry of Defence, finishing as a consultant (not as grand a position as it sounds). During my twenty-five years with the Ministry of Defence, I never met a single British Mormon, which perhaps illustrates that they occupy a rather peripheral role in Britain.

There are, I believe, officially around 180,000 British Mormons, with perhaps 30,000–50,000 active members (i.e., less than 0.1 per cent of the population). The claimed number of adherents seems to have been static for some time; and the impression I have is that, to use management terminology, there is a large input in terms of personnel and capital simply to retain market share. In Reading, where I live and which has a population of approximately 148,000, I have been told that the weekly attendance figure at the local LDS meetinghouse is around 120.

Keith Baker
Reading, Berkshire, England

Our Pardon for Christ's Sake

Jacob Morgan's article, "The Divine Infusion Theory: Rethinking the Atonement," 39, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 57–81, is an ingenious, though finally unconvincing, synthesis of the much sought after "mechanism" of the atonement. As Morgan himself admits, "It [infusion] does not answer the question of why Christ's suffering was necessary" (76–77).

The penal substitution theory discussed by Morgan fails in positing the suffering and death of Christ as his vicarious payment of the penalty due to us for our transgressions. Again, according to Morgan: "If justice was fully satisfied by Christ it seems that everyone should be forgiven of their sins automatically" (61).

Morgan's atonement theory does not explain the necessity for the sacrifice of the Redeemer. Still, he asks the right question. "The more difficult problem is explaining why his [Christ's] suffering should allow us to be pardoned" (60). Wouldn't it be nice if Jesus himself would just plainly and directly answer that one question? I believe he already has:

> Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is *pleading your cause* before him—
>
> Saying: Father, *behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin* . . . whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified.
>
> Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life. (D&C 45:3–5; emphasis mine.)

Jesus here presents the one and only, absolutely irrefutable "wrongful death suit" in that the injustices Christ suffered for his Father's sake justify the Father in forgiving us for Christ's sake. Paul appears to have understood this: "And be ye kind . . . for-

giving one another, even as God *for Christ's sake* hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32; emphasis mine).

By right of his perfect obedience and innocence, Christ has the one and only undeniable right to perfect justice: "For do ye suppose that ye can get rid of *the justice of an offended God,* who hath been trampled under feet of men that thereby salvation might come?" (3 Ne. 28:35; emphasis mine).

As God the Father considers the lawful penalty due to fallen man and the counteracting request for the forgiveness of men as recompense to His violated, innocent Son, His only option is to appease the greater of the two injustices while minimizing the loss to the lesser one. The Father must spare the brethren (and, of course, the sisters) of Christ as he has requested, but only on condition of our remorse for our sins and acknowledgement of His Son as our only savior. "Behold, he [Christ] offereth himself a sacrifice for sin . . . *unto all those who have a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered*" (2 Ne. 2:7; emphasis mine).

Of his suffering in Gethsemane, Christ said, "I partook and *finished my preparations* unto the children of men" (D&C 19:19; emphasis mine). Gethsemane was a finishing "preparation" for the atonement, but it was not *the* atonement. Only from the cross did Christ proclaim: "It is finished" (John 19:30). Gethsemane gives him empathy and judgment in bearing in his own person the pain-filled confession of our sins. Golgotha gains him the recompense of our captive souls by his wrongful death: "Thou hast led captivity captive" (Ps. 68:18).

Morgan asks rhetorically: "If Christ volunteered, where is the injustice?" (60) I reject the concept that, because Christ "volunteered" for his earthly sojourn and mission (so did we all), then all violence against him is justified as if, in essence, "he asked for it." Those who do evil against him and all the rest of us "volunteers" are still violators, and the innocent victims of these violations must still be recompensed–he, most of all. If Christ's voluntary status as the sacrificial lamb justifies any injustice against him, then again how can the scripture say: "For do ye suppose that ye can get rid of *the justice of an offended God,* who hath been trampled under feet of men that *thereby salvation might come?*" (3 Ne. 28:35; emphasis mine).

The innocent, just, and beloved Son of God, in perfect obedience to his Father's will, suffered infinite injustice at the hands of devils and men, that he may justly claim of the Father his right to an infinite recompense of the countermanding of every demand of justice against every repentant soul who loves him.

I think that the atonement as the recompense of our lives given to Christ for his wrongful death is so simple that even a little child can understand. Remember: "By very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls" (Alma 37:7).

Michael E. McDonald
Chester, Idaho

King Benjamin and the Yeoman Farmer

G. St. John Stott

I

According to republican purists of the Revolutionary generation, the values of commerce, which "fostered a love of gain, ostentatious living, and a desire for luxuries," could be contrasted with those of agriculture, which encouraged frugality, industry, and a desire for competence.[1] The contrast was largely a fiction, of course, and de Crèvecoeur's recognition that self-interest was what held farming communities together should warn us against a naive reading of Jeffersonian texts.[2] Nevertheless, as the income of most small farmers in North America in the late eighteenth century did not allow for conspicuous consumption, and rural neighbors were bound together by interlacing social obligations and debts,[3] the farmer of the Revolutionary generation could legitimately be given iconic status as the antithesis of aggressive commercial individualism. But what if agriculture were itself to become (even more) commercialized? What if obligations to others were reduced to the honoring of debts, and benevolence was thought to lie, not in traditional acts of charity such as helping the needy, but rather in helping the bottom line—in inducing men "to pursue with increased energy, that business, or that course of conduct, to which their true interest directs them"?[4]

These were not idle questions for those living in upstate New York in the 1820s. Agriculture was changing in the state's western counties in the years before Jackson's presidency, as improved transportation routes (including most notably the completed Erie Canal) dramatically multiplied the opportunities for shipping farm products. Clarence Danhof notes that 20 percent of northern farm goods were sold in urban markets at the beginning of the decade, a percentage that would rise.[5] From west

of Albany, historians have traced the movement of beef, pork, salt, flour, and potash to Quebec, wheat and flour to Schenectady (for reshipment to New York and the West Indies), grain, lumber and whisky to Baltimore, and cattle to Baltimore and Philadelphia.[6] As one might expect, these new opportunities led some to advocate a market-driven agriculture that would maximize yields and profits; and no less predictably, not everyone agreed that these changes were for the good. Although the recognition that in a commercial society an entrepreneur "deals with [others] as he does with his cattle and his soil, for the sake of the profits they bring" was an eighteenth-century commonplace,[7] the unapologetic equation of this philosophy with virtue *was* new—and some protested both this new definition and the changes that it brought to the social meanings embedded in market exchanges.[8] It is one such protest that concerns me here. Among those who felt that a move to surplus-market agriculture was retrograde was Joseph Smith Jr. who, living ten miles from the booming canal town of Palmyra,[9] would in 1830 present to the world in the Book of Mormon an alternative vision of how rural America should be.

Some might question this attribution. Smith claimed that the Book of Mormon was an inspired translation of works authored in ancient America and then edited for those who would read them in the latter days; for those who accept this account of the work's origin, any similarities between the practices and values of Book of Mormon peoples and those of its first readers would presumably be explained as a providential coincidence—indeed, as providing the justification for the book's coming forth when it did. That possibility is not addressed in what follows, for my concern here is not with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon but with the ways in which—whatever its origins—the work engages the concerns of its first readers. The question of the historicity of the Book of Mormon can hardly be dismissed, of course;[10] but however we account for the work, it is surely helpful to remember the words of J. R. R. Tolkien, as he rather sardonically surveyed the state of *Beowulf* criticism some seventy years ago: "At last then, after inquiring so long whence the material came, and what its original or aboriginal nature was (questions that cannot ever be decisively answered), we might now and again inquire what the poet did with it." Substituting "prophet" for *poet* (and bracketing the question of who the prophet was), I believe that we might usefully do the same.[11]

II

For those unwilling to bracket questions of origins, it might seem logical to appeal to Smith's biography and assume that his thinking on the dynamics of an agricultural society was influenced by his family's experience of economic failure. They were still smarting from the loss of their farm when he dictated the Book of Mormon text.[12] However, the Smith family story was far from unique and the issues addressed in the work were generally relevant to the situation of small landowners, tenant farmers, and hired hands in upstate New York. After all, those who prospered from the canal boom were large landowners—farmers able to operate on a commercial scale—and tradesmen. Small farmers were squeezed, indeed often squeezed out, by the canal's arrival and the consequent changes in land prices;[13] and Eric Hobsbawm's observation that, for those who responded to Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (1795), "poverty was . . . a collective fact, to be solved and not merely escaped" also applies to those who responded to Smith's work a generation later.[14] The Smiths, that is to say, were not alone in discovering that, although the capitalism of the day offered, as James Fenimore Cooper had written, a lure of "competence and happiness,"[15] the reality could be quite other. There was an audience ready to respond to the "profound social protest" that the Book of Mormon articulated.[16]

The depth of this protest can hardly be exaggerated. Rather than advocating the pursuit of market opportunities, the Book of Mormon counseled temperance, condemned the display of wealth, and elaborated an economic system based on a labor theory of value. Distrusting the pursuit of profit, as prosperity could lead to pride, and pride could lead to contempt for and "oppression to" the poor,[17] it urged the limitation of consumption, and proclaimed an egalitarian message. In a just society, the argument went, there would be "no respect to persons" on economic grounds; rather all would be "rich like unto [each other]."[18] The message could hardly be clearer: While having "respect to persons" follows from the acceptance of class divisions, having "no respect to persons" implied an egalitarian vision of community life.[19] Significantly, in the Book of Mormon the development of a class structure was a sign of spiritual decline (4 Ne. 1:28 [1:25]).

We might seem in all of this to be revisiting Charles Sellers's *Kulturkampf,* the struggle between, on the one hand, a morality sanctioning "competitive individualism and the market's rewards of wealth and

status" and, on the other, a morality drawing its strength from a revivalism that "recharged America's communal egalitarianism."[20] And to some extent, we are. Smith did look for an egalitarian society, his message would challenge those with wealth and status to use their surplus for the good of the community, and the theology of the Book of Mormon was revivalistic. However, we cannot stop here. A coloring of revivalism is hardly a distinguishing feature, given that for most Americans the first decades of the nineteenth century were, in Perry Miller's words, "a continuing, even though intermittent, revival"[21] and given that, in other respects, the message of early Mormonism was more complex than Sellers suggests.

Smith was not communalistic. Although, as we shall see, Smith's translation describes a society that owned land communally and restricted market exchanges, Smith did not think that this system necessitated a communal system of production. New England ministers had seen the good life in terms of individual property-holding, drawing on Micah 4:4 to flesh out their descriptions. This dream, part of the political rhetoric of Ontario County in Smith's day, was implicit in the Book of Mormon.[22] The prophet presumed that there were individual allocations of land ("inheritances," 3 Ne. 3:4 [6:3]), and that, although the community would come under the judgment of history as a collective, such collectiveness did not do away with personal accountability for stewardship.[23]

Further, Smith's vision did not presume absolute, synchronous equality. Linking economic and moral stewardship and drawing on the covenant theology of the Old Testament, Smith assumed that righteousness would inevitably lead to communal prosperity;[24] but he also recognized that, luck apart, it was hard work and entrepreneurial flair that would lead to individual success.[25] What disturbed him was not that some would become wealthy but that they would not use their wealth to help those in need.[26]

That said, the Book of Mormon does signal a clash of cultures, even if not precisely the one Sellers describes. Adam Smith had noted that, with the division of labor and the consequent impossibility of every man providing everything for himself, it was necessary to divide's one's stock into assets necessarily held in reserve for immediate consumption and capital which could be used (or invested) to meet these needs in the future. When one "possesses stock sufficient to maintain him for months or years," he explained, "he naturally endeavours to derive a revenue from the greater part of it; reserving only so much for his immediate con-

sumption as may maintain him until this revenue begins to come in."[27] This use of capital goes unquestioned in the Book of Mormon. What *is* questioned, however, and what set the Prophet down a different road from that followed by his contemporaries is the question of what one should do when one's revenue exceeds one's needs for immediate consumption and reinvestment, in short, when one possesses what I refer to in the following discussion as "surplus." For contemporaries, it went without saying that such surplus should be put to use. "A man must be perfectly crazy," Adam Smith had reflected, ". . . who does not employ all the stock which he commands" either to improve his standard of living or secure future profits.[28] Joseph Smith disagreed. Self-aggrandizement, he would tell a follower, "may be indulged upon only one rule or plan—and that is to elevate, benefit and bless others first." Riches, a Book of Mormon prophet affirmed (meaning, by the term, surplus), should only be sought "for the intent to do good."[29]

In exploring Smith's vision, we must, of course, remember that the Book of Mormon is not an economic treatise but a series of narratives describing migrations, wars, church-plantings, and apostasies in pre-Columbian America. As a result we have to determine for ourselves a starting point that can be used in tracing the book's argument, and I find it in King Benjamin's words before resigning the throne to his son, Mosiah (Mosiah 1–3 [1–5]). According to the Book of Mormon, Benjamin's people were the Nephites, descendants of a group called out of Jerusalem in the reign of Zedekiah (around 600 B.C.E.) and led to a promised land in the New World.[30] For the most part, they are farmers. Although, as LDS economist Garth L. Mangum notes, there seems to have been no period in Nephite history characterized by isolated farmsteads, there being an "almost immediate establishment of cities" following the group's arrival in the Americas,[31] the Nephite economy is nevertheless limited to agriculture, mining, and handicraft. In 1830, that would not have been thought surprising.[32] Although it was popularly supposed that farming was unknown to the Nephites' descendants, the Native Americans of Smith's own day,[33] it was a staple of missionary discourse that Smith and his contemporaries never thought to question that the Native American would turn to farming following conversion to Christianity.[34] Since the Book of Mormon represented the Nephites as Christian, it would have seemed logical that, if Christianity could lead to a settled Indian agriculture in the nineteenth century, it could have done the same thing some

two thousand years earlier. Similarly, given the conviction that the abandonment of settled agriculture was evidence of spiritual decline and a reversion to a savage state,[35] it would have been thought unremarkable that in the Book of Mormon those who abandoned the gospel increasingly relied on hunting and raiding settlements.

Readers would also have found it logical that Nephite agriculture would—like that of upstate New York[36] —be based on flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle,[37] food crops such as barley, corn, and wheat,[38] orchard produce,[39] and (implicitly) flax.[40] Nor would they have caviled at a conventional European-American division of labor, with men tilling the ground and raising crops, and women spinning "and work[ing] all manner of fine linen; yea, . . . cloth of every kind."[41] Given the presumption that Nephite civilization had ended in the fratricidal struggle that had climaxed at the Hill Cumorah near Palmyra,[42] readers would not have expected an exotic agriculture or a radically different social system.[43]

What would have been surprising, however (because by 1830 it would have seemed old-fashioned), would have been Benjamin's commitment to the yeoman dream, in which economic independence and a modest standard of living defined one's ambition. This dream was fundamental to Nephite society, and three mechanisms allowed for its realization. First, there was communal ownership of unoccupied land, with the assignment of family inheritances determined by need. The most notable example comes when imprisoned members of group who had lived by raiding the Nephites and exacting tribute are set at liberty and given an inheritance. This arrangement is seen as a civil obligation; although converted Lamanites are also given enough land to support their families, these ex-prisoners—former members of the Gadianton band—do *not* convert. They merely repent of former sins and covenant to keep the peace.[44]

Second, there is group control of prices, with a fixed price for "every kind" of grain, irrespective of the kind or the quality of the harvest.[45] "Some known commodity, as measured grain, is better, and more intelligible and unalterable than any money whatever," John Witherspoon had argued in his discussion of commercial exchange, drawing on Adam Smith's labor theory of value.[46] King Benjamin's successor-son Mosiah, who introduced the Nephite system of measures, thought the same—apparently going beyond the market-based idea of a just price (traditionally defined as the price uncoerced buyers would pay for goods) in favor of a system of ex-

change where grain could maintain a constant value. Third, although trade and traffic are seen as normal functions of the economy, providing a mechanism of exchange,[47] they are not seen as the means to laying up a store of personal wealth. Inevitably some members of society would fail to prosper. That being so, there was a communal responsibility to provide a safety net to avert disaster (3 Ne. 3:4 [6:3]; Mosiah 2:40 [4:24]).

Benjamin summarizes what this concern for others might mean when he urges his hearers not to injure one another (they should avoid violence and respect property rights) (Mosiah 1:44, 2:44, 26 [2:23, 4:13-14]), not to take advantage of the other,[48] and more positively—and radically—"to render to each his due." A person's due was what was necessary for a life of dignity; and when individual effort failed to provide this "due," the community had a responsibility to help.[49] This was the case no matter who was in need and no matter what the cause of the poverty, with no distinction being made on grounds of faith, birth, or "worthiness." Just as God's love embraces all that come unto him, "black and white, bond and free, male and female,"[50] so the charity of the Saints should have no limits. Those who had prospered were to "administer of [their] substance to him that stands in need" without hesitation. No matter what circumstances led to a person's poverty, the beggar should not be "put out" to perish.[51]

III

Needless to say, such concern for others was not characteristic of life in 1820s Palmyra or, indeed, elsewhere in America at the time. Smith knew this well. The contemporary generation was "not far" from the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah, he declared in March 1829[52] —and the reference pointed not just to the scope of the destruction that he expected to be poured out on America[53] but also to the cause of God's anger: "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth," Smith had read in James 5:4[54] —and he would not have missed the echo of the Sodom story in James's continuation: "The cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."[55] This warning of impending destruction as punishment for neglecting the poor was repeated in the Book of Mormon with reference both to the Nephites and the latter-day readers of their history: "If ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance if ye have, to those who stand in

need," one of the leaders of the Book of Mormon church explained, " . . . ye are as dross, which the refiners do cast out, (it being of no worth,) and is trodden under foot of men."[56] This would also be the fate of America in the latter days if its people did not repent, a later prophecy made clear.[57]

The call to repentance found in the Book of Mormon was, of course, one that America had heard before. Indeed, even the Nephite covenant to witness their commitment to God by "bear[ing] one another's burdens, that they may be light; . . . mourn[ing] with those that mourn . . . and comfort[ing] those that stand in need of comfort," would have seemed familiar to the work's first readers.[58] "We should bear one another's burdens; mourn with them that mourn, and rejoice with them that rejoice," Joseph Bellamy had explained in 1750, as he sought to ground the lessons of the Great Awakening in reformed thought.[59] "Love will dispose men to all acts of mercy toward their neighbors when they are under any affliction or calamity. . . ," Jonathan Edwards had already noted. "It will dispose men to give to the poor, to bear one another's burdens, and to weep with those that weep, as well as to rejoice with those that do rejoice."[60] Or as Smith's contemporary Nathanael Emmons explained, "True benevolence always disposes those who possess it, to enter into the feelings of their fellow men under all circumstances, to rejoice with them that rejoice, to mourn with them that mourn, to weep with them that weep, and suffer with them that suffer."[61]

However, such pieties had not created a society characterized by justice.[62] Instead, Christian duty was becoming increasingly seen as the duty to succeed economically.[63] As we have seen, by the time that the Book of Mormon came from the press, an Ontario County landowner like Samuel Chipman (quoted above) could confidently argue that benevolence should be seen to inhere not in acts of charity but in inducing others "to pursue with increased energy, that business or that course of conduct, to which their true interest directs them."[64]

Such a stance followed in part from the failure of Bellamy and Edwards, and subsequent New Light preachers, to focus on physical rather than spiritual needs. For them it had gone without saying that charity to the souls of others was the highest form of benevolence and that it was therefore legitimate to disregard physical needs to focus on spiritual ones.[65] Although those who distributed Bibles and tracts or who preached up revivals were hardly blind to the poverty around them, they found the number of the poor less troubling than the number of the un-

churched. "I wish I was poor," reflects Lucy Lee in a tract published a generation after the Book of Mormon, but reflective of earlier attitudes. "Then Christians would talk to me about [religion]; they always do talk [about it] to poor people."[66]

However, two additional factors contributed to the new focus that we find in Chipman. The first was the way in which true religion was thought to be manifested in evangelical faith, not works of charity. As the Rev. Alonzo Clark explained, preaching in Palmyra on September 14, 1828, it was impossible to please God with good deeds for even the best were "spotted with sin and stained with guilt." He took as his text Malachi 1:8: "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?" Clark ignored the acceptable offering of Malachi 3 and its association with social justice.[67]

The second factor was the way in which changes in the economy of upstate New York were making the use of surplus for charity increasingly difficult. In de Crèvecoeur's sketch "The American Belisarius," those facing "extreme indigence" can turn to the "princely farmer" S. K., who "opens to them his granary . . . lends them hay . . . [and] assists them in whatever they want."[68] We need not suppose that there were ever many like S. K. to accept that such figures had existed. Neither need we look too closely at their motives. As John Locke had argued that large possessions could be legitimated by the absence of waste, they might well have thought that to give away in charity what would otherwise perish would have been prudential as well benevolent.[69] But whatever the mix of motives driving his generosity, we might well suppose that S. K.'s granary would have been full because all his grain had not been sold—and this was as much because he lacked opportunity as because of a conscious decision to hold some of his harvest back to meet communal needs. By 1830, however, few New York farmers lacked opportunities to sell their produce, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to follow S. K.'s example. With improved transportation, more and more of one's grain was carried to market, and surplus was ceasing to be something stored in granaries and barns.

Chipman's insistence that a farmer's first concern should be to determine which crops would "afford the greatest net profit"—"what kind of crops are most profitable," "what crop will produce the greatest clear profit"[70] —was, in short, a response to new possibilities. Earlier addresses to the Ontario Agricultural Society had defined success differently. "Our work is well done," Thomas D. Burrall had reflected in 1822, "when our

lands are cultivated in a way to give the greatest amount of produce at the least expense of farming capital."[71] But Burrall's concern for yield rather than profit was, however, looking old-fashioned by the time Smith was at work on his translation.[72] Surplus could be sold, and the resulting profit could be used to improve one's life with goods originating outside of the local economy. (A traveler reported in 1822 that the log huts of settlers west of Canandaigua were being replaced "with new and often stately mansion[s]."[73]) Or it could be reinvested to increase revenue. Not surprisingly, recognizing the opportunities that existed, farmers went into debt for more land or machinery, or to purchase bank stock.[74] "Once the financial sector expanded its reach into the hinterlands, as it did after 1820 or so," Howard Bodenhorn has noted, "financial instruments became an outlet for rural savings." Increasingly, "farmers faced a choice between physical and financial capital"; and by the 1830s a farmer who prospered was much less likely to maintain his wealth in land and agricultural products than he would have done even twenty years before.[75]

Nothing in the Book of Mormon suggests hostility to banks as such. Although the Nephite use of gold and silver measures might seem to reflect Jeffersonian suspicions of paper money, there is no reason to suppose that Smith was blind to the advantages of increased liquidity.[76] However, inevitably, the increasing importance of cash over barter was transforming society by reducing the interdependence of neighbors. This interdependence had traditionally manifested itself in an exchange of services whereby, for example, well-digging could be credited for the cost of coffin-making;[77] and though such services had a book value, debts could be carried for years with a tolerance that the new economy would not allow. For example, Elisha Fish of Farmington (less than fifteen miles from Palmyra) recorded debits and credits against Martin Power for nine years (1817–26), at the end of which Power owed $5.32. They resumed the exchange of services in 1828, and by 1832 Power had 32 cents credit.[78] As another example, Nicholas Howland of Manchester noted the first of a series of gifts of farm produce to James Monroe on April 6, 1826; by October, Monroe had reduced his debt to $2.30 by working on Howland's land and agreeing to a settlement of $2.85. Two years later, Howland notes without any particular concern that this settlement was still due.[79]

Such willingness to carry accounts forward made the exchange of commodities and services work; and inasmuch as this exchange had bound communities together, it is hardly surprising that, from a Book of

Mormon perspective, the most regrettable aspect of a breakdown in property rights is that people no longer borrow or lend (Eth. 6:36 [14:2]).[80] Committed to a vision of communal interdependence that did not seem likely to survive economic change, we might suppose that, in April 1829, Smith heard the news that there were plans for a Wayne County Bank, whose "operations of discount and deposit [were to] be carried on in the village of Palmyra, and not elsewhere," with mixed emotions.[81]

IV

Given the way America was changing, the report that Nephi's people "lived after the manner of happiness" would have seemed both reassuring and challenging to the work's first readers. On the one hand, it would have reassured them that happiness was attainable. On the other, it would have challenged them with its assumption that pursuit was inescapably linked to the pursuit of virtue—that the twin goals of de Crèvecoeur's American farmer, seeking to be "happy and . . . good," were inseparable.[82] Unavoidably, the story of the Book of Mormon peoples was a call for reformation. The virtues of the Nephites were familiar from Christian tradition: indeed, they were doubly familiar as they were conventionally attributed to Native Americans. "No people can live more happy than the Indians did in times of peace," Mary Jemison had reported of the eighteenth-century Seneca in terms that inevitably bring the Book of Mormon to mind. "They were temperate in their desires, moderate in their passions, and candid and honorable in the expression of their sentiments."[83] But for all their familiarity, these virtues had the power to challenge a reader's complacency.

Consider, for example, the question of "temperate . . . desires." Although the Nephite concern for simple clothing was arguably little different from what Jemison reported of the Seneca—or, for that matter, what would be professed by most Americans in Smith's world[84] —the thinking of Book of Mormon authors was anything but traditional. If the Nephites prefer linen and homespun and avoid more expensive cloths (Hel. 5:38 [13:28]), it is not just because of the intrinsic merits of temperate habits or the questionable morality of using fabrics such as silk.[85] It is also because eschewing luxury goods preserved one's surplus and therefore one's capacity to meet the needs of others.[86] Although Benjamin cautions those with wealth not to impoverish themselves, he expects those who accept the gospel to give to the needy in proportion to what they themselves own

and condemns any attempt on their part to hold on to more than is necessary for a competence and to become "lifted up one above another."[87] A person's extravagance (in clothing or otherwise) was purchased at the expense of someone else's unmet need. This was a radical concern for others in the face of massive societal change.

Others, no less troubled by the way society was changing, had responded to the changes by focusing on inner rewards rather than profit. Robert Bellah and his colleagues have traced to the Prophet's generation the rise of what they call "expressive individualism," or the elevation of emotional self-fulfillment as the highest human good—something that they have seen as a reaction to the increasing "utilitarian" individualism of the market.[88] However, this pursuit of inner satisfaction was not an option for Smith: Prioritizing self-fulfillment in this way would be, from a Book of Mormon perspective, just as misguided as pursuing wealth, for it was but another form of selfishness—and selfishness was to be met with self-denial. After all, you could be contented, as the Canandaigua *Farmer's Diary* had advised two years after Smith's family had moved to Palmyra, "if you have a small farm or trade, that will support your family, and add a hundred dollars a year to your capital."[89] (One needed to add to capital to provide inheritances for one's children.) Indeed, Smith urged, one *should* be content with a competence.[90] Although, inevitably, some would prosper more than others, any surplus gained could be used to benefit others. For those who prospered *not* to "clothe the naked, . . . feed the hungry, . . . liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted" when confronted with suffering was to surrender to covetousness—was to be guilty of sin.[91]

In 1829, Smith's answer to the sin of covetousness is not yet a program. He makes no attempt in the Book of Mormon to define in detail the mechanisms of exchange and regulation that should prevail in society. Even the well-known account of people having "all things common" (3 Ne. 12:11 [26:19], 4 Ne. 1:4, 28 [1:3, 25]) should probably not be taken as implying a particular economic order. The same had been reported of the Jerusalem church (Acts 2:44, 4:32), and biblical commentators usually did not presume communal ownership of goods in their exegesis. "One wanted not what another had, for he might have it for the asking," Matthew Henry had explained in 1722,[92] and it was that level of giving that the Book of Mormon sought to provoke, not a new economic order.[93] That should not be thought to diminish the work's im-

portance. At a time characterized by a demoralizing of the theory of trade and consumption and an "all pervasive, all-engrossing anxiety to grow rich,"[94] Smith set his face against the trend, and that in itself merits its attention.

Notes

1. James L. Huston, *Securing the Fruits of Labor: The American Concept of Wealth Distribution, 1765–1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 11–12; Daniel Vickers, "Competence and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3rd Ser. 47 (1990): 3–29.

2. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America,* edited by Albert E. Stone (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 70; Timothy Sweet, *American Georgics: Economy and Environment in American Literature, 1580–1864* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 120. While de Crèvecoeur's *Letters* were first published in 1782, *Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America* is the modern title for pieces only discovered and published in the twentieth century. Unless indicated otherwise, this article references the *Letters.*

3. Barry Alan Shain, *The Myth of American Individualism: The Protestant Origins of American Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), xvi.

4. Samuel Chipman, *Address, Delivered to the Ontario Agricultural Society on its Fifth Annual Meeting, October 26, 1824* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis [1824]), 3.

5. *Change in Agriculture: The Northern United States, 1820–1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 2.

6. Percy Wells Bidwell, *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620–1860* (New York: Peter Smith, 1941), 171; Joyce Appleby, "Commercial Farming and the 'Agrarian Myth' in the Early Republic," *Journal of American History* 68 (1982): 842.

7. Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), edited by Fania Oz-Salzburger (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 24.

8. Such meanings are discussed in Hal S. Barron, "Old Wine in New Bottles? The Perspective of Rural History," in *Outstanding in His Field: Perspectives on American Agriculture in Honor of Wayne D. Rasmussen,* edited by Frederick D. Castenden, Morton Rothstein, and Joseph A. Swanson (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1993), 52. See also Peter L. Bernstein, *Wedding of the*

Waters: The Erie Canal and the Making of a Great Nation (New York: Norton, 2005), 336–37.

9. In 1824, Horatio Gates Spafford noted, Palmyra "was increasing rapidly" because of the Erie Canal's advent two years before. The township population had increased by 70 percent since 1813 (from 2,187 to 3,724), and the number of electors had grown from 290 to 841. *A Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Albany, N.Y.: B. D. Packard, 1824), 400–401, and *A Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Albany, N.Y.: H. C. Southwick, 1813), 271.

10. As one Evangelical scholar has argued, without "text-transcending referents to historical and trans-historical reality," we have no grounds for preferring scripture to other literature. Andreas Köstenberger, "Aesthetic Theology—Blessing or Curse? An Assessment of Narrative Hermeneutics," *Faith & Mission* 15, no. 2 (1998): 27–44, and if we agree it would be natural to be concerned to locate the Book of Mormon in a pre-Columbian North American context. Although one can, I believe, meet Köstenberger's challenge without presuming the historicity of the Book of Mormon, my point here is that attempts to read it against its purported background are only to be expected.

11. J. R. R. Tolkien, "The Monsters and the Critics" (1936), in *The Monsters and the Critics, and Other Essays*, edited by Christopher Tolkien (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 9; see also Michael J. Fuller, "To Edify the People of God: A New (Old) Method of Reading Medieval Hagiography," *Chicago Studies* 44 (2005): 285; Mark D. Thomas, *Digging in Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), 1–2.

12. Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 67–68.

13. Curtis D. Johnston, *Islands of Holiness: Rural Religion in Upstate New York, 1790–1860* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989); Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 214. For changes in land prices, see Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950), 141; Alan Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 148.

14. Eric Hobsbawm, *Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion and Jazz* (London: Abacus, 1998), 4. For a balanced interpretation of contemporary accounts of general prosperity which masked the number of the poor, see Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 348.

15. James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers; or, The Sources of the Susquehanna: A Descriptive Tale* (1823), edited by James D. Wallace (New York:

Oxford University Press, 1991), 216; Geoffrey Rans, *Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels: A Secular Reading* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 81–87.

16. The phrase is that of Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 113, 120–21. See also Daniel Walker Howe, "Charles Sellers, the Market Revolution and the Shaping of Identity in Whig-Jacksonian America," in *God and Mammon: Protestants, Money and the Market, 1790–1860,* edited by Mark A. Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 60; Marvin S. Hill, "Counter-Revolution: The Mormon Reaction to the Coming of American Democracy," *Sunstone,* Issue 71 (June 1989): 27; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: An American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 16, 25–26; Richard F. Palmer and Karl D. Butler, *Brigham Young: The New York Years* (Provo, Utah: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1992), 27; Charles D. Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 218–19; Mark Stoll, *Protestantism, Capitalism, and Nature in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 109.

17. Authorized version (Independence, Mo.: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1908), Hel. 2:45. This version follows the chapter division of the first edition, but conveniently adds versification. From 2001, it has been published under the imprint of the Community of Christ, the new name of the Reorganized Church. References to the editions published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City), which use a different chapter and verse division, are given in brackets. In the present case the reference is to Helaman 4:12.

18. Alma 1:46 [1:30], Jacob 2:22 [2:17]; see also the imagery of Jacob's parable of the vineyard: "they became like unto one body; and the fruit were equal" (3:144 [5:74]).

19. See James 2:1, 9, in Smith's *Holy Scriptures, Containing the Old and New Testaments: An Inspired Revision of the Authorized Version,* New Corrected Edition (Independence, Mo.: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1944) for a later expression of this idea.

20. Sellers, *The Market Revolution,* 31.

21. Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: Harcourt, 1965), 7.

22. William B. Scott, *In Pursuit of Happiness: American Conceptions of Property from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 2; Gideon Granger, *Address, Delivered before the On-*

tario Agricultural Society, at its Second Annual Meeting, October 3, 1820 (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, [1820], 17–18.

23. Mosiah 13:55 [29:38]; see also *Holy Scriptures*, Mark 9:44.

24. 1 Ne. 3:54 [2:20]; for covenant theology, see Ernest W. Nicholson, *God and His People: Covenant and Theology in the Old Testament* (Oxford, Eng.: Clarendon Press, 1986); Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 93–131.

25. Hel. 2:127 [6:8]; Alma 30:6 [63:5]. For the implications of Hagoth's being a "curious" man, see Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828; San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1967), *s.v.* curious, def. 1: "Strongly desirous to see what is novel, or to discover what is unknown; solicitous to see or to know; inquisitive." Wesley's observation that religion "must necessarily produce both industry and frugality; and these cannot but produce riches" might also be counted as a source of such thinking. John Wesley, "Thoughts upon Methodism," *The Works of John Wesley*, edited by T. Jackson, 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 13:260. Smith attended Methodist class meetings in 1828. Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*, 2d ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 25.

26. Morm. 4:54 [8:39], Mosiah 9:62 [18:28]. Dan Vogel, *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004), 62, discusses Smith's naivete in expecting concern for others to be more important than contractual obligation and profit; but see Granger, *Address*, 8, and for an acceptance of the market, tempered by a concern for how profits were used, see Steven Stoll, *Larding the Lean Earth: Soil and Society in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2002), 29.

27. Adam Smith, *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), edited by Edwin Canan as *The Wealth of Nations* (1994; New York: Modern Library, 2000), 302.

28. Ibid., 308.

29. Oliver B. Huntington, quoted in Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., *They Knew the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1974), 61; Jac. 2:24 [2:19]; cf. H. Michael Marquardt, *The Joseph Smith Revelations: Text and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), 208. This too might be thought to have been derived from Wesley's thinking. See Manfred Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics: Praxis and Principles*, translated by John E. Steely and W. Stephen Gunter (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1992), 36–37; John A. Newton, "Methodism and the Articulation of Faith: 'No Ho-

liness but Social,'" *Methodist History* 42, no. 1 (2003): 52–54, but social holiness was not central to American Methodism.

30. The Book of Mormon contrasts the Nephites with the Lamanites, who were originally members of the same Lehite family group, but who had an economy based on hunting and raiding Nephite towns. The two groups intermarried, and the Lamanites who destroyed the Nephites in the fifth century C.E. were a politically and religiously defined group with no necessary lineage connection to the original group of that name. In the Book of Mormon, the Book of Ether describes the history of a third group, the Jaredites, who reportedly reached the New World as part of the dispersion from the Tower of Babel. Jaredite civilization was destroyed in a civil war in the second century B.C.E. G. St. John Stott, "Amerindian Identity, the Book of Mormon, and the American Dream," *Journal of American Studies of Turkey* 9 (2004): 21–33.

31. Garth L. Mangum, "The Economics of the Book of Mormon: Joseph Smith as Translator or Commentator," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 83, 81.

32. For artisans, see Jarom 1:19 [1:8], cf. Eth. 4:50 [10:17]. Though there is urban development (Alma 6:8 [8:7]), the economy's agricultural base is shown by the linkage of its system of exchange to grain (Alma 8:58 [11:7]).

33. Although most of those who called themselves Nephites died in the war that ends Book of Mormon history, so much intermarriage had occurred between the original Nephites and Lamanites that we can assume Lamanite descent from the Nephites of Benjamin's day.

34. George Ryerson, March 23, 1831, speaking at a meeting of the New York Female Missionary Society, *Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald,* April 8, 1831, 122; John Heckewelder, *A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians* (1820), edited by William Elsey Connelly (Cleveland, Ohio: Burrows Brothers, 1907), 334. Heckewelder's *Narrative* is #199 in a list of works in a library that Joseph Smith may have known. Robert Paul, "Joseph Smith and the Manchester (New York) Public Library," *BYU Studies* 22, no. 3 (1982): 333–56. The Smith farm was about seven miles from Manchester. For Smith's arguing thus in 1843, see Joseph Smith Jr. et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* edited by B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (1902–32; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978 printing), 5:480.

35. Samuel Stanhope Smith, *An Essay upon the Causes of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species; To Which Are Added Strictures on Lord Kames's Discourse on the Original Diversity of Mankind* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1788), 206–12; de Crèvecoeur, *Letters,* 72.

36. For typical diets of the period, see Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman, *To Their Own Soil: American Agriculture in the Antebellum North* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987), 209.

37. 1 Ne. 5:126 [18:25]; Enos 1:34 [1:21]; Alma 1:44 [1:29]. The Jaredite diet also included swine: Eth. 4:20 [9:18]. Frontier diets, like that of the Jaredites, included fresh game: Eth. 4:69 [10:21].

38. Mosiah 5:35, 6:12, 17 [7:22, 9:9, 14]; Alma 8:58, 61 [11:7, 15], Enos 1:34 [1:21]. There are also references to unidentified cereals: "neas" and "sheum" (Mosiah 6:12 [9:9]). It is not clear whether barley is used as an animal feed, to produce malt, or for human consumption. Although beer is not mentioned, grapevines and wine are (Mosiah 7:21 [11:15], Alma 25:35 [55:8]).

39. An allegory in Jacob 3 [4–5] describes grafting in olive culture; see Rom. 11:17–24. Jacob assumes this knowledge on the part of his audience, so we may suppose it part of Nephite agricultural science. This knowledge would not have seemed esoteric to Smith's readers. S[olomon] Southwick, *State of New-York Agricultural Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1822* (Albany, N.Y.: Daniel Steele and Son, 1821), F4r-G1r, discussed the "Manuring, Planting, Grafting, and Pruning of Trees" in terms that parallel Jacob's.

40. Flax is not named but can be inferred from references to linen: Mosiah 6:32 [10:15], Hel. 2:133 [6:13], Eth. 4:19 [11:16]. The phrase "fine-twined linen" that is conventionally used in the Book of Mormon was no doubt adopted from Exodus 39:3, Authorized Version (King James Version).

41. Mosiah 6:31–32 [10:4–5], cf. Granger, *Address*, 17–18. As this information does not fit with what is known of Native American farming before European contact, apologists for the Book of Mormon have suggested that the words refer to North American equivalents of European plants and animals, not to the named plants and animals themselves. See, for example, John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1985), 232. However, for the work's first readers, *linen* would have implied flax, not maguey, *wheat* would have meant wheat (not amaranth), and so on, and that is the reading offered here.

42. Reading John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan* (1841) would lead some of Smith's followers to assume a Central American geography for the Book of Mormon. "Zarahemla," *Times and Seasons* 3 (October 1, 1842): 927. However, Smith found Native American remains in the Mississippi Valley "proof of [the] divine authenticity" of the

Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith, Letter to Emma Smith, June 4, 1834, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 2002), 346; *History of the Church*, 2:79–80; cf. "The Far West," *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (October 1832): 37. The earliest Mormon newspaper argued for a setting in the northeastern states. "The Book of Ether," *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (August 1832): 37. In writing an 1835 account of the translation of the Book of Mormon, Smith's scribe Oliver Cowdery reflected the early belief that "between these hills [in the neighborhood of Manchester, New York], the entire power and national strength of both the Jaredites and Nephites were destroyed." Oliver Cowdery, "Letter VII," *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1 (July 1835): 158.

43. The importance of mining might have been surprising, as it was not of major importance to New York farming communities, but Smith perhaps thought it a natural part of the rural economy because he had himself used seer stones in attempts "to discover lost goods, hidden treasures, mines of gold and silver, etc.": Abram W. Benton, quoted in D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), 56.

44. 3 Ne. 2:86–87, 3:4 [5:4, 6:3]; Alma 15:23 [27:22]; see also Alma 16:249–50, 254, 257 [35:9, 13–14]. If Smith had known James E. Seaver's *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* (1824), he could hardly have missed the Indians' grant of land to a prisoner of war called Joseph Smith. Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 162. In any case, the idea of public land grants would have been familiar to him from the federal government's awarding of land as a military bounty. Seaver's work is #192 in Paul's list.

45. Alma 8:53, 56, 58 [11:4–5, 7]. The equivalence in these verses of gold and silver units (the senine and the senum) was perhaps derived from the dual measures of Ezekiel 45:11. Given these price controls, I think Susan Curtis was mistaken in arguing for the modernity of the market system in the Book of Mormon. Curtis, "Early Nineteenth Century and the Book of Mormon," in *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture*, edited by Dan Vogel (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 87–88. Here I agree with Mangum, "The Economics of the Book of Mormon," 88–89.

46. John Witherspoon, *Essay on Money, as a Medium of Commerce; with Remarks, on the Advantages of Paper Admitted into General Circulation* (Philadelphia: York, Stewart & M'Cullock 1786), 4; Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 33.

47. 4 Ne. 1:54–55 [1:46]; Eth. 4:70 [10:22]. Note that in the 1828 Web-

ster's Dictionary, *s.v.* "traffick," can mean commerce "by barter" as well as "by buying and selling."

48. Note the instructions not to enslave each other (Mosiah 1:44 [2:13]). Slavery had been abolished in New York State as recently as 1827. Edgar J. McManus, *A History of Negro Slavery in New York* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), 174–75, 178. Perhaps we should understand Benjamin's prohibition in the light of this law. However, a form of indentured servanthood reportedly existed among the Lamanites (Mosiah 5:21–22 [7:15], Alma 15:9 [27:8], 3 Ne. 2:8 [3:7]). It is possibly this practice, rather than the concept of lifetime servitude, that lay behind Benjamin's words. For indentured servants, see Barry O'Connell, ed., *A Son of the Forest and Other Writings by William Ames, a Pequot* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 15.

49. Mosiah 2:24 [4:13]. Webster's *Dictionary* defines the transitive verb form of to render as: "to afford; to give for use or benefit." Definition 7.

50. 2 Ne. 11:114 [26:33]. The phrase is formulaic (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11).

51. Mosiah 2:28, 30-31 [4:16–18]. Smith no doubt relished this part of the Book of Mormon message. Joseph Smith Sr. had been warned out in Norwich, Vermont. Dan Vogel, ed., *Early Mormon Documents*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996-2003) 1: 666–68.

52. Marquardt, *The Joseph Smith Revelations*, 27.

53. G. St. John Stott, "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware," *Journal of American Studies* 21 (1987): 75–76.

54. James 5:4 (1-8), AV; cf. Hel. 2:45 [4:12]. For Smith's early familiarity with James, see *History of the Church*, 1:4. The Smiths, reduced to the status of tenant farmers, felt that they had lost their land by fraud. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism*, 67–68. They had not been treated with the "spirit of forbearance" that they would have felt entitled to. For debt forbearance, see Granger, *Address*, 8; cf. Orasmus Turner, *History of the Pioneer Settlement of Phelps and Gorham's Purchase, and Morris' Reserve* (Rochester, N.Y.: William Alling, 1851), 383.

55. Gen. 18:20, AV. Smith would come to see sexual excess as part of Sodom's sin. *Holy Scriptures*, Gen. 19:11–12. But in his early thought, the driver of sin—including sexual sin—is greed. G. St. John Stott, "The Economics of Sin: Sexual Morality in an Ethos of Civic Republicanism," *John Whitmer Historical Society Journal* 24 (2004): 60–64; cf. Thomas, *Digging in Cumorah*, 156–59.

56. Alma 16:223–25 [24:28–29], drawing on Matthew 5:13 and Ezekiel 22:19–21; 3 Ne. 7:41 [16:15].

57. 3 Ne. 7:40-41 [16:15], dictated no more than two months following the oracle cited in note 52. Oliver Cowdery reported that a vision of John the Baptist on May 15, 1829, was precipitated by the translation of 3 Ne. 5:1–13:24 [11:1–28:12]: "the account given of the Savior's ministry to the remnant of the seed of Jacob, upon this continent." Cowdery, "Letter I," *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834): 15.

58. Mosiah 9:39–40 [18:8–9]; the phrase draws on Sirach 7:34 and Galatians 6:2.

59. Joseph Bellamy, *True Religion Delineated and Distinguished from All Counterfeits* (1750; rpt. Ames, Iowa, 1997), 124.

60. Jonathan Edwards, *Charity and Its Fruits; or, Christian Love as Manifested in the Heart and Life* (1852), edited by Tryon Edwards (New York: Robert Carter Brothers, 1854), 12; cf. Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion* (1758), edited by Mary Catherine Moran (Indianapolis, Ind., Liberty Fund, 2005), 16.

61. Nathanael Emmons, "Disinterested Benevolence," *The Works of Nathanael Emmons* (1842), edited by Bruce Kucklich, 6 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), 3:205.

62. Nor had such an effect been produced by familiarity with Jesus's definition of discipleship as ministry to the poor and outcast (Matt. 25:31–46, cf. Alma 1:45 [1:30]), popularized in John Logan's boast that no white man ever "entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat . . . [ever] came cold and naked, and he cloathed him not." Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia,* edited by William Peden, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 63. See Alma 1:45 [1:30] for this ethic, and Mormon 4:54 [8:39] for an explicit reference to the situation in the latter days.

63. Alfred Habegger, *Gender, Fantasy, and Realism in American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 220; David Leverenz, *Manhood and the American Renaissance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 74.

64. Chipman, *Address,* 3.

65. Robert H. Bremmer, *American Philanthropy,* 2d ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), 12.

66. E. M. Sheldon, *I Wish I Was Poor* (Boston, Mass.: American Tract Society, [1864?]), 3. For attitudes to the poor, see Leo P. Hirrell, *Children of Wrath: New School Calvinism and Ante-Bellum Reform* (Lexington: University

Press of Kentucky, 1998), 160; Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 109. Louis W. Banner, "Religious Benevolence and Social Control: A Critique of an Interpretation," *Journal of American History* 60 (1973): 23–41, notes that evangelicals anticipated that social change would come with the millennium, and that evangelism was the priority before then; however, he exaggerates the novelty of this approach. Cf. Ruth H. Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756–1800* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 101.

67. Rev. John Alonzo Clark, Sermons, Special Collections, University of Delaware, 15: "God will not accept of a poor or partial offering." See also p. 17. Note in contrast the incorporation in the Book of Mormon text of Malachi's rebuke of those who "oppress the hireling" (Mal. 3:5, AV; 3 Ne. 11:8 [24:5]). Smith would not have heard Clark's sermon—he was in Harmony, Pennsylvania, at the time—but it can nevertheless represent the kind of thinking the Book of Mormon stands up against.

68. de Crèvecoeur, *Letters*, 410–11. This text was not published until the twentieth century. Cf. the practice of Smith's uncle, Jason Mack. Lavina Fielding Anderson, *Lucy's Book* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 287.

69. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), edited by Peter Laslett (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 2§46.

70. Chipman, *Address*, 4, 7.

71. Thomas D. Burrall, *Address, Delivered before the Ontario Agricultural Society, at Its Fourth Annual Meeting, October 22, 1822* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, 1822), 10.

72. Vickers, "Competency and Competition," 27–28; Southwick, *State of New-York Agricultural Almanack . . . 1824*, 44. For agriculture as a business, see Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America, and Two Essays on America*, trans. Gerald E. Bevan (London: Penguin, 2003), 644; Johnston, *Islands of Holiness*, 36; Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 16. De Tocqueville's *De la démocracie en Amérique* was originally published in two volumes, 1835–40.

73. [Ruth Rosenberg-Naparstec, ed.], "Diary of a Young Girl: The Erie Canal in 1822," *Rochester History* 62, no. 3 (2000): 19; cf. Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 322.

74. George Dixon, Will, March 19, 1839, Ontario County Records and Archives Service, Canandaigua, N.Y.

75. Howard Bodenhorn, *A History of Banking in Antebellum America: Financial Markets and Economic Development in an Era of Nation-Building* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7, 21; Robert E. Wright,

Origins of Commercial Banking in America, 1750–1800 (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), 135; Bray Hammond, *Banks and Politics in America from the Revolution to the Civil War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), 27; *Prairie Farmer* 21 (1865): 17.

76. Liquidity had been a problem in western New York for years. John Nichols, *Address, Delivered before the Ontario Agricultural Society, at its First Annual Meeting, October 13, 1819* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, [1819]), 6. In Kirtland, Ohio, in 1836 after trying unsuccessfully to charter a church bank, Smith would establish the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company. Marvin S. Hill, Keith Rooker, and Larry T. Wimmer, *The Kirtland Economy Revisited: A Market Critique of Sectarian Economics* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1977).

77. Elisha Fish, Account Book 1809–29, Ontario County Historical Society, Canandaigua, N.Y.

78. Ibid. For mutual help, see Robert A. Gross, "Giving in America: From Charity to Philanthropy," in *Charity, Philanthropy and Civility in American History,* edited by Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 29; Vickers, "Competence and Competition," 26, 28; Kristin Van Tassel, "Nineteenth-Century American Ante-Bellum Literature: The Yeoman Becomes a Country Bumpkin," *American Studies* 43 (2002): 73 note 58. For discussions of reciprocity of exchange, see James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3rd Ser. 35 (1980): 15; Clark, *Roots of Rural Capitalism,* 27, 33.

79. Nicholas Howland, Account Book, 1816–49, Ontario County Historical Society, Canandaigua, N.Y.

80. Benjamin encouraged his people to return what they have borrowed, in part because of the hardship that borrowing can create for the lender (Mosiah 2:46–47 [4:28]). Cf. George L. Kittredge, *The Old Farmer and His Almanack: Observations on Life and Manners in New England a Hundred Years Ago, Suggested by Mr. Robert B. Thomas's Farmer's Almanack* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920), 99–100; A Reformed Borrower, "Borrowing," *Palmyra Freeman,* June 10, 1828, 1. Benjamin does not, however, take Polonius's position and counsel against all borrowing.

81. *Act to Incorporate the President, Directors and Company of the Wayne County Bank* (Albany, N.Y.: Edwin Croswell, 1829).

82. 2 Ne. 4:43 [5:27]; de Crèvecoeur, *Letters,* 52–53.

83. Derounian-Stodola, *Women's Captivity Narratives,* 160. For praise of the "civilized tribes" for their generosity and how they provided for their poor,

see James Adair, *The History of the American Indians, Particularly Those Nations Adjoining to the Missisippi [sic], East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia* (1775), edited by Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City, Tenn.: Watauga Press, 1930), 18; William Bartram, *Travels through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws* (1791), excerpted in Gregory A. Waselkov and Kathryn E. Holland Braund, eds., *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 47; Ethan Smith, *View of the Hebrews; or, The Tribes of Israel in America* (Poultney, Vt.: Smith and Shute, 1825), 104; Elias Boudinot, *A Star in the West; or, A Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, Preparatory to Their Return to their Beloved City, Jerusalem* (Trenton, N.J.: D. Fenton, S. Hutchinson, and J. Dunham, 1815), vii–viii; Jonathan Carver, *Three Years' Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America for More than Five Thousand Miles* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1789), 126; Seaver, *A Narrative*, 145, 146, 152. See also William Robertson, *The History of the Discovery and Settlement of America* (1777; rpt. New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856), 333–34, for the admiring report that the Incas distributed land according to need and organized a common storehouse to meet the needs of the poor.

84. Russel B. Nye, *The Cultural Life of the New Nation, 1776–1830* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 106–9, 133–37; Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790–1840* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 182–91; Michael Zakim, "Sartorial Ideologies: From Homespun to Ready-Made," *American Historical Review* 106 (2001): 1,558; William H. Adams, *Address, Delivered before the Ontario Agricultural Society, at Its Fifth Annual Meeting, October 28, 1823* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, [1823]), 7. We should also allow for male reactions to "trumpery," something that was still troubling Palmyra menfolk twenty years later. Donald H. Parkerson, *The Agricultural Transition in New York State: Markets and Migration in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995), 11; cf. Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780–1860* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), 6.

85. "The fabrics of silk are very numerous and almost all are devoted to the purposes of show and luxury," the author of *The Cabinet of Useful Arts and Manufactures Designed for the Perusal of Young Persons* reported (New York: James Bloomfield, 1826), 30, while Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 320, would associate silk with "idle people who produce nothing." The suspicions such passages would have created would have been compounded by contem-

porary attempts to turn sericulture into a get-rich-quick scheme. Jared Van Wagenen Jr., *The Golden Age of Homespun* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1953), 182; *Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, Transmitting the Information Required by a Resolution of the House of Representatives, May 11, 1826, in Relation to the Growth and Manufacture of Silk, Adapted to the Different Parts of the Union* (Washington, D.C.: Neff and Green, 1828), 26. For the advocacy of sericulture in Ontario County see Z. Barron Stout, *Address, Delivered before the Ontario Agricultural Society, at the Town House, in Canandaigua, October 2, 1827* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, 1827), 8.

86. Alma 5:39 [7:23]; Stott, "Economics of Sin," 71.

87. Mosiah 2:32, 40–41, 9:60–62 [4:19, 24–25, 18:27–28], Alma 1:46, 16:223 [1:30, 24:38]; Hel. 2:140 [6:17]. Prosperity is counted as a blessing by Book of Mormon authors (Mosiah 11:58 [24:11], Eth. 3:34 [6:28]), but it can lead to a spiritually fatal pride (Hel. 4:49–51 [12:2]).

88. Robert Neelly Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 32–35.

89. *The Farmer's Diary; or Beers' Ontario Almanack, for the Year of Our Lord 1819* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: J. D. Bemis, 1818), D3v; cf. Southwick, State of New-York Agricultural Almanack . . . 1823, H1r.

90. Smith's ambition was for a general competence, not opportunities for exceptional wealth; and as a result, he did not question the subtext of Whig appeals for farmers to limit their ambition.

91. Stott, "Economics of Sin," 71; Mosiah 2:41, 43, 11:154 [4:25–26, 27:4]; cf. Jacob 2:16–24 [2:13–19], Alma 1:40, 16:100 [1:27, 31:24]. For selfishness as the disposition "to seek [one's] own private, separate interest, in opposition to the glory of God and the good of the universe," see Emmons, "Love Is the Essence of Obedience," *Works*, 3:180. See Marquardt, *The Joseph Smith Revelations*, 52, for coveting one's own property (albeit in a different context), as well as Mormon 4:50 [10:6–7], which denounces loving one's own possessions "more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted."

92. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* ([Peabody, Mass.]: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 2,071.

93. That said, Lyndon W. Cook is too literalistic when he sees Smith's "first serious interest in an economic law for the church" as following from his meeting with Sidney Rigdon in December 1830. Cook, *Joseph Smith and the Law of Consecration* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 1985), 5. There is a direct link between Book of Mormon aspirations and the Church law requiring a

member's "consecration of the overplus, after reserving [sufficient] for himself and family, and to carry on his business." John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* (St. Louis: John Corrill, 1839), 45–46.

94. E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, no. 50 (February 1971): 89–90; de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 623.

Grant McMurray and the Succession Crisis in the Community of Christ

William D. Russell

Members of the Community of Christ were shocked when our president, W. Grant McMurray, announced that he had resigned on November 29, 2004, effective immediately.[1] He cited some health problems but clearly the main reason was his admission of having made some "inappropriate choices." He declined to name a successor,[2] as called for in the Doctrine and Covenants: "None else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead."[3]

I got quite a few emails and calls from LDS friends from *Sunstone* and the Mormon History Association expressing shock and sadness. Lavina Fielding Anderson wrote: "It's heart-breaking for us personally. Paul and I were trying to think last night of a time when we ever saw Grant when he wasn't kind, funny, sensitive, self-deprecating, and articulate about really important things. We couldn't. He's one of the finest human beings I know, and the dignity and courage of his letter of resignation are all of a piece with that."[4]

Speculation about the nature of those "inappropriate choices" naturally circulated, but it seems clear that Church leaders have kept a tight lid on the personal reasons for Grant's resignation. His resignation without naming a successor, however, created a unique problem for the Church.

We of the Community of Christ tradition (until April 2001 the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) have always said that our priesthood, from the deacon to the president-prophet, are called by God. Through most of our history, three additional expectations have

governed the office of Church president: (1) the president has been a lineal descendant of Joseph Smith Jr.; (2) he served until his death; and (3) he named his successor. We have now abandoned all three of these expectations. In my view, these are all welcome changes.

When Brigham Young and the Twelve began the westward exodus in 1846, Emma Smith and many other Mormons declined to follow them. But it does seem to me that it was logical for the Twelve to lead the Church after the martyrdom of our founding prophet. After all, they were the "second Presidency"; and since Hyrum Smith had also been murdered, the only surviving member of the First Presidency was Sidney Rigdon, who was not in very good standing at that time. While members of the Reorganized Church have often asserted that Joseph Smith Jr. had made it clear that his son should succeed him as Church president, Grant McMurray in a 1980 article stated: "Joseph Smith, Jr., himself was largely responsible for the tremendous sense of confusion that followed his martyrdom in 1844."[5] When the Saints in Nauvoo in August 1844 showed their preference for Brigham Young and the Twelve as leaders, their decision should not be perceived, McMurray continued, "as it has in much apologetic literature issued by the Reorganization, as a bald usurpation of power by Brigham Young, jostling young Joseph out of his rightful place."[6]

I can understand Emma's decision not to move to Utah with the Twelve. Her life had been uprooted enough. And she shared the overwhelming consensus of the western Christian world that polygamy was an abomination in the sight of God. Her decision was a good one, and certainly in some ways Lewis Bidamon was a better husband and father than Joseph. Emma's sons appreciated him as a stepfather.[7]

After the majority of the Saints relocated in Deseret in 1846–47, several men tried to assert Mormon leadership in the Midwest. According to Lawrence Foster, the most dangerous challenge to Brigham Young's leadership in the wake of the martyrdom came from "the brilliant and charismatic prophet, James J. Strang."[8] Strang, who gathered followers in Wisconsin and later at Beaver Island in Lake Michigan, was probably the most promising alternative to Brigham Young and the Twelve in the short run. However, the Reorganized Church emerged from an 1851 religious experience of Jason W. Briggs, leader of the Church in Beloit, Wisconsin. Briggs had followed Strang until Strang embraced polygamy. Clearly the new church would oppose polygamy. But the other issue included in Briggs's religious experience, and perhaps just as important, was the idea

that the new president should be of "the seed of Joseph." Emma had four sons and naturally the eldest, Joseph III, would be the first choice to fill that role. Although Joseph refused to discuss the matter when first approached by members of the new church, eventually he accepted the call to be its president. At age twenty-seven, he was ordained at the conference in Amboy, Illinois, on April 6, 1860. Mormonism valued lineage, so it was natural that a faction that did not support the Twelve would look to lineal succession as a sound alternative to apostolic seniority.[9]

Lineal succession in the presidency was very important in the early years of the Reorganization, as the authority-conscious church in the Midwest contended with its equally authority-conscious cousins in the West.[10] McMurray notes that lineal priesthood was the primary focus in the early years of the *True Latter Day Saints Herald*,[11] which began publication in January 1860, three months before young Joseph's ordination. According to McMurray, during the new publication's first three years, "thirteen major essays are included with titles such as 'Lineal Priesthood,' 'The Pre-eminent Birthright of the Tribe of Joseph,' and 'The Lineal Transmission of the Priesthood from the Days of Adam to the Last Days,' and these do not include the countless references to the subject in other articles and in conference addresses."[12] As it turned out, both of our churches made that initial succession their precedent for the future, although there was some uncertainty when Brigham Young died. I have long argued that both churches selected very bad principles of succession.[13]

Joseph Smith III served as president of the Reorganized Church for nearly fifty-five years, from April 6, 1860, until his death on December 10, 1914, at age eighty-two. He understood two principles with respect to succession: the president should be called by revelation and he should be a worthy, lineal descendant of Joseph the Martyr. By the 1890s, Joseph understood the need to prepare younger men to lead the Church when he was gone. His oldest son, Frederick, was ordained an elder in Lamoni in 1897 when he was twenty-three.[14] But "Freddy," as his father affectionately called him, had not shown a lot of interest in church work up to that time, and he was not very active after his new ordination either. Apostle J. R. Lambert expressed opposition to Frederick's ordination on the basis of his poor record "in the past" and lack of promise for the future.[15] But Frederick showed enough interest by 1902 that he was called into the First Presidency along with a very capable Canadian named Richard C. Ev-

ans.[16] According to Roger D. Launius, R. C. Evans clearly desired to become the next president and saw the prophet's son as a rival.[17]

By 1906 Joseph had decided that God was calling Frederick to be the next prophet, and in Doctrine and Covenants 127, approved at the general conference on April 14, 1906, he said: "It is now declared that in case of the removal of my servant now presiding over the Church by death or transgression, my servant Frederick M. Smith, if he remain faithful and steadfast, should be chosen, in accordance with the revelations which have been hitherto given to the Church concerning the priesthood." If Frederick should "prove unstable and unfaithful, another may be chosen, according to the law already given" (D&C 127:8).

As Joseph Smith III neared death, he knew he needed to assure a clear pattern for future succession beyond Frederick's presidency. After consulting with Church leaders, he drafted a long document entitled "Letter of Instruction," intended to establish the principles upon which succession in the presidency would be based. Joseph knew how difficult the issue had been in 1844 when his father died without naming a clear successor and must have worried during the 1902–06 period that, if he died leaving succession vague, the Church might well split between followers of Frederick and followers of Evans. The "Letter of Instruction," published in the *Saints' Herald* in 1912, proved useful in determining succession thirty-four years later, when Frederick died in 1946, in 1995 when Wallace B. named the first non-Smith, and again in 2004–05 after Grant McMurray's resignation.[18] Launius notes, however, that in 1912 the Quorum of Twelve specifically refused to endorse the "Letter of Instruction," and the general conference also did not take the action of endorsing it as Church policy.[19] But it became precedent nevertheless.

Each presidential succession in the RLDS Church has been unique in some ways. Joseph Smith III died on December 10, 1914; Frederick was ordained on May 5, 1915. Frederick died thirty-one years later on March 3, 1946, without having followed his father's example of making a clear public statement about his successor. But on October 20, 1938, he had verbally instructed members of the Twelve and the Presiding Bishopric, according to the minutes of that meeting, that "in the event of his passing, Israel would be in line for the office of president." The minutes went on to say that by joining the First Presidency now, Israel "would have the advantage of the additional experience which this appointment would give."[20] After Frederick M. Smith's death, the Twelve took the leadership,

as suggested in the "Letter of Instruction," and asked the Presiding Patriarch, Elbert A. Smith, to seek the will of the Lord on this matter. Elbert reported to the conference that he had sought the will of the Lord over a period of time and received an increasing conviction that Frederick's choice of Israel should be approved.[21] Elbert was the son of David Hyrum Smith and Israel's first cousin.

Israel A. Smith was a lawyer and very familiar with the history of the Church, which he interpreted legalistically. He did not want to have uncertainty about succession troubling the Church after his death, as had occurred when his grandfather was murdered in 1844 and when his brother, Frederick, died. So he wrote a letter, dated May 28, 1952, in which he declared that "in the event of my death, whenever it shall occur, my brother, William Wallace Smith, should be selected to succeed me as president of the high priesthood of the Church, this having been manifest to me by the Lord at the time he was chosen and set apart as an apostle and again when he was called to be a counselor and member of the Quorum of the First Presidency, at the General Conference of 1950."[22] The letter was witnessed by F. Henry Edwards of the First Presidency and Presiding Bishop G. Leslie DeLapp. After Israel's death in an auto accident in June 1958, the letter was presented to the general conference held in October 1958. The conference voted to approve the letter and include it in the Doctrine and Covenants (now Section 144). W. Wallace Smith was ordained Church president at that conference on October 6, 1958.[23]

The first three RLDS presidents served a total of ninety-eight years and died in office, like royalty. LDS prophets have also continued to serve until death. The RLDS tradition was terminated in 1976 when W. Wallace Smith brought a revelation calling for his retirement two years hence, and for his son, Wallace B. Smith, to be "prophet and president designate" during those same two years, "after which time, if he remain faithful, through the process of common consent of the body of my church, he is to be chosen as president to succeed his father" (D&C 152:1).

Eighteen years later, Wallace B. Smith also chose to retire rather than serve until death but he departed even further from tradition—that of lineal descent in the office of the president—by naming W. Grant McMurray to be his successor. McMurray is not related to the Smith family in any way. He had been World Church secretary for ten years (1982–92) and a counselor in the First Presidency for four years

(1992–96) prior to being ordained as president of the Church on April 16, 1996.[24] W. Wallace was seventy-six when he retired; Wallace B. retired at sixty-seven.

During the week of the 1996 world conference, some people passed out pamphlets on the streets outside the Auditorium opposing McMurray's calling; but their action made no visible impact. There was relatively little dissent in the Church regarding this break in the tradition of Smith descendants. Possibly most of those who think the president should be a lineal descendant of the founding prophet had already left the Church a few years earlier after Wallace B.'s 1984 revelation calling for the ordination of women.

McMurray served as president of the Church for eight and one half years, from April 16, 1996, until his November 29, 2004, resignation. He was not only the first non-Smith in the office, but he was also the first president of any Latter Day Saint church to have a graduate degree in religion from a theological seminary or a graduate school of religion.[25]

W. Grant McMurray was born in Toronto on July 12, 1947, the son of William and Noreen McMurray. Grant firmly embraced the RLDS tradition as he grew up, seeing his church as "the one true church." He moved to Independence in 1959 with his mother and sister, Donna, after his parents divorced. His father had been a full-time Church appointee minister who lost his job when it became known that he had an alcohol problem.[26] Grant graduated from William Chrisman High School in Independence in 1965 and attended RLDS-sponsored Graceland College from 1965 to 1969, graduating with a major in religion and a minor in English.[27]

During his high school and college years, there was a growing recognition that some Church leaders and members were rethinking many of the Church's traditional teachings in areas of scripture, history, and theology. This theological ferment was becoming very visible at Graceland, where some of the faculty were among the leading advocates of the new ideas that were emerging.[28] Grant recalls noticing quite a contrast in the faculty during his freshman year when he had "Introduction to Religion" from Donald D. Landon, a major leader of the liberalizers at that time, and "Introduction to Sociology" from Raymond D. Zinser,[29] a charismatic individual whose conservative approach to religion included an ability and willingness to give prophecies in church meetings rather frequently. While McMurray majored in religion, he always had an interest

in journalism and wrote articles for the student newspaper, the *Graceland Tower.* The late 1960s were turbulent times, and student protest at Graceland and around the country was at its peak.[30]

One of the six religion courses that Grant took from me was "Latter Day Saint Scriptures," a course that focused on the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. No one in Graceland's religion department wanted to teach this course. Indeed, none of the three faculty members at that time had ever read the Book of Mormon.[31] Perhaps foolishly, I volunteered. I was about halfway through the book when the course started. On the first day I asked the students—fourteen in all—why they were taking this course. Most of them said something like they were taking it for their spiritual growth, and so forth. When I came to Grant, he said, with an embarrassed look, "I am taking this course because I have never read the Book of Mormon and this course will force me to read it." My response was, "Don't worry, Grant, I haven't read it myself."[32]

The students and the professor learned together, so the class was very discussion-oriented. I look back at this class as one of the most enjoyable I have ever taught in my forty years at Graceland (1966–2006). Two major conclusions reached by many of the students (and their instructor) were: (1) it is difficult to support the idea that the Book of Mormon is a historical account as claimed[33] and (2) there are significant problems with the RLDS practice since 1878 of instantly canonizing revelations from the prophet, because the faith community has not had an opportunity to consider the document at length and see if it meets the "test of time." One of my students, Kathy Olson (now Sharp), took this class later and stressed this idea in a 1972 article in *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action,* a journal published and edited mainly by faculty at Graceland College.[34]

After McMurray's graduation from Graceland in 1969, he enrolled in Saint Paul School of Theology, a Methodist seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, which was conveniently located about fifteen minutes from the RLDS headquarters in Independence. A significant number of RLDS leaders in the 1960s and 1970s attended Saint Paul, including five who were later called to the Council of Twelve and the First Presidency.[35] McMurray recalls siding with the theological revisionists during those years, but he did not have a "faith crisis" as some seminary students did.[36] In Independence, McMurray and his wife, Joyce, attended congregations clearly identified with the liberal wing of the Church.[37] In the

1970s they attended the Presence Mission which included many prominent Church liberals.[38] When the Presence Mission folded at the end of the decade, many of its liberals transferred to the Walnut Gardens Congregation, which soon became known as the most liberal congregation in Independence.[39]

The RLDS Church practiced closed communion, meaning that only baptized members of the RLDS Church could take the sacrament at the monthly service of the Lord's Supper. In 1971, while still a seminary student, McMurray was hired by the Church to work for Paul Booth, director of the Division of Program Planning. Booth put McMurray to work researching the issue of closed communion.[40] As a result, his first published scholarly article, "Closed Communion in the Restoration," appeared in 1971 in *Courage*.[41] Whether to open the sacrament to Christians baptized in other denominations became a major issue in the Church throughout the 1970s and 1980s until finally, the 1994 world conference voted to approve a policy of open communion.[42]

After fifteen months working for Paul Booth in program planning, McMurray, still a seminary student, was offered a part-time position in the History Department at Church headquarters, with the possibility that it would become full-time after a year. He would be working under the direction of Church Historian Richard P. Howard, one of the leading liberal thinkers in the Church. Howard had recently published *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development*, which won the Mormon History Association's 1969 "best book" award.[43] Howard's meticulous research into the evolution of the texts of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Joseph Smith's "New Translation of the Bible"[44] subtly challenged the literal interpretation of scripture that many members held. Perhaps as important as the textual reconstructions was Howard's introduction which explained and argued for a liberal interpretation of scripture.[45]

Early in 1972, the first year that McMurray was employed in the History Department, he joined with Howard and others in founding the John Whitmer Historical Association,[46] and he authored some significant historical articles in the years that followed. Three years after he became president of the Church, he gave a paper at the annual meeting of the John Whitmer Historical Association in which he reflected that it was interesting to note the subjects he had chosen to research, since they often had relevance for the presidential position he would ultimately assume.[47]

One of John Whitmer's early presidents, he chose for his presidential address, "The Reorganization in Nineteenth-Century America: Identity Crisis or Historiographical Problem?"[48]

In 1978 McMurray was invited to give the John Whitmer banquet address which is held in Independence the night before the world conference begins. Wallace B. Smith, the man who seventeen years later would call him to be the president-prophet, was being ordained at that conference. McMurray's lecture was, very appropriately, on the subject of succession: "'True Son of a True Father': Joseph Smith III and the Succession Question."[49] Wallace B. Smith had been an ophthalmologist in Independence for fourteen years prior to 1976. He had served only as a local leader in the Church and as a member of the Church's Standing High Council, which advises the First Presidency, when requested, on sensitive issues.

Prior to the 1982 world conference, McMurray was approached by Howard S. ("Bud") Sheehy, then a counselor in the First Presidency, inviting him to become the World Church secretary, replacing Roy Stearns, who was retiring in August. The World Church secretary is the executive secretary in the office of the First Presidency. McMurray recalls: "The First Presidency had wanted to upgrade the role of church secretary, so he or she would truly be the executive secretary and sit in on the weekly meetings of the First Presidency and the meetings that were held with the Executive Committee of the First Presidency, the President of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishop."[50] Wallace B. Smith's other counselor was Duane E. Couey. Grant accepted the offer, with the change becoming effective in August, four months later. However, at the conference Couey retired from the First Presidency and was replaced by Apostle Alan D. Tyree, which caused McMurray to wonder if the offer was still good. "Personally I looked forward to working with Duane, whom I admired greatly," he told me in an interview. "But Alan said he supported the appointment, too, so the Presidency said the job was still mine."[51]

McMurray's first conference as World Church secretary was the April 1984 conference which split the Church. President Smith introduced the document that became Section 156 of the Doctrine and Covenants, approving the ordination of women and also announcing plans to build the temple. After a long debate, delegates approved it by a vote of approximately 80–20 percent. Some thought Wallace B. Smith—having three daughters and no sons—had introduced women's ordination to al-

low one of his daughters to succeed him. But since Wallace ultimately recommended a male successor outside the family, it appears that Section 156 was not based on this motivation. Although Wallace has never, to my knowledge, publicly discussed the background to this revelation, he clearly believed the male-only priesthood was based on culture and tradition, not divine will.

The controversy over the ordination of women was not handled well by Church leaders, and more than one-fourth of the active Church members withdrew their support over the next six years. Wallace B. Smith's counselors, Howard Sheehy and Alan Tyree, were both former apostles with significant experience in Church leadership. Possibly Wallace delegated too much authority to his counselors. At any rate, Sheehy was known for being rather autocratic, and Tyree was known for being certain of his opinions. Many Church members believe that too many leaders—from the World Church level down to the local congregations—were too punitive in responding to the critics of Section 156. Churches are voluntary associations which thrive only if their adherents willingly participate with their time, talents, and financial resources. Hundreds of priesthood members were silenced (removed from the priesthood) for their opposition to new Church policies, particularly the ordination of women. Understandably they left and joined with other like-minded Saints to form restoration branches totally independent of the RLDS Church.

Thus, McMurray became president in 1996 after Church-shaking changes had been introduced by Wallace B. Smith: (1) the ordination of women,[52] (2) the dedication of the temple in Independence to the pursuit of peace,[53] (3) a policy change from closed to open communion for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper,[54] and (4) a break with the long-standing tradition of lineal succession in the presidency. As a historian, I would add a fifth change: a new era of historical professionalism and honesty, as seen especially in Church Historian Richard Howard's 1983 article cautiously admitting that Joseph Smith Jr. was a polygamist—a conclusion we had rejected since the presidency of Joseph III (1860–1914). That article was published in the independent *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* with the quiet support of the First Presidency, who wanted it to be published but not in an official Church forum like the *Saints' Herald*.[55]

It appears that by 1992 Wallace B. Smith had made at least a tenta-

tive judgment that Grant McMurray was to be the next president, since sixty-two-year-old Tyree was released at that conference and replaced by McMurray. Three years later in September 1995, Smith issued a pastoral letter announcing that, at the April 1996 world conference, he would recommend that McMurray be approved as the new president and prophet. In that letter, he said, "The principle of lineage in the calling and choosing of a successor is important but not overriding."[56]

McMurray was well grounded, both in the Christian tradition as a result of his undergraduate and graduate studies in religion and in the history of the movement he was about to lead by virtue of his decade working in the History Department. But certainly some veteran Church leaders would have preferred a president with extensive background in Church leadership outside the headquarters bureaucracy in Independence where McMurray had spent his entire career.

At the time McMurray became president, Gustav Niebuhr of the *New York Times* wrote that "McMurray's election was the latest move within the 250,000 member church as it struggles to redefine its identity and broaden its appeal." Niebuhr noted, "Even in small matters, differences are apparent. A visitor to Mr. McMurray's office is offered coffee, a drink shunned by Mormons." McMurray said to Niebuhr, "When you think about it, the Mormon Church and the R.L.D.S. Church share about a 14-year history in the early 19th century . . . and since then, we've developed on very different tracks."[57] Three months later the *Christian Century* observed, "McMurray's accession seems certain to accelerate the move of the RLDS Church away from Mormon tradition."[58] These observations were accurate.

During the eight and a half years that McMurray was president, he continued the direction that Wallace B. Smith had taken and, with skill and wit, effectively articulated an expanded vision for the Church. His writing and speaking skills were remarkable. Many Church members were highly impressed with McMurray's messages to the Church, finding them inspirational and motivational.

McMurray brought greater diversity into the presiding quorums. Wallace B. Smith had been president for twelve years after the approval of women's ordination in 1984, but he did not call any women to these high offices. No doubt time was needed to give women experience in other priesthood callings. When McMurray became president, some women had been in the priesthood for a decade, constituting a core of experi-

enced women now available for openings in the presiding quorums. McMurray called the first three women apostles (Linda L. Booth and Gail E. Mengel in 1998 and Mary Jacks Dynes in 2002) as well as the first woman to the Presiding Bishopric (Stassie Cramm in 2002). He also called the first African to the Council of Twelve, Bunda W. Chibwe from Zambia, in 2000.[59]

Barely one year into his presidency, McMurray initiated a three-year program called "Transformation 2000," which sought to invigorate the Church over the following three years. Its goals were to develop a Christ-centered theology of peace and justice, to engage 20,000 youth, children, and young adults in peacemaking, to locate 200 model congregations committed to youth outreach and peace ministries, to create 200 new congregations, and to obtain 200 new full-time ministers in the Church.[60] "Transformation 2000" as it was called, was a modest success. In 2003 McMurray said that Transformation 2000 had "led to the addition of almost 200 new field ministers and that "more than 200 new congregations" had been planted. The World Church budget grew from approximately $18 million to a figure that approached $30 million."[61]

Under McMurray's leadership the Church finally established a theological seminary. When Church members began to go to theological seminaries in reasonable numbers in the 1960s and 1970s, they usually attended Protestant seminaries. Many Church people thought seminary education was unnecessary, if not counter-productive. One delegate to the 1970 world conference stated emphatically. "These other schools have nothing to teach us."[62] But over time Church members began to see the value of seminary education, probably in part because of the contribution made in a variety of ways by people with graduate degrees in religion. Early on many of these students were headquarters staff members who attended Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri. But as time went on, RLDS members were attending a wide variety of seminaries: Protestant, Roman Catholic, and even state universities. Finally the Church established the Community of Christ Seminary located at the Independence campus of Graceland University, less than a mile from Church headquarters.[63] When the 2000 world conference approved this seminary, the delegates and observers responded with a vigorous applause, a marked contrast to the world conference held thirty years earlier when much hostility to theological education had been expressed and when a suggestion by a delegate that we should move toward ordaining

women was greeted with loud expressions of shock. Conservative critics are right when they say the Church has changed significantly over the past three or four decades.[64]

McMurray also engaged in scholarly debate with some of the Church's leading scholars when he was asked to give a paper replying to Paul M. Edwards, Roger D. Launius, Danny L. Jorgensen, and George Walton at the 1999 John Whitmer Historical Association meeting, held that year at Excelsior Springs, Missouri. These four had critiqued the Church at the 1997 Whitmer meeting in Kirtland. McMurray reviewed his own historical writings prior to becoming a member of the First Presidency, critiqued each of the four previous papers, and discussed the tension between the roles and goals of the historian and the ecclesiastical officer.[65]

Over the past several decades, the RLDS Church has become more sensitive to various issues of Christian social concern. During McMurray's time in the presidency, the world conferences have passed resolutions on war and peace, military service, land mines, earth stewardship, globalization, children's rights and advocacy, the developmentally disabled, sexual abuse, homosexuality, discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, gun control, capital punishment, and organ and tissue donation.[66]

One major issue in America as well as many other places around the world is the matter of homosexuals and their place in church and society. In the Community of Christ, this issue has been widely seen as significant for at least a decade. McMurray included very supportive statements on the topic—briefly in his 1998 world conference sermon and extensively in his 2002 world conference sermon. Gay and lesbian members and their families, listening to this message, felt they had received unprecedented support. But the 2002 statement created a backlash, possibly because McMurray honestly admitted that he had been aware of and agreed with ordinations that were approved for homosexuals in committed relationships, which is currently contrary to Church policy.[67]

McMurray also acknowledged the guilt of white Americans in their treatment of Native Americans over the years. A Native American Conference was held at the temple in Independence, February 15–18, 2001. At that conference McMurray stated: "We must acknowledge our culpability in the vast mosaic of abuse, violence, disinterest, and insensitivity that have marked the experience of Native peoples in America."[68]

After the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon, McMurray wrote "Faith Overcoming Fear: Pastoral Reflections on the Events of September 11." He noted that national pride was very high in the United States as a result of the terrorism. "But this awful act is not an attack on one country but rather is an assault on the human family." Reminding his readers that the major religions of the world share a commitment to peace, he wrote, "We must stand firmly against ethnic stereotypes and religious persecution." He also mentioned that the Church had become signatory to a statement by religious leaders in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States titled, "Deny Them Their Victory."[69]

And finally, during McMurray's presidency, the Church's name was changed to Community of Christ, reflecting the shift from being a sect-type to a denomination-type church. As a sect the Church focused heavily on convincing others—and probably ourselves—that the RLDS Church is the "one true church." Now the Community of Christ is clearly focusing more on Jesus and less on Joseph Smith. Theologian-in-Residence Anthony Chvala-Smith and Peace and Justice Ministries Coordinator Andrew Bolton are two examples of Church leaders who clearly see this shift and welcome it. In 2003 McMurray told the Mormon History Association that, on the one hand, "I believe he [Joseph Smith] was brilliant and visionary, probably a religious genius, certainly the founder of the most significant indigenous religious movement to be birthed on American soil," but on the other hand, "I also believe he was deeply flawed, with profound human weaknesses, inconsistencies, and shortcomings."[70]

After McMurray resigned in November 2004, his two counselors, Kenneth N. Robinson and Peter A. Judd, continued to lead the Church until the special world conference held in June 2005. In his resignation letter, McMurray had specifically declined to name a successor, so the two-member First Presidency announced a process of "discernment," attempting to ascertain the will of God as to who should lead the Church.[71] The Council of Twelve, in consultation with the First Presidency and the leaders of the other major Church quorums, and inviting the response of all members, led this process,[72] which relied heavily on Joseph Smith III's 1912 "Letter of Instruction," dealing with the issue of succession in the presidency.[73] Sunday, February 27, 2005, was designated as a special day of prayer and preparation throughout the Church.[74] The Twelve reported

that, after an extended period of prayer and fasting culminating in a March 2 meeting, "God graced our efforts and gave to each of us a testimony that Stephen M. Veazey is called to lead the Church as prophet-president."[75] At that time Veazey, forty-eight, was barely one-half the age of Gordon B. Hinckley, ninety-five.

The choice was not a surprise because Veazey, the second youngest apostle, had been chosen by his eleven colleagues to be president of the Council of Twelve at the 2002 world conference. The Twelve's recommendation that Veazey be ordained Church president was approved by the delegates at the special June 2005 world conference. When the vote was taken, it appeared that from among more than two thousand delegates, fewer than ten delegates voted in opposition.[76]

The McMurray presidency completed the elimination of the three expectations cited in the beginning of this paper. His two predecessors had retired rather than serve until death, McMurray was not a Smith, and he declined to name a successor when he resigned. The Church had to find an alternative to the tradition of one person (the prophet) naming his successor. In my view, this was the most positive side to McMurray's resignation. Hopefully this precedent will continue.

Many who knew Grant and Joyce McMurray thought Grant's role as "prophet" would be an uncomfortable one for both of them. At world conference the week he was ordained, McMurray said, "But to sit and listen while one is described as 'prophet, seer, and revelator' creates within me unimaginable turmoil. . . . We need to talk, my friends, about the way we have begun to move our identity as a people with a prophet to our calling as a prophetic people."[77] In McMurray's 2003 address at the Mormon History Association meeting at the Kirtland Temple, he recalled that a Salt Lake reporter had called him uncomfortable in that role. "Indeed I was," responded McMurray. "Seeking to discern God's will for us in our own time . . . is a shared task of religious inquiry, not a duty for one person locked in a closet."[78]

As a personal comment, I will say that *I* would have been uncomfortable if McMurray had been comfortable in his role as prophet. Therefore, in my view, McMurray made an important contribution to the Church when he proposed that we should think of ourselves not so much as a "people with a prophet" but as a "prophetic people."[79] This perspective involved much more than a natural feeling of human inadequacy. The concept of revelation as occurring through a prophet, resulting in specific

directions to a Church the prophet presides over, seems vastly inferior to the concept that God's people will act in prophetic ways when they see the poor, the suffering, and the marginalized, or when they see people making gods of their possessions, or people killing others in the name of their gods. The God of Israel portrayed in the Hebrew Bible is certainly not one who communicated his will for Israel through one person who spoke for Yahweh to the community of faith. The prophets of Israel were not official Church spokesmen.

In his prayer at the high priests' quorum meeting at the special 2005 conference, Don Compier, dean of the Community of Christ Seminary, said, "We thank God for our growing recognition of the fact that discernment of calling is a collective responsibility of the entire body of Christ."[80] If God can make his preference known about who should lead the Church to one person, it seems to me that the divine mind can just as well move a group of people to choose the right leader. Since all such human judgments are fallible, it also seems to me that the collective wisdom of the general officers of the Church is to be preferred to the judgment of one person, no matter how spiritually gifted that person might be. And when that happens, it has the advantage that more people have taken ownership of the decision.

McMurray made a valuable contribution to the Church by declining to submit for the Doctrine and Covenants his letters to the Church recommending men and women for ordination as general officers of the Church. He began this with his first "letter of counsel" calling people to the higher quorums, at the world conference of 1996.[81] Throughout the presidencies of Frederick M. Smith (1915–46), Israel A. Smith (1946–68), W. Wallace Smith (1968–78), and Wallace B. Smith (1978–96), every revelation approved for the Doctrine and Covenants included, at least in part, calling men to the presiding quorums of the Church. McMurray changed that tradition, and his successor, Stephen Veazey, followed suit when he became president. During his eight and a half years as president, McMurray did submit two documents for consideration, both of which were pastoral letters which the world conference approved for inclusion in the Doctrine and Covenants (now Sections 161 and 162). It has been my observation that these two pastoral statements have resonated very well with Community of Christ members, as they are quoted frequently in Church meetings. *Kansas City Star* reporter Mara Rose Williams described these documents as "major statements

calling for the inclusion of people of all races, cultures, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds in the church."[82]

At first glance, it may seem that the Community of Christ has adopted the LDS Church's method of succession in the office of president. However, there are important differences. First, Church members outside the Twelve were eligible for the office. Second, Veazey was not the senior apostle and, by chronological age, he was the second youngest apostle. Veazey called the youngest apostle, David D. Schaal, age forty-seven, to be one counselor in the First Presidency and retained as his other counselor Kenneth N. Robinson, who had served in the First Presidency throughout McMurray's tenure. Thus, the two youngest apostles in the Community of Christ were chosen to be the president and a member of the new First Presidency. And finally, Veazy's selection occurred only after a period of "discernment" in which not only the Twelve and other leading officers, but the entire Church membership was encouraged to submit names and to pray for divine guidance in the discernment process. Therefore, it was not an automatic appointment of the senior apostle, but an un-predetermined choice by the Twelve. It was an open process which Community of Christ members see as being guided in significant ways by the Holy Spirit.[83]

The new president of the Community of Christ was raised in Paris, Tennessee, a city where a young Wilford Woodruff spent some time on a mission to the South.[84] Despite his comparative youth, Veazey has had a more extensive and varied career in full-time ministerial service to the Church than any of his predecessors. The Smith presidents and McMurray had mainly headquarters assignments in their pre-presidential careers. Veazey was a pastor at age twenty and has been deeply involved in missionary work for the Church at various levels. He has been the apostle in charge of the Church's work in Africa, in the American South, and in large portions of the Midwest, in addition to directing African American Ministries, and other assignments. In 1990 he was ordained a president of Seventy and an apostle in 1992, at age thirty-five. Before his calling as an apostle, his work had been entirely outside of Independence. In 2002 his colleagues in the Council of Twelve Apostles chose him as their quorum president.

As a gracious and much-appreciated gesture, the opening worship service of the June 2005 conference that approved Veazey's ordination included a video highlighting major events in McMurray's presidency. He

had been very well-liked by many Church members, and this recognition of his contributions provided a graceful transition to the new presidency. The Twelve presented their recommendation of Veazey to meetings of the various priesthood quorums and caucuses—the bishops, evangelists, high priests, elders, Aaronic Priesthood, the non-priesthood delegates,[85] the children and youth caucus, and the French, Spanish, and Tahitian language caucuses.[86] Each group discussed the Twelve's recommendation, then voted whether to approve or reject it.

In the high priests' quorum, former President Wallace B. Smith, who had called Veazey to be an apostle at the tender age of thirty-five, rose to say that few have exhibited the leadership qualities that he has seen in Veazey. "I can say unqualifiedly that Steve is called to this office," he stated.[87] In the elders' quorum, Paul DeBarthe from Lenexa, Kansas, advocated separating the two roles of prophet and president, arguing that these two are difficult for one person to achieve. This point has been raised in private discussions in the Church for many years, but rarely in public. In the delegates' caucus—intended for conference delegates who are not members of the priesthood,[88] two people objected to the fact that "seer and revelator" had been left out of the statement by the Twelve recommending Veazey to be "president of the high priesthood, prophet and president of the church."[89] They cited the language of "prophet, seer and revelator" in Doctrine and Covenants 104:42 (LDS D&C 107:92). Apostle Dale E. Luffman, presiding over the meeting, suggested that the word "prophet" pretty well covers "seer and revelator" also, then later noted that "seer" and "revelator" connote "images of magic and folklore" that, he suggested, no longer serve us well.[90]

When all the delegates gathered for a business session to hear the reports from the quorums and caucuses, Veazey gave his testimony regarding his call. He quoted Joseph Smith III's statement to the 1860 general conference when he became Church president: "I have come in obedience to a power not my own." Then he left the chamber while the conference took up the matter of his call. All of the quorum and caucus meetings then reported, each supporting the call. Then individual delegates had the opportunity to discuss the recommendation. Finally, the conference voted on whether to approve Veazey for ordination. The vote was overwhelmingly in the affirmative, and Veazey was ordained at a special worship service on the Friday of the world conference, June 3, with six thousand in attendance.[91]

On the last full day, the conference considered and approved President Veazey's recommendations for ordination for various vacancies in the presiding quorums. In addition to calling Robinson and Schaal as his counselors, he also called four new apostles—two women and two men—and called R. Paul Davis to fill a vacancy in the Presiding Bishopric.[92] There was concern expressed from both the French Language Caucus and the elders' quorum that all of the new officers are English-speaking Americans, even though the Church is becoming more international. Of the twenty-one men and women who are the presiding officers of the Church, only three are not U.S. citizens: First Presidency member Kenneth Robinson from Australia, Apostle Bunda Chibwe from Zambia, and Presiding Evangelist Danny Belrose from Canada.[93] The outgoing First Presidency of McMurray, Robinson, and Judd were all born outside the United States, but McMurray's family moved from Canada to Independence when he was in the upper elementary grades, and Judd has lived in the United States since he came to Graceland College from his native England in 1961.

Two other apostles were released prior to retirement. Outgoing Apostle Ken McLaughlin had asked to be relieved of his place in the Twelve, which was unusual given his comparatively youthful age of fifty-three. In his statement to the conference, he said, "I have long believed that people ought to sit at the table of leadership for various periods of time and then serve in other ways. Indeed, it is my sincere hope that such movement will become increasingly common in the life of the Church—so common that we fully embrace the understanding that the needs of the Church require the on-going alignment of individual giftedness and interests with new ministries important to the well-being of the church."[94]

McLaughlin was raising a fundamental question for the future, not only for the Twelve but for the president: Would the Church be better served if general officers—including the president-prophet—were released after a decade or so to pursue other spiritual gifts and callings, making way for younger leadership? It will be interesting to see if Veazey serves until retirement—about seventeen years from now—or moves on to other ministries in later years.

Gail Mengel, one of the first two women called to the Twelve in 1998, was released so she could spend more time as the Church's officer concerned with ecumenical relations. She is currently serving a four-year

term as president of the ecumenical Church Women United.[95] President Veazey indicated that Mengel would concurrently serve as the Church's Ecumenical and Interfaith Officer.[96] Thus, her release illustrated the model that McLaughlin was suggesting.

A major theme of Veazey's conference sermon was "the cause of Zion," which is "one consistent theme at the heart of our journey as a people of faith." He stated: "At this point in our journey, we now understand that the cause of Zion cannot be separated from the message of reconciliation and peace brought by Jesus Christ."[97] Noting that Jesus "opposed the dominant religious and political trends of his day that were counter to God's purposes," Veazey said, "That is why he ate with sinners, healed the unclean, reconciled the guilty. That is why he tended to the needs of the poor and called people from all walks of life to a new kind of compassionate, peaceful community grounded in the love of God, self, and neighbor." The new president said: "We need to be especially aware of the condition of the most vulnerable in our midst: the aged, the young, the sick, the poor, the marginalized, and the oppressed. How are *they* doing? Are they experiencing well-being? . . . Are they unfairly hindered by the attitudes and actions of others who have a more secure or powerful place in the society?"[98] His concluding thought on the subject was, "If our vision of Zion does not promote the well-being of children throughout the world it is not the Zion to which God calls us."[99]

Aware of the tension all Christians face between the message of the gospel and the influence of the surrounding culture, Veazey lamented, "Too often the church withdraws from its prophetic role in the world, reflecting biases and prejudices of the larger society, rather than impacting society with a vision of the gospel and the values of the Restoration, such as the worth and giftedness of all people."[100] This message, a renewal of the much-cherished Zionic vision, was enthusiastically received by the membership.

What are the implications of President Veazey's ordination for the future of the succession process in the Community of Christ? Two and a half months after he resigned and four months before Veazey was selected, Grant McMurray told a newspaper reporter, "I don't think the present situation necessarily establishes a precedent for the future at all. Churches live in the moment, and at this moment the very best step . . . is for a very good-sized group of leaders to reflect on the needs of the church and to discern through prayer and reflection the best way to respond."[101]

Certainly future presidents could revert to early tradition and name their successor before they retire. But I don't think it will happen for three reasons.

First, many rank-and-file members will not approve of going back to choice by one person. I think many Church people are happy to see the appointing power broadened as it was in the 2005 selection of Veazey. Second, Veazey is known as a humble man, so I doubt that he will want to reclaim that power for the prophet. Third, it seems likely that the Twelve, having chosen the new president in 2005, will not yield that power back to the Church president without a struggle. So I disagree with McMurray on this point. What happened in 2005 *will* be seen as a precedent in the future, just as the 1912 "Letter of Instruction" became a precedent in 1946, 1996, and 2005, even though neither the Twelve nor the conference endorsed it at the time. As in any democracy, there will be pressure to expand the number of people involved in the selection. That might be the hard part, as the Twelve might resist giving up their central role to a larger group of decision-makers.

McMurray's achievements as leader of the Community of Christ were considerable. His resignation further reflects our perception that all prophets are human and fallible, as Joseph Smith Jr. demonstrated so well. McMurray may have chosen not to designate his successor merely because of his "inappropriate choices." However, I think it is more likely that he believes it is not a good idea for one person to choose the president, just as he feels that the prophetic role is not exclusive to one person. In resigning, McMurray forced the Community of Christ to come to terms with an inadequate tradition that expected one person to name the next leader of the Church. In that sense, his resignation was a blessing.

Notes

1. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Head of Former RLDS Church Unexpectedly Steps Down," *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 3, 2004, A-1, A-9; Carrie A. Moore, "Leader Resigns Presidency of Ex-RLDS Church," *Deseret Morning News*, December 3, 2004, B-1, B-2; David Tanner, "McMurray Resigns Church Presidency," *Independence Examiner*, December 3, 2005, A-1; Mara Rose Williams, "McMurray Resigns as Church President," *Kansas City Star*, December 3, 2004, E-2.

2. W. Grant McMurray, "Dear Peter and Ken" (official letter of resignation), *Herald*, January 2005, 6.

3. Community of Christ Doctrine and Covenants 43:2a. Unless otherwise noted, all D&C citations are to this edition. The parallel quotation is LDS D&C 43:4.

4. Lavina Fielding Anderson, email to William D. Russell, December 3, 2004.

5. W. Grant McMurray, "'True Son of a True Father': Joseph Smith III and the Succession Question," A in *Restoration Studies, Vol. 1*, edited by Maurice L. Draper and Clare D. Vlahos (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1980), 131.

6. Ibid., 132.

7. Valeen Tippetts Avery, *From Mission to Madness: Last Son of the Mormon Prophet* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 31.

8. Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 186–87.

9. David Hyrum Smith, the youngest child born to Emma and Joseph Smith Jr., was in the First Presidency from 1873 until 1885; his older brother Alexander was in the First Presidency from 1897 until 1902. The other son, Frederick, died in 1862 without having joined the Reorganization.

10. For the standard RLDS understanding of succession in the Church presidency, see Elbert A. Smith, *Restoration: A Study in Prophecy* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1925), chap. 5; Russell F. Ralston, *Fundamental Differences between the LDS and RLDS Churches* (1960; rpt. Independence, Mo.: Price Publishing Company, 1998), chap. 1; and Aleah G. Koury, *The Truth and the Evidence: A Comparison between Doctrine of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1965), chap. 5. For a scholarly understanding of the succession of Joseph Smith III, see McMurray, "'True Son of a True Father,'" 131–45.

11. The title *True Latter Day Saints Herald* clearly contains the implication that there are some false Latter Day Saints out there somewhere.

12. McMurray, "'True Son of a True Father," 140.

13. Many years ago, I made this argument in, "Needed: A New Method of Succession," *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action* 2, no. 1 (September 1971): 326–27.

14. Roger D. Launius, *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 31.

15. "Conference Minutes: Decatur District," *Saints' Herald* 44 (June 22, 1897): 401–2, qtd. in Roger D. Launius, "R. C. Evans: Boy Orator of the Reorganization," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 50 note 28.

16. The revelatory document calling these two as counselors to President Joseph Smith III is in D&C 126:8, April 18, 1902.

17. Launius, "R. C. Evans," 40–50, and his *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet*, chaps. 14–15. After Evans's disaffection, he wrote *Why I Left the Latter Day Saint Church: Reasons by Bishop R. C. Evans* (Toronto: n.pub., 1918).

18. Joseph Smith III, "Letter of Instruction," *Saints' Herald*, March 13, 1912, 241–48; also published in Joseph Smith III and Heman Hale Smith, *History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1805–1890*, 4 vols.; continued by F. Henry Edwards, Vols. 5–8, 1903–15 (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1970), 6:575.

19. Launius, *Joseph Smith III*, 349. Indeed, Launius notes that the letter "was not binding on the church, and the Quorum of Twelve responded to it by resolving that 'we do not commit ourselves to the terminology nor all the conclusions contained in the "Letter of Instruction."'" Council of Twelve Minutes, 1865–1928, April 12, 1912. McMurray, "'True Son of a True Father,'" 131, also notes that the letter "never did receive official conference approval."

20. Quoted in the Official Minutes of General Conference 1946, Business Session, Saturday, April 6, 1946, 2:00 P.M., *Saints' Herald*, April 27, 1946, 473.

21. Ibid.

22. D&C 144:1. W. Wallace Smith was ordained an apostle in 1947. In the third and last paragraph of the letter, which became Section 144, Israel A. Smith erred by dating the "Letter of Instruction" as having been published in the *Saints' Herald* for March 12, 1913; it was actually published in the March 13, 1912, issue.

23. The 1958 general conference was delayed from April until October so that the Auditorium could first be completed. Because of Israel's death in June 1958, there was only a four-month interim before the next conference; if the conference had been held in April, twenty-two months would have passed before the next scheduled conference. This 1958 conference was the last designated "general conference." From 1960 on, they have been called "world conferences."

24. W. Wallace Smith was the third son of Joseph Smith III to serve as Church president. His son, Wallace B. Smith, succeeded him. W. Wallace Smith lived in retirement for eleven years before his death in 1989; Wallace B. Smith is still alive and active in the Church. He chairs the Church's World Hunger Committee, and he serves as a volunteer chaplain at the Independ-

ence Regional Health Center. He and his wife, Anne, attend the Pleasant Heights Congregation in Independence.

25. Richard Ostling and Joan Ostling, *Mormon America: The Power and the Promise* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), 342.

26. The 1954 general conference reported William McMurray's assignment as being "Unorganized Ontario, Ottawa objective." At the next (1956) conference, McMurray was no longer on the appointee list.

27. W. Grant McMurray, interviewed by William D. Russell, Lamoni, Iowa, July 31, 2003, 1.

28. The religion and philosophy faculty—Lloyd Young, Leland Negaard, Robert Speaks, and Paul M. Edwards—were very involved in this effort, as were the two historians—Robert B. Flanders and Alma Blair. Flanders's *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965) was a blockbuster that humanized Joseph Smith. Flanders's conclusion that Joseph Smith Jr. was a polygamist shocked RLDS members. Lloyd Young's article on the virgin birth in the February 1, 1964, *Saints' Herald* was disturbing to many members of the Church, as was Leland Negaard's study of the problem of Second Isaiah and the Book of Mormon, published in the Church's magazine for college and university students. Negaard, "Literary Issues and the Latter Day Saint," *University Bulletin* 18, no. 4 (Spring 1966): 21–24.

29. McMurray, interview. Landon was a Church appointee on loan to Graceland for 1965–66.

30. For student protest at Graceland during these years, see David Anthony Tyeeme Clark, "This Side of the Cornfield: Reform Activism at Graceland College, 1965–1973," *Annals of Iowa* 59, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 35–69. This article was originally Clark's Senior Seminar in History project at Graceland College.

31. During the 1966–67 academic year, my two colleagues in the religion department were R. Robert Speaks, then in the last of his seven years teaching religion at Graceland, and Harold N. Schneebeck, who was teaching on a one-year internship as part of his program at Union Theological Seminar in New York City.

32. I previously told this story in my presidential address for the Mormon History Association in 1983: "History and the Mormon Scriptures," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 60. I got the impression that some of my LDS colleagues were quite surprised that none of the three religion professors then at Graceland had read the Book of Mormon and that I would volunteer to begin teaching it without having read it completely.

33. Ibid. I also presented some of my conclusions in my 1977 presiden-

tial address to the John Whitmer Historical Association meeting in North Kansas City, which was combined with a 1982 paper at the Mormon History Association meeting in Ogden and published as a "A Further Inquiry into the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 7, no. 5 (September-October 1982): 20–27.

34. Kathy Olson, "A Reappraisal of Canonization in the Doctrine and Covenants," *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1972): 345–52.

35. In addition to McMurray, who became Church president, his counselor Peter A. Judd, who previously served as an apostle, and three other apostles—Paul W. Booth, Lloyd B. Hurshman, and Geoffrey Spencer—graduated from Saint Paul. The earliest RLDS graduates were Richard B. Lancaster and Clifford P. Buck in 1965. Both had served as the director of the Church's Department of Religious Education. In 1967 I became the third RLDS graduate of Saint Paul.

36. McMurray, interview, 1.

37. RLDS members have always had the option of choosing which congregation they attend, irrespective of their proximity to the congregation chosen.

38. In addition to Grant and Joyce McMurray, others attending the Presence Mission were future apostles Joe Serig, Geoffrey Spencer, Jim Cable, and Peter Judd (who also served in the First Presidency), and other prominent Church people such as Richard and Barbara Howard, Bruce and Carol Lindgren, Lyman and Nancy Edwards, Joe and Helen Pearson, Larry and Carol Cavin, Anita and Arthur Butler, and Bob and Carol Smith.

39. Among the well-known Church leaders who attended Walnut Gardens, in addition to the McMurrays, were past or present First Presidency members Maurice L. Draper, Alan D. Tyree, and Peter Judd, Apostle Geoffrey Spencer, Church Historian Richard P. Howard and his wife, Barbara (she was editor of Herald House), and Paul M. Edwards, president of the High Priests' Quorum.

40. McMurray, interview, 2.

41. W. Grant McMurray, "Closed Communion in the Restoration," *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action* 2, no. 1 (September 1971): 277–84.

42. World Conference Resolution 1240 (April 15, 1994); 1994 *World Conference Bulletin*, 437–38. A current issue in the Community of Christ is the related matter of whether Christians should be allowed to join the Com-

munity of Christ on the basis of their baptism in another Christian denomination.

43. Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1969). A revised and enlarged edition was published by Herald House in 1995.

44. The RLDS people have traditionally referred to Joseph Smith's "New Translation of the Bible" as the "Inspired Version."

45. One reviewer, a conservative Church leader fairly well-read in biblical scholarship, wrote a very negative review of Howard's book, focusing his attack almost entirely on Howard's first chapter. Alfred H. Yale, Review of Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development*, in *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action*, pilot issue (April 1970): 59–60. For a favorable review, see my "Somewhat Revisionist," *Christian Century*, April 17, 1970, 454, which called Howard's book "the most scholarly work ever published" by the RLDS Church.

46. William D. Russell, "A Brief History of the John Whitmer Historical Association," *John Whitmer Historical Association 2002 Nauvoo Special Edition*, 147–52.

47. W. Grant McMurray, "History and Mission in Tension: A View from Both Sides," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 20 (2000): 34–47, and reprinted in *Restoration Studies VIII*, edited by Paul M. Edwards and Joni Wilson (Independence, Mo.: Temple School, Herald Publishing House, 2000): 17–25; and in *Religion and the Challenge of Modernity: The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the United States Today*, edited by Danny L. Jorgensen and Joni Wilson (Binghamton, N.Y.: Global Publications, 2001).

48. W. Grant McMurray, "The Reorganization in Nineteenth-Century America: Identity Crisis or Historiographical Problem?" *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 2 (1982): 3–11.

49. McMurray, "'True Son of a True Father,'" 131–45. Two additional articles that McMurray published in the *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* prior to becoming a member of the First Presidency were "'As Historians and Not as Partisans': The Writing of Official History in the RLDS Church," 6 (1986): 43–52, and "American Values for a New Jerusalem: Formations of the First United Order of Enoch, 1860–1871," 8 (1988): 30–44.

50. McMurray, interview, 3.

51. Ibid.

52. During the ten and a half years between the first ordinations of women on November 17, 1985, and Wallace B. Smith's retirement in April

1996, women were ordained to every office from deacon to high priest, with the exception of the three top administrative quorums: the First Presidency, the Council of Twelve Apostles, and the three-member Presiding Bishopric.

53. Both of these ideas were contained in Doctrine and Covenants 156, approved at the 1984 world conference, with approximately 20 percent of the delegates voting against accepting the document as revelation. Fifteen years later, McMurray recalled his response after typing up what became Section 156 from Wallace's hand-written notes. He told President Smith: "But Wally, I truly believe that in the long term the most important phrase in this inspired counsel is the one that says, 'The temple is dedicated to the pursuit of peace.' That sentence will transform the church." W. Grant McMurray, "Envisioning Our Future: A Call to Transformation," *Saints' Herald,* August 1997, 314.

54. World Conference Resolution 1240 (April 15, 1994).

55. Richard P. Howard, "The Changing RLDS Response to Mormon Polygamy: A Preliminary Analysis," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 14–29. Some later writers have cited the republication of Howard's article in *Restoration Studies III,* edited by Maurice L. Draper and Debra Combs (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1986), rather than the original 1983 publication. Howard had been assigned to write the article by the First Presidency. McMurray, then Church secretary, later commented that Howard's article was "thoroughly sanitized by the First Presidency, mainly by Alan [Tyree]." McMurray, interview, 3. I summarize the history of this article in my "A Brief History of the John Whitmer Historical Association," 147–52.

56. Wallace B. Smith, "A Pastoral Letter," *Saints' Herald,* November 1995, 456.

57. Gustav Niebuhr, "New Leader for Church with Mormon Roots," *New York Times,* May 12, 1996, 16.

58. Jan Shipps, "Nonprophet Organization," *Christian Century,* August 14–21, 1996, 787.

59. Prior to 1984 I had thought that President Smith would begin women's ordination by naming a prominent woman like Barbara Higdon, then president of Graceland College, to become an apostle. Then calls for women to other priesthood offices would follow after the ground had been broken at the top. Needless to say, I was wrong.

60. W. Grant McMurray, "Envisioning Our Future: A Call to Transformation," *Saints' Herald,* August 1997, 313–20.

61. W. Grant McMurray, "A Statement from President McMurray," *Herald,* February 2003, 5.

62. William D. Russell, "Reorganized Mormons Beset by Controversy," *Christian Century,* June 18, 1970, 770.

63. The seminary prepares people for full-time paid ministerial positions in the Church. Full-time ministers are expected to have a graduate degree in religion, although it does not have to be from the seminary. Many members also attend the seminary to enhance their skills as nonpaid, parttime ministers.

64. One response on the Church's webboard the day after the announcement of McMurray's resignation was: "I am glad he is stepping down. He once said he didn't consider himself to be a prophet—amen to that. When a new leader is chosen they should automatically disqualify anyone who has attended the St. Paul School of Theology or any other liberal seminary." The same day another respondent wrote: "Certainly, the failure to name a successor has scuppered any possibility of claiming correct succession procedures. . . . The Lord does not expect his prophets to be selected by a committee." Webboard quotations provided courtesy of Richard K. Lindgren.

65. McMurray, "History and Mission in Tension."

66. See these items in *World Conference Resolutions* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 2003), cited by resolution number and date: "Peace in El Salvador," 1234, April 11, 1992; "World Peace Committee," 1267, April 5, 2000; "Our Pursuit of Peace," 1227, April 10, 1992; "Participation in Military Service," 1249, April 19, 1996; "International Ban on Land Mines," 1258, April 1, 1998; "Earth Stewardship," 1224, April 9, 1992; "Globalization," 1284, April 3, 2004; "Children's Advocacy," 1235, April 11, 1992; "Practical Peace and Justice for Youth and Young Adults," 1272, April 8, 2000; "Outreach to the Developmentally Disabled," 1220, April 7, 1992; "Sexual Abuse of Children," 1276, April 12, 2002; "Dialogue on Homosexuality," 1279, April 1, 2004; "Human Diversity," 1226, April 10, 1992; "Personal Use of Firearms," 1270, April 8, 2000; "Healing Ministry and Capital Punishment," 1273, April 8, 2000; "Organ and Tissue Donation—The Gift of Life," 1281, April 2, 2004.

67. W. Grant McMurray, "The Vision Transforms Us," *Saints' Herald,* June 1998, 227–34; W. Grant McMurray, "Called to Discipleship: Coming Home in Search of the Path," *Herald,* June 2002, 8–21. In April 2001, accompanying the name change of the Church to Community of Christ, *Saints* was dropped from the title of the magazine.

68. W. Grant McMurray, "They 'Shall Blossom as the Rose': Native Americans and the Dream of Zion," *Herald,* May 2001, 14.

69. W. Grant McMurray, "Faith Overcoming Fear: Pastoral Reflections on the Events of September 11," *Herald,* November 2001, 13.

70. W. Grant McMurray, "'A Goodly Heritage' in a Time of Transformation: History and Identity in the Community of Christ, *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 65–66.

71. Jim Hannah, "Called to Discernment: Interview with Kenneth Robinson, Peter Judd, and Steve Veazey," *Herald,* March 2005, 18–19.

72. The leaders of other quorums involved in these meetings were the three members of the Presiding Bishopric, the seven Presidents of Seventy, the Presiding Evangelist, and the president of the High Priests' Quorum.

73. Joseph Smith III, "Letter of Instruction," *Saints' Herald,* March 13, 1912, 241–48; also published in Edwards, *The History of the Reorganized Church,* 6:560–75.

74. First Presidency, "Official: Selection of New Church President," December 16, 2004, *Herald,* February 2005, 6.

75. James E. Slaughter et al., "Official," *Herald,* April 2005, 6. See also "Report of the Council of Twelve to the Special World Conference of June 2–5 in the Matter of the Selection of a New Prophet-President for the Community of Christ," *2005 World Conference Bulletin,* 43–46, a historical survey of succession issues, read to the conference by Apostle Leonard M. Young.

76. This estimate of the negative votes is based on observations by Church Archivist Ronald E. Romig, New York lawyer Don Allen, and me. We were sitting in the first row of the balcony, near the front of the Auditorium chamber.

77. W. Grant McMurray, "A Prophetic People," *Saints' Herald,* June 1996, 226.

78. McMurray, "'A Goodly Heritage' in a Time of Transformation," 66.

79. McMurray, "A Prophetic People," 226.

80. William D. Russell, personal notes. At the 2005 world conference, I had press credentials because I was preparing this article for the *Dialogue*-sponsored session of the 2005 Salt Lake City Sunstone symposium. Although I am an elder, I attended the High Priests' Quorum because I thought it might be where the action would be. Hence, I was present to take notes on Don Compier's prayer. Friends informed me of the proceedings in the elders' quorum, which I later verified by consulting the participants themselves.

81. W. Grant McMurray, "A Letter of Counsel Regarding the Presiding Quorums," *Saints' Herald,* June 1996, 233–34.

82. Mara Rose Williams, "McMurray Resigns as Church President," *Kansas City Star,* December 3, 2004, E-2.

83. For major differences between the LDS Church and the Community of Christ, in the early years as well as the new differences that have emerged in the past generation, see my "The LDS and the Community of Christ: Clearer Differences, Closer Friends," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 177–90, an expansion of a paper of the same title read at the Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, August 14, 2003 (audiocassette SL03-163).

84. Thomas G. Alexander, email to William D. Russell, June 9, 2005. Alexander is the author of *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993).

85. The delegates' caucus is for nonpriesthood members who are elected delegates at the conference.

86. Several years prior to the ordination of women in 1985, the leadership became sensitive to the fact that many women are elected delegates to the conferences but are not eligible to attend any of the priesthood quorums, which consider inspired documents for possible inclusion in the canon of scripture. A delegates' caucus was added to meet this need. It was very large at first but shrank when women began to be ordained. Similarly, in time a sensitivity developed to the need for children and young people to be heard. There was also a recognition that those who speak other languages would be better served by attending a same-language caucus rather than the caucus of their particular priesthood group.

87. Russell, personal notes, 2005 world conference.

88. Delegates to the world conference are allocated to each jurisdiction based on its population of members. Nonpriesthood members are just as eligible as those in the priesthood for election as delegates, although those in the priesthood probably have a greater chance of being elected.

89. Slaughter et al., "Official," 6.

90. Dale E. Luffman, email to William D. Russell, June 28, 2005.

91. Helen T. Gray, "Community of Christ Quickly Selects New Leader," *Kansas City Star,* June 4, 2005, B-1, B-4.

92. The new apostles were Stassie D. Cramm, Ronald D. Harmon Jr., Rick W. Maupin, and Susan D. Skoor. Skoor is assigned to the Western United States. Her territory includes the Utah congregations in Ogden, Salt

Lake City, St. George, and Orem. She attended and presented at the Sunstone Sympsium, August 2006, Salt Lake City.

93. The international representation in the presiding quorums was reduced when Presiding Evangelist Danny A. Belrose retired in the spring of 2006. In addition, Kenneth N. Robinson is nearing retirement age.

94. Kenneth L. McLaughlin, June 4, 2005, Statement to the World Conference. At my request, McLaughlin gave me a copy of his statement.

95. "Council Oversees Work Done around the World," *Independence Examiner,* June 1, 2005, 10.

96. Stephen M. Veazey, "A Letter of Counsel Regarding the Presiding Quorums," *2005 World Conference Bulletin,* June 4, 2005, 70–71.

97. Stephen M. Veazey, "Share the Peace of Jesus Christ," 2005 World Conference Sermon, *World Conference Bulletin 2005,* 86, also published in the *Herald,* July 2005, 11–21.

98. Ibid., 87.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Associated Press, "Church Breaks New Holy Ground," *Columbia (Missouri) Daily Tribune,* February 13, 2005.

Is Joseph Smith Relevant to the Community of Christ?

Roger D. Launius

In the spring of 2005 Newell Bringhurst asked me to participate in a session of the Mormon History Association's annual meeting. Because it was the bicentennial of Joseph Smith's birth and we were meeting in Vermont, his birth state, our session was titled "In Pursuit of the Elusive Joseph Smith." He asked each panelist to consider the process of investigation and interpretation that has been made over the past forty years in terms of the most significant works produced, what significant areas of Joseph Smith's life remained to be explored, and whether a reasonably "definitive portrait" of Joseph Smith is more possible today than it was forty years ago. I agreed to participate in this session, along with four senior scholars in Mormon studies, D. Michael Quinn, Glen M. Leonard, Dan Vogel, and Grant Underwood. The session proved both stimulating and provocative, and hopefully useful to the audience in attendance. The following essay is a slightly revised draft of my remarks.

I spoke as a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints/Community of Christ. As a result, I had a decidedly different perspective on Joseph Smith than my co-panelists. In addition, with the peculiarities of the history of my faith community, Joseph Smith Jr. has enjoyed a place in this religious tradition strikingly different from that he has attained among the Utah-based Latter-day Saints. Without question, he is much less revered and less legendary than among the Latter-day Saints, for whom Joseph Smith is significant, not just for his life but for his religious innovations. I have heard this assertion many times and in many places. As Ronald K. Esplin commented in an important essay about Nauvoo, "Nauvoo was, and is, and will be important to Latter-day Saints because it was *the* City of Joseph. It was the city he built, where he lived and acted, where he died. Above all, it was the city where

he fulfilled his religious mission. . . . In a very real sense, his other labors were prologue."[1] Clearly Smith's religious innovations are central to the LDS reverence for the founding prophet.

I would compare this perspective to one debated among various other Christian groups. Which is more important: the life of Jesus or the death and resurrection of Christ? Allowing that both are significant, the relative importance that one would place on these events tells us much about the group's perspective. To emphasize the life of Jesus is to embrace an entity fully human who had to come to grips with the duality of his humanity and divinity and did so only with great difficulty and strength but ultimately with acceptance. To emphasize the death and resurrection of Christ is to accentuate divinity while too often giving short shrift to the struggle that Jesus engaged in throughout his life. Utah-based Latter-day Saints tend to emphasize the triumphant Joseph Smith (at least as they conceive of him) who "completed" his work of restoring the gospel before his assassination at age thirty-nine.

For the Community of Christ, Joseph Smith's place is much less assured and certainly far less triumphant. Indeed, I know of no one in the organization who would conclude that Joseph Smith "completed" his work of restoration, and I could poll many who would question the totality of what he accomplished. I would contend that Joseph Smith's activities represented a conflicting set of ideals for those identified with the Community of Christ. Such was the case from the time of Joseph Smith III, first president of the Reorganization, in the nineteenth century, and it has remained so to the present, becoming even more problematic in the last twenty-five years or so. Over the course of many years, the Church has cast aside any belief in plurality of gods, baptism for the dead, and temple ceremonies as understood by Latter-day Saints. From the beginning of the Reorganization movement, it rejected celestial marriage and the tendency toward militarism and official involvement in most political activities that were prevalent in Nauvoo. While some in the Reorganized Church refused to believe that these had any place in the organization of Joseph Smith's day—and this has been a source of tension for those inside the Church—the reality is that, in a demythologization of history, many have come to accept that not everything Smith did was appropriate. At a fundamental level, the lifetime of contradictions that Joseph Smith lived represented both a triumph and a tragedy, the backlash of which the Commu-

nity of Christ's adherents have been seeking to understand and in some cases to live down ever since.[2]

At the same time, there is a dichotomy between what some of the Church's historians might understand about the past and what the average member believes, so while there is some consensus there is certainly not unanimity in the construction of a faith story about Joseph Smith. This came home to me quite pointedly in the context of a request recently from the junior high Sunday School teacher. She asked, "What should I tell my students about Joseph Smith?" I asked her what was in the curriculum, and she told me that it was completely silent on the subject. Accordingly, her class was asking questions for which she had no resources. This situation raised a critical question. What might we say about the founder? Having deconstructed his life and mission, how might we work to reconstruct a meaningful story that celebrates his legitimate accomplishments while remaining honest to the historical record? I had no answer for this instructor, and I still do not.

Few of the major incidents that have been a part of the Community of Christ faith story remain salient. These include the translation of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood and the gospel in its fullness, the development of a uniquely useful theology, the concept of Zion, belief in the Second Coming of Christ and the millennium, and several others. What remains is a deeply flawed character at the center of the Church's origins.

How might a re-enchantment of Church history be accomplished? Might we do so by asking the question: "Could any other person have been the founder of the restoration movement?" No doubt, historical developments are important to the identity of the Community of Christ, but how might members accept the historical record "warts and all" but still see Joseph Smith as unique in some respects? It remains a puzzlement.

There are many difficult examples of what the Community of Christ has been seeking to deal with. The quest for Zion was an attractive idea for the Church for more than a century, and the success of Smith in such places as Nauvoo has often been viewed as the closest approximation the Church has to the ideals of Zion carried in scripture and doctrine. At the same time, the Reorganized Church/Community of Christ has been repelled by the darker side of political power—corruption, influence-peddling, and the difficulty of political choices. Much the same was true when considering Smith's truly weird theological experimentation.[3] Many in

the Community of Christ today are certainly uncomfortable with Smith's authoritarianism, with his militarism, and with his sense of being God's chosen. I know of no one in the leadership of the Community of Christ who accepts the Book of Mormon as a work of history, even if they view it as scripture. Of course, some rank and file members still accept it as such. As to the many doctrinal idiosyncrasies that emerged from the mind of Joseph Smith, those are sometimes viewed as the ramblings of a misguided fanatic.[4] That he became increasingly egocentric and power hungry is a given for virtually all Community of Christ members.

But I suspect that many members still view his early structuring of the Church and its basic doctrines as prophetic. Even so, their view of his prophetic role in the Church is severely limited when compared to the view of the LDS Church and perhaps to early RLDS views. By distancing itself from many of his actions and selectively emphasizing his prophetic role, the Community of Christ views him as more human than he is in the LDS tradition. His Nauvoo innovations are an "embarrassment," but many still view him as a figure of significance in the formation of the Church.

Accordingly, the Community of Christ has walked a fine line in interpreting the legacy of Joseph Smith. From a theological perspective, the Reorganized Church essentially rejected Smith's radical ideas. Between 1830 and 1844, and especially in the latter years, Smith promulgated a series of unique ideas on eternity, the multiplicity of gods, the possibility of progression to godhood, celestial and plural marriage, baptism for the dead, and other ideas associated with Mormon temple endowments—none of which found a place in the Reorganized Church.[5] A few of these innovations were simply considered quaint by non-Mormons; others, such as plural marriage, aroused volatile emotions and became rallying points for opposition to the movement.[6]

For many reasons, the Reorganization for over a hundred years desired to remain faithful to the stories, symbols, and events of early Mormonism, on the one hand, even as it sought respectability among Christians of other denominations.[7] To a remarkable extent, it was successful in doing so. These tensions were held in creative balance until a theological reformation in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Its success was largely due to the unique heritage of the Reorganized Latter Day Saints as the people in the middle, seeking to steer between the Scylla of excessively authoritarian, speculative, Nauvoo Mormonism and the Charybdis of creedal, congregational, Protestant sectarianism.[8]

The recent broad-based reformation has resulted in the virtual abandonment of most of the vestiges of Mormonism that informed the movement for a century and in their replacement by more mainline Christian conceptions.[9] In the process of that reformation, the character of Joseph Smith has become an embarrassment. He is often viewed as a skeleton in the closet of the Community of Christ. After all, he was a cult leader who preached doctrines anathema to many Christians, engaged in sexual hijinks of the worst order, sought to take over the United States and make it into a theocracy with him in charge, and, failing that, allowed himself to be martyred as a rallying point for his followers.

In this context, attempts to understand and explain the life and activities of Joseph Smith Jr. for the Community of Christ membership are not particularly necessary or valued. At this point, I can no more envision the preparation of a new biography of Joseph Smith usable by the Community of Christ than I can foresee the centrality of a new biography of Charles Darwin to the current debate over evolution/intelligent design. Joseph Smith is not truly germane to the current Community of Christ direction.

Having offered this lengthy preamble, let me address the questions that Newell Bringhurst suggested that we consider in relation to Joseph Smith.

1. How much progress has been made over the past forty years in terms of the most significant works produced?

This is an interesting question and one that I wish I had a better answer to, but the reality is that, while we now know much more about the details of Smith's life than in the past, I'm not sure that we have more understanding. Fawn Brodie laid out the major parameters of the questions most people pursued concerning Smith in her 1945 biography, and it is still by far the best work on the subject.[10] Few have moved far from the research agenda she laid out.

In *No Man Knows My History* Brodie systematically dealt with five basic issues that have challenged Mormon historians ever since.

1. Joseph Smith's First Vision.

2. Treasure seeking and its relationship both to Smith and Mormon origins.

3. The origins and content of the Book of Mormon.

4. The origins of plural marriage and other theological innovations.

5. Joseph Smith, theocracy, and authoritarianism.

Because of our pursuit of these major issues, we have learned an enormous amount about Smith's work. We are all indebted to the historians who have explored these issues in depth and broadened our knowledge. Donna Hill's 1977 biography tried to deal with these issues comprehensively and was largely successful but failed to replace Brodie's book as the standard account of Smith's life, at least among the larger community of historians and observers.[11] Perhaps Richard Bushman's new biography of Smith will accomplish that task, but such a determination comes only with time.[12]

The reason a definitive biography of Joseph Smith is such an elusive goal is because Mormon historiography has become such a battleground in the last twenty years. I'm uncertain if believing LDS scholars can write anything but "faithful history" any longer, emphasizing exclusively the sacredness of the story of Mormonism. From John Whitmer to the present, most writing on the Mormon past has been oriented toward producing a narrative of use to the membership. The result was a thrust of historical interpretation that overwhelmingly emphasized God's word as defined by the Mormon prophets, spreading throughout the world in a never-ending advancement of the Church. Most LDS historians have accepted this interpretation because, as Klaus J. Hansen has suggested, most of them are members of the Latter-day Saint faith community, and they must overcome years of religious training that predisposes them to view the Church, its leaders, and its institutions as righteous and just.[13] LDS Apostle Boyd K. Packer has even invoked an espousal of the progress of Mormonism as a religion as *the* primary purpose of historical investigation, telling Church educators in 1981: "Your objective should be that they [those who study Mormon history] will see the hand of the Lord in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now."[14] With such a perspective, Church-mandated interpretations of the Mormon past are not easily overcome. And while Bushman is certainly an able and elegant historian with special skills in presenting the faith story, his book will be acceptable mostly to believing Mormons.

2. What significant areas of Joseph Smith's life remain to be explored?

There is one huge area in Joseph Smith's life that I would like to see explored. It relates to his place in the myth and memory of the Latter-day Saints. No area in historical study has been more significant in the recent past than the study of memory. The reality of what happened in the past—which in any event is unrecoverable—is decidedly less important

than what the population who values the story believes about it. So what do the Mormons believe about Joseph Smith? How did they come to believe this, and why? How have these beliefs morphed over time and in response to what triggering events? Of course, Joseph Smith is a legend. He is a legend in the same way that Wyatt Earp, Jesse James, Daniel Boone, Alvin York, Henry Ford, and a host of others in American history are legends. Unpacking the legend and exploring his myth and memory offer a new understanding on his place in the development of this important American-originated religion.

3. Is a reasonably "definitive" portrait of Joseph Smith more possible today than it was forty years ago? Why or why not?

I would suggest that there is no such thing as a definitive work of history. At some level, this question depends on the concept of "truth"—whether it exists and, if so, whether it is "knowable." I question both assumptions, although I would never argue definitively about them since I don't really know.

What we think of as truth has changed fundamentally with time. I am reminded of a scene from the classic comedy, *Men in Black*, that is really a commentary on the nature of modern society. The Tommy Lee Jones character, K, tells the Will Smith character about the reality of aliens in America. He adds, "Fifteen hundred years ago, everyone knew that the sun revolved around the Earth. Five hundred years ago, everyone knew the world was flat. Yesterday you knew that we were alone on this planet. Imagine what you'll learn tomorrow."[15] Imagine how truth has changed over time! Truth is inexact and difficult to pin down, always changing in relation to other events, perceptions, and countervailing ideas, especially over time.

Indeed, truths have differed from time to time and place to place with reckless abandon and enormous variety. Choice between them is present everywhere both in the past and the present; my truth dissolves into your myth and your truth into my myth almost as soon as it is articulated. This pattern is reinforced everywhere, and the versions of truth espoused by various groups about themselves and about those excluded from their fellowship are often misunderstood. Perhaps Pontius Pilate framed the dilemma best two millennia ago when he asked Jesus, "What is truth?"[16] But he never got an answer from Jesus. That silence says much about the nature of truth.

So, having followed this divergent trail about the nature of truth, let

me suggest that there is no chance whatsoever of any historian producing the definitive biography of Joseph Smith. But that is because I reject the premise of definitiveness, not because excellent works will not emerge. Indeed, I hope they do—and soon.

Notes

1. Ronald K. Esplin, "The Significance of Nauvoo for Latter-day Saints," *Journal of Mormon History* 16 (1990): 72.

2. This was one of the themes of my dissertation, published as *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988). On the RLDS reformation, see Larry W. Conrad and Paul Shupe, "An RLDS Reformation? Construing the Task of RLDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 92–103; Roger D. Launius, "The RLDS Church and the Decade of Decision," *Sunstone* 19 (September 1996): 45–55; Roger D. Launius, "Coming of Age? The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the 1960s," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 31–57; Roger D. Launius, "Neither Mormon nor Protestant? The Reorganized Church and the Challenge of Identity," in *Mormon Identities in Transition*, edited by Douglas Davies (London: Cassell, 1996), 52–60; W. B. "Pat" Spillman, "Dissent and the Future of the Church," in *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, edited by Roger D. Launius and W. B. "Pat" Spillman (Independence, Mo.: Graceland/Park Press, 1991), 259–92.

3. I deal with this topic in relation to Nauvoo in "The Awesome Responsibility: Joseph Smith III and the Nauvoo Experience," *Western Illinois Regional Studies* 11 (Fall 1988): 55–68.

4. See my explorations of these topics in "The RLDS Church and the Decade of Decision," *Sunstone* 19 (September 1996): 45–55; and "An Ambivalent Rejection: Baptism for the Dead and the Reorganized Church Experience," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 61–84.

5. The literature on many Nauvoo theological developments is extensive. For general introductions, see T. Edgar Lyon, "Doctrinal Development of the Church during the Nauvoo Sojourn, 1839–1846," *BYU Studies* 15 (Summer 1975): 435–46; Marvin S. Hill, "Mormon Religion in Nauvoo: Some Reflections," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 44 (Spring 1976): 170–80.

6. See Richard P. Howard, "The Changing RLDS Response to Mormon Polygamy: A Preliminary Analysis," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal*

3 (1983): 14–29; Alma R. Blair, "RLDS Views of Polygamy: Some Historiographical Notes," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 5 (1985): 16–28; Launius, *Joseph Smith III*, 190–272; Roger D. Launius, "Methods and Motives: Joseph Smith III's Opposition to Polygamy, 1860–90," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20, no. 4 (Winter 1987): 105–20; Roger D. Launius, "Politicking against Polygamy: Joseph Smith III, the Reorganized Church, and the Politics of the Anti-Polygamy Crusade, 1860–1890," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 7 (1987): 35–44.

7. Alma R. Blair, "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: Moderate Mormonism," in *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History*, edited by F. Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards (Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1973), 207–30; Clare D. Vlahos, "Moderation as a Theological Principle in the Thought of Joseph Smith III," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 1 (1981): 3–11.

8. Clare D. Vlahos, "Images of Orthodoxy," in *Restoration Studies I*, edited by Maurice L. Draper and Clare D. Vlahos (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1980), 184. See also Conrad and Shupe, "An RLDS Reformation?" 92–103; W. Paul Jones, "Demythologizing and Symbolizing the RLDS Tradition," *Restoration Studies V*, edited by Darlene Caswell (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1993), 109–15; Larry W. Conrad, "Dissent among Dissenters: Theological Dimensions of Dissent in the Reorganization," in *Let Contention Cease*, 199–239.

9. One may debate whether this is a good thing. W. Grant McMurray criticized several scholars for pointing up the problems of this reformation in his address, "History and Mission in Tension: A View from Both Sides," in *Religion and the Challenge of Modernity: The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the United States Today*, edited by Danny L. Jorgensen and Joni Wilson (Binghamton, N.Y.: Global Publications, Academic Studies in the History of Religion, 2001), 229–49. It is a paper filled with his characteristic wit. But more important, it should also be deeply troubling for those who pursue historical knowledge, for it demonstrates serious anti-historical and, in some instances, anti-intellectual attitudes.

10. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945). A revised and expanded second edition appeared in 1971.

11. Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977).

12. Richard Lyman Bushman with the assistance of Jed Woodworth, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).

13. Klaus J. Hansen, "The World and the Prophet," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 106.

14. Boyd K. Packer, "'The Mantle is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect,'" *BYU Studies* 21 (Summer 1981): 262.

15. *Men in Black,* feature film, starring Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones (Universal Studios, 1997).

16. *The Holy Scriptures* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1944 ed.), John 18:38.

True to the Faith: A Snapshot of the Church in 2004

Lavina Fielding Anderson[1]

In July 2004, the LDS Church published *True to the Faith*, a handbook of doctrines and beliefs arranged alphabetically from A ("Aaronic Priesthood") to Z ("Zion"): 190 pages of what Mormons are supposed to believe, know, and do.[2] Arguably, in creed-free and catechism-free Mormonism, the appearance of this concise compendium represents a new development. Its closest parallels may be the missionary "white book," which spells out behavioral rules, the pocket-sized handbooks for Latter-day Saints in the military, or the newest revision of "For the Strength of Youth," which provides explanations of principles governing correct behavior but is also quite clear about what that correct behavior is. All of these works are contemporary and concise.

In terms of doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine* is very authoritarian but not "authorized," and the procedures and policies in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* are not generally available to members. In contrast, *True to the Faith* is available at any distribution center and is quoted on the Church's official website. In some stakes, including my own, every teenager got a personal copy.[3] For the first time, it makes available an authoritative, correlated source upon which members can draw with complete reliance that "this is what we believe."

It is obviously designed for universal application. Although the brief prefatory message from the First Presidency says that the book is aimed specifically at "youth, young single adults, and new converts," that part of the message comes near the end. The first sentence says: "This book is designed as a companion to your study of the scriptures and the teachings of

latter-day prophets." The reader is instructed to "refer to it as you study and apply gospel principles. Use it as a resource when you prepare talks, teach classes, and answer questions about the Church" (1).

It is difficult to answer the normal questions one would ask of a book: Who is the author or authors? Where did the idea come from for this book? Why is there a need for it, and what ends is it supposed to achieve? What did the process of writing involve? There is no clue anywhere about the presumed committee or individuals who wrote and reviewed this book, which is, admittedly, standard procedure in producing manuals. Its anonymity is virtually complete. Although knowing the history of its genesis and production would be fascinating, *True to the Faith* still has enormous importance as a snapshot of the Church in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Overview

The first message this book communicates is its size. Beginning in 1995 but definitely since 2001, publications designed for youth have been printed in this rather off-size format: 4 3/4th inches wide by 7 inches tall. It is much smaller than the Church's magazines and administrative handbooks, which are all 8½ by 11. It is shorter and wider than the scriptures and the adult class manuals, nor is it the size of a standard paperback, a pamphlet like the Joseph Smith story, or notecards (4x6 or 3x5 inches). Hymnbooks, on the other hand, fit the standard of most American tradebooks–6x9.[4]

The book has no index, which means that internal references to subjects that are not the main topic of an entry are difficult to trace. However, its 105 alphabetical entries are liberally enhanced with 66 "see" references. For instance, someone looking for "Stake" would find no entry on that topic but be referred to "Church Administration." For "Standard Works" see "Scriptures," for "Sunday" see "Sabbath; Worship," and for "Swearing" see "Profanity" (all on p. 167).

If I were selecting three adjectives to describe the book, they would be "authoritative," "timeless," and "Christ-focused."

1. The authoritativeness of the book is communicated clearly. It is published by the Church, introduced by the First Presidency, and sold at distribution centers. Another indication of its authority lies in its low-key but dogmatic prose. This is a book of answers that does not acknowledge the existence of questions. Typically, the material is addressed directly to

the reader: "Your testimony will grow stronger," the preface promises the reader. "You will remain true to the faith" (1). "As you become more reverent, . . . you will be less troubled and confused. You will be able to receive revelation to help you solve personal and family problems" (145). While these simple statements may be reassuring, it may be more problematic to read that abortion "has become a common practice, defended by deceptive arguments" (4), because there seems to be little room for discussion and few acknowledgments of the complexity of some topics.

Another strong characteristic of its authoritative nature is its clearly limned view of reality. For example, the entry on "Creation" begins, "Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth. . . . You are a spirit child of God, and your body is created in His image. To show your gratitude for these blessings, you can care for your body by obeying the Word of Wisdom and other commandments. . . . You can also respect other people as children of God" (44–45). The tone, though muted and low-key, is definite.

2. The second characteristic of *True to the Faith*, its timelessness, is both a cause and an effect of its authoritativeness. Although the preface is a message from the First Presidency, they are not identified by name. The subtext is therefore that, no matter which individuals comprise the First Presidency, these statements will presumably stand forever without revision. As another manifestation of timelessness, there are virtually no internal clues about when it was written or allusions that might date the material. No Church president or General Authority except for Joseph Smith is quoted, even when some entries represent the thinking and sometimes the language of individual General Authorities in recent conference talks. Instead, the text relies heavily on the scriptures. For example, the entry on "grace," which is slightly under two pages, quotes six scriptures and cites an additional sixteen.

3. The third characteristic, its focus on Christ, is a refreshing one. The entry on "Atonement of Jesus Christ," at a little over six pages, is one of the lengthiest in the book. Although I did not read through checking specifically on this point, I think that virtually every entry incorporates a reference to the Savior in some way, even when it is used somewhat coercively as in the entry on "Modesty," which it defines as not dressing, speaking, or acting in ways that "draw undue attention to yourself." The test of modesty it recommends is: "Would I feel comfortable with my appearance if I were in the Lord's presence?" (106)

As another example of the focus on Christ in *True to the Faith* is this statement: "Temple ordinances lead to the greatest blessings available through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. All we do in the Church—our meetings and activities, our missionary efforts, the lessons we teach and the hymns we sing—should point us to the Savior and the work we do in holy temples. . . . The endowment helps us focus on the Savior, His role in our Heavenly Father's plan, and our commitment to follow Him" (170–71). I think these statements are an effort to assert a more explicit connection between the Savior and temples than may otherwise be apparent.

A similar effort may prompt the definition of "worship" as "participation in priesthood ordinances," which specifies: "As you reverently partake of the sacrament and attend the temple, you remember and worship your Heavenly Father and express your gratitude for His Son, Jesus Christ" (188).

Belief and Behavior

As I read the 105 entries, I tentatively classified them as dealing with "belief" (e.g., concepts or doctrine), or "behavior." These classifications are quite subjective, since a typical entry on belief also spells out the desired behavior that will result from this belief. I classified sixty-seven entries (roughly 64 percent of the total) as primarily doctrinal or theological. They are Aaronic priesthood, Abrahamic covenant, adversity, agency, apostasy,[5] articles of faith, atonement of Jesus Christ, charity, Church administration, Church disciplinary councils, civil government and laws, conscience, conversion, covenant, creation, death (physical), death (spiritual), eternal life, faith, fall, family (proclamation), foreordination, forgiveness, godhead, God the Father, gospel, grace, gratitude, happiness, heaven, hell, Holy Ghost, honesty, hope, humility, Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith, justice, kingdoms of glory, laying on of hands, light of Christ, love, Melchizedek Priesthood, mercy, millennium, ordinances, original sin, paradise, peace, plan of salvation, priesthood, prophets, Relief Society,[6] repentance, restoration of the gospel, resurrection, reverence, signs, sin, soul, spiritual gifts, teaching the gospel, temples, temptation, ten commandments, war, worship.

These beliefs, many of which we share in common with other Christians, are also part of our history; but as expressed in *True to the Faith*, they present a normative Mormonism that has little in common with the radi-

cal, marginalized, experimental movement of its first two generations. Instead, the Mormonism described in these pages is extremely conservative and self-consciously respectable.

This presentation of unspectacular religiosity is nowhere so clear as in *True to the Faith's* discussion of testimony. A testimony consists of five core pieces of knowledge: (1) "that Heavenly Father lives and loves us"; (2) "that Jesus Christ lives, that He is the Son of God, and that He carried out the infinite Atonement" (this three-part "knowing" is the most complex element and suggests, in my opinion, the book's increased focus on Christ); (3) "that Joseph Smith is the prophet of God who was called to restore the gospel" (there is no mention here of either the First Vision or the Book of Mormon); (4) "that we are led by a living prophet today"; and (5) that the Church "is the Savior's true Church on the earth" (178). These propositions are, in essence, the minimum beliefs that an orthodox member must sustain. The first two—those concerning Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ—are shared with all of Christendom; the last three are distinctively Mormon. They assert our specialness, our chosenness.

However, *True to the Faith* stresses restrained, subdued, organic spiritual experiences. A testimony comes "through the quiet influence of the Holy Ghost, . . . as a quiet assurance, without spectacular displays of God's power." It will "grow gradually" (179). "Quiet spiritual promptings . . . are more powerful" than "visions or angelic visitations" (141). Revelation comes "when you are reverent and peaceful" (141). Revelation "will probably come to you 'line upon line. . . .' Do not try to force spiritual things. Revelation does not come that way" (143). The Holy Ghost communicates through our feelings, especially "a feeling of comfort and serenity" (144). This depiction of revelation and spiritual experiences would, needless to say, have excluded most converts to the Church in its first twenty years.

I'm sure that *True to the Faith* will be a rich mine for those who want to explore Mormonism's contemporary theological and doctrinal landscape, but I had a greater personal interest in the other category—behavior, which is where I categorized thirty-eight items (about 37 percent of the total). These behavioral expectations spell out what Mormons will do or areas on which there is a Church policy that can be used as a standard for evaluating orthodoxy. They include: abortion, abuse, adoption, baptism, birth control, body piercing, chastity, cross, debt, divorce, education, family history work and genealogy, family home evening, fasting and fast of-

ferings, gambling, judging others, marriage, missionary work (young men have a "duty" to serve missions; young women and older couples have a "responsibility"), modesty, obedience, patriarchal blessings, pornography, prayer, profanity, revelation, Sabbath, sacrament, salvation, Satan, scriptures, the second coming of Jesus Christ (which is discussed exclusively in terms of individual preparation), service, sacrifice, tattooing, testimony, tithing, unity, welfare, and the Word of Wisdom.

I found it interesting that the policy on abortion is identical to that in the *Church Handbook of Instructions*: "Members . . . must not submit to, perform, encourage, pay for, or arrange for an abortion. If you encourage an abortion in any way, you may be subject to Church discipline" (4).[7] *True to the Faith* also spells out the long-accepted three "exceptional circumstances" that may justify an abortion: if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, if a "competent" doctor determines that continuing the pregnancy will put the mother's life "in serious jeopardy," or if the fetus has such "severe defects" that it "will not . . . survive beyond birth" (4). However, both *True to the Faith* and the handbook quickly add, "Even these circumstances do not automatically justify an abortion. Those who face such circumstances should consider abortion only after consulting with their local Church leaders and receiving a confirmation through earnest prayer" (4). The handbook does not specify that the prayer should be "earnest," so *True to the Faith* actually amplifies it on this point.

The policy on abuse—"physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional"—is far short of what I think we need, considering the severity of the problem. In fact, it is watered down from the version in the handbook, given that one of its primary audiences is young men and women who are at greater risk than adults of being victims of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse. *True to the Faith* states that abuse "can cause confusion, doubt, mistrust, and fear," suggesting, rather improbably, that abuse may also cause none of these effects. It further states, "Abusive behavior may lead to Church discipline" (6). Unfortunately, the conditional verb here may not provide the reassurance that a shaken young victim needs to seek help from an ecclesiastical leader.

The next three-paragraph section in the "Abuse" entry is "counsel for the abuser" and the second section is "help for victims." I found it puzzling that the needs of victims are listed last. Advice to abusers include instructions to repent, to ask the Lord and their victims for forgiveness, and to "speak with [note: not "confess to"] your bishop . . . so he can help you

through the repentance process and, if necessary, help you receive additional counseling or other assistance."

This guidance seems inadequate, considering the extent and resulting trauma of abuse problems in our culture. The abuser is told to seek "an eternal perspective" that will help him see that "your anger has almost always come in response to things that are not very important." A sexual abuser is advised to "discipline your mind" and "stay away from pornography" (6).

The "Help for Victims" section is slightly better. The victim, it says, should "immediately" talk to his or her bishop who will "guide you through the process of emotional healing. . . . You are not to blame for the harmful behavior of others. You do not need to feel guilt. . . . Rather than seek revenge, focus on matters you can control, such as your own outlook on life. Pray for the strength to forgive those who have hurt you" (7). I am concerned that this counsel does not assure the abuse survivor that abuse is illegal, that reporting is mandatory, that legal and judicial remedies are available, that therapy is almost always helpful, and that seeking justice is not the same as seeking "revenge."

The abuse policy in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* is much longer; and even though it is directed primarily to the bishop, I think every member of the Church should also be aware of it. It strongly states that "abuse cannot be tolerated in any form," that abuse "violate[s] the laws of God and man," and that abusers "are [not "may be"] subject to Church discipline," "should not" have callings or temple recommends, and even after full reinstatement should not work with children or youth "unless the First Presidency authorizes removal of the annotation on the person's membership record." The "first responsibility of the Church"—by which it presumably means the local Church leader—"is to help those who have been abused and to protect those who may be vulnerable to future abuse." The handbook acknowledges the probability of "serious trauma and feelings of guilt" and urges leaders to be "sensitive . . . and give caring attention to help them [survivors] overcome the destructive effects of abuse." It spells out the probable need for "professional counseling" for both victims and perpetrators, instructs bishops to inform their stake presidents and to call the help line (there is no help line for ordinary members or abuse victims), and advises the bishop to "urge the member [perpetrator] to report these [illegal] activities to the appropriate government authorities." The bishop should also advise the perpetrator to get "qualified legal

advice" but should personally "avoid testifying in civil or criminal cases or other proceedings involving abuse."[8] If similarly specific information were widely available to the membership at large, I think it would go further than the relatively few (though strongly worded) denunciations of abuse that have appeared at infrequent intervals in general conference addresses.

A few additional items seem to reflect current emphases related to social issues. Under "Addiction" is the advice to "See gambling, pornography, and Word of Wisdom." The book reassures the reader: "You can overcome addiction through personal effort, the enabling power of the Lord's grace, help from family members and friends, and guidance from Church leaders" (187).

Birth control, which was defined as a manifestation of selfishness and resistance to God's will in official statements up through the 1980s, has now been privatized. Though strongly pronatalist ("Ponder the joy that comes when children are in the home. Consider the eternal blessings that come from having a good posterity . . . Prayerfully decide . . .), *True to the Faith* concedes: Decisions about "how many children to have and when to have them . . . are between the two of you and the Lord," and it also acknowledges that "sexual relations within marriage" also have the purpose of "express[ing] love for one another" (26).

True to the Faith rather awkwardly straddles a conceptual fence by asserting that husband and wife are equal partners while assigning to the husband traditional patriarchal duties: "Each husband and father in the Church should strive to be worthy to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. With his wife as an equal partner, he presides in righteousness and love, serving as the family's spiritual leader. He leads the family in regular prayer, scripture study, and family home evening . . . " (125). "Remember that marriage, in its truest sense, is a partnership of equals," reads the entry on marriage, "with neither person exercising dominion over the other, but with each encouraging, comforting, and helping the other" (100).

Omitted Topics

As benchmarks of change are topics that might have appeared in earlier versions of *True to the Faith*, had such a book existed, but that have quietly disappeared from what is now considered "essential" to know. For example, for the past thirty years, Church doctrine and member behavior have been organized according to the three-fold mission of the Church:

perfecting the Saints, preaching the gospel, and redeeming the dead. That mission statement appears nowhere in *True to the Faith* and neither, for the most part, does the language. The book refers to "sharing the gospel," rather than preaching it. "Redeeming the Dead" is a mere subheading under "Family History Work and Genealogy," but the phrase is not used again in the entry (61).

"Polygamy" or "plural marriage" appears nowhere, which is certainly not surprising; however, a puzzling sentence explains that Abraham "entered into celestial marriage, which is the covenant of exaltation" (5). I'm somewhat at a loss to explain this statement. "Less active member" has apparently gone the way of the "prospective elder," the Adam-God doctrine, and blood atonement.

There are entries for "Priesthood" and "Relief Society" but no entries, not even "see" references, for Primary, Young Women, and Sunday School. The auxiliaries are treated in a single sentence under "Church Administration," not as organizations but as local meetings organized according to age groups. For example: "the Relief Society, [is] for women ages 18 years and older, Aaronic Priesthood quorums, for young men ages 12 through 17 . . . " (36). I find it significant that the Relief Society is listed before the boys, since it reflects the new order of the sustaining vote in solemn assemblies initiated by President Hinckley.

New Concepts

Topics not previously addressed in standard Church materials are time-sensitive topics and therefore among the most interesting, since time will tell whether they will become core knowledge or trends that will be replaced by future development. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," is quoted verbatim. It comprises the complete entry under "Family," except for a brief historical introduction about when it was first introduced. In what may be preparation for this document's eventual canonization, *True to the Faith* announces: "This inspired proclamation . . . has become the Church's definitive statement on the family" (59).

Another topic that has received much recent attention is pornography, which receives a strong denunciation but, unfortunately, has so sweeping a definition that it seems eventually unworkable: "Pornography is any material depicting or describing the human body or sexual conduct in a way that arouses sexual feelings" (117). Does this mean that the Song of Solomon will disappear from the next LDS edition of the Old Testa-

ment? The language in the entry is uncharacteristically vivid and emphatic, considering the subdued tone of most entries. Pornography is "tragically addictive. . . . If you experiment with it and allow yourself to remain caught in its trap, it will destroy you, degrading your mind, heart, and spirit. It will rob you of self-respect and of your sense of the beauties of life. It will tear you down and lead you to evil thoughts and possibly evil actions. It will cause terrible damage to your family relationships. . . . Ask the Lord to give you strength to overcome this terrible addiction" (117–18).

There are entries on both body piercing and tattooing, also recently emphasized by President Hinckley. Both entries follow President Hinckley's approach in applying 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 ("If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy . . . ") to discourage these practices. The entry on body piercing begins: "Latter-day prophets strongly discourage the piercing of the body except for medical purposes. If girls or women desire to have their ears pierced, they are encouraged to wear only one pair of modest earrings." The entry then continues with a strong warning: "Those who choose to disregard this counsel show a lack of respect for themselves and for God. They will someday regret their decision" (27). Similarly, tattooing is characterized as "a lack of respect for themselves and for God. . . . If you have a tattoo, you wear a constant reminder of a mistake you have made. You might consider having it removed" (167).

Even more interesting was a cluster of entries that, taken together, may signal serious alarm on the Church's part about ongoing evangelical claims that Mormons are not Christian. One of these entries is "grace," defined as "the divine help and strength we receive through the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ" and twice later in the entry as an "enabling power" (77–78). *True to the Faith* encourages: "Effort is required on our part to receive the fulness of the Lord's grace and be made worthy to dwell with Him" but it also promises that we can receive strength at moments of discouragement or weakness from this "enabling power."

The related entry on original sin (110–11) acknowledges that we live "separated from God and subject to physical death" but also states clearly that "we are not condemned by what many call the 'original sin.' In other words, we are not accountable for Adam's transgression in the Garden of Eden." But the most interesting related entry is the one on "Salvation," rather a lengthy one at three and a half pages long. The introductory paragraph poses the situation of being asked by "other Christians" the ques-

tion, "'Have you been saved?'" The correct answer is yes because we believe in Christ and have entered into a covenant relationship with him. Furthermore, we can claim to be born again if we have been baptized and confirmed.

The entry provides a list of six different meanings of "salvation." Depending on what the questioner means, the answer to the question about being saved will either be "yes" or "yes, but with conditions" (151). These six definitions are: salvation from physical death, salvation from sin, being born again, salvation from ignorance, salvation from the second death, and eternal life or exaltation.

President Boyd K. Packer has wielded enormous influence on Mormon culture and belief during the last thirty years. I was not surprised to see that "free agency" appears nowhere in *True to the Faith*, including in the "Agency" entry, but I did expect to see the term with which he has replaced it: "moral agency." But "moral agency" does not appear in the entry on "Agency" (12). Also, the entry on "Plan of Salvation" is called just that, rather than President Packer's consistently used "plan of happiness," although the defining paragraph gives a list of equivalent terms with their scriptural references, including "plan of salvation," "great plan of happiness," "plan of redemption," and "plan of mercy" (115). "The Plan of Salvation" is also the term used in identifying God the Father as its author (75).

Although these examples use more neutral or more commonly accepted terms than those President Packer has popularized, I think it is possible to speculate that his influence accounts for the fact that *True to the Faith* includes an entry on "Light of Christ." President Packer spoke on this topic on June 22, 2004, at the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah, at a seminar for new mission presidents.[9] Since the copyright information for *True to the Faith* gives a date of 2004 with an "update" in July 2004, I can't help wondering if the update added this entry after his address. A careful reading of both the address and the entry, however, leaves me somewhat mystified at the rationale for including this topic in the first place, since it seems to have, as its main purpose, maintaining a distinction between the specialness of Latter-day Saints, who can have the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the less-special status of non-Mormons who can be influenced by the Light of Christ to investigate the gospel. Rather confusingly, the entry in *True to the Faith* explains that even Church members still have and need the light of Christ but that it manifests itself as one's

conscience, although there's no explanation of why the Holy Ghost can't also perform this function of enabling us to "judge good from evil" (96).

Conclusion

How would I evaluate *True to the Faith* overall? On the positive side, I think the heightened attention to Jesus Christ is very commendable, a spiritually uplifting focus on a relationship with the Savior rather than a more exclusive focus on institutional duties and responsibilities.

Second, for the most part, the prose is clear, positive, and simply phrased. Addressing the reader directly is a technique that is usually friendly sounding, not intimidating. The book also makes a commendable effort to use gender-inclusive language.

As a third advantage, it brings at least a few Church policies out of the handbook and makes them available to members.

On the negative side, the anonymity and authoritativeness of the entries means that even problematic expressions cannot be dismissed as the personal opinion of the author. I have concerns that the simplicity and clarity of the language will not serve at least some members well as they struggle to deal with the messy and complicated realities of their lives. Real people thirst for answers because they have real questions. Getting the answers from someone who hasn't listened to the questions does not always aid the questioner, and it sometimes means that the answers are painful mismatches for individual needs. In many ways, even given this book's strengths, it simply does not accommodate the lived realities of many members of the Church, perhaps the most pressing of which are the growing poverty of members in Third World countries, the inequality of women in the Church, and the theological paradoxes of how the Church treats gay and lesbian members.

True to the Faith will probably have both good and bad effects. On the one hand, it will probably reduce the authority of self-appointed proclaimers of esoteric doctrines and, by giving leaders and members the same handbook of beliefs, inject a little more equality into that lopsided relationship. On the other hand, it will almost certainly continue to foster the lamentable habit of proof-texting and reading the scriptures out of context that already afflicts us. I suspect that it also means that those who find themselves following the counsel to study the scriptures but who come up with insights that do not reinforce existing interpretations will be labeled as heretics even more quickly. In any case, this snapshot of au-

thorized Mormon beliefs and behaviors in the early years of the twenty-first century will provide a benchmark against which future change will be measured.

Notes

1. Permission to make translations and abstracts of this article, or to make copies of it for classroom or other use, must be obtained from the author.

2. No author or editor identified, *True to the Faith* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, June 2004). Quotations from this work are cited parenthetically in the text.

3. One of this article's anonymous reviewers commented that she had not heard of *True to the Faith* until reading this article; but when she asked her husband, a counselor in a stake presidency, he recalled that it had come in about a year earlier and had been distributed to all bishoprics in the stake "as a resource" but without more specific instructions. It was not distributed to youth or other lay members.

4. For example, the following youth and Primary guide books have the same dimensions: *Young Woman Personal Progress: Standing as a Witness of God* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1995); *Aaronic Priesthood–Deacon: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 2001); *Aaronic Priesthood–Priest: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 2001); *Aaronic Priesthood–Teacher: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 2001); and two Primary booklets: *Faith in God–Boys* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 2003) and *Faith in God–Girls* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 2003). My thanks to Marina Capella for supplying these examples.

5. This entry assures the reader that there will never be "another general apostasy" but that "we must each guard against personal apostasy . . . by keeping your covenants, obeying the commandments, following Church leaders, partaking of the sacrament, and constantly strengthening your testimony through daily scripture study, prayer and service" (14).

6. This entry includes the organization's comprehensive ten-point mission statement: "Sisters in the Relief Society work with priesthood holders to carry out the mission of the Church. They support one another as they: increase their testimonies of Jesus Christ through prayer and scripture study; seek spiritual strength by following the promptings of the Holy Ghost; dedicate themselves to strengthening marriages, families, and homes; find nobil-

ity in motherhood and joy in womanhood; love life and learning; stand for truth and righteousness; sustain the priesthood as the authority of God on earth; rejoice in the blessings of the temple; understand their divine destiny and strive for exaltation" (131).

7. *The Church Handbook of Instructions: Book 1, Stake Presidencies and Bishops* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), 157, differs only in using third person throughout.

8. Ibid., 1:157–58.

9. Boyd K. Packer, "The Light of Christ," *Ensign*, April 2005, 8–14.

Maturing and Enduring: *Dialogue* and Its Readers after Forty Years

Robert W. Reynolds, John D. Remy, and Armand L. Mauss

Introduction

Just about twenty years ago, the editors of *Dialogue* commissioned a general survey of subscribers. The results were published in its spring 1987 issue under the title, "The Unfettered Faithful," intended to evoke an image of religiously committed readers who felt free to explore the issues and frontiers of Mormon thought beyond the conventional treatments in official Church literature.[1] The purpose of this article is partly to replicate and compare more recent survey results with the earlier ones. Our title refers not only to the "maturing and enduring" of our faithful readers (two-thirds of whom are now older than fifty), but also to the same developments in the journal itself, which has passed through many editorial hands and has survived more than one period of crisis in its forty-year history, even in recent years.[2] Another purpose for this article is to provide both a descriptive and an analytical overview of the traits and interests of *Dialogue* readers at the opening of a new century, at least as indicated by those readers who responded to our survey.[3]

The earlier survey was conducted entirely by mail during 1984. The database at that time included approximately 2,900 names, of whom four-fifths (2,300) were current subscribers and the rest recently lapsed. Persistent follow-up efforts produced an eventual return rate of about 60 percent of that database (~1,800), with no appreciable bias perceptible from nonresponse, except for an underrepresentation of Utah subscribers and of women. This survey was conducted during 2005 with a data-

base of about 3,500, but this time including only about half that many current subscribers, plus another 300 whose subscriptions had lapsed recently. The rest were long-term lapsers or customers who had purchased something from *Dialogue* but had never subscribed.

Respondents this time were given the option of sending back paper questionnaires by mail or taking the survey on the *Dialogue* website. Despite strenuous follow-up efforts, the return rate this time reached only 50 percent among current subscribers and about 30 percent among lapsed subscribers and others. Of those who did respond, three-fourths used the mail-back option, and one-fourth used the internet.[4] Nonresponse bias was again apparent from the underrepresentation of women, probably because the addresses we had were in the husband's name for most of the households. Altogether, from the entire database and from both mail and internet respondents of all kinds, we received 1,332 usable questionnaires.[5] On the whole, a question-by-question comparison between the 1984 and the 2005 surveys shows surprisingly few differences on a percentage basis. We will point out some similarities and differences as we go along.

Respondent Type and Results

Since respondents were of different kinds (current subscribers and otherwise) and had responded in different ways, we wondered whether our results had been affected by any of three factors distinguishing the respondent types: (1) whether the respondents who took the survey electronically (via our website) answered the questions differently from those who responded on paper by mail; (2) whether the respondents who were lapsed subscribers answered the questions differently from those who were current subscribers; and (3) whether those who were long-term subscribers responded differently from those who were more recent subscribers. Comparisons of these three kinds determined that, on the whole, no statistically significant differences appeared in the responses to the various questions.[6] There were, however, a few exceptions to the "no differences" generalization:

1. As might be expected, those who responded to the survey through the *Dialogue* website were noticeably younger, in general, than those who responded by mail. They were also more likely to be male and returned missionaries, but somewhat less inclined than mail-in respondents to be

orthodox in their beliefs about the Book of Mormon and about how to deal with Church policies with which they disagreed.

2. Lapsed subscribers, when compared to current subscribers, were considerably less likely also to be regular readers of other LDS-related publications (e.g., *Sunstone*, the *Ensign*, *Journal of Mormon History*), so it is not that they have been replacing *Dialogue* with this other reading. Lapsers were also somewhat more likely than others to be female and to be in their middle years (ages 31–50), when many of life's stresses seem greatest; but somewhat less likely (60 percent vs. 72 percent) to regard *Dialogue*'s tone and content as objective and independent; or to say that *Dialogue* contributed to their spiritual experience.

3. The length of subscription among all respondents, was positively correlated with age, sex (male), and educational attainment. Also, shorter-term subscribers were more likely than longer-term ones to visit the *Dialogue* website; to prefer issues of *Dialogue* devoted to single themes (as opposed to varied content); and to be interested in downloading individual articles. Short-termers were less likely, however, to be readers of other LDS-related publications, or to find "most" enjoyable the personal essays, book reviews, and letters published in *Dialogue*. In response to the question about how they had first learned of *Dialogue*, most cited friends and family members, no matter how long they had been subscribers. A surprising number of subscribers, however, under "Other," wrote that they had first learned about *Dialogue* from classmates in LDS institutes, at BYU, or at other colleges. Only "charter" subscribers in any numbers (20 percent) cited "advertisements" as their first contact with *Dialogue*—referring perhaps to the start-up ads circulated in 1965.

These few differences in responses by subscriber type are not of the kind or magnitude that might make it difficult to generalize about what sorts of people read *Dialogue*. Let us begin, then, with a fairly high level of generalization: the *modal* reader.[7]

If responses to our questions were not much affected by currency or recency of subscription, or by paper vs. electronic response to the questionnaire, then how might we generalize about our subscribers? What other characteristics would go into a "portrait" of the most common kind of *Dialogue* subscriber today (at least, among those who responded to our questionnaire)? The modal respondent is a home-owning, married man over age fifty with a post-graduate degree. He is either in retirement or approaching it, resides in either Utah or California, is a life-long member of

the LDS Church and a returned missionary, and attends sacrament meeting virtually every week. He regularly reads the *Ensign* and many other religion-oriented publications besides *Dialogue*. He has subscribed to *Dialogue* for at least ten years, reads half or more of every issue, finds the editorial tone and content of *Dialogue* to be generally objective, and feels that the journal contributes to his spiritual and religious growth. He is inclined to be supportive of Church programs and policies, although he might express some dissent privately to leaders before going along; and he regards the Book of Mormon as a divinely inspired document, even if it is not literal history.

Demographic Traits of Readers

About three-fourths of our respondents were men (perhaps an artifact of patrilineal household addresses). This is the same proportion as we found in our 1984 survey. Some 81 percent of our readers are married, again the same proportion as in that earlier survey. Other marital categories were also about the same.

We are not surprised to see that most of our readers are relatively old. About 64 percent are over age fifty (more than 40 percent are over sixty). Almost exactly the same total proportion (60 percent) was between ages thirty and fifty in our earlier survey. These are probably the same people, in large part, but just twenty years older, so we are still not reaching many in the younger half of the age range, especially those below age forty (only 17 percent now compared to more than 40 percent in the earlier survey).

In our earlier survey, 55 percent of our readers lived in the western states (Rockies to the Pacific Coast), and all the rest were scattered elsewhere. Now 72 percent are in the western states (including 33 percent in Utah and 17 percent in California—i.e., half of all respondents). The rest are scattered around the country, with some 10–12 percent now found in the Northeast. Fewer than 1 percent are in the rest of the world combined.

Dialogue readers have always been well educated. Some 41 percent have doctoral degrees (about the same as in the earlier survey), and 31 percent claim master's degrees, up from 26 percent earlier. The proportion with bachelor's degrees is now 21 percent (similar to the 1984 figure of 25 percent), but readers with no college degree are fairly scarce (now 8 percent vs. 12 percent earlier).

Home ownership is up a bit (90 percent vs. 82 percent earlier), probably a function of the aging of the readership. The proportions of respondents who are self-employed and those who work for others have both declined, while the retired fraction has gone up to one-fourth—obviously a function of aging. Sixty-four percent remain in the work world, and the rest are homemakers or otherwise engaged. Only 2.5 percent of our readers are students.

Variable Levels of Commitment to *Dialogue*

Maintaining Subscriptions

There has not been much change between the two surveys in how long respondents have had subscriptions. A third have subscribed for less than ten years, another third for twenty-five years or more, and a final third in between. One in six respondents is still a charter subscriber. Our newest subscribers (< 4 years) account for more than a fourth of the total, so our marketing efforts seem relatively effective, though this figure is a little lower than that reported in the 1984 survey.

In that survey, only 14 percent reported that their subscriptions had lapsed. Today about a third of the respondents admit that their subscriptions have lapsed, for longer or shorter periods. We asked them to write their reasons. Studying these has led us to conclude that most of the reasons are simply pretexts that could be neutralized through skillful promotion and marketing, rather than serious explanations for lapsed subscriptions. For example, a common complaint was a lack of time or money to keep up on the reading; this reason reflects priorities in subscribers' lives rather than disaffection with the journal. Other common reasons include a loss of interest in LDS matters generally, or in the Church itself, due to changed outlooks across time and life-stages. Quite a few blamed "circumstances" or their own negligence for the lapsed subscriptions, suggesting the continuing need for proactive follow-up on lapsers.

Subscriptions have not increased for more than a decade. Throughout most of its history, *Dialogue* (like similar journals) has suffered an annual nonrenewal rate of 10–20 percent, which must be replaced with new subscribers if the journal is to survive. It is only the time, energy, and initiative of our business director that have enabled *Dialogue* subscription levels to remain fairly stable (between 1,700 and 2,000) in recent years. The increasing online access to all such journals is likely to undermine even

further the appeal of printed copies, so it is a constant struggle even to maintain subscriptions, let alone increase them whenever possible.

When we get new subscribers, they tend to come from about the same sources as twenty years ago. Some 57 percent report having been referred by family members, relatives, or friends, compared to 61 percent in the earlier survey. This figure suggests the need for special marketing efforts with current subscribers to get them to help recruit friends and relatives.

Reader Satisfaction

Sixty-nine percent of our respondents claim to read half or more of each issue of *Dialogue*, but they don't share it with others as frequently as respondents did in 1984. At that time, only a third of the readers failed to share their copies of the journal with others; but now the figure is over half. That might mean that the more possessive subscribers are inadvertently forcing others to get their own subscriptions; however, that does not seem to be the case. Among married subscribers, only 44 percent of the men share their copies with one or more others (presumably including their wives), while 60 percent of the women share theirs.[8]

More than two-thirds of the respondents regard the content and editorial tone of the journal to be "objective and independent," while another 15 percent find that the tone and content seem to vary with the topic under discussion. Only 10 percent judged the tone "negative and hypercritical," but a near-matching 8 percent found it "bland and uncritical." This distribution of responses was very close to the same in the earlier survey, an interesting consistency in reader judgment across time. Those respondents who chose to amplify their choices with comments generally seemed to understand that tone and content are bound to vary across time and topic. Perceptions about tone and content, furthermore, did not vary much by age or education level. Church attendance did not influence the "objective" verdict very much, but the "negative and hypercritical" opinion was noticeably higher among those who attend LDS services regularly (12 percent) than among those who do not (2 percent).

A few readers felt strongly enough about tone and content to record personal peeves. These comments were far more likely to express irritation over negative and hypercritical elements perceived in the reading of *Dialogue* than over bland and uncritical qualities. Elaborations written in

for other questions, too (e.g., "what would you most want to change if you were editor," and "what would you try hardest to keep the same"), constantly stressed the importance of fairness, balance, openness to varied viewpoints, and the like, while also objecting to articles that seem negative and hypercritical about the Church. The latter objection occurred three or four times as often as comments calling for more pointed or "courageous" criticism of the Church. Aside from tone, the write-in responses also complained fairly often that some of the articles were too academic, technical, or over the heads of readers.[9]

Another indication of reader satisfaction is found in the responses to whether *Dialogue* "contributes to the enrichment of my personal religious or spiritual experience." A decisive 82 percent agreed, either strongly or somewhat, again an interesting consistency with the 89 percent in the 1984 survey. This feeling about *Dialogue*'s impact on spiritual life was not related to age, education, geographic location, or mission experience, but it was a little more likely among women than men and among regular church-goers. An unusually large number of respondents also wrote comments on this topic, the overwhelming majority being elaborations on the "agree" responses—some of them virtual "testimonies" about *Dialogue*'s effect on their spiritual growth. On the other hand, the main purpose for elaborating on a "disagree" response was to take issue with what seemed to be the *premise* of the question, namely that *Dialogue* was *supposed* to enrich personal spiritual experience. That is, disagreeing respondents were not particularly unhappy with *Dialogue* but simply did not think readers should expect a spiritual experience from it—only an intellectual one. Interestingly enough, this kind of comment came both from non-LDS (or ex-LDS) readers and from devoutly LDS readers, who simply thought readers should look elsewhere for their spiritual nourishment. Nearly half reported using *Dialogue* material, at least occasionally, in the Church classes they teach.

Preferences of *Dialogue* Readers in General

It is remarkable to see the stability of readers' preferences in *Dialogue* content across the past twenty years. When we compare their rank-ordering of "most" and "least" favorite topics then and now, the figures are almost identical. They still show rather strong preferences for articles on history, doctrine, and current social issues, though with some drop in the last category. They like personal essays, book reviews, and letters to the editor.

TABLE 1
Types of *Dialogue* Articles and Features Enjoyed Most

Topic/Feature	*Percentage of Respondents*	*Totals**
History	91	1,024
Doctrine	83	1,035
Current social issues	77	754
Personal essays	72	779
Book reviews	69	631
Letters to the editor	63	547
Science	55	696
Arts and culture	26	664
Fiction	22	910
Poetry	9	935

*Totals of those who responded one way or the other when asked for the three kinds of articles they liked most and the three kinds they liked least.

They look with considerably less favor on poetry, fiction, and articles dealing with the arts. (See Table 1.)

Two-thirds of the respondents, in 2005 as in 1984, prefer varied content rather than issues devoted entirely to one topic. However, 87 percent, the single strongest preference, is for issues containing small clusters of articles on a given theme or topic. At the same time, there appears to be some interest in future books made up of collections of articles on common topics or themes, taken from back issues of the journal. (Write-in suggestions especially identified history, doctrine, and social issues as favored topics for such anthologies.) There might be a marketing opportunity here for small print-runs of thematic books. Half of the readers said that they would buy such topical books (of reprinted articles), even if they could download their own copies of individual articles from the *Dialogue* DVD or website.

Other Mormon-Oriented Subscriptions

Readers of *Dialogue* read fairly broadly in other Mormon-related publications. Two-thirds (68 percent) reported subscribing to (or regularly

reading) the *Ensign* (compared to 77 percent in the earlier survey). Other literature published under LDS Church and/or BYU auspices, and consulted by our readers, include *BYU Studies* (29 percent vs. 34 percent earlier); *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* (17 percent); and *FARMS Review of Books* (13 percent). The last two, of course, were only just getting started twenty years ago.

In the "unsponsored" sector, the biggest overlap occurs with *Sunstone*, which is regularly read and/or subscribed to by 68 percent of our *Dialogue* readers (up from 60 percent in 1984). A fourth of our subscribers also get the *Journal of Mormon History* (25 percent, up from 20 percent earlier). Thus, *Dialogue* seems to have benefited mutually from our various collaborations with Sunstone and the Mormon History Association. Our readers also subscribe to the *Utah Historical Quarterly* (13 percent, down from 18 percent earlier), the *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* (9 percent, scarcely read earlier), *Irreantum* (the AML journal–9 percent, scarcely read earlier), and the electronic *FAIR Journal* (6 percent, nonexistent earlier). However, in the case of *Exponent II*, only 17 percent of our readers report subscribing, down from 43 percent in the earlier survey, a drop perhaps attributable to editorial difficulties in maintaining a regular publication schedule at *Exponent II*.

Besides the list of Mormon-related journals and magazines provided for readers to check off in responding to this question, the survey invited them also to write in lists of "Other" periodicals that they were regularly reading. Unfortunately, the question did not specify that it was referring to "Other" literature of a religious kind, so respondents listed an enormous variety of periodicals of all kinds, professional and popular, religious, political, social, literary, and even hobby-related. The religious periodicals they wrote in included some of the newer Mormon-related ones (e.g., *Mormon Historical Journal*) as well as non-Mormon (e.g., *Christianity Today*). A number of electronic journals or sites were also listed (e.g., *Meridian, Times & Seasons*). *Dialogue* readers are especially focused on religion, but clearly they are widely read in many other fields as well.

Readers Preferences: Variations by Age and Sex

Age Differences

Age and length of subscription are obviously somewhat related, so correlations of responses by subscriber longevity often track those related

TABLE 2
Percentages of *Dialogue* Content Preferences by Subscriber Age

Topic/Feature	*<30*	*31–40*	*41–50*	*51–60*	*>60*	*Number***
History	85	87	91	91	93	1,007
Doctrine	82	85	85	82	81	1,018
Current social issues	79	79	73	80	75	743
Personal essays	59	63	64	77	77	764*
Book reviews	50	51	65	64	79	617*
Letters to the editor	52	40	56	64	74	537*
Science	55	52	60	53	54	638
Arts and culture	25	43	23	23	23	650*
Fiction	32	27	28	20	18	896*
Poetry	7	12	8	6	10	917

* Statistically significant <.05 probability level

**Totals of those who responded one way or the other when asked for the three kinds of articles they liked most and the three kinds they liked least.

to age.[10] However, neither age nor subscription length produced many important differences in how respondents answered the survey questions. For example, age was not a factor in readers' perceptions about the tone and content of *Dialogue* or about the influence of the journal on their personal spiritual experience. In reader preferences, though, younger readers did not favor personal essays and book reviews as much as older readers did. The older the readers, the more likely they were to enjoy letters to the editor, but the less likely to enjoy fiction. Otherwise, age made little difference in such preferences. (See Table 2.)

A positive correlation appeared between age and the number of other religion-related periodicals to which readers subscribed—perhaps a simple function of financial resources. We wondered, however, if the *kind* of journal to which readers subscribed (besides *Dialogue*) might differ according to age. To examine this possibility, we first divided the other journals into (1) faith-promoting (*Ensign, Journal of Book of Mormon Studies, FARMS Review of Books,* and *FAIR Journal*; (2) neutral (*Journal of Mormon*

TABLE 3
Percentage of "Other" Subscriptions Correlated to Age*

Category of Subscription	*<30*	*31–40*	*41–50*	*51–60*	*>60*
Faith promoting only	36	25	15	17	12
Faith promoting and neutral	6	11	4	3	5
Faith promoting, neutral, and edgy combinations	38	45	56	57	63
Neutral only	2	2	2	1	2
Neutral and edgy	2	5	5	6	4
Edgy only	17	14	18	17	15
N (100%)	53	133	226	272	522

*All significant at the 0.0001 probability level

TABLE 4
***Dialogue* Content Preferences by Sex**

Topic/Feature	*Percentage*		
	Men	*Women*	*Number***
History	94	81	1,024*
Doctrine	85	74	1,035*
Current social issues	72	86	754*
Personal essays	65	86	779*
Book reviews	73	57	631*
Letters to the editor	66	58	547
Science	65	27	696*
Arts and culture	18	50	664*
Fiction	16	38	910*
Poetry	5	20	935*

*Significant variation at the p = 0.0001 level.
**The questionnaire asked respondents to identify the three kinds of articles they liked most and the three kinds they liked least.

History, Utah Historical Quarterly, Irreantum, and *AMCAP Journal*); and (3) "edgy," meaning somewhat adventurous intellectually (e.g., *Sunstone* and feminist publications). This rank-ordered trichotomy was definitely correlated with age, but in a surprising way. The older the respondents, the *less* likely they were to subscribe only to periodicals in the faith-promoting category (see Table 3, row 1), and the *more* likely they were to subscribe to all three kinds including those in the "edgy" category (row 3). Otherwise, age made little difference.

Our younger readers were somewhat less likely to live in Utah, more likely to live in the northeastern United States, and more likely to be female than were older respondents. They were also far more likely to have responded to the questionnaire electronically and to have visited the *Dialogue* website frequently. These differences by age suggest that a different "profile" for *Dialogue* readers will emerge after another twenty years.

Differences by Sex

Sex is more closely correlated to respondent preferences than is age. Women seem to share men's strong interest in history, doctrine, and book reviews, but not by such large margins; they are much less interested in science. However, women are far more interested than men in personal essays, fiction, poetry, and the arts, and even more interested than men in current social issues. (See Table 4.)

Men and women were not very different in their judgments about the tone and content of *Dialogue*. By large margins, both sexes found the articles generally objective and independent; but men were twice as likely as women (11 percent vs. 6 percent) to find *Dialogue* hypercritical and negative. Nor did men and women differ much in their belief (by 80 percent or more) that *Dialogue* has contributed to their personal spiritual experience, but women were somewhat less likely to use its articles in preparing Church lessons or talks, perhaps, we hypothesized, because their teaching assignments more often involve youth or children. As for their tastes in other LDS-related literature (faith-promoting, neutral, or edgy), men and women did not differ to any significant extent.

Finally, women were more likely than men (a third vs. a quarter) to have been short-term subscribers (< 4 years), and a little more likely to have let their subscriptions lapse (41 percent vs. 32 percent). Both men and women are likely to read half or more of each issue, but women were more likely to share their copies with others (53 percent vs. 41 percent).

TABLE 5
Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services, All Respondents, LDS and Others
N = 1,307

Frequency of Attendance	*Percentage*
Weekly or more	67
Most weeks	11
Subtotal:	78
Occasionally	7
Rarely or never	16

Women are more likely than men (two thirds vs. half) to have first learned about *Dialogue* from personal contacts.

Religious Commitment and Its Implications for *Dialogue* Readers

Basic Indicators of Religious Commitment

Fully 90 percent of our readers are Latter-day Saints, mostly "lifers" but including 11 percent who are converts. The 1984 figure was 94 percent. Some 6–7 percent of respondents described themselves as no longer affiliated with the LDS Church. Most of these are now affiliated with other denominations. Only seven readers (not 7 percent) are members of the Community of Christ (formerly Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints).

Of today's respondents, 67 percent attend LDS services every week and another 11 percent attend "most weeks." This total of 78 percent is down from the 88 percent in 1984 for all respondents, LDS and otherwise. Also, 61 percent of today's LDS readers are returned missionaries, a question not asked in the earlier survey. Interestingly, however, 41 percent of even the non-Mormons (probably former Mormons) also served LDS missions. (See Table 5.)

Today's *Dialogue* readers are somewhat less docile than earlier readers in their attitude toward the LDS Church and its truth claims, though the differences are perhaps less than we might expect from the publicity given to dissenters in recent years. When asked what a Church member

TABLE 6
Preferred Action When Disagreeing with a Church Policy

Response	*Percentage*
Accept on faith and comply	9
Express feelings to leaders, but comply	30
Dissent privately but avoid open conflict	37
Gather support from others and petition leaders	7
Other responses, including mixtures of above	17
Total (100%)	1,166

should do "when faced with a Church policy or program with which he or she does not agree," 9 percent responded that a member should accept the Church position and try to comply (compared to 10 percent twenty years ago). Thirty percent agreed with the next response category: "express your feelings to leaders but then go along," down from 37 percent in 1984. The total of these two categories together ("accept and comply," plus "express disagreement but comply"), produces a category that might be called "supportive" (39 percent), down from 47 percent in the 1984 survey. The other categories, indicative of more serious dissent ("dissent privately" and "gather support from others"), are higher than the same responses in 1984: a combined 28 percent then, 44 percent now. Written comments usually said something like "it depends on the situation" or were mixtures of two or more of the four standard responses. (See Table 6.)

The past twenty years have also seen some decline in *Dialogue* respondents' acceptance of the traditional LDS claims about the Book of Mormon. The 1984 survey asked whether the Book of Mormon is "authentic in any sense"; 94 percent said "yes." The figure from the current survey is also 94 percent but in a more complicated way. Both surveys asked the "yes" respondents to identify "in what sense" they regarded the book as "authentic." Interestingly enough, more responded to this question about the kind of "authenticity" than had responded "yes" in the first instance, suggesting that some of those who said "no" still found the Book of Mormon "authentic" by some definition. To accommodate respon-

TABLE 7
Beliefs about the Book of Mormon

Interview question: Do you regard the Book of Mormon as authentic in any sense? If so, how?

Response	*Nature of Authenticity*	*Percent of Total*
Yes	Literal historical document	36
Yes	History doubtful, teachings divine in origin	23
Yes	Moral teachings sound and pleasing to God	13
Yes	Not divine but authentic 19th-century literature	15
Yes	Authentic in other ways (including combinations)	7
No	Not authentic in any sense	6

dents who said "no" but then identified the Book of Mormon as authentic in one of the categories, we reclassified some of those responses, bringing the "yes"total to 94 percent.

The interesting shift, however, is the *kind* of authenticity attributed to the Book of Mormon. In 1984, 63 percent gave the orthodox answer that the Book of Mormon is a literal historical record; the current figure is 36 percent (41 percent for LDS only). In other words, the percentage of those who accept the literal historicity of the Book of Mormon has decreased; current respondents are more likely to have a less literal understanding while still accepting the book's authenticity. Twenty-three percent of current respondents agreed with the statement: "Its historicity might be doubtful, but its theology and moral teachings are of divine origin." Only 14 percent had checked that answer in 1984, a noteworthy difference. In 1984, 77 percent of respondents were in the first two categories combined (literal historical record plus perhaps not historical but with divine theology and moral teachings). Now the combined figure is 59 percent. The next category was: Its moral teachings are sound and pleasing to God (10 percent then, 13 percent now), followed by the fourth category of authenticity: not divine but rather an authentic nineteenth-century product (7 percent then, 15 percent now). (See Table 7.) Another 7 percent of current respondents agreed that it was authentic "in other

TABLE 8
Church Attendance by Book of Mormon Beliefs*

Attendance Frequency	*Book Is Literal History*	*Teachings of Divine Origin*	*Other*
Weekly or more	92	81	43
Most weeks	5	12	16
Less often	3	7	41
N (100 percent) =	449	287	425

*All significant at the 0.0001 probability level

ways"—mainly restatements or minor qualifications of the four basic choices.

No doubt the outpouring of scholarly literature on the Book of Mormon during the past twenty years (whether apologetic or critical) has influenced these figures. Some 70 percent of our readers acknowledged that such literature has influenced them "a great deal" or "somewhat" in their views on the Book of Mormon. The survey asked readers who answered "no" (did not consider the Book of Mormon "authentic in any sense") to offer their own explanations for the book's origin and contents. The written responses often conflated these two issues, but the most common explanation was Joseph Smith's own imagination, while the second most common response was, in effect, "I have no idea." Nonbelievers tended to explain the book's contents as nineteenth-century ideas taken from Smith's environment, fraud, or plagiarism (though with no clear idea about the specific source of the plagiarism).

As indicated in Table 8, however, a more "relaxed" definition of Book of Mormon "authenticity," from literal history to simply divinely inspired scripture, is apparently not associated with a significant decline in Church activity. Attendance weekly or more often is characteristic of 81 percent even of those who hold this less orthodox view. Combining "weekly or more" attendance with those who attend "most weeks" yields a total of 93 percent of readers in this category ("divine origin"), virtually the same as for those holding to the traditional "literal history"view (97 percent combined). Indeed, a majority (59 percent) even of those who at-

TABLE 9
Dialogue Respondents on a Composite Scale of Religious Commitment

Commitment Level	*Percent of Total*	*Frequency*
1 Least	7	83
2	14	159
3	32	363
4	22	246
5 Most	25	277
Totals	100	1,128

tribute no divine origin to the Book of Mormon claim regular Church attendance.

Religious Commitment and Demographic Variations

Religious commitment might be defined in many different ways, but our questionnaire permits us to define it only operationally and in terms of only three components: Church attendance, acceptance of Church policies, and beliefs about the Book of Mormon. However, rather than attempting to measure the impact of each of these three commitment indicators separately, we have combined them into an additive and scaled index to create a composite *Scale of Religious Commitment* that cumulatively takes into account the respective weights of each indicator. Thus, the more "orthodox" a person is on each indicator, the higher will be his or her religious commitment score.[11] Table 9 displays the distribution of respondents on this scale.

Measured on this scale, a third of our respondents (32 percent) occupy a middle category of religious commitment, but half are in the two highest categories (total of 47 percent). We discovered, furthermore, that this general distribution is only slightly affected by some demographic factors, but not nearly so much by age as one might suspect. Table 10 shows that religious commitment rises in about the same pattern in all age groups (columns). The youngest age group has the largest percentage of any groups reaching the "most" committed category (37 percent), but otherwise there is really very little difference across these distributions by age.

Education level, sex, and marital status made little difference in reli-

TABLE 10
Percentages of Religious Commitment by Age*

Commitment Level	*<30*	*31–40*	*41–50*	*51–60*	*>60*
1 Least	11	8	11	9	5
2	6	9	12	14	17
3	30	40	33	30	31
4	17	19	21	22	23
5 Most	37	25	22	25	24
N (100%) =	54	141	209	246	469

* Statistically significant at the p = .051 probability level

gious commitment. Residents of Utah and of the midwestern states appeared in the two highest levels of religious commitment more often than did readers from other areas. Not surprisingly, LDS members, and especially returned missionaries, were the most likely to appear at the highest levels of religious commitment, while non-LDS, reaffiliated, and ex-LDS readers were most likely to appear at the lowest levels—an obvious artifact of the particular operational definition and measurement of religious commit- ment used in this particular study.

Influence of Religious Commitment on Reader Preferences

Religious commitment obviously matters a great deal in the lives of LDS members generally, but applying our Scale of Religious Commitment to various questionnaire responses revealed little or no difference in many of the responses. For example, in respondent preferences for topics in *Dialogue* articles (history, doctrine, science, etc.), religious commitment did not distinguish much among readers. In Table 11, however, reader attitudes toward *Dialogue's* "tone and content" were correlated with religious commitment. At least half of the most highly committed experienced *Dialogue* as "objective and independent," but a fourth of this group found it "hypercritical and negative." In contrast, three-fourths of the least highly committed found the journal "objective and independent," while a fifth found it "uncritical and bland." In general, the "objective and inde-

TABLE 11
Perceptions of *Dialogue* Tone and Content by Religious Commitment

Perceptions of Dialogue	*Religious Commitment Scale by Percentage*				
	1 Least	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5 Most*
Hypercritical and negative	1	1	2	10	25
Objective and independent	74	67	78	70	54
Uncritical and bland	20	21	6	2	1
Depends on the topic	5	11	14	18	20
N (100%) =	76	136	339	228	243

*All significant at the 0.0001 probability level

pendent" verdict declined with increased religious commitment. However, this trend was offset somewhat by the positive correlation between religious commitment and "depends on the topic."

As already observed earlier, readers in general find that *Dialogue* contributes to their spiritual and religious experience, a perception that increases with religious commitment, but more in the middle ranges of commitment than at the highest level. The same general pattern appears in using *Dialogue* lessons and talks. Not quite half of the most highly committed report such uses of *Dialogue*, but more than half in the middle ranges do so, while very few at the lowest end of the religious commitment scale do. This pattern suggests the interesting implication that appreciation for the spiritual contribution made by *Dialogue* to religious life is even greater among readers with moderate-to-strong religious commitment than among the most strongly committed.

A certain wariness about resorting to "extra-curricular" reading material among the most highly committed can be seen also in their relative lack of exposure to the recent scholarly and scientific literature on the Book of Mormon, which most of them report has influenced them "slightly or not at all" in their understanding of that book of scripture. In

TABLE 12
Use of Other Mormon-Related Literature by Church Commitment*

Category of Other Literature	*Religious Commitment Scale by Percentage*				
	1 Least	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5 Most*
Faith-promoting only	9	6	12	15	30
Faith-promoting and neutral	3	1	2	8	10
Faith-promoting, neutral, and edgy combinations	38	33	65	70	57
Neutral	3	4	3	0	1
Neutral and edgy	11	11	6	1	2
Edgy only	36	45	13	7	2
N (100%) =	64	136	343	240	266

*All significant at the 0.0001 probability level

contrast, 52 percent of the least highly committed report "a great deal" of influence from such literature.

The same wariness among the most highly committed can be seen in their "other" religious subscriptions. They were the most likely to subscribe exclusively to periodicals of the "faith-promoting" variety, while the least highly committed were, as expected, the most likely to take "edgy" journals. Actually, however, most *Dialogue* readers were very eclectic in their preferences for this "other" literature. The largest category of choice among the entire range of religiosity was the middle or "most mixed" combination. (See Table 12.)

Implications of the 2005 Survey

Our readers are (perhaps not surprisingly) quite homogeneous in their intellectual outlooks and reading tastes, as the description of the "modal" *Dialogue* reader shows. Demographic differences, such as age, sex, education level, region of residence, and even frequency of Church at-

tendance generally make relatively little difference in the intellectual outlooks of our readers.[12] Compared with the 1984 survey, this fairly homogeneous readership seems to have remained quite stable for decades. It might therefore be considered our *base constituency*. Any strategy adopted to increase circulation of the journal should perhaps look first and foremost at new potential subscribers with a similar profile. Any broadening of that profile should probably be sought mainly at the margins. Marketing efforts should always take account of the likely impact of any promotional or editorial strategy upon that base constituency, lest outreach efforts to very different kinds of readers jeopardize the loyalty of the existing base.

The relative homogeneity of this base constituency includes a fairly devout attitude toward Mormonism, though perhaps more of a "Liahona" type of Mormon than an "Iron Rod" type.[13] Elements of this attitude include embracing the essential divinity of the Book of Mormon, if not its literal historicity; attending church regularly; and generally supporting—or at least accepting—questionable Church policies and programs, even if with reservations. This outlook, however, does not condone actions or publications that are perceived as attacking the Church or scorning its truth-claims. A rejection of the negative and hypercritical came through again and again in the open-ended comments written by respondents on their questionnaires—and at a far higher frequency than the opposite kind of comment—namely, complaints that *Dialogue* had lost its "critical edge" and become too bland.

Readers are not looking to *Dialogue* as a substitute for the *Ensign*, to which the great majority of them already subscribe; but neither are they seeking a vehicle to reform the Church or update its doctrines and policies. Our readers expect and want treatments of difficult and controversial issues in LDS history, doctrine, and social life, but they want those treatments to be balanced, if not wholly "objective," and they want more than one side of a controversy presented, preferably in the same issue of the journal. This characterization comes very close to a similar conclusion about the 1984 survey and for most of the same reasons, which, in turn, seems a close reflection of what Eugene England and his associates had in mind when they founded *Dialogue* forty years ago.[14] We have, in other words, a tradition. *Dialogue* also has an established role in the broader LDS culture, described in positive terms even in the quasi-official *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*.[15]

Unlike 1984, however, our subscriber base is now heavily skewed toward an older age. One reason, of course, is the aging of the founding generation. Another might be the loss of potential subscribers from the younger and middle age groups, who became wary about *Dialogue* and similar publications after admonitions by conservative Church leaders, starting in the early 1980s, became more pointed and sterner by the end of that decade.[16] A third reason might be the more critical edge that became apparent in a few *Dialogue* articles during the 1990s and/or an inadequate program for maintaining and building subscriptions in the same general period. The print-run for issues by the end of 1987 had exceeded 5,000 (not all of which would have been for subscribers).[17] About 1990, subscriptions began to fall and, by the end of that decade, stood at less than 2,000, where they have remained, more or less, ever since.

The younger age groups have been disproportionately affected by this drop-off. At present, only 4 percent of *Dialogue* subscribers are thirty or younger, compared to double that figure twenty years ago. Even those in the 30–40 age group account for only 12 percent (vs. 30 percent earlier). Subscribers in their 40s account for a fifth of our total (19 percent). Taken together, all of these younger age groups (20s, 30s, 40s) total 38 percent of our subscribers. The rest are over fifty. It is not at all clear why *Dialogue* has not been attracting younger readers with the same success that it attracted their parents' generation. There seems no reason to believe that younger readers have different tastes and preferences from those of older readers in kinds of articles (see Table 2) or that younger readers are looking for more "edgy" or adventurous articles (Table 4).

Somehow the students and other younger people among our potential subscribers must be attracted to *Dialogue* in larger numbers and convinced of the need to become and to remain as committed subscribers. They are crucially important to the survival of *Dialogue*, not only in the immediate future, but also because, in the long run, they are likely to become the well-educated and affluent supporters who will be able to keep *Dialogue* going as major donors, as editors, and as members of the board of directors. They need to take to heart the realization that without them and their resources, there simply will be no *Dialogue* to provide the rich trove of literature that they and their children will be expecting to depend upon.

Like other publications in the LDS "unsponsored sector," *Dialogue* will always have to struggle to enlarge its subscriber base or even to main-

tain it. In this effort, minimizing subscriber attrition is at least as important as enlisting new subscribers. A comparison of lapsed subscribers with current ones indicates that the lapsers are somewhat more likely to be female, single, and middle-aged; to be reading less from any LDS-related publications; and less likely to find *Dialogue* articles "objective." However, the "reasons" given by lapsed subscribers when asked to write them down did not, on the whole, reflect dissatisfaction with the journal as much as lack of time or money, their own negligence in failing to renew, or sometimes communication failures with the business office.

As for enlisting new subscribers, the questionnaire shows the importance of referrals from friends and relatives, a source that has consistently brought in about 60 percent of new subscribers. Ads in newspapers and magazines have never proved very effective, but relationships with *Sunstone* and the *Journal of Mormon History* prove to be good sources of potential new subscribers. For *Dialogue* to survive to the half-century mark, it will need the subscriptions and support of a lot more people, especially younger ones, from the "market niche" already reflected in its current subscriber base and from any others who see the value in what *Dialogue* offers. The board of directors and the editorial team, for their part, will need to remain constantly alert to cultivate and maintain a public image for *Dialogue* that bespeaks its tradition of religious and intellectual integrity, independence, openness, and balance.

Notes

1. Armand L. Mauss, John R. Tarjan, and Martha D. Esplin, "The Unfettered Faithful: An Analysis of the *Dialogue* Subscribers Survey," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 27–65.

2. Some of that history has been provided in three important articles by Devery S. Anderson: "A History of *Dialogue*, Part One: The Early Years, 1965–71," 32, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 15–66; "A History of *Dialogue*, Part Two: Struggle toward Maturity," 33, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 1–96; and "A History of *Dialogue*, Part Three: The Utah Experience," 35, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 1–70. Anderson promises additional installments of this history in the near future.

3. A general tabulation of the numerical results from this latest survey appears on www.dialoguejournal.com, "Survey Results" (in the left-hand side box).

4. The research team for this survey consisted of the three authors. The

questionnaire was slightly modified from the 1984 version. The conduct and management of all aspects of the preparation and mailing of the questionnaire, together with the follow-up procedure, and the processing and formatting of the incoming data, were all handled by Professor Robert W. Reynolds, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Weber State University. We are deeply grateful to the university, the department, and many of the department staff for their sponsorship and support of this project. John D. Remy, a graduate student in religious studies at Long Beach State University and a systems analyst in the Division of Undergraduate Education at the University of California-Irvine, prepared the electronic version of the questionnaire and processed the incoming data before transmitting them to Professor Reynolds. His role, too, was vital in this project. Armand L. Mauss, professor emeritus of sociology, Washington State University, who had directed the 1984 survey, provided general coordination for this project and wrote much of the final text for this article.

5. On questions calling for answers from all respondents, non- response rates on each question ranged from minuscule (much of the time) to 14 percent. The totals reported in many tables do not add up to the original 1,332, since not all respondents answered every question.

6. Note that statistical significance refers to the probability that a certain distribution of figures in a table could have occurred by chance. The higher that probability, the lower the statistical significance. By convention, the highest tolerable probability is .05, or five chances in a hundred. This kind of significance is different from substantive significance, which refers to how important a finding is in some sense.

7. As contrasted with "average," the "modal" respondent is the kind that responded most frequently.

8. The *Dialogue* website was launched in 2002, and its use cannot be compared to any earlier date. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents reported that they "rarely or never" visit the website, and only 5 percent do so at least monthly. Such an uneven distribution may simply result from the skewed age distribution of *Dialogue* respondents. During the past year or so, however, the *Dialogue* website has been greatly expanded with new features and other content, and the raw number of visits rose from 6,165 in April 2005 to more than 9,000 in April 2006. Purchases through the website regularly constitute from 20% to 25% of annual *Dialogue* sales. Many who are not actual subscribers to the journal seem to be seeking copies of selected articles or entire back issues, as well as new subscriptions, DVDs, and other products.

9. Copies of the written comments for these and most other questions

on the survey can be obtained electronically by request to the Business Office at http://www.dialoguejournal.com/. The concerns, criticisms, kudos, and suggestions in these comments are again remarkably consistent with those in the 1984 survey. Mauss, Tarjan, and Esplin, "The Unfettered Faithful," 54–65.

10. The close correlation of age and length of subscription is indicated by the statistics gamma (.68) and r (.59).

11. Various forms of these indices are common in the social science literature; the 1987 article reports the application of a fairly simple one in Tables 5–9. The one used here is somewhat more complex and refined. For details, contact Robert Reynolds at rreynolds@weber.edu.

12. Church attendance is normally a variable that influences opinion and taste in the United States. Our statistical analyses have generally been limited to bivariate relationships: one dependent variable vs. one independent variable. For a number of our dependent variables of interest, we constructed some multivariate regression equations, but they yielded little additional information or predictive power beyond the bivariate tables already presented. For more information, contact Rob Reynolds.

13. The terms come from Richard D. Poll's classic article, "What the Church Means to People Like Me," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2, no. 4 (Winter 1967), 107–17.

14. Mauss, Tarjan, and Esplin, "The Unfettered Faithful," 40; Anderson, "History of *Dialogue*, Part One," 42ff.

15. David J. Cherrington, "Societies and Organizations," *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1992), 3:1389, reported that *Dialogue*, like a number of other unsponsored LDS cultural institutions, serves "at least six important functions for Church members and/or the Church." These included "increased affiliation and social support . . . an opportunity to learn and distribute new insights about theology . . . historical events, and current practices . . . add to the collection of Mormon literature . . . in artistic or scholarly ways . . . serve as an outlet where individuals with unorthodox beliefs can share their questions, concerns, and doubts . . . [and] promote change [such as] the elimination of racism and sexism."

16. See, e.g., Dallin H. Oaks, "Alternate Voices," *Ensign*, May 1989, 27–30. See also Mauss's reflections on this article, "Alternate Voices . . . The Calling and Its Implications," *Sunstone*, Issue 76 (April 1976): 7–10.

17. Anderson, "History of *Dialogue*, Part Three," 60.

With this and the following article Dialogue *continues its special series on the Mormon experience and identity outside the usual Anglo-American cultural realm, under the supervision of guest editor Ethan Yorgason.*

How Missionaries Entered East Germany: The 1988 Monson-Honecker Meeting

Raymond M. Kuehne

On Thursday, March 30, 1989, eight missionaries and their new mission president, Wolfgang Paul, were driven from Hamburg, West Germany, to the German Democratic Republic (GDR). They expected a delay of several hours at the border but were amazed when the guards waved them through without the usual search of the cars. President Paul said, "After we crossed the border our joy was beyond description. President Schütze[1] could hardly contain himself. He honked the horn, blinked the headlights, shouted and cried for joy because after fifty years missionaries were again in his country."[2] Two of the missionaries were left that day in East Berlin, two in Leipzig, two in Dresden, and two in Zwickau. They were the first of twenty to enter the GDR over the next month. Prior to their entry, local members had served full-time or part-time missions, but the scope of their activities had been severely restricted, and only a few convert baptisms had taken place each year. The new missionaries began immediately to meet with members' friends. Three convert baptisms were performed in Dresden on Sunday, and a total of 569 took place in the last nine months of 1989.

Two months later, on May 26, ten young men from the GDR were

driven to the West German border where a long line of cars awaited the usual inspection. A guard noted the occupants' special passports and motioned for them to proceed directly to the gate. Passports were quickly stamped, the gate opened, and the group proceeded toward Frankfurt, from which they would fly to the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah.[3]

Why did the border open so smoothly for those two groups? The answer is found in a historic meeting in East Berlin on October 28, 1988, when Erich Honecker, chairman of the GDR's State Council (Staatsrat) and General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (SUD), said to President Thomas S. Monson, "Your requests are approved." In that one sentence, Chairman Honecker agreed to several requests that the Church had conveyed in earlier conversations and letters. President Schütze described them, "Missionaries in, missionaries out, more buildings, and more youth activities. [They] were the main four points. We didn't want much, and missionaries were the most important."[4]

This article details the events of 1988 that led to that meeting. However, some prior history is necessary. East Germany's ruling party was predominantly a Communist party with a different name. Based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, it viewed churches as former collaborators with governments that had suppressed Communism and oppressed the common man (workers and farmers). The party's goal was the creation of a future Communist society without churches. Since this goal could not be implemented immediately, the GDR's constitution provided (at least on paper) for religious freedom, the equality of all religious organizations and the separation of church and state, principles intended to eliminate church influence in political affairs until churches disappeared.

Faced with life under a totalitarian government, the LDS Church emphasized the GDR's Constitutional promise of religious freedom and attempted, with limited success, to achieve the same legal status held by the larger churches.[5] Later, the Church also began to emphasize its traditional noninvolvement in political affairs. Its position concerning the separation of church and state distinguished it from the predominant Lutheran (*evangelisch*) Church,[6] which criticized the government on a broad range of social and political issues.

While the GDR's activities succeeded in reducing the number of practicing Christians, party leaders eventually recognized that churches would not disappear in their lifetime. In a meeting with Lutheran leaders

on March 6, 1978, Honecker acknowledged that churches had a legitimate role in a socialist state. Among other concessions, he approved the construction of ten new Lutheran churches in localities where none had previously existed.[7] Given the principle of equality of all churches, that decision became a factor in the government's suggestion the same year that the LDS Church build a temple in the GDR. Construction of new meetinghouses followed shortly thereafter.

Until 1969, the 5,000 LDS members in the GDR had been the responsibility of mission presidents who resided in West Berlin or Hamburg. In 1969, the Church established a separate Dresden Mission to oversee activities in the GDR. Its president, Henry Burkhardt, had served as a counselor to the previous mission presidents since 1952. In 1972, he was permitted for the first time to leave the GDR to attend general conference in Salt Lake City. During each subsequent annual visit, President Spencer W. Kimball told him that political solutions to problems such as those he faced in the GDR were generally ineffective—that the world changed only when individuals changed. President Kimball said, "If you want to see a change in East Germany, it must begin with you personally because you are the leader of the Saints there. You must befriend the Communists, which means you must have a change of heart. You must change your whole outlook and attitude. You cannot hold any grudges against them." Burkhardt, who had been harassed and jailed by his government, said, "It took a long time, from 1973 until 1976, before I came to realize that Communists were also children of our Heavenly Father, and that I should deal with them accordingly, in a friendly manner. From that time forth, miracle after miracle occurred in the history of the Church in this country. They became friendlier and more receptive to me, as a representative of the Church."[8]

In 1975 Elder Monson dedicated the country and prayed for divine intervention in governmental affairs: "Cause that Thy Holy Spirit may dwell with those who preside, that their hearts may be touched and that they may make those decisions which would help in the advancement of thy work."[9] Three years later, the government suggested that a temple be built. It was officially announced in October 1982 and dedicated in June 1985.[10] Stakes were organized in Freiberg (1982) and Leipzig (1984). The Church's next priority was to obtain permission for missionaries to enter the GDR and for its young members to serve missions abroad. Those am-

bitious goals could be achieved only with the full support of Chairman Honecker.

On February 2, 1988, almost nine months prior to the October meeting with the chairman, President Monson wrote in his journal, "I am happy that a breakthrough seems to be in the offing pertaining to having a limited number of full-time young elders from the West serve as missionaries in [the GDR]."[11] His journal entry did not give a reason for that optimism, and political developments within the GDR at that time could be seen more as a reason for pessimism. However, the plan that led to the meeting with Honecker appears to have been built upon the events of late 1987 and early 1988 summarized below.

During the night of November 24–25, 1987, the GDR's secret police entered and searched the Zionskirche, a Lutheran church in East Berlin, confiscated papers and copying machines, and imprisoned a few individuals. The Zionskirche had allowed some of its members to use a basement room for a library, seminars, and other activities related to "environmental and peace" issues with financial support from a small West German political party. The group also distributed a newspaper critical of government policies. Following the raid, the government took action against a few lay members of Lutheran organizations and warned all churches to control their political activities. An official in the Secretariat for Religious Affairs later described the atmosphere of that time as a return to the 1950s and said that "a new style in party directives left no room for negotiation and conversation." Honecker told the Secretary for Religious Affairs, Klaus Gysi, to "solve the problem" by ending discussions with churches and, instead, "instruct, forbid and threaten" them.[12]

As events following the Zionskirche raid unfolded, Jürgen Warnke, legal counsel to the Church's Frankfurt regional office, consulted with Manfred Wünsche, a private GDR lawyer who assisted the Church on legal matters. Warnke then wrote to President Hans B. Ringger, a Swiss citizen and counselor in the Europe Area Presidency on January 4, 1988. Warnke said that a degree of euphoria had been growing within the churches in the GDR over the possibility of social reforms, but the government was now sending strong signals that the limits of acceptable activity by churches and their organizations had been breached and must be restored. Warnke said, "Secretary Gysi has reconfirmed the government's basic church policy, but has emphasized that church organizations were expected to operate within those bounds in order to avoid serious conse-

quences." He agreed with Wünsche "that we must be more disciplined and not allow our own euphoria over our accomplishments to lead to violation of the limits placed upon us by the state."[13]

A Strategy to Approach Chairman Honecker

It appears that Church leaders came to see the crackdown against other churches as an opportune time to bring their requests to Chairman Honecker. The strategy was to emphasize the Church's traditional policy of noninvolvement in internal political affairs and to distinguish itself from the churches involved in political dissent. This strategy was coordinated with the Church's two major contacts within the GDR, attorney Manfred Wünsche and Günther Behncke, a division leader in the Secretariat for Religious Affairs. The secretariat was attached to the Council of Ministers and coordinated church issues. It had no operating authority and could only make recommendations, but it had considerable influence because everyone knew that important decisions regarding religious matters were made by the Chairman of the State Council, Erich Honecker. Therefore, in a matter as unprecedented as allowing missionaries from the West to enter the GDR, or for GDR youth to leave for missions abroad, the chairman's agreement was essential and had to be obtained before other officials raised objections.

Five weeks after Warnke's letter to Ringger, Burkhardt met with Behncke in the latter's office. During a discussion about an information brochure that the Church had submitted for approval several months earlier, Burkhardt told Behncke that the Church "operated in accordance with distinct principles concerning the relationship between church and state and required its members to do the same. Anything that was not consistent with these principles and teachings of the gospel has no place in the Church." In response, Behncke said, "Secretary Gysi would find it appropriate and helpful if the Church would express its position on this matter and how the members understand their rights and opportunities as citizens." He suggested that this information be conveyed personally to the secretary in a birthday greeting and added to the proposed information brochure.[14]

The suggested new text became the last three pages of a 26-page brochure published that year as *Die Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage stellt sich vor* ("The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Introduces Itself"). Similar text would appear later in the official *Erklärung der*

Präsidentschaft der Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage in der DDR ("Statement of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the GDR"), which was sent to Honecker prior to the October meeting. The drafting of the *Erklärung,* hereafter referred to as the "Statement," will be discussed below.[15]

The birthday greeting to Secretary Gysi began with expressions of appreciation for "improvements in the relationship between state and church" and for the "church building program, so visibly presented in the beautiful Freiberg Temple and the completed or soon to be completed meeting houses in Freiberg, Leipzig, Dresden, and Zwickau." Regarding the Church's relationship to the state, the letter to Gysi stated:

> The position of the Church in relationship to secular authority always has been clear and distinct, . . . to respect and support that government, which secures to us the right of religious freedom and freedom of conscience. The members of the Church [in the GDR] understand very well that they have the opportunity to practice their religion, develop their individual personalities enjoy the blessings of the gospel, and live in accordance with Christian principles. . . . We do not support a connection between church authority and political influence. Therefore, we do not routinely take positions on current political events. Instead, the Church teaches and challenges its members in the GDR and throughout the world to become engaged in public affairs, to stand for freedom and right and to encourage the good in every form. We see significant similarities in your and our view of the absolute separation between state and church and in the equal treatment of all churches and religious organizations.[16]

I have found no written record of Gysi's response. Instead, on April 18, 1988, Burkhardt wrote directly to Honecker and requested an opportunity for President Monson, Elder Russell M. Nelson, and local leaders to meet with him in October.[17] The short letter did not include any of the specific church-state issues contained in the letter to the Secretary. The meeting's only stated purpose was to thank Honecker "for the benefits associated with the implementation of the church building program, for the freedom to practice our religion according to the principles of our faith, and to discuss current problems of our time." The chairman responded five weeks later. He said he was "pleased to have an exchange of opinions with you and the other named gentlemen, which will give us the opportunity to discuss citizens' requests and other current problems."[18]

President Schütze emphasized the importance of approaching Honecker directly. He said, "We were told later by government officials,

that if we had gone through normal government channels, we would never have been successful."[19] In the course of several interviews, Günther Behncke described how the Church managed to reach Honecker directly, without going through "normal channels." Manfred Wünsche had worked previously with Hans Ringger on legal matters. At the request of President Monson, Ringger now urged Wünsche to find ways to allow missionaries to enter and leave the GDR. Wünsche brought this request to Behncke's attention in early January, 1988. The two of them discussed informally how this could be done. "Unofficially, we considered if it was possible or even thinkable, and we discussed how we could present it in a manner that Honecker would be agreeable." Although neither man had direct ties to Honecker, Wünsche's previous legal work for highly placed GDR officials, including sensitive family matters, provided him with options that might be used to bring ideas to Honecker without alerting officials who could raise obstacles to the proposals. Behncke said that Wünsche soon reported, "I have found a way to reach Honecker." While he did not ask to know the details, Behncke concluded that Wünsche made contact with Honecker's wife, Margot, because he had previously handled issues involving Honecker's divorce from his first wife. (Margot Honecker was also the GDR's secretary of public education [*Volksbildung*] at this time.) In any event, Behncke and Wünsche consulted with Church officials and arranged for their requests to reach Honecker directly but unofficially.[20]

As noted above, the formal letter from President Burkhardt to Erich Honecker was very brief. In a 1991 interview, Behncke added further details:

> Of course, the [GDR] Presidency, Manfred Wünsche, and I knew that the purpose of the meeting concerned specific issues: continuation of the building of meeting houses and the sending and receiving of missionaries. But we couldn't jump into that immediately. We had to proceed in a political-tactical manner, and this was handled excellently by the Presidency, in that they first asked to meet with the Chairman to thank him for the fact that Mormons in this country could operate with the same rights as the Catholic and Lutheran churches. And that was an honest expression of thanks, because it was not the case in all countries that the Mormons had equal rights with other churches.[21]

However, while the letter was brief, Honecker already had been informed about the Church's wishes and had signaled his agreement, not only to the meeting but to the requests. Otherwise, Wünsche would never

have recommended that a letter be sent. As Behncke put it, "Why would Honecker meet with them if he couldn't say yes to their requests?" But Behncke and Wünsche not only kept their informal contact with Honecker confidential, they also handled the formal letter in a comparable manner. Not even Gysi, Behnke's superior, was aware that the letter had been sent. When the request became known, some officials said that Honecker shouldn't meet directly with Monson. According to Behncke, they "felt the meeting should be with the third ranking man, the president of the Volkskammer [the lower house of Parliament], Horst Sindermann, a man of integrity. But he couldn't make decisions concerning the wishes of the Mormons." At that point, Behncke briefed Gysi on the matter and advised him to ignore the complaints, since Honecker had already written, "Agreed, EH" on the letter. Behncke said Gysi just grinned when he learned what had been accomplished without his knowledge.[22]

The Official Statement and the Church's Requests

Two important documents were prepared in advance of the October meeting: the official "Statement" from the GDR Presidency about the Church's relationship to the state, which was published in newspapers the day after the meeting, and a list of the Church's specific requests, which Honecker approved at the meeting but which were not made public in the GDR. The form and content of those documents evolved between June and August 1988.

On June 22, 1988, the GDR Presidency reviewed a draft statement prepared by Manfred Wünsche, which focused on positive examples of the Church's relationship with the state. The presidency modified that draft to say that the present good relationship did not exclude the existence of problems that could and should be resolved, specifically in the areas of missionary and youth activities and public affairs. Care was taken to attribute the problems to local officials who prevented Church members from enjoying the benefits of the positive relationship that existed with the central government. The presidency also drafted a supplemental list of requests, which could be addressed at the meeting if the opportunity arose. The list included:

1. Missionary Work: Young GDR Church members should be able to go on missions abroad and missionaries from outside should be able to come to the GDR.

2. Youth activities: Church groups should be able to hold activities

outside of their meeting houses, including the use of camping and sport facilities and hostels.

3. Public affairs: Examples included a visitors' center near the temple; the importing and/or printing of Church literature; and use of public facilities for large Church meetings.

On June 27, 1988, the GDR Presidency reviewed additional changes to the "Statement" suggested by Warnke and Wünsche and added more specificity to the Church's requests. The "Statement" and requests were then translated into English and approved by the First Presidency. However, instead of being placed in a separate document, the Church's requests were added to two letters that officially transmitted the "Statement" to Honecker and the new Secretary for Religious Affairs, Kurt Löffler, on August 22, 1988.[23] While Löffler and Behncke fully understood the details of the Church's missionary proposal through informal communications, the description in the official transmittal letters was somewhat vague and certainly more modest than what was approved and implemented after the meeting. For example, the letter to Secretary Löffler said: "We could suppose, for example, that young members from Dresden would be assigned to Rostock or vice versa. Their time might also be served abroad. In that case, it would be based on reciprocity, so that a comparable young member from abroad would carry out his service here. Of course, there are many details to be resolved. We would be pleased, however, when a start could be made here."[24]

The letter to Honecker said, "In our Statement, we have emphasized that we fully support the church-state policy of our country and are thankful for the assistance it affords us. If we were asked if we see opportunities where the relationship between state and church in our country could be further developed . . . there are certainly some things that would help our members, especially our younger members, to identify themselves with our country even more strongly than in the past." Following that introduction, the missionary request was described at greater length than in the secretary's letter, but within a very broad description of "missionary" activities that sounded much more like humanitarian services:

> Many have, for example, assisted in projects in Latin America that have the goal of eliminating illiteracy, improving hygienic conditions, or increasing understanding of the basic principles of proper human nutrition. In European countries, the goal is to present the teachings and principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to do so especially through the

> contribution of the missionaries to spiritual welfare and education by: a) strengthening the capacity of individuals for responsible service through high moral standards; b) maintaining health and the capacity to work by observing a positive lifestyle and through proper nutrition and; c) supporting families and thereby strengthening the foundation of a good society.[25]

Regarding youth activities, the letter to Secretary Löffler said, "It has not been easy in the past to carry out camping or sporting activities. Indeed, a reservation for a camping place, youth hostel or sports place for activities with 100–200 participants is out of the question." The letter also referred to an upcoming Church youth camp in West Germany with participants from sixteen countries. "These gatherings serve world peace and cooperation among nations through common experiences and mutual understanding. It would be a positive experience for our youth if they could participate in this church camp under the flag of our country." The letter to Honecker addressed youth activities in less detail but emphasized that participation in youth gatherings abroad would "contribute to peace and cooperation among nations through common experiences and mutual understanding," a favorite political slogan of the GDR government.[26]

The Statement

Since all of the Church's requests had been added to the transmittal letters, the "Statement" became solely a description of the Church's relationship to the state. Following are key sentences from that "Statement":

> We respect you as the representative of our homeland and our state with which we identify ourselves, in which we live and work, in which we find joy. . . . The position of the Church . . . has always been clear and distinct, namely to respect and support governments that protect our right to exercise our beliefs.
>
> The members of the Church recognize that they have been given the opportunity in our country to exercise their religion, to develop themselves as individuals, and to act in accordance with Christian ideals. . . . Generous decisions have enabled us to carry out our religious services and spiritual welfare activities at a high level in accordance with the basic principles of our Church.
>
> Separation of church and state is a reality in the GDR and fulfills a longstanding goal of the Church. . . . It has been and continues to be a basic principle that we do not approve of ecclesiastical authority being used for political influence. The Church is not a political or social organization. It interacts with the surrounding society primarily through the experiences and activities of its members.

> The Church is absolutely not open to anyone seeking to use it as a platform or a cover for opposition, or to pursue "special or group goals" that cannot be brought into harmony with the mission of the Church and its stated goals. . . . Young men in the church also accept their responsibility regarding military service.
>
> [The] prerequisites for the preservation of world peace and understanding among nations are being created through the policies of the GDR. . . . [The Church] supports our government in its efforts toward coexistence, peace, and good relations. . . . [It is our] goal to promote the peaceful coexistence of mankind wherever God has placed us, especially through Christian living and in accordance with the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to contribute to the strengthening of our country in order to preserve peace.[27]

Two weeks prior to the October meeting, Monson wrote to Honecker on behalf of the First Presidency. He said he was looking forward to the meeting and expressed hope that Honecker would be able to come to America and visit Utah in the future. He enclosed a short statement from the First Presidency that was consistent with the "Statement" of the Presidency in the GDR, but decidedly more reserved in tone and detail. It said in part: "We live in a time when men and women should stand together in peace and endeavor to protect the world around them. Our Church has learned in your country that many of these basic goals are commonly shared, which has led to trusting, constructive collaboration. . . . We are not politically active as a church and refrain from exerting political influence of any kind. Instead, we encourage our members to contribute to the improvement of the country in which they live and to foster good community relations."[28]

The Briefing Document for Chairman Honecker

Secretary Löffler's office prepared a briefing document with an assessment of the "Statement" and the Church's requests, which was sent to Honecker's personal secretary on October 11, 1988.[29] Attachment 1 of that document contained Löffler's recommendations regarding the missionary and youth requests. Before preparing his recommendations, Löffler had sent the requests to Eberhard Aurich, secretary of the Central Council of the Free German Youth (FDJ). He told Aurich, "There cannot be any special rules for the youth activities of this church. . . . However, in the interest of a reasoned application of our state-church policy, it is necessary to determine whether some of the wishes of the Mormons can be accepted within the framework of the varied activities of the FDJ."[30]

Aurich replied, "Sending individual persons abroad for missionary work is acceptable. Sending an organized youth group is not acceptable because that would demonstrate a political-organizational division of our youth, which would harm the GDR and the FDJ politically." His response reflected the FDJ's traditional insistence that all group activities involving youth were the responsibility of the FDJ, while sending individuals abroad was not relevant to the FDJ's mission. Regarding the request to use government facilities, Aurich said, "Young Mormons can use youth hostels, camping places, etc., [but] we cannot agree to reservations for group activities of a religious organization, since that would contradict the principle of the unity of the youth." He added that church-sponsored activities for youth should be limited strictly to religious events and be conducted at church facilities, while the youth should join FDJ for nonreligious activities. That instruction was also consistent with previous GDR policy. He did not support the request to send a group of Mormon youth to a scouting activity in West Germany, although sending an FDJ group that included Mormons might be acceptable.[31]

Secretary Löffler's own recommendations in Attachment 1 of the briefing document only partially followed Aurich's comments. The three issues he addressed were:

> 1. *Hostels and campgrounds:* Individuals can use these facilities and their programs, but church-related group activities or other religious practices such as common prayers, spiritual singing, or religious services are not allowed.
>
> 2. *Missionary work:* Sending an organized group abroad cannot be allowed . . . [but] sending individuals in the manner practiced by the Mormons can be allowed. Missionary activity within the GDR by retired persons, including retired persons from abroad, can be allowed, but only on condition that it take place in the church, for example, in caring for the elderly. Public missionary work (e.g., from door to door) is absolutely not allowed.
>
> 3. *Participation in an international camp:* Since the participants are exclusively Mormons, the operation of the camp is considered an internal matter. The participation of a small group, including adult leaders, can be permitted.[32]

Conspicuous by its absence was any reference in the briefing docu-

ment or in Aurich's letter to young missionaries from abroad entering the GDR. While Löffler and Behnke knew this permission was the Church's primary goal, the written request had been vague, and the briefing document did not address the issue at all. When asked about its absence, Günther Behncke said: "Allowing missionaries to enter the GDR was not a significant problem, but letting young men leave the GDR to serve missions abroad was a very big problem since many people wanted to leave the GDR."[33]

Attachment 2 addressed the "Statement":

> The comment that the Church is not a political or social organization, although it interacts with its surrounding social environment, is an important statement regarding state-church policy. . . . The "Statement," which was preceded by other politically descriptive statements in recent years, such as its [the Church's] position on the basing of the MX missile, reflects a continuing process in which the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has described its position within a socialist society.[34]

Attachment 4 described the government's view of the Church's relationship to the state:

> In accordance with Church principles, members are taught to be loyal to the state, to respect and adhere to socialistic laws, to perform the duties of citizens and be diligent and honest workers. As a result, no politically relevant problems in the state-church relationship exist at either the central or local level. The leading representatives of the Mormon church in the GDR have unambiguously declared themselves in favor of the socialistic peace policy, including the necessity of military measures to protect our socialistic accomplishments. Mormons to date have not avoided their military obligations or training and would not find support for such from the church leadership.[35]

Attachment 5 contained suggested responses that Honecker might make during the meeting, including the following: "I agree with you that real Socialism fulfills not only the ideals of Communists but also meets Christian goals and values. . . . The challenges of the present and the future require that we not be thrown back into confrontation."[36]

The Meeting

President Monson wrote at length in his journal about the historic meeting on October 28, 1988, including these brief concluding comments: "[Honecker] proceeded to acknowledge our requests and said that

in the future all of our young people could meet together in youth conferences, using state facilities if necessary, for he trusted our young people and admired them. This was a great compliment. He then reviewed my request for missionaries and simply said, 'Permission granted.'"[37]

When Honecker said, "Permission granted," to what had he agreed and what did the Church think had been approved? Some of the documents cited above imply that the GDR's response to the Church's requests were still being developed after Honecker had accepted the meeting invitation, and the Church's letters of August 22 assume that future negotiations would be needed to address details. They simply said, "We would be pleased, however, when a start could be made here." A small "start" is exactly what appears to have been anticipated in secretariat documents written prior to and immediately after the meeting. One internal document written before the meeting said, "The exchange of young members on the international level is conditionally possible, but a general decision is not appropriate at this time. In the absence of relevant experience, the numbers should be limited at first to 3–5 persons."[38] A second example is Günther Behncke's own meeting summary, in which he wrote that Honecker had approved the requested missionary activity. A handwritten note on one copy of that summary states, "4–6 persons at first."[39] However, such a severe limitation on the number of missionaries was not evident in the negotiations that took place a month after the meeting, as described later.

Reaction of Church Members

The evening television news on October 28 included a long report about the meeting. Since very few Church members knew that the meeting was scheduled, the news was a total surprise. One member said, "It went through the ranks of the members like a wildfire. It was amazing. For more than twelve minutes that evening, the news was just about our Church." While the news coverage was extensive, it was also incomplete. It included photographs of the participants, Monson's presentation of a gift to Honecker, and references to the "Statement," which was printed in full in newspapers the next day; but there was no mention of the Church's requests or any indication that requests had been approved. Members learned about the new opportunities for missionary and youth activities gradually as details were resolved.

Matthew Heiss and Jeff Anderson, representatives of the LDS

Church History Department, conducted oral history interviews in 1991 and 1993. They asked members about their reaction to the news of the meeting. I have summarized representative comments from fifteen interviewees in the following three paragraphs:

> A sigh of relief went through our ranks. . . . I fought to hold back the tears when I heard about it for the first time, tears of joy. . . . We felt recognized, something that was withheld from us all those years. . . . It filled me with pride. Finally, we could appear in the daylight. . . . I felt that I was recognized as a Christian and no longer restricted to a backyard church in a former factory building. . . . Normally, one would not sit together at the same table with such a man. But I thought that the time had come and it will be good for us. . . . Many things were not totally clear to me, but I try to be obedient. I have come to understand that it was right.
>
> I ran into a wave of rejection from my colleagues who had always respected me. . . . Many outside the Church said, "Now you are crawling to the Communists. You made some kind of compromise with them." . . . There were many members who didn't understand that a leader of the Church would appear with the Chairman. . . . We had some problems, especially with the young people. . . . I could not call it good. It was not the right time.
>
> People came to the temple grounds, especially from the Lutheran Church, and said, "You say you are Christians, but you don't do anything. You know that we have to fight for our freedom." It was hard for us to explain that freedom was actually something different from what they were trying to do. . . . President Monson acted under inspiration, otherwise he would not have done that. But it left the image that we had knelt down before a socialistic government.

Each member of the Church Presidency in the GDR commented on the reaction to the meeting during interviews in 1991:

> President Burkhardt: I often received threatening phone calls and was asked how we, as a church, could fraternize with the Communists like that. I had to put up with that for a while. I received letters that were not written with the nicest tone, because people believed that I was the one who had initiated or was desirous of this contact. But I had the inner satisfaction that President Monson wanted this connection. And it was good. There were some members among us who did not agree. But they were not the most active members. Among the active ones, there were only a few who were not convinced that such an association was good. Many took the position, "We will wait and see what comes out of this meeting, whether it was worth it."[40]

> President Apel: Some members asked us after the [fall of the regime], "Why were you with Erich? You sold yourselves." I see it entirely differ-

ently. There were hardly any government leaders in any Western country that did not have contact with Erich Honecker, who didn't visit him, shake his hand, or sit at banquets with him. And so we said to ourselves, "We must try to obtain as much as possible without denying our faith."[41]

President Schütze: Naturally, there was some criticism. . . . Some members were disturbed and asked why we should associate with the Communists now and seek their help. Many members and nonmembers also had a problem with the fact that Western money was being used to build meeting houses in East Germany, in other words, that the Church was giving money to the Communists. But we had another goal, or better said, the Lord was pursuing a different and very specific goal, namely, that people would become interested in the gospel. In the dedicatory prayer that President Monson spoke in the Dresden area, he said, in my own words, "Lord, let the people develop an interest in the gospel." That is exactly what happened. It brought a great amount of publicity. The Church leaders presented their standpoint very officially and our wishes were answered. The Church did not compromise or sell itself. There were no other agreements made, in any form.[42]

Did the Church Compromise Itself?

Although President Schütze said that "the Church did not compromise or sell itself," his comment reflects the fact that many people outside the Church, and a few within it, saw Monson's meeting with Honecker as having done exactly that. The meeting with Honecker was generally viewed as giving support to the regime, which it undoubtedly did; but most members, even those who had some doubt about the wisdom of the meeting, expressed hope that it would result in improved conditions for the Church.

The LDS Church History Department interviewers in 1991 and 1993 did not specifically ask about the "Statement." However, in my own interviews and informal conversations with members, their description of the media coverage of the meeting often included expressions of personal embarrassment or anger over the content of the "Statement" and other Church publications of that period. Examples of specific text that troubled them included the expressions of loyalty to the government and the description of GDR policies as contributing to "world peace," "understanding among nations," and "peaceful coexistence." Those specific words often appeared in traditional Communist propaganda and were used by all Soviet-dominated countries engaged in furthering Communism worldwide. Therefore, members were accused by colleagues who

read the "Statement" of having made common cause with the Communists.

The meeting with Erich Honecker surprised and concerned members who had grown accustomed to frequent and strong anti-Communist statements by Elder Ezra Taft Benson and other Church leaders during the administration of President David O. McKay (1951–70). However, a new tone and approach to Communism emerged shortly thereafter during President Kimball's administration, as he placed more emphasis on developing personal and friendly relations with socialist governments. His repeated counsel to President Burkhardt is one such example. In 1977, after visiting Poland, he came to Dresden and spoke to 1,400 members on the Twelfth Article of Faith. President Burkhardt recalled that the talk impressed a government official who had been invited to attend the meeting.[43] Finally, in 1979, President Kimball ended previous efforts to bring members to the Swiss Temple and accepted the GDR's unexpected offer to build a temple there. In short, while the president of the United States was demanding that the Communists tear down the wall, the president of the Church was finding ways to open doors through the wall.

President Burkhardt's implementation of President Kimball's advice was not an easy task because government officials were well aware of the Church's earlier anti-Communism statements. Nevertheless, Burkhardt and his counselors attempted to speak the language of the GDR when that could be done without violating the Church's principles and teachings. For example, the GDR's propaganda campaigns frequently complained about the West's "militarism" and atomic weapons. In 1981, the First Presidency, under President Kimball's leadership, issued a statement that opposed President Ronald Reagan's MX missile-basing plan and said, "We repeat our warnings against the terrifying arms race in which the nations of the earth are presently engaged. We in particular deplore the building of vast arsenals of nuclear weaponry."[44] Church leaders in the GDR quoted portions of that document during a meeting in which Secretary Gysi had criticized representatives of all churches for not actively supporting the government's international "peace initiatives." After the meeting, Gysi requested and was given the complete text. A favorable article with quotations from President Kimball appeared thereafter in the newspaper *Neue Zeit* headlined: "Our Fathers Proclaimed Peace—Mormons Protest against Building the USA-Intercontinental MX."[45]

Günther Behncke said that Erich Honecker was aware of and quite impressed by the Church's position on the "peace" issue.

Statements with the "peace" theme continued after the meeting with Honecker. In 1989, the Church published a thirty-two-page pamphlet about its history in the city of Leipzig. A section entitled "Church and Society" included quotations from Doctrine and Covenants 98, a revelation that instructed the Saints to "renounce war and proclaim peace." GDR Church leaders also used quotations from President Kimball's 1976 *Ensign* article in which he wrote that a reliance on armaments for security was a form of idolatry.[46] Those teachings provided a firm basis for the antiwar statements written by Church leaders in the GDR.

The GDR's official state-church policy included two principles that government officials emphasized but didn't always practice: separation between church and state and equal treatment of all religious organizations. It was in the Church's interest to support those principles and they did so in the "Statement" and in other documents over the years. Church leaders also referred to related principles in Doctrine and Covenants 134 and the Twelfth Article of Faith.

But did those principles apply to Communist governments and Communist leaders, and should the Saints in the GDR respect the laws of that land and the officials chosen under its laws? Most members answered in the affirmative. One said that the *Articles of Faith* by James E. Talmage "was in every home and branch, and it was applied as written. Regardless of whether someone lived in a kingdom as a Swede, in a presidential democracy as an American, or in a socialistic state as we did, there were no extra guidelines or directions."[47]

Church leaders in the GDR often stated that members were taught to be loyal citizens of the country in which they lived. This emphasis on "responsible citizenship" is also found in President Monson's correspondence from this period. Following the October meeting, he invited Secretary Löffler to visit Utah. In two letters to Löffler, he linked Church teachings with good citizenship. In one he said he looked forward to hosting Löffler and his wife so they could visit Church headquarters and see how it was striving to "raise our members to be good citizens." In the second, he said the visit would enable the secretary to see how we encourage our members "to be good citizens."[48]

It should be noted that the "Statement" had been translated into English and sent to the First Presidency for approval. It is possible, but not

likely, that the political significance of specific terms with special implications in Communist literature such as "world peace," "peaceful coexistence," and "understanding among nations" was not evident in the English translation. It is more likely that their inclusion was intentional or that they were not considered significantly more problematic than the rest of the "Statement" or the meeting itself. Following the meeting, President Monson was quoted in the *Church News* as saying: "Obviously, there are differences of belief that separate us, but there are many more things that unite us."[49] Those words echo similar language that appeared in Honecker's briefing document: that common goals "tie us together more than our differences in philosophy of life or religious confession separate us."

Why Did Honecker Approve the Church's Requests?

The most common explanation about why Honecker met with Church leaders and approved their requests is that he wanted an invitation to visit America. An official visit would enhance his international prestige and help him obtain additional Western capital. Perhaps he hoped that the Church's influence might lead to such an invitation. Church leaders in America probably were convinced that Honecker wanted to visit America. In his report of the October meeting, Günther Behncke noted that Monson twice expressed his hope that Honecker would soon visit the United States, assuring him that he would be a welcome guest in Utah as part of such a visit.[50]

The government's perception of the Church's influence in America, and thus its potential role in winning an invitation for Honecker to visit the USA, is seen in the following 1993 interview with Gottfried Richter, a Church leader in the GDR:

> Over the years, the attitude of state officials toward our church changed, . . . which I saw in the file that the Stasi [secret police] kept on me. At first, they wrote, "This church is closely tied to the USA. Some leaders are in the service of the American government. . . ." In later years, however, they wrote that members of the Church in the GDR are loyal to their country. They said that members "clearly restrict themselves to the principles of the church. There is no evidence that they engage in polemics against the state, and the operative-political importance to us of this church and its leaders has increased with the building of the temple in Freiberg." A member of the Secretariat once told me, "We don't judge your church here based on the number of its members, but according to the influence it has

> in the USA and increasingly in the world. . . ." They knew that the church had influence—for example, its opposition to the MX proposal.[51]

While he did not dispute the idea that the Church was influential in America, Günther Behncke did not share the belief that a visit to America was Honecker's primary or immediate goal. His view of Honecker's motives deserves attention. He said:

> Many people wanted to hear that these things only happened because Honecker wanted to crack open the door to a visit to America. Of course, he had been to all of the major powers of that time except America and England. Certainly he would like to go there, too, for reasons of good relations between neighbors and in the interest of peace. But [was] that the determining factor in this case? I would say almost 100 percent, no. In that case, events would have proceeded in a quite different manner.[52]

Behncke explained that Honecker was a realist in foreign policy matters. He knew that America and England would never invite the head of the GDR for a state visit when relations between the two major Western countries and the Soviet Union were improving, especially since, at that moment, relations between the GDR and the Soviet Union were strained. He knew that the GDR was a very small pawn in a much bigger chess game between the major powers.[53]

Nor was money a significant reason for receiving the Church leaders. Behncke has been quoted as saying that anything paid for with Western money was approved. However, that statement has been taken out of context. Moreover, it was made in connection with the special construction program that already was bringing in Western money for the building of churches, and every meetinghouse requested by the Church had already been built or planned by 1988. While many GDR agencies were searching for projects that would bring more Western money into the country, the possibility of a financial gain by approving the Church's youth and missionary requests does not appear in any known GDR documents.

While theories about money and a visit to America may be relevant to some of Honecker's policies, they are not relevant to the meeting with President Monson or the approval of the Church's requests in 1988. Instead, we should look more closely at internal developments in the GDR at that time. Honecker faced a serious crisis in early 1988. Dissent was growing, and his state-church policy was in danger of collapse following the crackdown he had instigated over the Zionskirche affair. Moreover, a

prolonged and visible battle with the Lutheran Church would generate negative publicity abroad and threaten any foreign policy goals he entertained. Soon, he would have to back off from the newly harsh policy, which would inevitably be seen as a victory for the Lutheran Church and the dissenters.

A meeting with President Monson offered several opportunities for Chairman Honecker to enhance his image abroad and strengthen his hand at home. Behncke said that if he was known abroad as a *Kirchenfresser* (someone who eats churches) why not be seen discussing "world peace" with representatives of a church from the most powerful country in the world, whose leaders were known as anti-Communists, even as *Kommunistenfresser,* who more recently had spoken out against the arms race, and whose influence had ended the U.S. government's plan to station a system of nuclear missiles in Utah and Nevada? (The Russians had stationed their own SS-20 missiles in the GDR, which did not please Honecker since he did not want the GDR to be a potential target of a Western attack.) Simultaneously, he could demonstrate to a meddling Lutheran Church that he could and would make significant concessions to a church whose local leadership did not interfere in the GDR's internal affairs and whose members lived exemplary lives and practiced their religion without problems in a socialist state.[54]

In light of Honecker's problems in 1988, the pre-meeting briefing document prepared by people who knew his goals and concerns takes on greater significance. Attachment 4 said that members of the Church "are taught to be loyal to the state, to respect and adhere to socialistic laws. . . . As a result, no politically relevant problems in the state-church relationship exist at either the central or local level." Attachment 2 said that the "Statement" contained "politically unambiguous remarks concerning the place of the Church and its members in a socialistic society [and] its identification with the state and state policies. [Moreover] the comment that the Church is not a political or social organization, although it interacts with its surrounding social environment, is an important statement regarding state-church policy." And Attachment 5 suggested that Honecker tell his visitors, "The challenges of the present and the future require that we not be thrown back into confrontation."

That last sentence is a key to Honecker's motivation and to the Church's strategy, because he *was* being thrown into confrontation by the Lutheran Church. In contrast, the LDS Church repeatedly emphasized

that it followed strict principles concerning the relationship between church and state and did not permit its members to use the Church as a platform or cover for political opposition. That position was confirmed in the "Statement."

Moreover, we have direct evidence of Honecker's personal reaction to the "Statement." On one copy found in government files, certain passages were underlined while other extant copies have no such underlining.[55] Günther Behncke explained the significance of the underlining: "Honecker received fairly thick documents that we had prepared from what the Church had sent to us. I don't know if he read it all, but his State Secretary [Löffler] was there in his office when he read it and had marked all the passages where Honecker had said, 'Donnerwetter, das ist schön.'[56] We naturally underlined those passages."[57]

The underlined passages included this sentence: "The Church is not a political or social organization [and] the Church is not open to anyone seeking to use it as a platform or a cover for opposition."

Results of the Meeting

Obtaining permission for expanded missionary activity was the primary reason why LDS Church leaders pressed for the meeting with Honecker. The arrival of missionaries from the West cannot be addressed in detail here, but some of the subsequent events are summarized below:

> President Monson (November 3, 1988): We will have to move with care but also without delay in taking advantage of the opening that is now before us. . . . We would begin missionary work on a small scale and then hopefully move upward in number.[58]

> President Burkhardt: We had our first follow-up meeting with Secretary Löffler in November. President Ringger was, naturally, a bit sly. I probably would not have been so bold on this matter, but in that meeting we came to speak not of 10 missionaries but rather of 10 pairs. We explained to him that missionaries are never allowed to be alone, but always go in pairs. So we remained with the number ten, which could be increased later. Herr Löffler accepted that as quite understandable . . . but the 10 who would come in were 10 pairs.[59]
>
> When we met with him again less than four weeks later, we again spoke about the missionaries. Herr Löffler said, "Yes, 20 missionaries." Brother Ringger said, "Yes 20 pairs, since our missionaries always go out in pairs." Herr Löffler had always spoken to Erich Honecker about 20, but not 20 pairs. But Brother Ringger spoke about 20 pairs, and that would be

40 missionaries. . . . It was not long before we had more than 100 missionaries here.[60]

Günther Behncke: Concerning the missionaries, that was a touchy subject: "Let Americans into the GDR? They are our archenemy!" We had agreed in advance to start with a relatively small number. We agreed that ten missionaries from the GDR could go out and ten could come in. But you know, the request of the presidency after the meeting was quite different. We were together with Herr Löffler, Herr Ringger, and Henry Burkhardt in Tabarz in Thüringen. I can tell you that not just 10 missionaries entered but at least tenfold. And it went very well.[61]

Behncke later elaborated on the negotiations in Tabarz. He said that Honecker, as head of state, could not be and was not involved in details. He had given his representatives considerable latitude over the numbers of missionaries, and they exercised it. However, Behncke was especially impressed by a new attitude evident during those negotiations. He said that the Church's representatives (Ringger and Burkhardt) exhibited increased self-confidence after their meeting with Honecker. "I had the impression," he said, "that we were suddenly equal partners. We worked together in a very friendly manner to make the best decisions. I found it very pleasant."[62]

In summarizing the reaction of Church members to the Monson-Honecker meeting, I have reserved one comment from a member who still holds a very negative opinion of the meeting. He called the meeting "completely incomprehensible! The government was already tipping. There was opposition everywhere. People could see more and more that it couldn't go on further, and right then Church representatives came and compromised themselves with those people. That was depressing for us here. It severely damaged the Church. Our lowered reputation was apparent in the missionary work."[63]

This comment raises an important point. Did negative reactions to the meeting adversely affect the newly authorized missionary activity? It is possible, but no data exist to show how many people refused to talk with the missionaries because of their opposition to the meeting. However, the following facts relevant to the meeting's positive results are known.

While the missionaries were not officially allowed to go door to door or initiate contact with persons on the street, they were not totally limited to meeting with members' friends. Despite occasional warnings from the police, they employed a variety of methods to circumvent official restrictions and initiate discussions with people on the street. An average

of about seven convert baptisms had taken place annually in the years prior to 1989. After the arrival of the missionaries from the West, 569 convert baptisms were recorded in the last nine months of 1989. While baptisms continued at a high rate into 1990, Wolfgang Paul, the new mission president, said that, soon after the border between East and West Germany opened, "we noticed that people were not so interested in the missionaries, in the Book of Mormon, etc., because suddenly other things were there that attracted them. Earlier, everything from the West was worthy of pursuit and had great significance. But now they had more options."[64] Missionary activities also became more difficult after 1990 because the flood of goods and services from the West caused many factories and businesses in the GDR to close, and people began to focus more on finding or retaining employment.

Would the numerous converts baptized in 1989 or early 1990 have joined the Church later if missionaries had not entered before the demise of the GDR? It would have taken at least several months to find living quarters and assign missionaries to work in the eastern cities. Since baptisms declined soon after the border opened, it must be assumed that the total number of converts would likely have been significantly lower if missionaries had not arrived when they did. It is true that some of the earliest converts left the Church or became inactive and that some members were disturbed by problems associated with the flood of new converts, who often joined within days or weeks of being exposed to the missionaries. However, the converts also brought new life and rewarding challenges to the wards and branches in the GDR.

Günther Schulze, bishop of the Dresden Ward, who was called to that position in December 1989, recalled in 1993 that about 250 converts had joined his ward since the arrival of the missionaries, while almost 200 members (including some converts) had left for the West to find employment. Among the converts who remained in Dresden were many young people who desired to fulfill a mission for the Church. In fact, six of the converts had already returned from full-time missions by 1993 and four more were currently serving missions. These young people had been well integrated into the ward, but none had saved money for missions and none had family support. While it was difficult to support so many missionaries financially, Bishop Schulze said, "I am very thankful that these young people had the desire to serve a mission."[65] Every bishop in the former GDR would agree today with Bishop Schulze and would welcome

both the challenge and the opportunity to prepare ten or more converts for missions.

Conclusion

This article has presented the background and circumstances that led to the meeting between President Thomas S. Monson and Chairman Erich Honecker in October 1988. While a basis for the concessions obtained from the government through that meeting can be traced back to President Spencer W. Kimball's 1973 advice to President Henry Burkhardt to befriend GDR officials, the specific plan to expand the Church's missionary activity appears to have developed after the November 1987 police raid on the Lutheran Zionskirche and the subsequent crackdown on churches involved in political dissent. Although Jürgen Warnke's letter of January 4, 1988, advised that "we must be more disciplined and not allow our own euphoria over our accomplishments to lead to violation of the limits placed upon us by the state," a bold strategy was developed and became evident only five weeks later when President Burkhardt emphasized the Church's policy of noninvolvement in the affairs of state, and Günther Behncke responded by asking Burkhardt to convey that policy directly to Secretary Gysi. Subsequent Church correspondence included frequent reference to scriptural passages from the Doctrine and Covenants, the Twelfth Article of Faith, and related statements by Church leaders that denounced war, promoted peace, and emphasized respect for government.

Following the meeting, members developed several theories about Honecker's motives for meeting with Church leaders and approving their requests. Many of those theories are represented by one member's effort to explain the meeting:

> The price [for the entry and departure of missionaries] was to declare that we Mormons could live with Socialism; but we *had* to live with Socialism. We had no alternative. The suspicion of our critics, that we entered into a pact with the government is an overreach. . . . Did the [government leaders] feel that they were so strong, or perhaps they were so weak, that they couldn't deny the requests of our leaders? Was it the decrepit status of the old men in the party's Central Committee that made them so unexpectedly reasonable? Or did Erich Honecker wish to receive an invitation to the USA via the Mormon Church? Was this an opportunity for [the GDR government] to prove to the ever-watching world that they were not the bogeymen that they were judged to be?
>
> One thing is sure, we did not present a political threat to them, at least

> not directly. Mormonism would never grow into a mass movement. This Church simply demands too much self sacrifice, or at least a high degree of self discipline, from its members. But the GDR's politicians saw the results, and that is what the Deputy State Secretary for Religious Affairs, Herr Kalb, expressed at the dedication of the Freiberg Temple: "We have seen that Mormons are not involved in property crimes. There is almost no divorce among you. Your young men never drink alcohol during their Army service, which is astounding to us. These are the kind of people we want to produce. The fruits are good." Was that what brought us a special status in the last years and months of the GDR?[66]

The above questions and theories all have some validity, but they are not a sufficient explanation of what happened. The evidence shows that the Church's support for the principle of separation of church and state and noninvolvement in government affairs coincided with the government's need for a public relations event that would counteract the negative publicity associated with its crackdown against other churches. By granting significant concessions to a small church that did not meddle in affairs of state or permit anti-government activities within its buildings, Chairman Honecker could poke a finger in the eye of the larger, openly critical churches, especially the Lutheran Church, and simultaneously show the outside world that his government was not antireligious.

The October 1988 meeting was a success for both parties. The Church received immediate concessions regarding its missionary and youth activities, while Honecker could show the world that a church could function successfully within a socialist state and that its leaders shared his goal of peaceful coexistence. The long-term results are difficult to evaluate since Honecker's government collapsed at the end of 1989 and the GDR was brought into the Federal Republic of Germany the next year. However, the success of the Church's missionary program in 1989–90 far outweighed any initial negative reactions to the meeting. I, therefore, find Günther Behncke's conclusion useful. He said, very loosely translated, that the Church received "something for nothing" (*Leistungen ohne Gegenleistungen*)—that is, it received services or benefits without being obligated to provide something in return. The Church simply stated the principles of church-state relationships that it had always practiced, thanked Honecker for what it had already received (the temple, new buildings, etc.), reminded him that its members consistently fulfilled their obligations as citizens and Christians, and requested its rights under the GDR's constitution (equality with other churches, freedom to worship, and the

ability to share their religious convictions with others through missionary activities).

As a final note, each of the ten young men who left the GDR in May 1988 for missions abroad were told that future mission calls would depend on their nonpolitical conduct abroad and their return to the GDR upon the completion of their service. Each promised, as a condition of his selection, that he would return. All ten did return, but to a Germany that neither they, those who called them, nor those who permitted their departure had anticipated.

Notes

1. Manfred Schütze, a GDR citizen, had been president of the Leipzig Stake since 1984.

2. Wolfgang Paul, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, October 24, 1991, Friedrichsdorf, Germany, typescript, 16–20, James H. Moyle Oral History Program, Archives, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). A West German citizen, he was president of the Germany Hamburg Mission when called to preside over the new GDR mission. I am the translator of all quotations from German in this article.

3. Henry Burkhardt, interviewed by Raymond M. Kuehne, February 25, 2003, Freiberg, Germany. Burkhardt, a GDR citizen, led the Church in that country since 1952, first as a counselor to mission presidents residing in West Germany and, after 1969, as president of a new Dresden GDR Mission. In 1984 that mission was closed after all members had been assigned to the Freiberg (1982) and Leipzig (1984) stakes. He then became president of the Freiberg Temple and also president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the GDR. The two stake presidents were his counselors in that GDR presidency.

4. Manfred Schütze, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, October 9, 1991, Berlin, Germany, typescript, 25, Moyle Oral History Program.

5. The Church was recognized as an institution, but *Rechtsfähigkeit* (the ability to act for itself in legal matters) was not confirmed until May 1985, prior to the dedication of the Freiberg Temple. Previously, buildings "owned" by the Church were recorded in the name of members as trustees for the Church.

6. Officially, "Evangelical" applies to an association of protestant churches that had legal corporate status in nineteenth-century Germany. I use the more common English designation, Lutheran.

7. The GDR had previously implemented a program whereby historic churches destroyed in the war could be rebuilt with Western currency from abroad. The 1978 agreement extended that program to areas of new construction where no church had previously existed. However, Western money was still required.

8. Burkhardt, Interview, February 25, 2003.

9. Thomas S. Monson, *Faith Rewarded: A Personal Account of Prophetic Promises to the East German Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), 36. Monson was assigned in 1968 to oversee the Church's activities in the GDR.

10. Raymond M. Kuehne, "The Freiberg Temple: An Unexpected Legacy of a Communist State and a Faithful People," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 95–131.

11. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 126.

12. Dr. Horst Dohle, author of *SED und Kirche, Vol. 2, 1968–1989*, interviewed by Hans-Joachim Beeskow of the *Berliner LeseZeichen*, June 1997, www.berliner-lesezeichen.de (accessed February 2, 2006).

13. Jürgen Warnke, Letter to Hans B. Ringger, January 4, 1988, photocopy in my possession.

14. File memorandum, GDR Presidency, February 11, 1988, Freiberg Temple Annex Archive, Freiberg, Germany (hereafter cited as Freiberg Archive). It was common practice in the GDR for organizations to send formal greetings on birthdays and other special occasions to government leaders.

15. The statement, as printed in all major GDR newspapers the day after the meeting, had the following full title: *Erklärung der Präsidentschaft der Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage in der DDR anläßlich der beantragten Begegnung mit dem Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR–Erich Honecker am 28. Oktober 1988.*

16. Henry Burkhardt, Frank Apel, and Manfred Schütze, Letter to Klaus Gysi, March 3, 1988, photocopy in my possession.

17. Henry Burkhardt, Letter to Erich Honecker, April 18, 1988, "Selected Documents 1954–1988," Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (hereafter cited as SAPMO-BArch), MS 13798, fd. 11, 112–13, LDS Church Archives.

18. Erich Honecker, Letter to Henry Burkhardt, May 24, 1988, "Selected Documents 1954–1988," SAPMO-BArch, MS 13798, fd. 11, 114–15, LDS Church Archives.

19. Schütze, Interview, October 9, 1991, 24.

20. Günther Behncke, Interviewed by Raymond M. Kuehne, June 20, 2005 and May 8, 2006, Berlin, Germany.

21. Günther Behncke, Interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, October 20, 1991, Berlin, Germany, typescript, 13, Moyle Oral History Program.

22. Behncke, Interview, May 8, 2006.

23. File Memoranda, GDR Presidency Meetings, June 22, 27, and August 19, 1988, Freiberg Archive.

24. Henry Burkhardt, Letter to Kurt Löffler, August 22, 1988, "Selected Documents from the Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen Collection 1950–1990," SAPMO-BArch, MS 13918 (hereafter cited as MS 13918), fd. 16, 408–9, LDS Church Archives.

25. Henry Burkhardt, Letter to Erich Honecker, August 22, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 410–11.

26. Ibid.

27. The full statement was printed in major GDR newspapers. Photocopies in my possession.

28. Thomas S. Monson, Letter to Erich Honecker, October 14, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 432–37.

29. Briefing Document for Chairman Honecker, October 11, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 420–30.

30. Kurt Löffler, Letter to Eberhard Aurich, August 31, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 412–13.

31. Eberhard Aurich, Letter to Kurt Löffler, September 26, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 415–17.

32. Briefing Document for Chairman Honecker, 422.

33. Behncke, Interview, May 8, 2006.

34. Briefing Document for Chairman Honecker, 424.

35. Ibid., 427.

36. Ibid., 428.

37. Monson, *Faith Rewarded,* 133–35.

38. No author, "Concerning the Intentions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Regarding Aspects of Their Church Activity," n.d., MS 13918, fd. 16, 399.

39. Günther Behncke, Meeting Summary, November 1, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 442–46.

40. Henry Burkhardt, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, October 24, 1991, Friedrichsdorf, Germany, typescript, 28–29, Moyle Oral History Program.

41. Frank Apel, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, October 15, 1991, Freiberg, Germany, typescript, 17, Moyle Oral History Program. Apel was president of the Freiberg Stake.

42. Schütze, Interview, October 9, 1991, 25–27.

43. Burkhardt, Interview, October 24, 1991, 17. The Twelfth Article of Faith states: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."

44. "First Presidency Statement on Basing of the MX Missile," May 5, 1981, *Ensign*, June 1981, 76.

45. "Our Fathers Proclaimed Peace—Mormons Protest against Building the USA-Intercontinental MX," *Neue Zeit*, July 16, 1981, unpaginated photocopy of clipping in my possession.

46. Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," *Ensign*, June 1976, 2–6.

47. Rolf-Thomas Lehmann, interviewed by Raymond M. Kuehne, October 12, 2003, Görlitz, Germany.

48. Thomas S. Monson, Letters to Kurt Löffler, November 11, 1988, SAPMO-BArch, DO 4/987, 29–31; photocopies in my possession.

49. "German Democratic Republic Grants Rights for Missionary Service," *Church News*, November 12, 1988.

50. Günther Behncke, Meeting Summary, November 1, 1988, MS 13918, fd. 16, 442–46.

51. Gottfried Richter, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, June 22, 1993, Freiberg, Germany, typescript, 12, 13, 18, 29, Moyle Oral History Program. Richter was a counselor in the Dresden Mission presidency from 1969 to 1984 and later was responsible for public relations.

52. Behncke, Interview, June 20, 2005.

53. Behncke, Interview, May 8, 2006.

54. Ibid.

55. The underlined copy of the "Statement," SAPMO-BArch, DO 4/987, 42–44; photocopy in my possession; compare to the unmarked copy: Statement, MS 13918, fd. 16, 408–10.

56. "Donnerwetter" is literally "a thunderstorm." That exclamation can be used negatively, as in "damn it," but most often positively, as in the British "by Jove!" The latter tone applies here. "Das ist schön" means, "That's good."

57. Behncke, Interview, June 20, 2005.

58. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 137.

59. Burkhardt, Interview, October 24, 1991, 29.

60. Burkhardt, Interview, February 25, 2003.

61. Behncke, Interview, October 20, 1991, 15.

62. Behncke, Interview, May 8, 2006.

63. Gerhard Müller, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, June 16, 1993, Halle, Germany, typescript, 22, Moyle Oral History Program.

64. Paul, Interview, October 24, 1991, 20, 34.

65. Günther Schulze, interviewed by Matthew K. Heiss, July 19, 1993, Dresden, Germany, typescript, 44, 46, Moyle Oral History Program.

66. Gerd Skibbe, Memoirs, n.d., unpaginated; typescript of selected passages copied with permission in Freiberg, Germany, November 2003.

Perseverance amid Paradox: The Struggle of the LDS Church in Japan Today

Jiro Numano

The growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has recently slowed in Japan, as elsewhere, adding to the decades-long challenge for the Church of a low activity rate within the country. Latter-day Saints often say that conversion is more of a process than a one-time event. The same is true with LDS enculturation, or acceptance of this American-based church by other cultures as a legitimate part of their societies. Both conversion and enculturation require that people get to know something new and accept it as part of their personal being or their society's character. As such, both processes are types of internalization, one at the individual level and one at the societal level.

Ideally, both internalization processes proceed smoothly and steadily over time. In reality, however, unexpected complications and setbacks often mingle with advances. The Church's current struggles in Japan demonstrate such challenges. Perseverance and paradox characterize the experience of the Church and its members. This essay outlines the shifting fortunes of the LDS Church in Japan historically and offers illustrations and explanations of the two types of internalization processes for the Church in contemporary Japan. By doing so, it updates the thoughts I have offered on the Church in Japan in the pages of *Dialogue*.[1]

Mormonism's History in Japan

The Earliest Missionary Efforts, 1901–24

The early mission to Japan was not very successful. Perhaps LDS

polygamy was simply too foreign for the Japanese to countenance. Japanese newspapers, for example, sensing the 1890s continuation of polygamy, treated the arrival of Mormon missionaries in 1901 with clear rejection, or, at least, a very cautious tone.[2] A typical article referred to the LDS Church as "a strange religion which still practices polygamy" and worried that accepting this religion would give disgraceful Japanese men an excuse to keep mistresses.[3] The admonition of another Tokyo newspaper, *Niroku-shimpo,* to "first welcome [the Mormons] and see what message they have" was a minority position.[4] More common was rejection, a comprehensible reaction in view of the strong trailing note of polygamy.[5] In the early twentieth century, Japan was endeavoring to join with the West in its "civilized society"; the Meiji Restoration had included the abolition of the custom of keeping mistresses and strong encouragement for the establishment of monogamy. The sterile results of the Church's next twenty-three years in Japan suggest that the Japanese on the whole strongly rejected Mormonism. The period was characterized by indifference from the Japanese and an inability of LDS missionaries to get the Japanese to see past the stereotype of polygamy.[6]

Lack of Japanese language abilities and literature in Japanese, the small number of missionaries, and the vast difference between American and Japanese cultures certainly contributed to the mission's futility. More generally, however, the mood at the turn of the twentieth century was not welcoming to Christianity as a whole in Japan. Yasuo Furuya, a Princeton D.D. and a former professor at International Christian University, observes that this period was one of narrow nationalism. The Meiji Constitution (1889) and the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890) both firmly established the emperor's absolute rule. In this context in 1891 occurred a notable scandal. Kanzo Uchimura was a well-known Japanese Christian who had joined the Methodist Church in 1878 while attending Sapporo Agricultural School. After studying theology in the United States, he returned to Japan to become a teacher at First High Secondary School. However, he refused to bow down before "Kyoiku-chokugo" or the Imperial Rescript on Education at its reading ceremony. He was forced to resign from his post, was severely ostracized, and was charged with defaming the Imperial House. *Lèse-majesté* was a crime before World War II. In short, the Japanese frowned upon Christianity and viewed it with hostility,[7] so Mormon missionaries came to Japan at a very difficult time.

The Post-World War II Flowering of the Church

The climate for foreign cultural influences within Japan changed drastically after World War II.[8] Narrow nationalism gave way to the internationalism endorsed by the military occupiers of Japan, which included support for Christian missions. Furuya calls this a "Christianity boom," culminating in a minister's being invited to the Imperial Court to lecture the emperor on the Bible.[9] The United States exerted a particularly strong influence during this period, and Japan experienced rapid "Americanization" politically, socially, and culturally. The United States imposed much of this process, but the Japanese also genuinely participated. The United States mandated a U. S. military presence in Japan, for example, as well as a military alliance between the two countries. The Japanese sought to follow American patterns in industry and constitutional politics. Furthermore, American cultural products became intensely fascinating to the Japanese.

In this climate the LDS Church prospered as a recognizably American organization.[10] Within three years of the war's end, it reopened its mission in Tokyo, building on the proselytizing success of the post-war months. Many people, mostly in humble material and spiritual conditions, thronged to the missionaries' roadside preaching and attended church meetings. Few traces of polygamy remained relevant. Newspapers during the 1950s described missionaries doing street preaching "enthusiastically," "in a polite manner," and "at their own expense."[11] In the 1960s some papers printed a photograph of the Salt Lake Temple as a sacred place of world historical interest.[12] Newspapers featured two U.S. cabinet ministers, George Romney and David Kennedy, as "devout" and "pious" Mormons.[13] The participation of the Church in Exposition '70 in Osaka drew much positive attention, as did famous Mormons such as Ezra Taft Benson, Billy Casper, Johnny Miller, and Jack Anderson.[14]

Most LDS references concerned American Latter-day Saints. Unsurprisingly, *Shukan-Yomiuri*, a weekly magazine, termed Mormonism an "American" church in October 1975.[15] During this period, the Japanese showed fresh interest in and welcome for American Mormons.

Struggles and Successes in Contemporary Mormonism

The years after 1980 constitute a period of mixed success for Mormonism in Japan. During the 1980s, the media, for example, continued

to use modifiers such as "devout" and "earnest" to describe American TV actors Kent Gilbert and Kent Delicutt, both former LDS missionaries to Japan, appearing on Japanese entertainment TV.[16] Generally positive descriptors as "diligent," "healthy," "low cancer rate," and "long-lived" also characterized Mormons. However, news of a critical or negative nature—both internally and externally—also caught the media's attention.[17] Such episodes included the Church's position on the Equal Rights Amendment in 1982, the Mark Hofmann murders in 1985, a scandal over a real estate deal by the Tokyo Church administration office in 1986,[18] and gossip about an extramarital affair by an LDS actress in 1991. Then came the Salt Lake City Olympic bid scandal in 1998.

This shift toward ambivalence refers to the minority of Japanese who pay attention to Mormonism. Of course, most Japanese increasingly know about and take for granted the most visible facets of Mormonism: helmet-wearing missionaries on bicycles, English conversation classes taught at meeting houses, and members' rigid observance of the Word of Wisdom. In addition, countless members of the Church represent LDS ideals well and visibly among acquaintances.[19] Some Japanese tourists have visited LDS communities abroad, and students who study at Church-run institutions of higher education also bring back knowledge of Mormonism. Nevertheless, vast numbers of Japanese know little or nothing about Mormonism beyond the most basic stereotypes, and indifference remains dominant.

However, the move toward ambivalence reflects more than simply Japan's attitude toward Mormonism per se.[20] After the second World War, the nation struggled through a long process of regaining self confidence. Despite economic and population slowdowns, such confidence has blossomed in the past couple of decades. Japan is one of the most secular and modern nations in the world. With the world's second largest economy, people live in affluence, and many disregard religion. Terrorism by Aum Shinri-kyo in 1995,[21] among other things, made the nation distrust religion as a whole. Japan's other-directed, relational, social and cultural expectations work against the demands of systems (such as Mormonism) that prize individualistic and exclusivist attitudes toward faith, lifestyle, and transgression.[22] Participation in a globalized economy is occurring simultaneously with a widespread movement toward nationalist conservatism.[23] Materialism, secularization, estrangement from religion, and growing nationalism are all adverse factors that weigh

against Christianity, including Mormonism. The recent U.S. unilateral foreign policy actions (especially warfare) have not played well in pacifist Japan.[24] The Church, which most Japanese still regard as American, invariably suffers by association. LDS growth rates reflect this changed climate: a slowdown from almost 3 percent per year between 1982 and 1996 to about 1 percent between 1997 and 2004.[25]

The Social Level: Japan's Intercultural Paradox

The historically changing fortunes of Japanese society noted above help contextualize challenges to Church growth in Japan. In this section I point out Japan's *intercultural* paradox, which has influenced these struggles. Similar dynamics affect societies other than Japan to greater or lesser degrees, but the paradox seems particularly inherent to Japanese culture.

Scholarly observers of Japan, both foreign and Japanese, have long been fascinated by Japanese receptiveness toward foreigners and foreign culture. Books such as Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), Karel van Wolfren's *The Enigma of Japanese Power* (1988), and Yoshio Sugimoto's *An Introduction to Japanese Society* (1997) attest to this interest. The historical Japanese embrace of Chinese religion, thought, and technology, as well as its rapid adoption of western science and technology after the Meiji Restoration (1868) and World War II, has led many scholars to argue that Japanese culture is uniquely hospitable to things foreign. Japanese culture incorporates these outside elements into Japanese society, makes them its own, and subsequently improves on them. Accounts of Japan's post-World War II economic "miracle" often used this theme, especially during the heyday of Japanese economic power during the 1980s and early 1990s. Scholars also explained the LDS Church's rapid growth in Japan through the 1980s by this argument. Even Sterling M. McMurrin, that often prescient observer of the LDS scene, grounded his optimism for continued LDS growth in Japan in this manner: "I must recognize that some native peoples have had an almost unbelievable capacity for cultural adaptation. The Japanese are the prime exhibit of this, not only in the profound transformation of their society since the outset of the Meiji era, but even more recently since the War and the American occupation."[26]

However, this explanation's popularity waned somewhat after the prolonged Japanese economic slump began. Scholars recognized that ac-

counts of Japanese receptiveness toward things foreign needed additional nuance. And actually many already understood that Japanese cultural adaptation did not operate simplistically. Instead, it incorporated a paradox.

Perhaps this paradox is best introduced through a saying we Japanese often hear from foreigners: "We were welcome as outsiders, but rejected when we came inside." Dave Spector, a TV talent who has lived in Japan since 1983, puts it this way: "Japanese are fond of 'foreign countries,' but do not ask for 'foreign countries' within the country." A foreigner who speaks Japanese fluently, which used to be unexpected, is sometimes referred to as a *hen-na gaijin* ("strange foreigner") and faces the mixed reception of friendliness and puzzlement. More often than not, while Japanese usually welcome a guest or traveler with very warm hospitality, a person from another country who tries to settle down in Japan faces suspicion and even rejection.

Recently a Japanese scholar with a long residency in Europe has explained this phenomenon as Japan's "intercultural paradox." Toshiaki Kozakai's observations, published in 1991 as *Les Japonais: Sont-ils des Occidentaux? Sociologie d'une Acculturation Volontaire*, derive from ten years of research on the topic and fifteen years of living outside of Japan and observing intercultural issues relating to the Japanese:

> The word "gaijin" (literally an "outside person," an equivalent of "foreigner"), which is used mostly for the Westerners, is disliked the most by those of them who reside in Japan. As guests they surely will be very warmly received, but they would be marked "outside person," as with a branding iron, however long they have lived in Japan, however many generations go by after obtaining citizenship, or even after they have come to behave just like Japanese by speaking flawless Japanese and acquiring the conventions of the society. The day would perhaps be remote when they would be accepted as genuinely Japanese in this closed island community.[27]

Though attitudes are changing slowly, this situation by and large still predominates.

Visitors to Japan quickly notice that television and magazine advertisements overflow with translated loan words of Western origin, as well as with Caucasian models. Kozakai suggests the coexistence of two important attitudes. The Japanese take in the West, on the one hand, through linguistic Westernization, aesthetic Caucasianization, and the desire to acquire the status of honorary Caucasian; but on the other

hand, they reject real Westerners. To illustrate, a young Japanese woman says she feels drawn to *gaijin* as boyfriends, but prefers to marry a Japanese man. Kozakai argues that two vectors are functioning: one is to take in a foreign object, and the other is to keep it away when the circumstances become very real. Masao Maruyama, a political thinker, dubbed Japan "both [a] closed and open society." To account for this apparent contradiction, Kozakai maintains that "taking a foreign object in is easy and possible when the foreigner is kept outside." Kozakai uses the sheer scarcity of foreign residents in the country, as well as the island country's geographical isolation, to support his view.[28] Even when the Japanese take in a new element from a foreign culture, that element will go through mutation, reinterpretation, reinvention, and refraction. Kozakai aptly calls these processes "detoxification" and refers to a system of "immunization."[29]

Kozakai's formulation suggests that foreign elements in Japan face initial enthusiastic welcome while they are still seen as foreign but become subject to suspicion and/or "detoxification" and "immunization" if they attempt to gain a foothold in the country. I believe this formulation applies to the LDS Church and the gospel. Japanese fascination with foreign elements showed itself most remarkably in the post-World War II period. The Church grew steadily from nearly zero to around 50,000 members in 1980. But when a foreign thing comes "inside," when it appears to be more than a surface phenomenon, the reverse motion of keeping it away begins. LDS growth rates reflected the paradox only by the 1990s, but other evidence shows a movement away from the earlier embrace of things Mormon. Each piece of evidence is admittedly anecdotal and may have additional, more proximate explanations, but taken altogether, and along with the growth and retention difficulties,[30] they point to a pattern of Japanese respecting Mormons and Mormonism abroad but manifesting indifference when they come close and stay there.

One piece of evidence is the disappearance of "Mormonism" entries from dictionaries of philosophy since the late 1950s. I found in libraries four dictionaries of philosophy that were published in Japan before 1955. Each listed Mormonism. But of the fourteen such dictionaries published after 1955, only two listed Mormonism. Another example is the gradual exclusion of the LDS Church by the Christian world of Japan from its *Christian Yearbook* starting in 1976 after having listed LDS statistics for more than twenty years previously.[31] I can also point to the

Nihon Hoso Kyokai's (Japan Broadcasting Company's) apparent discontinuance of occasional broadcasts of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. I remember listening to the Tabernacle Choir on NHK radio several times, but more than thirty years ago. I almost never hear the choir on the radio these days, either locally or nationally. Japan Columbia Record Company, now renamed Columbia Music Entertainment, a major Japanese CD audio company, used to have a contract with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to sell records, but it no longer markets the choir's records or CDs.

The Individual Level: Church History on the Internet

The struggles of the Church in Japan can also be seen at the individual level, as many members persevere (or do not) through unexpected challenges to internalize Mormonism. Here I recount, as a member and personal observer of the Church in Japan, a minor crisis that developed for Japanese Mormons because of the internet.[32] The internet is an increasingly important source of information in Japan. The Japanese surfer will find that a majority of websites and bulletin boards on Mormonism are either critical or antagonistic toward the Church, giving historical information on Mormonism unfamiliar to most members.

Physical distance and language barriers have kept most Japanese Church members, including those who are academically inclined, from knowledge of scholarly research on Mormon history. A small number of members subscribe to *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, and the like, and certain controversial aspects do become known through personal networks. For example, although the Church itself said virtually nothing about the priesthood racial ban before 1978, most Japanese members had some knowledge of it. Nevertheless, non-standard Church history has generally been very dimly known by most Church members. It was only around 1997 that Mormon history, other than the "standard Church history" carefully provided by the Church, became easily accessible in Japan. The accessibility was largely due to the rapid development and spread of the internet.[33]

Prior to the internet, the quantity of Church literature on LDS history was quite limited, aside from lesson manuals. Older members, converted after the war, recall two books: *What of the Mormons?* by Gordon B. Hinckley, written and translated into Japanese in 1958; and William E. Berrett's *The Restored Church* (translated 1975), a large book with many

illustrations that had been originally developed as a text for U.S. seminary students. Very few members now possess these books, let alone refer to them. Then came two booklets devoted to Church history: *The Restored Truth* (1980, 1996)—an excerpt from *What of the Mormons?*—and *Our Heritage* (1996). These latter two works are still the chief sources of history for the general membership. The four books aim at members generally and comprise material positive in nature, plain to understand, devoid of complex and sensitive elements, and often featuring moving anecdotes of faith and sacrifice. The literature might be compared to a textbook of any nation's history for the middle-school level. For instance, the books lack concrete descriptions of the polygamy practiced by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, the direct and immediate causes of Joseph Smith's death at Carthage, and the dissension that resulted in schismatic movements and the creation of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Community of Christ) in 1860.

More recently, in 1998, the Church Education System published its latest textbook, *Church History in the Fulness of Times*. This is the only publication by the Church in Japanese which comments on the Mountain Meadows Massacre or on the Mark Hofmann case. Both descriptions are worded very carefully, presumably so as not to damage the image of the Church. The list of the twelve documents Hofmann forged is mentioned in a footnote, the first time the documents had been printed in a Japanese publication since the 1980s, when four of them were introduced in the *Seito-no-michi*, the Japanese Church magazine.[34] These examples illustrate the scarcity of information in Japan provided from within Mormonism.

Encyclopedias had been the most easily available sources of information outside of Mormonism on Church history. The descriptions therein were very brief and the tone was usually not critical, though they cannot be called friendly. Some inquisitive members might have glanced through other books on religion, but most had similarly short and general treatments of Mormonism. Robert Mullen's *Mormons* was translated in 1970 when Japan hosted Expo '70. The book, published by a major publishing house with the title *The Search for Happiness*, was well written and quite friendly to the Church, but it was not non-standard Mormon history. Of course, very antagonistic anti-Mormon literature could be found at Christian bookstores, but most members avoided these works or disregarded their claims as anti-Mormon.

The internet changed the scene radically. Soon after the internet began to be accessible, a member of the Church accessed American anti-Mormon sites and stumbled over problems with the Book of Abraham. He read other aspects of nonstandard Church history and, in 1997, started a website of his own in Japanese called "The Truth about the Mormon Church." It caused a great shock, as he was a respected bishop at the time. He was excommunicated soon thereafter. He renamed the site "Uninformed Saints" in 1998.[35] The following year, members who had left the Church created a website, "Group of Courage and Truth." That same year, another defector started a website called "Is the Mormon Church Worth Believing?" In 2000 a member who remains in the Church introduced "The Study of Mormonism" to give viewers an "objective" perspective.

Thus, in just a few years, different versions and interpretations of Church history and doctrine became accessible in Japanese. As a result, a number of members—perhaps dozens—became disturbed and left the Church. The phenomenon was not very conspicuous, but it was observed here and there. They felt perplexed that Joseph Smith undertook polygamy secretly before the doctrine's public announcement, they puzzled over the supposed connection between the endowment ceremony and Masonic ritual, they grew suspicious of the Book of Mormon's historicity, and they wondered about other issues. Since many Japanese converts are honest-minded and sober, many dissenters felt disappointed and betrayed by the Church. Among those who left the Church were a convert from another Christian church who had been mission leader of a district in western Japan, a very active returned missionary in the Tokyo area, a core member of an Osaka ward, a few Relief Society sisters in one branch, and many other rank-and-file members. Since then, various websites, both apologetic and antagonistic, have been set up, including the official webpage of the Church in Japanese. The tone of the antagonists is still angry, sarcastic, and hostile.

Most who dissented from the Church because of alternative histories,[36] I have observed, returned to their former atheistic lives, though a certain number turned to Protestant churches. Some of those who became atheistic apparently lapsed into moral degradation, launched extramarital relations, neglected their families, and divorced their spouses, just as higher criticism of the Bible and modernism may cause some Christians to lose confidence, recognize no authority, and follow their

own moral instincts. Though it would be virtually impossible to prove, the slowing conversion rate might also result partly from the existence of these secular resources. I have heard anecdotal reports of investigators discontinuing missionary lessons or changing their minds about baptism after reading antagonistic webpages.

At the 1983 conference of the Mormon History Association, Martin E. Marty introduced a distinction between two equally valid but intellectually different levels of religious faith: "primitive naivete" and "secondary naivete."[37] Here primitive naivete refers to accepting a religion more or less without question, while secondary naivete means staying in the faith even after critically scrutinizing Church history and adapting one's faith to more nuanced and sophisticated demands. The passage from the primitive to the secondary level, which often happens as individuals mature, is a difficult process for many, sometimes even occasioning a personal crisis. Members may feel betrayed, disappointed, and indignant when exposed to material that contradicts cherished ideas. They struggle to restructure and reestablish their faith and philosophy of life. Those who succeed grow stronger in the faith than they were before, but some do not succeed.

One might suggest that most members need only primitive naivete; that is, they are content with simple, standard, and positive forms of Church history. And it may be true that many members thrive under such circumstances. The Church in Japan, however, will not grow if it keeps only those with primitive naivete and is unable to retain those who leave that stage and launch more complex explorations of their faith. Nor will an LDS culture that fosters only primitive naivete ever become fully internalized in a society as complex as Japan's. A system of thought from the outside that will not engage a society's most rigorous minds will always remain peripheral. In Japan, those at the first stage of naivete stayed in the Church while many of the rest, including members with complex views, left or drifted into inactivity. Those who leave tend to be inquisitive and intelligent; thus, the Church in Japan has been losing significant human resources.

Conclusion: Coping with the Challenges

In Japan, as everywhere else, the reception of the Church and the gospel varies greatly among individuals. To some, indeed to most Japanese, the Church and the gospel bear unmistakable marks of a foreign en-

tity. To others, those who have been deeply converted, the Church and the gospel are simply the truth. The gospel, like science (which was successfully "taken in" by a modernizing Japan), claims universal truth, beyond cultural particularities. Given an estimate of about 25,000 active LDS in Japan—out of more than 120,000 members,[38] which in turn is about one in every 1,000 Japanese—those holding that the gospel carries truths independent of culture are not insignificant in number, but neither do they appreciably impact views toward Mormonism in the larger society. Most Japanese, in the long term, will continue to regard Mormonism as fundamentally foreign.[39] If the intercultural paradox operates in the manner I have suggested, the Church will probably continue to face severe challenges of growth and retention in Japan. For Latter-day Saints, true conversion among individuals requires, among other things, spiritual persuasion that the essential church transcends its places of origin. As I have argued elsewhere, true conversion often fails to occur for many Japanese in the process leading to baptism. Many converts join for reasons other than deep internal belief. Church leaders must continue to attend to the conversion process after baptism.[40]

From my observation of LDS-related bulletin boards and other trends in Japan, I do not believe that the swaying and/or defection of members from the Church is as common now as it was during the early years of internet access. This situation parallels members' attitudes toward anti-Mormon literature in the past. Once active members become aware of the nature of antagonistic websites, they avoid viewing them. Yet it is still the case that members may be exposed to such information more easily and innocently than in pre-internet days. Thus, Church teachers and leaders in Japan must, at least indirectly, confront this new accessibility to nonofficial Church history and criticism.

The intercultural paradox and the mini-crisis over the internet involve a similar process: enthusiastic curiosity for new phenomena from the outside, replaced by disillusionment and a repelling of those phenomena once greater familiarity sets in. One of the Church's key challenges in Japan is to ensure that familiarity does not breed contempt. Familiarization should draw members closer. We should give members more tools to recognize Church teachings and history—even amid the controversies—as universally and personally applicable, rather than foreign.

A new type of Church member who is informed about academic Mormon history may be slowly emerging in Japan. I personally know

many such members: a few at the bishopric level, a few college professors, a physician who is in a district presidency, a Gospel Doctrine teacher, an Institute teacher (not a CES employee), and others. These members could be regarded as Mormon intellectuals who have made the passage from Marty's primitive to secondary naivete or from belief before criticism to belief through criticism and interpretation.

What would help knowledgeable Japanese members pass to the secondary stage of faith? First, the leadership of the Church in the country should understand historical issues in the Church. With such knowledge, they will be able to deal better with members who are encountering such questions and difficult issues for the first time. Second, the Church in Japan should release as much information concerning Church history as possible. Finally, there should be neutral resources available. With these conditions satisfied, the Church in Japan will become more mature, stable, and better able to weather future crises. It might even simultaneously lay the groundwork for the long process of overcoming the intercultural paradox.

Notes

1. See, most recently, Jiro Numano, "Mormonism in Modern Japan," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 223–35.

2. Two foreign newspapers, *Japan Herald* and *Japan Mail*, preceded the Japanese papers in reporting and arguing about the arrival of the Mormon missionaries. Alma O. Taylor, one of the first four LDS missionaries in Japan, wrote in his journal on August 20, 1901, "In reading the papers for the last two or three days I find that the subject of Mormonism is being advertised extensively and that the different papers have taken sides and a heavy war is raging. . . . [M]any of the articles written concerning us are very severe and slanderous." Reid L. Neilson, "The Japanese Missionary Journals of Elder Alma O. Taylor, 1901–10" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 2001), 40. Frederick R. Brady, "The Japanese Reaction to Mormonism and the Translation of Mormon Scripture into Japanese" (M.A. thesis, Sophia University, Tokyo, 1979), first researched the archives of Japanese newspapers and assembled a list of articles on Mormonism. The most detailed treatise on this topic is Shinji Takagi, "Mormons in the Press: Reactions to the 1901 Opening of the Japan Mission," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 1 (2000): 141–75.

3. *Jiji-Shimpo* (Tokyo), "On the Arrival of Mormonism," August 20, 1901, 2; all translations from Japanese are mine.

4. *Niroku-shimpo* (Tokyo), "Mormon" (editorial), August 22, 1901, 2.

5. I first put this point of view in my "Reaction of Japanese Press at the Arrival of Mormon Church," (Japanese) *Mormon Forum*, no. 17 (Fall 1996): 14.

6. Shinji Takagi and William McIntire, *Japanese Latter-Day Saint History* (Japanese) (Kobe: Bihaibu Shuppan, 1996), 117–19. The number of members when the mission was closed in 1924 was 166. The LDS First Presidency gave the main reason for closing as the mission's "almost negligible results." *Deseret Evening News*, June 12, 1924, quoted in R. Lanier Britsch, "The Closing of the Early Japan Mission," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 2 (Winter 1975): 173.

7. Yasuo Furuya, *On Japan Proselytizing* (Japanese) (Tokyo: Kyobunkan, 1995), 76–77.

8. Between 1924 and 1948, the Church continued to operate in Japan as best it could with its few available local leaders. See J. Christopher Conklin, "Members without a Church: Japanese Members in Japan from 1924 to 1948," *BYU Studies* 15 (Winter 1975): 191–214.

9. Furuya, *On Japan Proselytizing*, 79–80.

10. Shinji Takagi, "The Eagle and the Scattered Flock: LDS Church Beginnings in Occupied Japan, 1945–49," *Journal of Mormon History* 28, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 104–39; Takagi, "Riding on Eagles' Wings: The Japanese Mission under American Occupation, 1948–52," *Journal of Mormon History* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 200–32.

11. *Asahikawa Journal* (Asahikawa, Hokkaido), May 25, 1959.

12. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, November 18, 1961; *Nikkei Shimbun*, October 21, 1966.

13. *Mainichi Daily News*, November 30, 1965; *Asahi Shimbun*, December 13, 1968.

14. *Mainichi Shimbun*, April 26, 1969, 3; *Weekly Asahi Golf*, December 1, 1971; *Asahi Shimbun*, January 7, 1972.

15. Quoted in Seiji Katanuma, "The Church in Japan," in *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures*, edited by F. LaMond Tullis (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 170. Katanuma had aptly argued a few years earlier: "Internationalization of the Church necessitates nationalization of the Church" in each country, suggesting that "it means that our church in Japan becomes the church for the Japanese" by paying attention to the needs, desires, and hopes of his fellow countrymen. Seiji Katanuma, "The Church in Japan," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 1 (Autumn 1973): 26. Jiro Numano, "How International Is the Church in Japan?" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*

13, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 85–91, also regarded the Church as an American organization.

16. The very common use of the adjective "devout" (keiken-na) does not necessarily represent the individual reporter's choice of words but is conventional wording, reflecting the common image of society toward Mormons.

17. Some of this mixed media message paralleled American media coverage of the LDS Church. Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 98–123.

18. *Uwasa no Shinso* (*Truth of Rumors*, a monthly journal), 8, no. 11 (November 1986): 62–65. An employee charged that a collusive relationship existed between dealers and the office.

19. For example, Teiji Ebara, a Catholic theologian, writes, "I have wonderful Mormon friends who value their families very much. They refrain from stimulants, work hard, and are morally clean." *Catholicism and the Mormon Church* (Japanese) (Tokyo: San-yo Press, 1993), 104.

20. See Numano, "Mormonism in Modern Japan."

21. The religious group Aum Shinri-kyo released sarin gas on a Tokyo subway on March 20, 1995, killing twelve people and injuring 5,510.

22. Numano, "Mormonism in Modern Japan," 226–28.

23. Kosaku Yoshino, *Sociology of Cultural Nationalism* (Japanese) (Nagoya: Nagoya University Press, 1997), 238–39, says that the *shido-yoryo* (the course of study) directed by the Ministry of Education in 1989 clearly reflects a shift toward nationalism. Masachi Ohsawa, *Imperial Nationalism* (Japanese) (Tokyo: Seido-sha, 2004), 208, also observes the reemergence of nationalism since the 1990s. The most outstanding sign was the movement to revise history textbooks. Those Japanese who try to rewrite the nation's history prefer a sympathetic, reassuring history that points to the nation's nobility and glory—a nationalist viewpoint. Others acknowledge the criticism of Japanese imperialism made by the country's neighbors. The first group appears to have become a sweeping force in recent years.

24. According to the U.S.-Japan joint opinion poll by Gallup pollsters and Yomiuri Newspaper in November 2004 (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 26, 2004), 53 percent of Japanese respondents replied they did not trust the United States. That figure is the highest of the last five years. Seventy-five percent were displeased with the U.S. occupation of Iraq, and 61 percent did not regard the reelection of George W. Bush with favor.

25. LDS membership in Japan increased from 75,155 in 1982, to

111,525 in 1996, to 120,842 in 2004. The statistics are based on a letter to me from the Tokyo Japan Administration Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, March 30, 2005. A sharp increase between 1980 and 1982 was due to an unusually hasty baptism policy begun in 1979. For more explanation of these baptismal policies and a general discussion of Church growth through the mid-1990s, see Numano, "Mormonism in Modern Japan," 224–25.

26. Sterling M. McMurrin, "Problems in Universalizing Mormonism," *Sunstone* 17, no. 18 (December 1979): 15.

27. Toshiaki Kozakai, *Intercultural Paradox* (Japanese) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1996), a revised and updated version of his *Les Japonais: Sont-ils des Occidentaux? Sociologie d'une Acculturation Volontaire* (*The Japanese: Are They Westerners? Sociology of a Voluntary Acculturation*) (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1991), 90.

28. Ibid., 158, 159, 215. Kozakai points out that Western residents did not account for more than 0.1 percent of the population in 1990; the majority of Japanese are exposed to foreign cultures only indirectly.

29. Ibid., 80, 194, 211.

30. According to the graph, "Church Activity in Japan" prepared by the Church's Research Information Division, the percentage of members attending sacrament meeting stood a little lower than 30 percent in the second half of the 1970s, then declined to a little over 20 percent in the 1980s and 1990s. Cyril I. A. Figuerres, *The Ammon Project: Establishing "Real Growth" and the "First Generation Church" in Japan* (Salt Lake City: LDS Research Information Division, 1994). Japan's activity rate is low by LDS Church standards, but not uniquely so; and short of studying Japanese retention through sophisticated methodologies of social psychology, it may not be possible to suggest the particular contribution that the intercultural paradox makes to levels of activity. Nevertheless, the conceptual logic seems sound: When the teachings of the Church—still a foreign element to many members—press hard with demands that an individual Japanese reform himself or herself, that person often draws back, failing to accommodate himself or herself to it or fully integrate it within his or her own existent frame of thought.

31. In 1976, Japan's Evangelical Association proposed excluding the Unification Church, LDS Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Christian Scientists from the Christian Yearbook "on the ground of the heretical nature of these sects." *Christian Shimbun* (Tokyo), December 19, 1976. After

twenty years of successively diminishing the space allotted to these four religions, the *Yearbook* eventually excluded all of them from its 1996 edition.

32. Here again I am not claiming that the Church's experiences are completely unique to Japan, just that these experiences are necessary to understand the particular struggles of Mormonism in Japan.

33. The percentage of Japanese households with internet access soared from 6.4 percent in 1997 to 88.1 percent in 2003.

34. In 1988 I reported the list of Hofmann's forged documents in the first issue of an independent journal, *Mormon Forum*, three years after Hofmann's arrest. This bi-annual journal, with a circulation of 400, lasted until 2000.

35. "Uninformed Saints" is a translation of *Seito-no-michi* (*michi* means "unknown"), a pun on the former name of the monthly LDS Church magazine in Japan, *Seito-no-michi* (*michi* means "way"), or *The Way of the Saints.*

36. A similar wave of defections occurred in Bremen, Germany, in 1997, although the article reporting it does not say whether the medium conveying the non-standard history was on the internet or in print format. Jorg Dittberner, "One Hundred Eighteen Years of Attitude: The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Free and Hanseatic City of Bremen," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 67–68. Many branch members were disillusioned by the Utah Lighthouse Ministry's revelation of certain, apparently unsavory episodes in early LDS history and by the Church's failure to respond to those disclosures in ways that satisfied local members. Eventually thirty previously stalwart members defected, including two former bishops and a branch president. In a comparable case, Japanese members would probably have responded less precipitously and perhaps with more patience, but the nature of the disillusionment would have been similar.

37. Martin E. Marty draws the phrase from Paul Ricoeur. Marty, "Two Integrities: An Address to the Crisis in Mormon Historiography," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 3–19, reprinted in George D. Smith, ed., *Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 181; see also Louis Midgley, "The Acids of Modernity and the Crisis in Mormon Historiography," in ibid., 189ff., and Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), cited in Marty, "Two Integrities," 187 note 2.

38. For the reasoning behind this estimate, see Numano, "Mormonism in Modern Japan," 224–25.

39. Ibid., 230–32. Little has changed in this regard during the ten years

since I last wrote of the need for Mormonism to take root in the soil of Japanese society.

40. Ibid., 227.

Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Texas Oak Leaves*, watercolor, 30" x 34", 1991, courtesy Utah State Gallery

PERSONAL VOICES

En Route: A Journey of the Spirit

L. Jackson Newell

In the introduction to his epic short story, "A River Runs Through It," Norman Maclean wrote that his primary aim was to let his "children know what kind of people their parents are or think they are or hope they are."[1] This sentiment captured my initial purpose in crafting this essay. Dealing chiefly with my evolving spiritual life, it is the story of a youth whose extended family took religion seriously, even seriously enough to live peaceably with its great diversity of belief; it is the tale of a free spirit butting heads with a tightly disciplined institution; and it is the record of a family spiritual legacy, one noticeably different in beliefs and loyalties than the typical Latter-day Saint has come to know and cherish through his or her heritage.

Religious Heritage and Harsh Realities

My upbringing was spiritually compelling and personally rich, though my early years hardly lacked challenges. When I look back, the good forces that bore on me as a youth place me among the most fortunate of children launched in those years following the Great Depression and straddling World War II. Born and reared near Dayton, Ohio, I grew up in a home where religion frequently surfaced as a lively subject of conversation. Mother's mother was Roman Catholic, her father German Lutheran. They lived in Columbus, Ohio. As my forty-four-year-old grandmother, Kathryn, lay dying of tuberculosis, she had exacted a promise from her husband that nine-year-old Henrietta be raised Catholic. But she also confided in her older daughter (Mother's senior by sixteen years): "The most important thing to me is that Henrietta is brought up to be a good woman." Out of respect for his deceased wife's family and heritage,

my grandfather saw to it that Mother attended mass through her first communion at age twelve. This she did, then promptly announced to the chagrin of her beloved Catholic aunts, uncles, and cousins that she preferred to attend the Lutheran Church with her father. Services were still conducted in German there, however, so she shortly joined her best friend, Frances Brandt, as a member of the King Avenue Methodist Church.

Throughout her life, Mother maintained a deep spirituality anchored on the inspiration she found in Jesus's deeds and teachings. She felt little need to speak about her own beliefs, but she could be moved to tears upon witnessing even the most common act of kindness—as she was when I struck and killed a small pig while she and I were driving down a country road together when I was in high school. I got out of the car and apologized to the farmer who happened to be in his front yard at the time. When I slipped behind the wheel to resume our journey, she smiled through moistened eyes and said: "Thank you for what you just did, Jack."

A highly educated woman who earned a master's degree at Stanford in 1927, Mother drew enormous strength and courage from her faith in God, from the example and teachings of Jesus, and from good people. When I was a small child, she worshipped at Grace Methodist Church in Dayton, Ohio, with Dad, my two older sisters and me. When I was eight, we moved to neighboring Englewood to be in the country. Mother then attended Concord Methodist near our home in Englewood, and I went with her. I doubt that church attendance ever did much for me or my spiritual development, but Mother's way of embracing the triumphs and tragedies of life surely did. Her deeds revealed her faith and her belief in the essential, if only potential, goodness of the men, women, and children of this world, both near and far. She did not make judgments or reserve her affections for others based on their race, social class, or sexual preference—and our extended family and circle of friends spanned the full range. It simply was not in her makeup to attach significance to such distinctions. I have never met another person who seemed to possess the pure goodness of my mother.

Dad's father, Thomas V. Newell, attended Bonebrake Theological Seminar in Dayton, Ohio, and was ordained a minister in the United Brethren Church (a branch of Methodism) shortly before he turned forty. With a wife and four small sons, he took a pastorate in the same neighborhood where Orville and Wilbur Wright ran their bicycle shop in Dayton. Soon after, my Grandmother Martha was also diagnosed with tuberculo-

sis and the family doctor instructed Tom and Martha to move west where the dry air would ease her breathing and extend her life. They got off the train in Denver in the autumn of 1902. With no Protestant ministry available, Grandpa turned to skills he had mastered as a youth: horse training, carpentry, and farming.

Grandmother died when my father, their third son, was seven. Grandpa reared his four sons alone on a farm near Loveland, and they helped him establish a homestead up Skinner Gulch. As a boy, Dad recalled, his father often mounted his favorite horse on Sunday mornings, stuffed his Bible in the saddlebag, and rode off to one remote ranch community or another to preach as a circuit riding pastor. Throughout their lives, Dad and his brothers chuckled about their youthful fidgeting while Grandpa offered long and earnest prayers of thanksgiving during which their pancakes turned cold. These memories may explain why the blessing on our food when I was growing up was so simple and direct: "We thank thee for this food, dear Lord, that thou did kindly give help us to show our thanks to thee by how we talk and live. Amen."

As a small child, I knew Dad as a respected physician in the Dayton community and a man who showed great respect for religion. He served on the board of directors at Grace Methodist for a term or two, then resigned when the pastoral committee switched from tolerating moderation in the use of alcohol to insisting on abstinence. When we worshipped as a family in these years, I loved to sit next to Dad because he sang the traditional hymns in a way that resonated with my soul. After he enlisted in the U.S. Navy's Medical Air Corp in World War II when I was five, I remember crying through "Onward, Christian Soldiers" as Mother squeezed my little hand and we both thought about Dad in the war-torn South Pacific. By the time I reached my teens, however, Dad rarely attended church with Mother and me. (By then my sisters had gone off to college in Colorado.) The reasons behind this change in Dad were complex, but the fact that he established a long-term relationship with a patient *cum* mistress when I was twelve provides sufficient explanation.

Over the last twenty years of her life, through pain I still cannot fathom, Mother's faith would be tested and her strength demonstrated by her refusal to give up on Dad, or leave him, despite his nightly "hospital rounds" (as everyone outside the immediate family believed them to be) from 9:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. Bitterness never overtook Mother. She continued to devote her life unstintingly to the service of those in need, loving

others unconditionally. The cross Mother bore enabled me to know and admire Dad for his many fine qualities, to realize I must forgive him for his tragic flaw just as she did, and to be nurtured by a strong father whose love for me I knew without doubt.

Dad's belief in me was demonstrated unequivocally at the conclusion of my junior year in high school when he gave his blessing (and thus, Mother's) to a scheme my best friend, Bill Anderson, and I dreamed up in the school library one morning shortly after my sixteenth birthday. We worked after school all spring to earn money for a road trip across the West that summer in Bill's 1950 Chevrolet. We accumulated enough cash (just over $300) to buy gasoline and food for the extended camping trip, and departed early in June on our three-month journey of 9,000 miles. Dad's trust in allowing me this opportunity, and his pride in our successful return, mattered greatly to me at that critical stage of growing up. "You went away a boy and came back a man," he said with satisfaction the day I commenced my senior year.

An earlier event in my life bears mention. When I was six, a physician diagnosed me with Perthes of the left hip—a deterioration of the ball joint and surrounding bone that demands treatment to help avert the permanent shortening of the affected leg. With a straight brace that took all the weight off my left leg and a two-inch thick cork-soled shoe on my right foot, I attended the Gorman School for Crippled Children in Dayton for my second and third grades. The horrible polio epidemic following World War II was in full swing at the time, so all but one of my schoolmates were severely crippled and most faced permanent disabilities. The day the doctor told me to take off my leg brace and cast it aside was one of the most joyous—and sobering—of my formative years. Gorman School and my friends there were soon in my past, but an awareness of my good fortune, and the capriciousness of others' misfortunes, marked me with an enduring sensitivity to the severe trials that people face in life.

Rites of Passage

I left home for Deep Springs College at seventeen, the beneficiary of loving parents, two older sisters whom I worshipped, and a spiritual legacy rich in texture and real in experience. My college years—at Deep Springs, the University of California at Davis, and Ohio State—were filled with animated discussions about religion, politics, and ethics. I returned home for Christmas in my nineteenth year, determined to confront Dad about his

continuing affair with Charlotte Baber—and the awful toll it was taking on Mother. I arranged to meet him at his office after his final appointment one afternoon. Dad knew why I needed to talk with him alone, and he accepted my eye-to-eye appeal to his conscience. At the end of our unsparing conversation, he said: "I am helpless, Jack, and I will not change what I am doing. You must accept me as I am if we are to know each other as men." I did not tell Mother of this conversation right away, knowing the additional pain it would cause her. But when I later related the story to her, she wept—not from anger about her plight but in gratitude for my futile effort.

Having seen courage, faith, grace, and forgiveness at work in a life so close to mine, I passed through the skepticism of my college years rather quickly. No surprise, then, that Harold Grimm's senior course sequence at Ohio State on the European Renaissance and Protestant Reformation captured my imagination as no other academic studies had done. The content of these courses and the character of this professor gave direction to my life-long interest in the history of religion, the sources of spirituality, and the varieties of moral and spiritual belief. That year of study with Professor Grimm also focused my sights on becoming a professor. To earn a living teaching as he taught and thinking about the things that animated him looked like a dream to me, and I pursued it passionately.

I received my baccalaureate degree in history from Ohio State in May 1961 and, on the same day, opened an envelope from which fell a handsome check. To my surprise, my recently deceased Uncle Francis had left each of his nieces and nephews a bequest of $500. The next day I called Rocky Mountain National Park to seek (and receive) a release from my commitment to lead its forest fire-fighting crew that summer. I promptly purchased a round-trip ticket to London and stuffed my backpack with bare essentials. Within a week, I was on my own in a world I had known only from books and pictures. First the British Isles on a Mo-Ped, then the Continent by thumb. My Deep Springs classmate, Rich Haynie, was just concluding the second year of his mission in Paris that summer and I went to visit him at the LDS mission home at 3, rue de Lota.

The first day we were together, Rich led me on a tour of the Louvre, the Arch of Triumph, and the Eiffel Tower. In response to my curiosity about the purpose of his mission, he laid the six missionary lessons on me the next day. Impressed but somewhat overwhelmed, I struck out on my own the following day and Rich returned to his regular routine. Before I left, however, we traded books—my partially read copy of Ayn Rand's *The*

Fountainhead for Rich's English edition of the Book of Mormon. The latter promptly found its way to the bottom of my backpack where it provided nothing more than ballast throughout my summer adventures that included climbing the Matterhorn with another Deep Springs buddy, Vern Penner. I returned home in September, just in time to commence my studies for a master's degree at Duke University.

I repacked for school in a single day and headed for Durham, North Carolina, stopping overnight to visit my sister Joyce and her husband, Gene, in Blacksburg, Virginia. When I mentioned my time with Rich Haynie, Joyce lit up. She, too, had become interested in Mormonism through a college roommate, and we talked long into the night after Gene went to bed. Mormonism had become a sore point between them. Arriving at Duke the next day, I was just moving into the graduate dorm room when two young men appeared at my door. Elders, from Idaho. Joyce had contacted the mission president in Virginia when I pulled out of her driveway that morning. The efficiency of the LDS Church bureaucracy was revealing itself to me for the first time.

Heady Thoughts and High Ideals

My master's program centered on American history in the Revolutionary era. When Professor Harold Parker handed me a list and asked me what I wished to pick as my minor field, I chose theology. Duke had a fine Protestant divinity school, and it seemed to me that a serious look at things religious was in order. I took a year-long course in Christian eschatology and social thought from Professor Ray C. Petry and enjoyed every day of it. At the same time, my dark-suited Idaho missionary friends were coming by my apartment for regular visits. I occasionally attended the local Methodist Church, sometimes went to the LDS services, but usually hung out with Rick Coville, John Cavanagh, Jim Coward, and other grad school friends on Sunday mornings. Through the LDS ward, I formed a close friendship with Chuck and Valeen Avery. He was pursuing a doctorate in forestry at Duke in the same program my brother-in-law Benny was to join the next year. When Lenette and Benny arrived in Durham in the autumn of 1962, we enjoyed many good times together as struggling graduate students—including many passionate conversations about politics, the environment, and religion. Mormonism quickly became an emotional lightning rod that unleashed thunderous arguments among us. We

somehow learned to enter and leave this stormy field without carrying the fallout across to other facets of our close sibling relationship.

By the early 1960s, when Mormon Church president David O. McKay was pushing ninety, his first counselor Hugh B. Brown had become the leading spokesman for the LDS Church. The eloquent Brown, nearing eighty himself, urged young people to think for themselves and warned everyone about the dangers of blind obedience. He also forged a high level of camaraderie with leaders of other religions in the United States. I read everything of his that I could get my hands on, and he quickly became the most inspiring religious leader I had ever known. One of his statements still rolls off my tongue from memory:

> You young people live in an age when freedom of the mind is suppressed over much of the world. We must preserve it in the Church and in America and resist all efforts by earnest men to suppress it. . . . Preserve, then, the freedom of your mind in education and in religion, and be unafraid to express your thoughts and to insist upon your right to examine every proposition. We are not so concerned with whether your thoughts are orthodox or heterodox as we are that you shall have thoughts.[2]

Seeking understanding and living by the spirit of the law was his constant refrain. This was a religious attitude and philosophy that resonated with my most deeply held beliefs.[3]

The summer between my first and second years at Duke, I went west for my fourth season of fighting forest fires for the U.S. Forest Service or National Park Service. This time I won the fire crew chief position on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. I wanted to live among Mormons and experience their religion and culture where they were at home. My job got off to a fast start and proved to be both challenging and rewarding. Late one June night as a full moon beamed through the bunkhouse window by my cot, I felt an urge to get up and drive to the canyon overlook, Cape Royal, to contemplate my life. With my legs dangling over the lip of the chasm, silvery with moon-glow, I resolved to join the Mormon Church. I definitely could not accept its claim to be the "one true church," but I did believe that living my life within its culture—the culture that Hugh B. Brown so eloquently championed and my friend Rich Haynie exemplified—would be right for me. If I someday reached the Pearly Gates and Saint Peter broke the news that the Mormons had no corner on the truth, I reasoned, I would smile knowingly and reply that I couldn't have chosen a better way to live.

A week later two of my best friends from high school, Larry Collins and Steve Josselyn, stopped to see me on their western road trip prior to Larry's marriage. The three of us went to the lodge bar that evening and I ordered a Coke. "What! What's happened to you, Tiger?" Steve blurted out. Larry chimed in with equal surprise. We had enjoyed drinking beer together since we graduated from high school in Englewood, Ohio. When I explained that I had decided to join the LDS Church and therefore to forgo alcoholic beverages and coffee, they were baffled but entirely respectful. We clinked our glasses and fully enjoyed the next several days together.

At the end of July, Linda King asked me to be her date for the North Rim employees' mid-summer "Turn-About Dance." After that, I asked her out again and again. A waitress at the North Rim Lodge dining room that summer and a senior majoring in art education at Utah State, she had been reared in an inactive Mormon family in Fillmore, Utah. Actively engaged in the Church herself, however, she seemed to understand me instinctively and was comfortable with my way of seeing the world. We spent almost every evening together through August and early September. When it was time for us to resume our studies, I drove Linda to Fillmore and met her family, then delivered her to Utah State in Logan before I headed back to North Carolina. Linda and I had, however, stopped in Richfield, Utah, for an important event. Rich Haynie had returned from the French Mission, and he agreed to baptize me in his home ward before I left the state. Linda was with me for that event on September 9. It has always meant a great deal to both of us that I had decided to join the LDS Church prior to our first date. The choice had been mine alone; it was not affected by the romance that kindled shortly after my moonlit epiphany.

Shock Waves Hit My Family . . . and Me

News of my conversion to Mormonism sent shock waves through the Newell family. Mother was in Oregon helping Lenette and Benny with their four children when my letter arrived describing my imminent baptism as a Mormon. She immediately interpreted my decision as a failure of her spiritual nurturance, a feeling no doubt intensified by Lenette and Benny's belief that Mormonism, despite its many wholesome adherents, was a cult founded by a mentally ill crackpot. Dad happened to be visiting Joyce and her family that same weekend when my letter arrived in Virginia. She, of course, was elated, while Gene shrugged in disgust. Dad said

nothing. When Joyce asked what he thought about my baptism, he retorted: "Well, at least he didn't join up with the damn Catholics!" (Dad's equanimity, you see, did not rival Mother's.) These strong reactions notwithstanding, I believe my decision was a tribute to my upbringing. It never occurred to me to consider how the family would react. I had always been encouraged to think for myself and prepared to make decisions about my life with confidence. I believed instinctively that the family would respect my choice, but comfortable acceptance did not come easily or quickly.

Linda and I corresponded throughout the 1962–63 academic year. She came to Ohio to spend Christmas with me and my family, and I drove to Logan to give her an engagement ring during spring vacation. At Mother's insistence, the ring was set with the diamond that her father had given her when she graduated from high school. I was ordained an elder in Durham on March 10, just six months after my baptism, in preparation for our temple marriage in June—which required approval by the First Presidency of the Church since I did not meet the minimum one-year membership requirement for entering the temple. My letter of authorization bore the shaky signature of President David O. McKay.

Linda and I were married "civilly" in Fillmore on Saturday, June 15, so that members of both our families could be with us. By this time, Linda's mother was so debilitated by alcohol addiction that she was unable to help with wedding preparations. Linda, therefore, planned and orchestrated our wedding and reception herself. My parents drove out from Ohio and other members of my extended family drove in from California and the Midwest, and two Deep Springs classmates traveled to Fillmore for the occasion. This considerable gathering from my side of the marriage notwithstanding, our simple ceremony at Linda's ward house was held in the tiny Relief Society room because the Church refused to dignify marriages outside the temple by allowing them to take place in the church's chapels. The fact that our wedding would not be considered a marriage by the Church was so offensive by my sister Lenette and my two brothers-in-law that my siblings and their families did not make the trip.

We planned to drive directly to Logan the following day to be ready for Linda's summer school classes at Utah State on Monday. Sunday began very early, however, when we were awakened at the Safari Motel in Nephi by a state trooper who instructed us to return to Fillmore immediately. We were living outside the law, he informed us soberly, because we

had not signed our marriage license! It turned out that the trooper was a personal friend of Linda's father, and they had conspired to make the most of this opportunity to haze the newlyweds. After signing the official document with a flourish and enjoying a memorable lunch at Linda's home with our parents and other family members, we set out again for Logan.

Two days later Linda and I entered the Logan Temple to seal our marriage in the customary LDS manner "for time and all eternity." At that time, Mormon couples went through their religious endowment ceremonies and temple marriages in one continuous process. I was completely unprepared for what hit me. Stunned. The pressure to make lifelong promises of obedience to Church leaders and to wear authorized garments day and night for the rest of my life came with no reasonable chance to ask why, object, or opt out. To do so would have been to call off the marriage and incur humiliation, especially for Linda who had been reared in the culture. I felt entrapped by the Church especially because, at this point in the process, the bride and groom are separated from each other.

Fortunately, my trusted friend Rich Haynie went through this endowment ceremony with me. Without him, I may very well have stood up and walked out. Linda's bishop, Elliot Rich, who was a professor of agriculture at Utah State, also proved to be a most engaging and understanding friend in the days that followed. I tried to hang on to Hugh Brown's interpretation of Church doctrines, but the garments (those old one-piece button-bottom marvels) chafed me in both body and spirit. Bishop Rich kept me in the fold when he answered my direct question: "Are we supposed to wear these garments *all* the time, as the elderly gentleman instructed me when I entered the temple?" His response: "I believe there are times when your temple garments can be folded neatly and placed at the foot of your bed. Now, if you don't want a different answer, don't ask anyone else." We weren't about to.

Early Years of Marriage and Mormon Life

My spiritual road was both rough and rewarding over the next couple of years as I finished my master's at Duke and taught a year at Clemson University in South Carolina. The rewards came chiefly from our association with the humble members of the tiny Seneca branch in the mountains west of Clemson—and especially the branch president Tom Garner,

his wife Trudy, and their six young children. The roughness was due in large part to Joseph Fielding Smith's sermons assailing evolution and insisting that the world is only six thousand years old. I wrote him (he was then president of the Quorum of the Twelve) and asked if he believed it was necessary to accept his view to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. He scribbled across the bottom of my letter "See my *Man, His Origin and Destiny,*" and mailed it back to me. Having read the book, I knew what it said, and I felt empty over this exchange. But David O. McKay, I learned years later, didn't support Smith on this position and trimmed Smith's sails by having University of Utah geologist Lee Stokes write an article for the old Church magazine, the *Improvement Era,* defending geological time. I read it with surprise and satisfaction. A decade later when I joined the University of Utah faculty, I met Stokes and thanked him. We remained friends until he died.

Linda and I spent two months at my extended family's simple cabin on a tiny island in Georgian Bay, Ontario, between my year of teaching at Clemson and starting my two-year faculty stint at Deep Springs College. I had been a Barry Goldwater conservative until then, but I was reconsidering my political philosophy. Linda and I decided to read Samuel Elliot Morrison's new *Oxford History of the American People*—all 1,100 pages of it—aloud to each other. Finishing the task before we headed west, I discovered that the ideals that had always mattered most to me—social justice, human rights, and mercy (giving people a second chance)—were more often championed by the left than the right. I registered as a Democrat that fall, as did Linda. Once again I encountered the stunned disbelief of my physician father and that of my sisters and their husbands. Mother, on the other hand, responded with interest, being genuinely curious about our shifting political views.

Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought was founded in 1966, heralded by an article in *Time* magazine. Linda and I read about it one morning at breakfast and sent our check for a subscription to the independent journal before the day was out. What a breath of fresh air it was to know that other unorthodox people like us found ways to be happy and productive in the fold! I was teaching at Deep Springs at the time, and Linda and I also found the Bishop Branch of the Church—fifty miles away in the Owens Valley—a welcome spiritual home. We attended its services regularly in the old Elks Hall, and served in the Young Men's and Young Women's leadership, making two trips a week over and back across some-

times treacherous Westgard Pass. The upbeat members of our struggling branch were a welcome respite from the anger, pessimism, and cynicism of the Deep Springs students and faculty during the Vietnam War. Our own mounting anger boiled over in June 1970 when one of the Deep Springs students we had been closest to was killed in action.

New Hampshire: Conflicts and Rewards

In the autumn of 1967, we moved from Deep Springs to Durham, New Hampshire. I had taken a job as assistant dean of liberal arts, hired by Gene Mills who was to become our lifelong friend. Our paths also converged again with Lenette and Benny's, for he had recently joined the forestry faculty at the University of New Hampshire. We enjoyed three remarkable years together in New England.

When we arrived in the Granite State, I was still smarting over increasingly restrictive Church policies that signalled the end of the era of President McKay and Hugh B. Brown. Joseph Fielding Smith loomed as the next president of the Church, and he was finally having things his way. I had decided that I would simply drift away when Boyd K. Packer, then an assistant to the Twelve and the new president of the New England States Mission, came to the Portsmouth meetinghouse one Sunday to interview a string of Melchizedek Priesthood holders for the purpose of reorganizing the New Hampshire District leadership. When it came my turn, he didn't ask me if I believed the doctrines of the Church or supported the General Authorities; he simply called me to serve as one of the twelve members of the district council. I said, "All right," and that was that. Three of my best friends, Ernie Ellsworth, Glendon Gee, and Dick Lemke, also in their late twenties, were appointed to the council. No one on it, including the president and his counselors, had passed their early forties. Packer himself was only forty-three. This was the mission field at its best.

Several things stood out in my Church experience during these New Hampshire years. I discovered immediately that the district president was a John Birch Society officer, as right-wing as they come. George Romney was bidding for a presidential run in the New Hampshire primary that spring, and our district president wore a "George Wallace for President" (the segregationist ex-governor of Alabama) lapel pin to our monthly district council meetings. When my friends and I turned up at the next meeting with our "Romney for President" pins, an earnest discussion ensued.

The upshot: We would all leave our politics outside when we engaged in Church business, concentrating instead on what united us. We did, too, and we generated a high level of esprit.

George Romney was a moderate Republican with an impressive reform record as governor of Michigan. We used our 150-year-old Bow Lake farmhouse as a "neighborhood headquarters" and held a reception there for his wife, Lenore Romney, a gracious woman. The Vietnam War had become a national agony by that spring; and George Romney's candidacy came crashing down when, at a press conference in Concord, he flatly stated that he had been "brainwashed" by the Johnson administration during a recent visit to Saigon. The press ridiculed him for this single sentence, and he was forced out of the running before the primary was held. Of course, as time passed, it became clear that he and most other Americans had, indeed, been brainwashed for a long time, but that clarity didn't save George Romney's candidacy. Along with a number of Church friends, we backed Hubert Humphrey enthusiastically that fall in the general election, but he suffered a narrow loss to Richard Nixon.

As an LDS district councilman, I became something of a circuit-riding preacher myself, akin to Grandfather T. V. Newell six decades earlier. The last Sunday of each month, Linda and I traveled to a different struggling branch in the Granite State to attend a string of Sunday meetings and speak at sacrament services. We drove our blue 1968 VW beetle which I shod with studded snow tires each winter, enabling us to set off for some remarkable adventures with our daughters Chris and Jennifer. We often stayed overnight with branch presidents and their families, forming friendships with many young families akin to our own.

I was speaking in the un-air-conditioned Concord chapel one sweltering Sunday afternoon when a six-month-old baby began to cry. I put up with the competition as long as I could, then paused in frustration and said what every Mormon speaker has secretly wished to blurt out: "Would the lady down in front please remove her screaming baby from this meeting!" Those in attendance were aghast for a split second—until they realized that Jennifer and Linda were the culprits—and that I was smiling.

A crucial element of my Church life in New Hampshire was a meeting I requested with Elder Packer at the New England Mission home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I had corresponded with him through several cycles about the Church's stand against the ordination of worthy African Americans to the priesthood. When I drove down Interstate 95 to talk

with Packer, he was all business. He had no patience with my questions, told me to repent for my lack of faith in Church leaders, and warned me to stop questioning and get myself back in line with Church doctrine. This was particularly ironic, because one of my points had been that the proscription on Blacks receiving the priesthood was a long-time *practice* of the Church, not a doctrine traceable to a claimed revelation. Elder Packer and I parted with a chilly handshake. Shortly thereafter, he left the mission presidency and returned to Church headquarters where he was soon to serve as one of the Twelve. Charismatic Paul H. Dunn, ordained to the First Council of the Seventy in 1964, swept in to replace Packer as mission president.

No two leaders could have been more different in style or approach. Dunn, a protégé of Hugh Brown, spoke forthrightly about the free agency of members and poked fun at the deferential treatment General Authorities typically expect. Linda and I both enjoyed a most cordial relationship with him, and our friendship would be renewed again and again. Suffice it to say, Paul Dunn was a General Authority I admired and enjoyed as a friend. Years later in Salt Lake City, he spoke to an area-wide priesthood leadership gathering that I attended. He admonished us against "the common practice of using force, and pressure, and guilt as instruments to keep members in an obedient frame of mind." Such tools, he warned, were unworthy of a free and believing people. He gave this remarkable address shortly before he was marginalized for exaggerating or fabricating his World War II and major league baseball stories. His speaking and story-telling styles were exciting, invariably humorous, and deeply humane—akin to Garrison Keillor's—but Elder Dunn neg- lected to tell his listeners that his Lake Wobegon was not real either. This lapse in judgment severely diminished this enormously popular, effective, and youth-oriented Church leader. Ironically, it was an article in *Sunstone* magazine that revealed Dunn's deceptions to a Mormon audience after the *Arizona Republic* broke the story—testimony to the power and impartiality of a free press and to free inquiry in the Church. He was one of just two remaining General Authorities who actively supported *Dialogue* and *Sunstone* within the Church community.

Ohio: Religious and Family Transitions

We moved to Columbus, Ohio, in August 1970, in pursuit of my doctorate at Ohio State. Roald Campbell became my dissertation com-

mittee chair and, ultimately, a close colleague, co-author, and friend. These years between 1970 and 1974 were especially important ones in our family. Living just seventy miles from my parents in Dayton afforded many chances to get together. Mother sought every opportunity to spend time with Chris and Jennifer, and Dad took great pleasure in our times together as well. One weekend Mother and Dad attended church with us at our ward. Around our dining room table that afternoon, they suddenly became very serious, and Mother said: "Daddy and I want you to know that we admire the way you live your religion, and we respect the place of the Mormon Church in your lives. Your children are fortunate to be raised as you are leading them. This makes us very happy." Mother died without warning of heart failuire following gall bladder surgery a few months later. Our son, Eric, was born less than a year later, a juxtaposition that led us to wonder playfully if Mother had gone up there and picked him out for us.

Exactly one year after Mother's death, Dad announced his plan to marry Charlotte Baber. Struck by the cruel irony of her succeeding Mother in our family home, we were quite unprepared to respond to this news. Aunt Louise, then in her early nineties, sensed our dilemma and counseled Linda and me: "If you refuse all contact with Charlotte, you will cut yourselves and your children off from your father. You must decide now which is more important to you, avoiding Charlotte or having Len in your lives and the lives of your children." We opted for Dad. In the years that followed, his gratitude—and his presence in our lives and our children's growing-up years—was our rich reward.

Dad and Charlotte had several years together before she fell victim to severe dementia that required institutionalization. She died while Dad was flying to Salt Lake City for one of his semi-annual visits with us in the late 1980s. I broke the news to him as he got off the airplane, then flew back to Ohio with him the next day to help with the funeral. Charlotte had just one surviving relative, a nephew who flew commercial jets. He attended the funeral along with five of Dad's elderly friends. In driving snow and bitter cold that late November day, the nephew, two funeral directors, and I carried Charlotte to her grave. Dad hobbled along beside me with his cane, wordlessly, though three decades of pathos clogged both his mind and my own.

As for our church life in Columbus, I was called almost immediately to serve on the stake high council and was ordained a high priest. The

stake president, Jack Van Rye, was a young pharmaceutical salesman from Utah with apparent aspirations for higher leadership in the Church. Happily, Stayner Brighton, Ohio's superintendent of public instruction, and John Jefferies, director of the Columbus Children's Hospital, also served on that high council. The three of us constituted an unusual liberal wing of the body. They were both older and more experienced than the stake president (and certainly me), which made it difficult for him to dismiss our trio. During my tenure on the council, at least two Church courts were convened to judge members accused of heresy or infidelity. The president may have been a by-the-book judge, but he had trouble with his jury. Stayner, John, and I stood up for both defendants, arguing for measures more lenient than excommunication. Kindness, we urged, would be more likely to inspire genuine contrition than ecclesiastical judgment. It would also spare their families severe and unnecessary consequences of their own. Since these courts are supposed to render unanimous decisions, led by the stake president, our contrasting views caused Van Rye much consternation—but apparently spared the errant members excommunication.

Rich Haynie came to seek his doctorate at Ohio State in 1973, while I was serving a post-doctoral fellowship there. He and Becky also had three young children, so our old friendship blossomed with added dimensions. Rich served in a stake music calling. At one priesthood leadership meeting, the stake president's remarks could be characterized as "going the Church one better." If Church policy required Aaronic Priesthood youth to wear white shirts and dark slacks to administer the sacrament, then, in our stake, he stated, these young men would also wear ties and trim their hair so it did not touch their collars or ears. When it came time to conclude the meeting with a hymn, Rich, who was at the piano, stood and announced, "Rather than close the meeting tonight with 'Come, Come, Ye Saints,' we will sing 'Know This, That Every Soul Is Free.'" Many of us sang with renewed fervor that night as Rich pounded on the keyboard.

Memorable as these experiences were, our Church life in Columbus was no match for the excitement and romance of the newly established missions and less "Church-broke" members we had known in upper New England, rural South Carolina, and eastern California.

Rearing Children in Zion

If our four years in Ohio had jolted our LDS frame of reference,

then our move to Utah was a sea change. The University of Utah hired me to preside over its Student Affairs Division and offered me an assistant professorship effective July 1, 1974. Linda and I had always panned Mormons who longed to "go home to Zion," so we dealt with the irony of our move to Utah by regarding it as a three-year sojourn. For those first three years, we lived in Holladay, across the street from the meetinghouse. (In New Hampshire, we had lived twenty-seven miles from the church, and in Ohio the distance was roughly three miles.) Our neighborhood was about 95 percent Mormon, genuinely admirable people for the most part. I taught the adult Sunday School class for a time, helped a bit with the youth, and covered for four-year-old Eric and his five-year old compatriot when they broke three windows out of the Church basement one summer morning while "pretending to be robbers." No wonder a woman came up to me after church later that year and exclaimed: "I just figured out why you look so familiar to me! You play the part of the devil in the temple ceremony, don't you?" I suppose that's what you get if you wear a red beard (as mine then was) and rear a pre-kindergarten delinquent in Utah.

Chris and Jennifer were nine and seven years old the second year we lived at 2416 Capricorn Way. I often tucked them into bed, then lay down on top of the bedspread between them to tell a true or made-up "bed-night story." I often fell asleep before they did, petering out in the middle of a sentence. They would poke me in the ribs, demanding that I wake up and finish the story. One Saturday night, however, they had a serious question to ask me. Jennifer said plaintively, "Last week our Sunday School teacher said she expects every child in her class to bear testimony tomorrow that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God and that the Church is true." (Fast and testimony meeting was the next morning.) "But I don't know those things for sure."

Chris chimed in: "Same for me, but my teacher says she will be terribly disappointed if we don't bear our testimonies." A long and surprisingly grown-up discussion followed, at the end of which I offered my fatherly advice: "You should never ever say something you don't believe, no matter what anyone else says. If you believe Joseph was a prophet, then say so. If you don't believe he was, then it would be wrong for you to say it. It is always more important to be true to your own conscience than to please someone else." Chris and Jennifer both went to the microphone the next day to express gratitude for the many good things in their lives, but neither

claimed she believed Joseph Smith was a prophet or that "the Church was true." I admired their youthful courage.

In June 1977, we moved to 1218 Harvard Avenue and became members of the Garden Park II Ward with its beautiful and unique old chapel, spacious grounds, duck pond, and Red Butte Creek. Shortly after we moved, Dick Fox, the bishop, asked if I could visit with him for a few moments. As we sat down in his office, he said, "I want you to teach an alternative adult Sunday School class. The current class is full of older members; and though their teacher is good, he has bored the young couples to the point that they don't come out any more. A lot of these couples are your age, so I'm calling on you to teach a class that will draw them to church on Sunday and give them something to think about all week. I don't care if you use the Church manuals or not, but I trust you'll do something interesting and inspiring."

I accepted Dick's challenge and the newly born class met in the old Carriage House on the grounds next to the chapel. We started with two or three couples and a single adult or two and grew from there. In a short while, Dick wisely asked Linda to join me in teaching the course, and the two of us built it up to a regular attendance of about thirty or thirty-five people. We rarely gave even a mini-lecture, but instead posed real questions, suggested pertinent religious principles and philosophical ideas (drawing especially on the New Testament and Obert Tanner's newly republished *Christ's Ideals for Living*), and got everyone involved. We dealt frankly with issues we all face in work, marriage, parenting, tithe paying, personal conscience, and religious obedience. We always tried to end on a note of practical value, finding things we could do and reason for hope in the wisdom arising from the discussion.

Henry Eyring, the acclaimed University of Utah chemist, came to the class several times as a stake high councilor. He always participated in and seemed to enjoy the discussions. Linda and I taught this class for nearly ten years, forming many fast friendships. The only serious discord we encountered came between the two of us one Sunday morning when I suggested that Muhammad Ali (who was still in his heyday) was the person in our time most like Joseph Smith. I still stand my ground: The two shared a buoyant genius in dealing with people, a daring outlook on life, and an impish sense of humor. And each of them took audaciously controversial stands on issues of his day.

In the meantime, we were both tapped to work in other ward jobs as

well. Linda typically served in the Relief Society, and I taught the young men in priesthood quorums and often in Scouting. Pediatrician Ted Evans and I always seemed to hold related positions in the youth programs, and we organized outings for both young women and young men. As our own children moved up through their school years, I was able to take advantage of my youth leadership callings to do a lot of things with them and to see that they and their peers got many opportunities to enjoy the out-of-doors and engage in community service. Contrary to usual Church practice, I tried to involve the young women in the same activities as the young men.

Sunday dinners around our family table became the focal point of our lives together. Our four children spanned from elementary school to high school and always had a host of questions about what they had been taught in Sunday School or why the speakers had said what they did in sacrament meeting. Would their dear Grandmother Newell really be denied a place in the celestial kingdom because she was not a Latter-day Saint? Were face cards and people who played card games (as they did with their grandfather) really evil? Why can't young women pass the sacrament right along with young men? Why didn't our neighbor, Elder Sterling Sill, ever smile if he was a General Authority of the Church and knew the gospel so well? Smoking is harmful, and alcohol can be very destructive (their Uncle Steve made this fact unmistakably clear), but what was wrong with drinking tea or coffee? The questions poured out and our conversations rolled. How do you distinguish between Church doctrine and what happens to be the opinion of a general conference speaker? What is clearly good about the Church's teachings, and what is probably incidental at best to a good life? Where does the Church's authority end and your conscience begin? No question was off limits, many stories were told, and we laughed as often as we sighed. The Church provided a superb context for our children to think about what is right and wrong, who gets to decide, and how to live a good life and help create a just society. Sunday dinners were often the most exciting and thought-provoking point in our week.

The denial of LDS priesthood ordination to worthy black members was naturally among the issues that came up around our table. President Spencer W. Kimball's announcement in June 1978 that this proscription of privileges was lifted came as a great surprise and enormous relief to our family. I was teaching in England that semester, and we had just joined friends for dinner when one of our hosts mentioned that he had just read

in the *London Times* "about a new proclamation that brings an end to Mormon discrimination against African American men." Tears sprang to Linda's eyes, and I choked up, baffling our hosts until they realized that joy was the source of our emotions. With courage and integrity, our friend Lowell Bennion had guided us and thousands of other Latter-day Saints through the excruciating years leading up to this historic change. We are all in his debt for the sacrifices he made to advance this cause.

Serving and Challenging the Establishment

Despite the rewards of our long Church engagement, by the end of the 1970s I could no longer deny the tightening pinch between my conscience and the Church's increasingly sharp emphasis on obedience. Writing essays to focus my thinking and express myself on matters of importance to me was just becoming my *modus operandi*, so I began burning the midnight oil to work things out in my mind. At a time when I was coming up for promotion to the rank of professor and had only recently been freed from one of the two deanships I had held simultaneously (student affairs, which I dropped, and liberal education), it is clear to me in retrospect that facing my differences with Church leaders commanded my attention with new urgency. In 1980, *Sunstone* published my essay "Mormon Prophets and Modern Problems"[4] and *Dialogue* published "Personal Conscience and Priesthood Authority."[5] In working out my own views, I had become engaged in a serious public conversation to which I would contribute for many years. (It seems that I still am.)

In 1981, the bishopric in our ward was reorganized and I was called to serve as the second counselor to Howard Herbert, a good but rather reserved man in his mid-fifties. Ben Hathaway, who had previously served as a bishop, was first counselor. My reputation as a liberal and the common sense of the ward membership made the announcement of my calling a surprise in sacrament service on Sunday, June 14, judging by the murmur that rippled across the chapel. After the meeting, many people in our Sunday School class seemed to be as pleased as they were startled that someone like me could be called to the bishopric.

When the stake president, Eugene V. Hansen, had interviewed me in his office a few days earlier, he asked me a series of direct questions:

Q.: Are you a regular tithe-payer?

A.: Yes, we tithe but the money does not all go to the Church.

Q.: If you were to serve in the bishopric, would you pay it fully to the Church?

A.: Yes, I would not want to be in the position, even by implication, of urging others to tithe to the Church unless I were doing so myself.

Q.: Do you attend the temple regularly?

A.: No, the experience generally detracts from my spiritual life, but [anticipating him this time] I would do so if I accepted a position of leadership.

Q.: Do you support the every-member-a-missionary program of the Church?

A.: No, for two reasons. First, it implies that friendships are a means to other ends, not ends to be treasured for their own sake. Second, it thrusts an awkward slant on friendships—implying to the other person that what I believe is superior to what he or she believes. My experience does not support this conclusion consistently, and I don't like to insult other people even if I think they are wrong.

Q.: But would you support the missionary program as a bishopric member?

A.: If I have a gift along this line, it is in helping liberal and estranged members stay in the Church. I surely can commit to work actively toward this end, by whatever name you give it.

Q.: All right, then, are you willing to serve with Howard Herbert as his second counselor?

A.: If you are comfortable with me as I am, then I am comfortable in saying yes.

"Good," President Hansen responded. "We will present your name for a sustaining vote at church tomorrow morning, and set you apart immediately thereafter."

As I rose to leave, he exclaimed, "Oh, one more thing. Would accepting this calling jeopardize in any way your effectiveness in bridging the Mormon/non-Mormon communities within the University of Utah?"

"Five years ago," I said, "it might have pigeon-holed me, but faculty and students know me well enough now that I doubt anyone on either side of the religious divide would see me as less trustworthy."

President Hansen nodded with satisfaction and ushered me out. Also of interest in this conversation was the fact that I had worn a full beard since before coming to the university. Gene Hansen said nothing

about my whiskers, nor did anyone else outside a few close friends who wanted to know if President Hansen had brought the matter up.

The new bishopric was sustained and set apart that Sunday, and we embraced our responsibilities. Both of my senior compatriots apparently felt a need to school me in the ways of Church leadership. While Howard's initiatives were subtle, Ben assumed the role of an assertive older brother and occasionally lectured me sternly about "supporting the brethren" when I questioned the wisdom of instructions passed down from Church headquarters. Two months into our working relationship, such an episode flared up over the home referral missionary program through which every active couple was asked to invite three non-member neighbors over for dinner (as couples or singles) along with two full-time missionaries. Bishopric members, as usual, were to lead by example. When Howard presented the challenge and called on Ben and me to get started right away, I said as graciously as I could that Linda and I would not be participating. Ben raised his voice in protest, I raised mine in response, and our tempers flared. As we went at it, Howard sat frozen behind his desk pleading, "Brethren. Brethren! Stop, oh please, stop!" Ben and I continued until we both were thoroughly vented. When we caught our breaths, we looked at each other and burst out laughing, then stood up and gave each other a bear hug. We both admired the spunk we saw in the other far more than we cared about our differences. From that day forward, Ben and I worked together with remarkable esprit.

My three-plus years in the bishopric were eventful and satisfying. I came to understand more fully that every household in our neighborhood (indeed, any neighborhood) bore its own grief and, in most cases, tapped the wellsprings of it own strengths and achieved its own triumphs. I counseled newly married couples as Elliot Rich had counseled Linda and me, and seized more than my share of openings for good-natured change. When ward conference rolled around one year, for example, it fell to me to read the names of all ward leaders and call for the customary sustaining vote by the membership. The Church provided a template on which every leadership position is named, followed by a blank in which the appropriate person's name was to be written in. Looking this over the night before the meeting, I noticed that there were spaces for the names of all the young men who led Aaronic Priesthood quorums but nothing comparable for the young women who led their classes. Easy to remedy. I simply made a parallel list next to the boys' names, and added all the girls who

were leaders of their Young Women's classes. When I read the names of ward leaders, from the bishop on down, I proceeded right through my expanded form, called for a sustaining show of hands for the named individuals, and, having completed my assigned task, sat down. Someone tapped my knee. It was the stake president passing a hand-written note my way: "Is there a new form for sustaining ward leaders?" I scribbled in reply, "Yes, there is in our ward!" and handed it back. He smiled knowingly.

The Promise and Price of Free Expression

As a senior dean on the campus now and a recently promoted full professor, I found my career to be in a highly demanding but stable phase. Complicating matters, however, Linda and I were presented an additional challenge less than a year into my bishopric duties. Dick and Julie Cummings invited us to their home one evening. Over dinner, Dick explained that they were working with the search committee to find new editors for *Dialogue* and asked if we would consider taking on that challenge. We were honored by the confidence the search committee showed in us but explained that we already had our hands full.

A week or two later, Fred Esplin and Randy Mackey came to our home on a Sunday afternoon. We hardly knew either man, so their telephone call to set up the meeting aroused our curiosity. After a lively conversation in our living room, they explained that the *Dialogue* search committee had *chosen* us. They caught us by complete surprise. Linda's recent articles about Emma Smith (even though *Mormon Enigma* was still three years from publication) and my recently published essays in *Dialogue* and *Sunstone* apparently brought us to their attention. Suffice it to say, we were flattered by their confidence and asked if we could ponder the matter for a few days. In the end, we agreed to tackle the editorship if several conditions were met. Would Lavina Fielding Anderson join us as associate editor? Would Fred and Randy serve, respectively, as the journal's business manager and legal counsel? Would Allen Roberts lend his extensive periodical publishing experience to the mix? All agreed. This group became the core of our *Dialogue* leadership team for the next five-plus years. Linda staffed the office downtown with able assistants, I devoted evenings and weekends to the task, and the two of us took turns chairing the weekly policy and editorial meetings in our living room.

Stanford University graduate students Gene England and Wesley Johnson had founded and run the journal in Palo Alto, California. In the

early 1970s they handed the responsibility to Bob Rees in Los Angeles, who passed it to Mary Bradford and Lester Bush in Washington, D.C., where it remained until 1982. When we moved the *Dialogue* editorial office to Utah for the first time in its sixteen-year history, hand-wringing broke out among some of the journal's most ardent supporters. Wouldn't Church leaders be able to intimidate the editors if they were in the same city? Others, however, saw *Dialogue's* arrival in Utah as a sign that the independent journal had matured and could stand its ground. As it turned out, our five years at the helm were tumultuous for LDS scholars and writers everywhere because the Church made a series of moves to intimidate independent scholarship about the Mormon experience and discourage Church members from reading *Dialogue* and *Sunstone* or attending scholarly symposia sponsored by them.

About a year into our editorship, over a dozen of our writers, personal friends, and acquaintances were called on the carpet by their stake presidents and warned, variously, to stop their research into controversial facets of Church history and to stop publishing in *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, and the *Seventh East Press* (a short-lived, independent student newspaper at BYU that was closed down after its editors published an interview with Sterling McMurrin). If they continued to write, they were instructed, they should shift their focus to faith-promoting stories. Historians were threatened with sanctions including excommunication if they published studies that dealt with such subjects as Church finances, Church leadership, polygamy, or the evolution of temple ordinances. Our Tuesday evening *Dialogue* editorial team meetings suddenly became electric as reports of each new development in this confrontation between scholars and Church authorities played out. As the lines of conflict became etched with increasing clarity, our editorial team unitedly resolved to remain focused on publishing legitimate scholarship and principled in defending the integrity of the journal and our authors.

Two manuscripts and their authors truly punctuated this high-stakes conflict. The first was an exhaustive study by David John Buerger of the secretly practiced "second anointings" through which select Mormon leaders have been chosen and promised in a most sacred temple ceremony that a lofty place in heaven is assured for them, no matter what they might subsequently do. (Though Buerger did not explore the doctrinal implications, concentrating instead on its history, I find them truly disturbing.) The other manuscript, written by former BYU his-

torian D. Michael Quinn, documented and considered the implications of the continued authorization of new polygamous marriages after the formal renunciation of plural marriage in 1890. (Perhaps half a dozen of the marriages involved General Authorities as a party; many of the new plural marriages they authorized, however, were lower-ranking members. This practice continued for at least fourteen years following President Wilford Woodruff's Manifesto that federal officials and the general public were led to believe ended polygamy.) In these and related cases, our tests for publishing became: (1) Is the evidence unimpeachable? (2) Is the interpretation responsible? and (3) Is the issue important to a rounded understanding of the Mormon experience? The Quinn and Buerger manuscripts both passed muster after exhaustive review and refinement, and we published them.

When the former was under review by us, which somehow was no secret to Church authorities, Apostle Boyd K. Packer went so far as to threaten us and the authors in only slightly veiled fashion at the priesthood session of general conference: "Anyone who interrupts the process of faith, or the seeds of trust in Church leaders . . . *just go ahead*! These shall be *cut off.*" I was present when these words were spoken, understood them well, and wrote them in my notebook. I resolved then and there not to bow to Packer's threat. After a very long and traumatic discussion in our living room a few nights later, the rest of our *Dialogue* leadership group arrived at the same difficult conclusion. If verifiable historical evidence, carefully vetted and responsibly interpreted, challenged the faith or undermined the authority of Church leaders, then both the membership and the leadership needed to be mature enough to deal knowledgeably and openly with our whole history. That was, and is, my position.

Paralleling these events, Doubleday released Linda's and Valeen Avery's thoroughly researched biography of Joseph Smith's first wife, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*, in October 1984. The volume won three significant book awards the first year, but Church leaders were rankled, most obviously because Linda and Val dealt frankly with the origins and early practice of polygamy—clearly the major trial in Emma's life. Both authors received many invitations to speak at sacrament services, Relief Society meetings, and evening firesides. The first-time public discussion of the topic upset Church leaders.

In the introduction to the second edition of the book, published by the University of Illinois Press in 1994, Linda and Val captured the long

and sad story of the Church's clandestine effort to quash sales of the book and ban them from speaking about it on Church property or to Church groups. Suffice it to say here, in June 1985, a confidential message transmitted only in person or by phone went out to LDS ward and stake leaders in Utah, Arizona, and Idaho, warning them about the book and instructing them to deny any and all invitations that might be tendered Linda or Val to speak in meetinghouses—including sacrament services, Relief Society meetings, and firesides. We received no fewer than seven phone calls that Sunday morning from friends who served in ward or stake leadership positions, asking if Linda and Val had been told about the proscription on their freedom to speak within the Church. They had not. Serious issues about the propriety of the action, due process, and personal respect immediately leaped to the fore.

In the weeks that followed, Linda, through our stake president, Eugene Hansen, insisted on a meeting with someone of apostolic rank to hear an explanation for the directive, the rationale for it, and the reason that the order was disseminated without her knowledge or Val's. Linda and I ultimately met with two apostles, Neal Maxwell and Dallin Oaks, both of whom we knew from their days as ordinary members. Maxwell had served as vice-president of the University of Utah and Oaks had been president of Brigham Young University. We invited President Hansen to accompany us, which he did. Ushered into Oaks's office, we found them both cordial if ill at ease; but as our conversation unfolded, neither proved to be at all forthcoming. When Linda asked if they had read *Mormon Enigma*, Maxwell said nothing and Oaks commented that he had "read parts of it." Even so, they did not apologize for the action taken by the Church nor try to explain it. They said only that the behind-the-scenes manner in which ward and stake leaders were instructed to act on the decision might not have been the best way to do it.

As relatively new apostles, and the only two who had come up through academic careers, I believe Elders Maxwell and Oaks in particular were assigned to talk with us as a way of testing their absolute loyalty to the Church's hierarchy. In meeting with us, they were clearly required to speak against free inquiry, defending the Church's views and actions on this matter as their own rite of passage. Linda and I left the meeting on a polite note, but one that lacked warmth on either side. We rode down the elevator of the old Church Administration Building at 47 East South Temple, remarking on the contrast between the ideals that inspired us

and the loyalties that bound the two Church apostles. Nothing had changed.

Linda and Val were shortly the center of national news stories. Someone had tipped off religion writer John Dart at the *Los Angeles Times.* He promptly interviewed them both and tried to get an explanation from the Church (without success). The story ran in leading newspapers from coast to coast. The controversy over the Church's "book banning" raged for months. In the midst of this turmoil, Linda's phone rang one day at the *Dialogue* office. A familiar voice from our past said: "This is Paul Dunn, Linda. Do you remember me?" Of course she did; and in their cordial conversation, he invited Linda, me, and our children to come down to his office later that week just to talk. "You know, Linda," he said, "how much I admire you and your work, and I know your children love you for who you are, but I want them to know that I know how good your book is and how courageous a person you are."

Welcome Respites

Heather and Eric were still rather young, but on the appointed afternoon Chris came down from Utah State and we picked Jennifer up early at East High. The four of us spent more than an hour with Paul Dunn in his office, speaking frankly, reminiscing, and laughing together. "I can tell you that none of your critics up here have read your book, Linda," he said, "but I have read every word of it—including the footnotes—and I can tell you it is an excellent biography." He showed great interest in Chris and Jennifer, asking questions about their studies and plans.

When we left Dunn's office and walked down the hall, Marion D. Hanks happened to be waiting for the elevator. He, too, greeted us warmly and asked what we were doing in the building. When we told him, he seemed very pleased, then graciously introduced himself to Jennifer and Chris as we rode down together. This was a fortuitous meeting, because Marion D. Hanks was the only other General Authority openly supportive of liberals in the Church. When we walked out the door onto South Temple, fifteen-year-old Jennifer exclaimed, "Geez, I didn't know they had guys like that down here!" Elders Dunn and Hanks were surely a dying breed. This bracing experience notwithstanding, it is difficult to describe the toll this whole affair took on our four children, then ranging from ten to nineteen years of age. It can't be easy to have your mother punished by

the Church you attend for writing a book that wins prizes and that almost everyone you know praises warmly.

Greatly magnified sales of the Emma book, coupled with the bad press the Church continued to receive for trying to silence its authors, led to an odd and unsatisfying retraction of the ban. Linda had persisted in pressing for a resolution of the impasse through our stake president, Gene Hansen, and he continued to be genuinely concerned and helpful. On the eve of a KSL television interview with Linda concerning the upcoming Mormon History Association meeting (which was sure to include questions about *Mormon Enigma* and the controversy surrounding it), she got a call from President Hansen explaining that the sanctions on Linda and Val had been lifted. When asked early in the interview about the ban, Linda reported with satisfaction that it had just been lifted. Ironically, however, the Church never announced or confirmed this action. In practical terms, therefore, the ban was never lifted because those who might have asked Linda or Val to speak were never informed that they were again free to extend such invitations.

As our *Dialogue* years, in which the *Mormon Enigma* controversy was imbedded, neared their end, Linda and I attended the gala dedication of the Obert and Grace Tanner Plaza at the University of Utah. The affair included dignitaries from both the city and the Church, and Gordon B. Hinckley was among them—then a counselor in the First Presidency. He recognized us, greeted us by name, and, at the end of a brief but cordial conversation, said: "Thank you for all the good you do." We were both surprised but assumed President Hinckley didn't really know who we were or in what controversies we had been involved. But a few days later we received a hand-written note from Hinckley in the mail. Acknowledging our *Dialogue* editorship, his letter ended with the same sentence: "Thank you for all the good you do." He has been president of the Church for more than a decade now; and from a distance, I have observed and often admired that same openness and magnanimity in President Hinckley.

My exit from the bishopric after three and a half years of service came at my own behest. I had had good experiences as a Boy Scout during my pre-teen and teen years in Ohio, and I was eager for Eric to enjoy similar opportunities. Just as he was turning twelve, our Scoutmaster moved away and it fell to me as second counselor to recommend a new one. When I told Bishop Herbert that I had succeeded in my task and was

ready to nominate the new Scout leader, he asked me who it was. "Jack Newell," I replied. He blinked and said, "You can't do that and serve in the bishopric, too." When I explained that I wished to trade assignments, Howard said he would need to check with the stake president before moving ahead. That evening, Howard called me on the phone: "Jack, the stake president said, 'Whoever wants to be a Scoutmaster gets to be a Scoutmaster.' We will release you from the bishopric and sustain you as Scoutmaster next Sunday."

I accepted this new assignment with the understanding that I could include Heather in all the outdoor adventures of our little troop. Starting at age nine, then, Heather joined me, Eric, and his buddies on all Troop 14 hikes and campouts. With Ted Evans, we climbed 13,068-foot Wheeler Peak in Great Basin National Park the day before Heather's tenth birthday. Our troop enjoyed a great variety of Tuesday evening activities and weekend outings, and we paid enough attention to merit badge work to move the Scouts along on pace. I take satisfaction in the fact that each of the boys I started with that fall earned his Eagle in a timely fashion.

Sometime during those years as a Scoutmaster, I experienced the most deeply spiritual moment of my life to date. Sitting near the back of the Garden Park chapel during sacrament meeting one Sunday afternoon, drifting quietly away from the clatter of children and the drone of the speaker, I heard my mother's voice saying to me: "Jack, you are just the kind of man I always hoped you would become." I sat bolt upright in total surprise, then settled back in my seat closing my eyes. With a deep breath, I savored the inexplicable moment.

Church encouragement for young men to serve two-year missions became a factor to reckon with as Eric and his friends moved through high school. Linda and I had a clear stance. If Eric wished to go, we would back him enthusiastically. If he chose not to serve, we would support him just as vigorously in whatever else he opted to do with those crucial years of his early adulthood, just as we had with Chris and Jennifer before him. He showed no interest in the subject until, just before his nineteenth birthday, he suddenly announced that he wished to go. I felt good about his decision, and, on the eve of his departure, gave him "just one piece of advice"—which was my usual send-off when any of our children launched a major new step in life. On this occasion I urged Eric to listen as closely to what other people said about their beliefs as he hoped they would listen to

him present his views. If he would do this, I opined, he would get an education and they might as well.

Though Eric's reports from his short stint in the Missionary Training Center in Provo were truly strange, once he was off in the mission field I gained new respect for the program itself. Most of all, I greatly respected the way Eric conducted himself during his two years in rural Louisiana. He helped reconstruct a Protestant Church after a hurricane, attended and spoke at a black Baptist revival meeting, and became a trouble shooter for the mission president, a professor of sociology at BYU, when tensions broke out in different wards and branches between black and white members. Above all, he learned a great deal about people, poverty, and himself. To this day, he thanks Linda and me for letting his decision to serve be entirely his own—and we remain grateful that he served and learned so much from his experiences.

Bureaucracy on the Loose

My respect for individual Church leaders and many Church programs notwithstanding, my differences with Church policy and bureaucracy came to a head in the late 1980s. The Church set out to remodel the Garden Park Ward house about 1987. This unique architectural treasure was "to be brought up to standard" in the words of the Church Building Department. Without warning, we suddenly found the towering windows in the lovely old cultural hall ripped out and replaced by concrete slabs, the vintage hardwood basketball floor inside covered with all-weather carpet, and the walls lined with burlap. In the chapel, three large nineteenth-century Minerva Teichert paintings of biblical scenes were removed from the spaces that the architect had designed specifically for their display so that the building would be in compliance with a new "no decorative art" policy. Further, due to the structural crosses that appeared coincidentally in the leaded glass windows, they were slated for removal and replacement with clear glass. As an ironically humorous aside, the Carriage House was remodeled in this same renovation scheme and we were supposed to refer to it from then on as the "Remote Instructional Facility."

At the height of this controversy, a serious protest erupted involving members of both Garden Park wards as well as non-members in the neighborhood. Stake and ward leaders were urged to halt the destructive work on the historic building. As part of this effort, I wrote President Hinckley,

appealing to him to intervene to stop the desecration of the chapel and return the Teichert paintings. Within a few months, the Teichert paintings reappeared in the chapel. The stained glass windows were left undisturbed. A decade later, the concrete slabs were removed from the cultural hall and large windows were reinstalled. After all my struggles with the Church over intellectual freedom, this bureaucratic handling and partial desecration of the unique Garden Park Ward house was the final straw in my relationship with the Church as a organization. My spiritual health demanded a release from the storms of institutional religion.

Conscious Choices and Difficult Decisions

For more than twenty years, we had reared our children in the Church, taught both adults and youth in countless Sunday school, Relief Society, and youth classes, and served in a variety of ward and stake leadership positions. I raised my voice repeatedly in both private and public appeals as the Church turned increasingly against the things I held dear—including many of the things I believed it stood for when I chose to be baptized a member in 1963. I had supported Linda in her nine-year quest to write the Emma biography, and then stood with her during her personal struggle to deal with being undercut by the religion to which she had devoted so much of her life. Believing that I could affect the flow of events, I had thrown my heart into writing for *Dialogue* and *Sunstone,* speaking on intellectual freedom and scholarly integrity at public forums and academic meetings, and, finally, joining Linda in editing the journal. By 1990, I was at a crossroads.

By that time I was in the midst of a long project of my own. Sterling McMurrin and I were engaged in a series of fifty-two recorded conversations leading to a book that was to be published just after he died in 1996 as *Matters of Conscience: Conversations with Sterling M. McMurrin on Philosophy, Education, and Religion.* In reliving his similar history of conflict with the institutional Church a generation earlier, and watching others who were committed to the same principles spanning much of the twentieth century, I realized that people like me usually tread one of three paths: (1) They turn bitter and spend the rest of their lives on the margins of the Church (just inside or just outside the boundaries) nursing their obsessions, (2) They submit to their multi-generational family heritage of temple-going Mormonism and swallow their differences with the Church, or

(3) They move on in life, both spiritually and temporally. A dwindling few, like the phenomenal Lowell Bennion, endure.

Constitutionally, I am designed neither for bitterness nor submission, so my choice was natural. As a convert I did not have a phalanx of family elders who would see me as fracturing their eternal family or embarrassing their good name. Linda, with her longer history in the faith, empathized with my position, but she was more patient than I. Even so, I was uninterested in any but the simplest transition. I quietly slipped away from church-going and other institutional observances—while maintaining warm relationships with Church friends and admiring the good that I saw in leaders like President Hinckley and many others whom I know and respect at the local level. Our departure from Salt Lake City so I could serve as president of Deep Springs College in California in 1995 was a most welcome relief. It served as a definitive marker for me, and, I believe, for Linda.

Just six months earlier, however, a specific and happy event had forced our hands in a rather public watershed. Eric and Allison Jones were engaged and planning their marriage for Christmas week, 1994. They wished to be wed in the Salt Lake Temple and assumed that Linda and I, along with Allie's parents, would be there with them. As a condition of temple participation, members must pledge unflinching loyalty to all Church leaders and affirm their belief that the Mormon Church is the only true religion. I had not gone to the temple for years, but I knew I could not in good conscience make the required statements of loyalty. Eric and Allie were crestfallen when Linda and I told them we would not be with them in the temple for their sealing ceremony. At the end of a long and serious conversation in which we explained every facet of our beliefs, Allie suddenly stood up, held out her arms, and hugged us both tightly, saying softly, "I love you just the way you are, and I wouldn't want you to be any other way." With tears all around, their wedding plans proceeded and newly broadened familial bonds were forged in common understanding.

As the wedding date approached, we received a heartfelt appeal from our old friend, Ted Evans, then bishop of Garden Park Ward. He said he believed in us, considered us worthy by his standards, and thought it vital that we be with Eric and Allie for their temple marriage. He asked us to come down to the bishop's office to pick up temple recommends that he would prepare for us "after asking a few questions I know you can answer in good faith." Touching as Ted's trust and kindness were, accepting tem-

ple recommends would signify our agreement with the Church's position on issues over which we had come to differ fundamentally with it. More important, perhaps, I did not want to play into a system that I believed more firmly than ever uses familial bonds unfairly as levers to encourage outward professions of loyalty to the Church. I was in a crucible that pitted principles against one another that I had forged and sought to honor over my entire life: loyalty to my conscience, loyalty to my family, and noncooperation with institutional misuses of power.

In the end, I simply could not accept this offer that was tendered so genuinely by a friend and which would have meant so much to Eric and Allie. I could not profess in words, or imply by temple attendance, that I believed things that I no longer accepted as true. Neither could Linda. We accompanied Eric and Allie to the Salt Lake Temple door, waited at a coffee shop down the street, and then greeted them as a married couple two hours later. Inside the temple sealing room where marriages are performed, an attendant noticed the two empty seats next to Eric that are usually reserved for the groom's parents. She asked him which two people from among his family and friends in attendance he wished to invite to take those chairs. He told us later that he simply smiled and said, "I would like those seats left just as they are, thank you." Eric understood. And he knew we were with him and Allie in spirit.

Arriving Again at the Beginning, and Knowing the Place . . .

I believe that living in our time requires a constant succession of judgments about the claims we will allow institutions to make on our behavior and beliefs, and the sanctuary we must claim for the exercise of our own conscience. Nothing could have schooled me more thoroughly in the high stakes associated with this dilemma than the years from 1962 to 1995. I believe I am a better man and a finer teacher for these struggles. I am also convinced that our four children, having watched their mother's even-handed response to her treatment over the Emma book and having seen both of us strive to keep our spirits healthy and strong while dealing with the vagaries of Church authority during their formative years, understand things about the requirements, costs, and rewards of institutional loyalty and personal integrity that can be invaluable. As a family, we all tread different but related spiritual paths today, and we all love and respect each other passionately for what we believe and how we live—in common and in contrast with one another.

If our formative years were essentially wholesome and happy, we tend to find our way back to those roots later in life as we grapple with the complexities and ironies of living. This is surely true in my case, and it seems to be so with both of my sisters. Our childhood home was anchored on consciously principled living and lifted by sometimes unfathomable love. Mother drew inspiration from the life of Jesus and countless other noble human beings, served others selflessly, practiced forgiveness, and knew the meaning of grace. Urging us to live good lives, she taught by example the words of St. Augustine, "Love God and do as you will." Get things right in your heart, and your actions will meet the highest standards. Now in our sixties and seventies, Joyce, Lenette, and I have trod spiritual paths that include among us Mormonism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and existentialism. As young adults we argued furiously over our differences and emphasized what was distinctive about our beliefs. No longer. Different as our outward observances may be, we have converged on almost every important point—and all three of us, with our spouses, strive to honor principles of remarkable similarity. Know your own heart, stand up for what you believe, and let kindness rule your relationships with others near and far. A finer personal legacy than this, I do not know.

Epilogue: This I Believe

I believe that good and evil exist side by side on this earth, rooted in human nature. Evils arise from imperfections in the human soul itself—every human soul. Each of us weighs in the grand moral balance through the myriad decisions we make each day, nudging the scales imperceptibly one way or the other. The outcome is neither pre-determined nor fixed; the destiny of human civilizations and of our planet's diminishing bounty rest largely in our hands. Through our acts of will, each of us is capable of magnifying the joy or of deepening the suffering around us. Truth, or the Over-Soul as Emerson described the divine, has no hands, no voice, and no will but ours in this world.[7] We are each responsible for marshaling our strengths and acting with courage, compassion, and justice. While we are creatures of the natural and human worlds in which we exist, we are not simply at their mercy. We are part of them and we affect them.

The beauty, nobility, and strength that we are capable of reaching, if we attain these heights at all, come by grace. They are inexplicable gifts from beyond, coming to one person through the innate goodness of a friend or the inexplicable kindness of a stranger, to others through inspi-

ration they find in nature or scripture, and to still others through quiet epiphanies. While the nature and form of the divine remain a mystery to me, I know this higher power can be magnified within the human heart and that acts of kindness, love, and mercy—often coming when we least expect them—are its truest expression.

In my judgment, no one knows anything certain about the existence of a supreme being, an afterlife, or the origins of consciousness. I believe firmly, however, in life after death as a perpetual rippling forth of the effects of our individual lives. So long as anyone remembers us, certainly, that is a kind of immortality, but our lives influence many generations beyond that as well. We are all the products of long-forgotten ancestors whose choices for good and ill affect us for centuries or millennia after their passing.

I conclude with the most intense epiphany in my experience. I was traveling with a small band of students and professors in the Galapagos Islands off the Ecuadorian coast in March 1990, when seven of us decided to brave the jungle for a day on Isabella Island, the largest in the group, to search for the giant tortoises that still inhabit its interior. Following Rodrigo, our Ecuadorian guide, we trekked and sweltered well into the afternoon—our hopes rising and falling repeatedly. Just as we had resolved to start back in disappointment, Rodrigo spotted a tortoise trail in the underbrush. We spun around to follow it for another hour. Suddenly we came to a pond where a dozen tortoises lay at the water's edge. Their backs were nearly as high as my waist, their lazy heads as large as my own. I was overcome just being in their presence, sensing my privileged association with the Bishop of Panama, who first described these unique animals when shipwrecked on the islands in 1535, and Charles Darwin whose sojourn there more than three hundred years later did much to stimulate his historic observations on natural selection and the origin of species.

Having been rewarded richly for our considerable exertions, we started the long, hot journey on foot back to the broken-down blue Ford schoolbus in which we had been transported many miles to the trailhead. We arrived at dusk, exhausted, dehydrated, and exhilarated. About twenty men, women, and children, poverty-stricken banana farmers all, were playing volleyball across a net of tied rags in the fading light. None spoke English; but when we emerged from the jungle, they saw us and motioned enthusiastically for us to join them, challenging us to a match. We jumped at the opportunity, squinting to see the dirty ball, slipping on the muddy

ground, and making a gallant effort until, reduced only to moonlight, we ended the game in something of a draw. With spontaneous backslaps and hugs all around, we left the clearing and piled into the rusty schoolbus. It would not start. Our guide and driver, shining a flashlight on himself, motioned for us to get out and push. We did, slipping and falling down in the muddy tracks, but ultimately managing to produce enough speed that the old engine turned over and roared into life.

We tumbled back into our seats. The bus lurched forward down the rough jungle road and I clung to the frame of the bench in front of me. In that moment I was overwhelmed by feelings of gratitude, humility, and peace beyond any I had known before. Time and place seemed to disappear. Distinctions in race, nationality, education, and privilege among myself, the students, the faculty, our guide, and those with whom we had just engaged in the volleyball game, simply left my consciousness. I felt as completely at home as I might have that same instant at 1218 Harvard Avenue in Salt Lake City. Joy overwhelmed me as everything—human and natural—simply merged into a whole. As tears welled up in my eyes, I knew that our destinies as human beings, as co-inhabitants with other creatures, and with the earth itself, were indistinguishable and inseparable. And I knew as never before that I had aims to fulfill, energy to spare, and gifts to give.

Onward.

Notes

1. Norman Maclean, "A River Runs Through It," in *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), ix.

2. Hugh B. Brown, Brigham Young University convocation address, May 13, 1969.

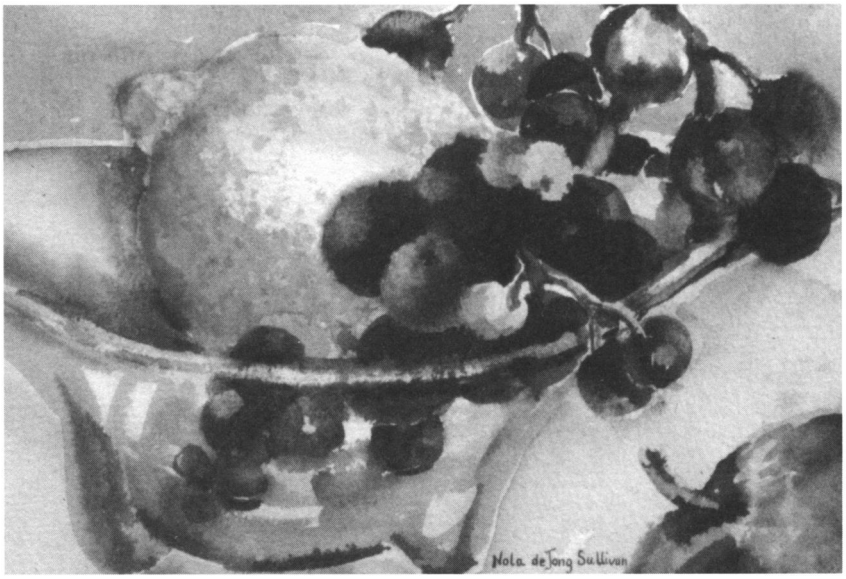
3. To capture the remarkable tenor of the LDS Church in the era of David O. McKay's leadership, read Chapter 1 of Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright's prize-winning *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005).

4. L. Jackson Newell, "Mormon Prophets and Modern Problems," *Sunstone* 5, no. 4 (July-August 1980): 37–38.

5. L. Jackson Newell, "Personal Conscience and Priesthood Authority," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13, no. 4 (Winter 1980): 81–87.

6. Devery S. Anderson, "A History of *Dialogue*, Part Three: The Utah Experience," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 1–70.

7. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Over-Soul," in *Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1982), 211–21.



Nola de Jong Sullivan, *In a Glass Bowl*,
watercolor, 11" x 14"

Like the Lilies of the Field

John Bennion

Buried in the Depths

I float in the corner of the university diving pool. My legs, which are more muscular and dense than my torso, pull me down. Closing my eyes, I'm rocked by the wake from a diver. Sound disappears with my ears under water. I arch my belly and lift my heavy legs higher. My body is buoyed up in a manner that feels like faith.

Another exercise: I imagine that I'm a pregnant woman. By the time labor starts, there's no backing out; I can't wrest control of my existence from my own body. I hang on, giving up my will to forces outside, or in this case, inside myself.

"Abandon yourself to experience," my therapist tells me. I am to swim with the current of my life instead of fighting it. "You have control issues. You try to manage events and people that you can't possibly be responsible for."

I'm in therapy because of a year-long depression, the worst since graduate school. It came after returning from a trip to England, where I led a group of students hiking across that "green and pleasant land."

Lost in England

Up to my thighs in a brook in the Yorkshire Dales, I was lost again—my shoes and the legs of my hiking shorts soaked. "There's no path over here either," I said, an astute observation, because I had just climbed over a barbed-wire fence and forced myself through waist-high stinging nettle to get to the brook. The students looked at me as if I were crazy. I didn't have a clue where we turned off the Pennine Way, and I was frantic inside, though it manifested itself in a forced and manic grin.

The worst part of getting lost when you're supposed to be the guide

is that it's undignified. When I lost my way, which was nearly every time I got behind the wheel of our luggage van and often when we set out on foot cross-country, the students laughed. It was always a sweet, you're-one-of-us kind of laughter, as if my failings endeared me to them. They teased that my blue GPS was nothing more than a pretty necklace. It stopped working whenever a cloud crossed the sun, common in England, or when we walked under a tree, also common. They busted a gut when they discovered that my compass had polarized, pointing faithfully south. "This is significant," Megan Whittaker said once. "Metaphorical of your life." I felt less like a teacher than a comic of the self-depreciating mode, Woody Allen in hiking shorts. I'm even skinny like him and starting to get near-sighted, although I refuse to wear my glasses when hiking.

I crawled out of the stream, drenched. "If we head north, we can't miss the highway."

"We don't mind, John," they said for the twentieth time. "We like it when we get lost." I led them over another barbed-wire fence, through a gap in a hedgerow, and across a pathless field. They returned to their conversations, following me as if I had good sense.

We came to the highway. Using my infamous pathfinding skills, I scanned the terrain. Our map showed the Pennine Way intersecting the road at a "double-arched bridge." I looked east, low in the valley, toward the lower reach of the stream I'd mired myself in. There would be no double-arched bridge for such a small watercourse. I looked west, toward the top of the ridge, where there also couldn't be a bridge, because no river or stream would flow along the highest ground in the area. This much I knew—streams make valleys, so if you want to find a stream, walk down. I forgot to remind myself that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

I always pray when I'm in a pickle, but that time it was not so much "Help us find the way," but "Help me not to look like a fool again." Too late.

Desperate, following instinct, I led the group westward up the verge of the highway. Cars whined past. Near the top of the hill, the road turned north, opposite the way we needed to go. Soon I saw the double-arched bridge, made of weathered red brick. It spanned a canal, which being manmade, could run wherever its builders wanted it to, even along the top of a ridge. We'd seen a stretch of it that morning, one of a network of canals that spreads outward from London. In eccentric and stubborn England, even waterways don't necessarily follow valleys.

The students, still in good cheer, went along with the detour, which cost us more than two hours on a tightly scheduled day. Since the beginning of the trip, I had found our way and lost it again, set hikes for us which were longer than we could accomplish, pushed the students out in cold weather, become confused because of the pressures of repeated decisions, and mismanaged the budget. When I made bad decisions, I tended to hole up like a badger, refusing help.

To my credit, most of the places we walked through were foreign to me; we were delayed but never so lost that we had to call in the police or other aid. Karla, my wife, often commented on my chutzpah for undertaking the trip in the first place. "You always rush in where angels fear to tread," she said, leaving out the operative word. Looking back, I admit I did all right. While every day something went wrong, every day also had ample good.

The students, most of whom were more trained to optimism than I, made a difficult experience into a positive one. "Lost again, are we?" They smiled and shrugged. That they still loved me made me feel that God might also.

Despite this constant reassurance, I wanted to be perfect, never getting lost and never making bad decisions. Not ever. When it happened again, I felt foolish. So what should have been momentary detours or lapses, I continually worried into what felt like major failures. I longed for an impeccable trip and mourned when it didn't happen.

Lost in the Desert

For me, being out of control is being swallowed by the world, becoming a child again. When I was five or six, my father and I spent much of the summer at his property in Utah's west desert, forty miles from home. Only greasewood, halogeton, and shadscale grow without irrigation, odd twisted plants, gray or gray-green in color.

One evening when the sun went down, my father sent me to our trailer to cook dinner. I opened a can of Spam, cut and fried it, and pried the lid off a bottle of peaches or pears. I remember standing above the stove as the meat grew hot and then cold. There was a small window in the kitchenette, and I watched for my father to come as dusk fell over the desert. The toads croaked in waves, an eerie chorus. He still didn't come. I started to cry. As I remember it, I was more lonely than afraid. The desert stretched forever around me. Strange creatures lived there: ragged jack

rabbits that shrieked when shot, coyotes that wailed in the night like tortured children. Rattlesnakes unwound and left their holes, slithering out to hunt.

I watched for my father and he didn't come and didn't come. I felt, without being able to articulate my fear, that my sanity and identity would soon slip away into the endless desert.

Finally Dad came back and wrapped his arms around me. "I'm sorry," he said. "It took longer than I wanted. I'm sorry." I'm sure he was mystified by my tears. He was only a half mile away, but I had felt unprotected, as if the universe was a place of danger and chaos instead of safety and order.

I probably wasn't scarred by this experience; it just feels typical. Whenever I lose control I think the world will swallow me.

The Sins of the Fathers

Introspection is peeling an onion. Remove one layer, then another. Soon there's nothing left of the self but a small white bulb. And then even that is gone.

I am the child of an alcoholic. When I was a teenager in a tight and repressive Mormon village, it felt like being abandoned in a private desert. I could control nothing, do nothing to keep me and my family from disappearing from before God's throne. My kind, taciturn father self-medicated his depression with cooking sherry. Because drinking any alcohol was against the Mormon commandments, I thought his sin was as evil as adultery. I was ashamed of him. Now that I'm more enlightened, I'm ashamed of being ashamed of him. This is what my therapist calls progress.

I have learned through therapy that my hunger for control—I must, at all costs, manage myself and those around me—could have come from my teenage years when I perceived that there was no father leading my family toward heaven. I believed I had to fill the void—an impossible job for a teenaged boy.

The problem with all this is that both my mother and father were there all the time. My father never missed work, teaching elementary school and running a ranch, each one a full-time job in itself, and my mother cooked for us, read in the kitchen, found sales to supply us with Christmas and birthday gifts. I'm sure they were both working through their own sorrows, his masked by staying busy and hers by obsessively

reading novels, but they were always with us. Still I learned the habit of mind that I was the one who needed to save my family. If I didn't do it, it wouldn't get done. Like every teenager, I knew better than they how to solve our problems.

I discovered my father's drinking early in my adolescence. I was racing horses with my friends when he drove past. After the race he praised, in a loud and emotional voice, my reckless efforts to win with Maggy, our mustang/Morgan mare. I still remember his crooked grin, his voice breaking. I had never noticed him so sloppy. Most of the time he was as closed as a clam. After a few minutes of watching, his behavior clicked for me. I knew he was like the drunks I saw on television or in the movies. "That's my son," he said, nearly weeping for joy. "That's my hard-riding son."

My new secret was as important to me as Cain's was to him. I knew not to talk about my discovery with my friends, my mother, certainly not with my father. I believed in repentance, that if he stopped, it would be as if it had never happened. He would never drink if I was there, so one way to help him was to stay with him. Luckily for me, he didn't drink all the time. With few exceptions, he indulged on weekend evenings when work was done. Like a detective, I always watched him, and I developed an infallible sense of when he wanted a drink, feeling the urge as soon as he did. We were like twins. He needed the pleasant slowing down, the release from dictator Duty in his head, like being bathed in pure emotion. I just wanted to make him stop.

I remember the feeling—as strong as my hunger for air—of needing him not to drink. Back then I thought obedience was the strongest law of God. All the others—agency, self-determination, love—were not as important to me as getting him to skip his evening bottle. If he stuffed his indulgence once, I could make him skip again, three times, four, until we were the perfect family in the photograph we hung in our house, a circle of bright faces. Not rotten with depression and alcoholism.

It went like this, dozens of times: We've just come back from a day working with the cattle. He parks the car and instead of going right in to dinner, he says, "I've got to water the cow, feed the cow, check the horse." All true. But I also know from long experience that, if I go in the house without him, he'll come in an hour later a different person, a grinning, sentimental caricature of himself. And I'll have lost.

So I say, "Let's eat dinner together. I'll help and then we'll go in together." We feed the cow, water the chickens, check the horse. Always

there is something else. An hour and still we haven't eaten. Weary, hopeless, I head back for the house. He has stashes everywhere—buried under the wheat in the tin granary, stuck above the door in the smokehouse where we hang our tack, pushed inside the double roof of the chicken coop, under newspapers in one of the row of broken-down cars, or poked between bales in the haystack. An hour later he comes inside lubricated, grinning unsteadily.

His drinking made him feel calm and happy, but I hated it. The idea that didn't occur to me was to talk to him—it was too frightening.

When I was eighteen, I prepared to go on a mission. A couple of weeks before I was to enter the temple to take out my endowments, we came back from working at our western farm late in the evening. As we unloaded the truck, I saw him walk around the side of the porch and return quickly. Following his steps after he disappeared inside the house, I found no hiding place except the dog house. I reached inside, touching the brown paper sack that he'd stashed there—a six-pack of beer. My heart beating fast, I put it back, determined this once to confront him. I thought that if he admitted his habit, it would be a first step to quitting. Once he knew I knew, he'd be too embarrassed to continue. I waited, more frightened and upset than I'd been since childhood. Finally he walked around the side of the house and pulled out his stash. I stepped out and caught him holding the bag, so to speak. "What's in there?" I said.

"Does it bother you?" The shame was so thick he couldn't say the words. I picture his face and body deep in shadow.

"Yes. I want you with me in the temple."

"I'll be there," he said. "I promise you."

What's odd is that I don't remember whether he actually made it. It's like I've had careful surgery on my memory, and I can picture myself in the locker room, after the washing and anointing, putting my own garments on for the first time. I remember sitting in the world room. My friend Erich, who had already been through the temple, was there escorting me, but I don't remember my father. I remember everyone eating in Dee's Family Restaurant, now closed, but the time in the temple is a blank. Logically I know he was there and that afterward he went back to his drinking, but I don't have a single image of his face with me inside the endowment rooms.

Years later I tried to rat on him to the stake president. "My father

drinks," I told him in private. "He has a temple recommend and is going to the temple for my sister's wedding. He's not worthy."

"Trust the interview," the stake president said. "Trust the process." He implied that what happened there was my father's business and not mine. Now, thirty years later, I agree, but at the time the idea was difficult to take in.

After leaving home, I stopped trying to save my father, except for a few bouts of pious indignation, when I tried to get the whole family to agree to a tough-love confrontation. My mother refused, and my plans went nowhere.

When I was thirty, I wrote Dad a note: "I am not keeping your drinking a secret between us anymore." I meant only that, when we were alone together, I wouldn't respect the code of silence. He wrote a note back: "You have the power to destroy me in this town." I guess he thought I was going to go public. As if after fifteen years of silence I could bear to say anything to our neighbors. As if they didn't know already. It's easier now that he's been dead for twenty years.

That misunderstanding was so drastic that communication seemed impossible, so I gave up. All the way to his deathbed his secret stayed safe. As you can see, I'm obsessively still not talking about it.

Instead of bothering him, I turned to writing—a master's thesis of stories about troubles between fathers and sons. In one story a boy ruins the father's pump engine by neglect, in another a Navajo boy is ashamed of his father's drunkenness, another retells the story of Abraham sacrificing his son. As I wrote all the stories I thought about my own father. The inscription is from "The Lost Son," by Theodore Roethke: "Ordnung! Ordnung! Papa is coming!" The quote is inaccurate because my father was never authoritarian. I was just rapt with attention on his comings and goings because I needed him to change. The stories were another way of trying to get a handle on my life. For my PhD I wrote a novel. The early drafts were about my father. The protagonist comes home from his mission to discover that his father is committing adultery with a woman he home teaches. Adultery is easier in some ways to repent of than an addiction to alcohol. So I wrote about adultery to manage my feelings about my father's drinking. I described the son sneaking after his father through the field, discovering him in the house of the woman, confronting him with his sin. The father was sorrowful and repentant. That kind of melodrama was a daydream, a fantasy for me.

Each of my siblings, all sisters, adapted to my father's alcoholism in a different way. It's not my business to talk about them here, except to say that we each took up roles we are still acting out. These patterns of behavior keep us stable.

"You Try Too Hard"

I became the one who tries to manage or mediate, not just in family matters. This desire may have led me to teaching. My first job was in a rural junior high—a place of nightmare. On the first day of my teaching career, I stood at the head of the class. I had the illusion that they would respect me, learn from me, simply because I stood in a position of authority. Moroni, Utah, is a town where people butcher turkeys, package them, and make fertilizer out of the waste—close to what their children did to me.

My illusion of control broke down the first week and I entered a five-year hell. Their small minds fermented with hormones; they were striking out on their own. They had an infallible sense of the weakness at the core of my authoritarian need. Like picking at a scab, they uncovered my fear of disruption and loss of control. We were perfectly unsuited for each other. They sang Christmas songs in the middle of grammar lessons. They called me a pig farmer, which now makes me laugh because it was true. For about four years, I raised pigs and tried to teach adolescents. Both groups gave me little respect. The sows chased me from their pens, and the students teased or disobeyed me. My classes fell into chaos. Even today if I walk into a junior high, my palms start to sweat and I have to get away from all the cocky faces, all the half-formed identities. It feels like being thrust into a thick stew of emotional disorder.

Once in Moroni a student punched me. If I'd known then what I know now, a physical instinct I've learned from playing aggressive basketball, I could have taken him down or, with that confidence, I could have dealt with him without being physical. Instead I walked, weeping, to the principal. I wanted a structure inside which my authority would be safe. He and the counselor, experienced at this kind of thing, put the fear of God into that boy. But at the same time they undermined my authority as they tried to support it.

That boy's best friend was an even worse devil. Once I had him in the hallway outside my door. I shook my finger in his face, telling him off. He was not impressed. "You know what your problem is?" he said, speaking slowly so I couldn't misunderstand. "You try too hard."

The truth of it struck me with more force than a fist. I didn't want to hear anything so profound come from his obnoxious mouth. Little did he know I was fighting for my life, desperate for control, when I knew, almost from the beginning, that I would fail.

A close friend, one who has struggled with depression much longer than I have, says that control is the wrong word. He says what I really wanted was to feel competent. He writes in a letter,

> You wanted things in your childhood family to work. Maybe the immoral aspects of your father's drinking were just a rational dressing you came up with; the important fact was that your father wavered between competence and incompetence, and when he felt the most competent, you and everybody else could see he was drunk or nearly so. You sensed early on, age three or four or five, that group things weren't working in your home. So you can call it control . . . if you want, but it doesn't strike me as the kind of control that control freaks exercise . . . , which derives from a pleasure in limiting the agency of others. With you, it is the control that is required to make group things work, family, junior high class, a study abroad experience.

This makes sense. His letter revealed to me that, for much of my life, I've led people and taken control of projects to show myself I'm competent. A slave to duty, I pile more and more work on myself until I don't have room to think about what I had left undone—saving my father. When I am overwhelmed with writing projects, Church work, papers to grade, I get frantic from lack of time and begin snapping and nipping at the people closest to me like a shrewish dog. The cycles of overwork develop into depression. Still it's a pleasant kind of drowning. It feels as if I'm doing all I can.

Leading Study Abroad

I have a daydream which makes me laugh when I'm not half asleep. One of my university classes has been kidnapped and hidden in the hills around my home town. Or it's in the Uinta Mountains or on a tropical island or in Alaska. Often the president of the United States or the prophet of the Mormon Church is also abducted. I must lead the whole group to safety. In these dramas I'm more courageous than Pocahontas, stronger and more agile than Spiderman, and more inventive than MacGyver. Once, in my dreams, I duct-taped butter knives backward to my feet so that I could climb a brick wall and worm through a tiny window to free-

dom. Sitting in my office, those stories seem ridiculous, but still they're saturated with a feeling of glory.

Walking across England, at the head of a long line of students who followed me wherever I went, was the realization of a fantasy. Not once during our two-month journey did I have the dream.

So while the students on study abroad thought it funny that I kept getting lost, for me it was more serious. Getting lost, becoming disorganized, failing to arrange a part of our trip in time—all seemed significant. I would have gladly sacrificed that aspect of my personality.

At home, in my normal job, and at church, it's easy to keep relationships superficial enough that I can carry the illusion that people don't see my flaws. What was different on this trip is that we were together daily, and they knew me well, all of me—especially those who worked closest with me: Megan, Deja, Kerry, Steve, and Karla, my wife. As we traveled, they knew me more and more clearly, saw my fragmented, confused, and wayward nature, and still loved me. Their forgiveness felt so much like redemption that I could hardly bear it.

Can you see it now—the truth of my life? Slowly, gradually as those good people stayed friends with me, not exactly because of my successes and despite my failings, I came to feel again that God forgave my imperfections. And I wasn't alone.

I know from watching the others, talking to them, reading their journals, that they felt the same way. We re-learned that He loves us because we could see it in each other's eyes. More than any educational group I've been a part of, we loved each other. Of course we had squabbles, times when we hurt or offended each other, but in general it was one of the most carefully Christian groups I've been in.

Then at the end of the trip, our mutual trust was challenged again.

London's Dark Satanic Mills

The worst snafu I made on our trip manifested itself when we arrived in London. We unloaded from the coach and stood in front of the cobbled, arched alleyway that led to our hostel—the Generator, the last and most dismal hostel of our two-month tour of England. We would stay there for two weeks.

I had walked alone through the building before our tour started and found it to be dirty, loud, profane, and overcrowded. Several times since then I'd warned the others that our lodgings in London would be "Spar-

tan." It was a lie. I mean, doesn't that word imply clean and orderly? I knew that for the scrupulous members of our group, this hostel would be hell. Despite the practical repeated assurance on the trip that God cared for us like the lilies of the field, the feeling that we were peregrine Christians, I was sure that the Generator would destroy our harmony.

Anxious to get us checked in, I gripped my backpack in one hand and the bow and arrow set of my ten-year-old son Christopher in the other. Walking down the alley, I passed a poster of a cartoon woman engaged in an autoerotic act. College- and high school-aged students crowded the entryway. I imagined a sign above their heads: "Abandon hope all ye who enter." For once the saying didn't feel like a cliché. The place stank of cigarette smoke and bodies. With my button-down shirt and graying hair, I felt as out of place as Mr. Bennet at a rave.

And it happened again, the feeling of the ground crumbling under my feet, loss of control over my own fate and the fate of those following me. As I stood in the raucous hallway with the stench of stale beer and urine in my nostrils, time seemed to wind backward. I felt as exposed and insecure as I had when I stood in front of my junior high students in the late seventies—a naive, skinny hick.

The building had been a police training barracks; it could just as easily have been a jail, with rooms tiny as cells. We didn't have anyplace to sit except on the beds, which were so close together that our knees bumped if we faced each other. I couldn't sit upright on the bunkbed without bumping my head. The windows were narrow. A small sink. The doors had a punch code which some of us discovered was not changed by the management, so the last tenant of a room was not locked out. We didn't feel secure even inside our rooms. The group toilets generally had pee, vomit, and snarls of toilet paper on the floor.

There was a breakfast room where we swallowed our cornflakes in a non-smoking eating room, which had only slightly less smoke. A television blared at all times. Most of our cell mates loved to mouth one of the oldest Anglo-Saxon words, using it four or five times each sentence, as every part of speech except as a preposition. I'm fond of the earthy expressiveness of that word—my father used it when he was startled into fear—but in the mouths of these young people it seemed excessive. Next to the breakfast room was a bar where music played until early morning. The bartender's job was to sell the kids too much liquor, the bouncer's was to throw the drunk ones out into the street—a case of the left hand ignoring

what the right hand was doing. The women of our group, strong and self-sufficient, took care of themselves, but it wore them down to have these young drunks leering at them.

It was the most depressing place I've ever slept in, including mice-ridden shacks in the Utah desert and ruined trailers on the Navaho reservation. We couldn't move out, having spent all our money in advance. It and other places like it were the only lodging available for a group as large as ours by the time I'd made arrangements. We were stuck, so we spent as much time as we could at plays, churches, and museums, or wandering in the parks.

The students could have scattered in all directions, wandering the city in groups of two or three. After some tense times in the country, I thought they were tired of each other and would cherish being separate. The opposite happened. The members of our wandering group wanted even more to be together. We didn't have a good place for class, so we met in Tavistock Park, in the LDS meetinghouse, in Kew Gardens, in a corner of the plaza in front of the British Museum. Our last night in England, our friend Gary led the group in a long walk across Richmond Park, and we spent the evening at his and Helen's house. They served us by letting us relax together. We sat in a circle on their back lawn while Gary and Helen ferried food out to us: sliced steak on bread, a wonder of a salad, and roast chicken. They shared their home because they knew we had nowhere to go. It was an astonishing act of kindness. We talked, sang, and wept together.

It's probably clear from the shape of this scattered and unwieldy narrative that I'm working up to saying that the peace and mutual respect we'd gained as a group remained strong, that the healing that started in my soul as we walked across England continued. The story will be that we were like Zion's Camp, firm in our faith despite the challenges. Of course that happened, but I can't write the words without feeling I'm manipulating the truth, just as I did when I told the students our lodgings would be Spartan. It certainly was a hellish place, but looking back, I can hardly feel bad that we pampered and protected, middle-class, white Americans had to live in unpleasant lodgings for two weeks while we wandered one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Another problem with describing what happened as an epiphany after a trial was that some of the students continued to suffer from my carelessness. Because we had insufficient breakfasts and because the students

were on their own for food, those who were out of money suffered from hunger. The program coffer was empty, so I couldn't afford to give the whole group an allowance. We even had to cut back on some of the main tourist sites we'd planned on taking in—the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's. The students could go on their own, but those who had no cash or credit were stuck. One woman wept when I announced the state of our budget. "What will I do?" she said under her breath. She and others had no reserves of money to fall back on. And after hearing me say that I had put into the program a thousand pounds of my own money, they were reluctant to ask for help.

In their journals and the final essay, nearly everyone wrote about how bad the Generator was, but they also wrote, which still astonishes me, that they treasure the experience. Many of them had nearly an identical experience as mine—learning to accept a spotted universe and to forgive their own inadequacies. Amanda wrote: "In losing myself, exposing myself to an uncontrollable environment I have found myself. My cycle is not over. I will never cease to find beauty and ugliness all around me and become lost again. . . ." Tawna wrote, "I have had a real struggle on this trip to get to that point of trusting my own views, and trusting in who I am. In many places I would feel almost less than everyone, because I wasn't seeing or enjoying what they were." Through reading John Ruskin and through talking with the other students she came to believe that "our experiences can be similar enough to teach us empathy and understanding, yet different enough to be of value. . . ." Elise wrote: " . . . as I have listened to people's stories and talked about their lives . . . , my feelings of intimidation have disappeared. My insecurities have dwindled, and I have been able to develop some of the strongest friendships I've ever made."

Again and again as I read their final essays, I felt a rush of recognition. They were feeling what I had felt, what I had thought I was alone in feeling. To my knowledge none of them had alcoholic fathers, but somehow they'd been made to think their lives were inadequate. The love of the transient, wandering group of Christian scholars helped them feel that even as strict a being as God might love them.

So we survived even the Generator, making our City of Enoch, our Zion, inside that hell. I was happier than I'd been for many, many years. Then the summer after we returned to Utah, no longer sustained by two dozen young and energetic students, no longer walking with these supportive friends, I plunged back into despair.

The Calculus of Redemption

Writing this, I'm back in the United States, I'm propped up by pillows in my bed in Provo, Utah. It's early morning and Karla sleeps next to me. My laptop makes a clatter in the half-dark room. The wooden slats of the blinds let in a pleasant, variegated light. Since returning from England, I've unlearned and relearned what I felt then. I've plunged into depression and, with the help of meds and therapy, pulled myself out again. Faith in others, God, and myself expands, but it's unsteady growth.

For as long as I can remember I've searched for a perfect day. A day during which my walk before God is spotless, without a single, wavering misstep. Maybe this desire is the worst kind of blasphemy, arising from the need, already described, to control my own destiny.

When I was in college, a freshman, it was my first time away from home; and while my mother and father weren't much in my mind, I was no longer propped up and comforted by our home life and traditions. In our house in Vernon, I was the oldest, the only boy, with five younger sisters. In a patriarchal society, I was a prince. I didn't have that context during my freshman year at school. But I didn't even think about them, the people who had been my emotional context my whole life. What I longed for, like the desire for water, was the affection of my girlfriend, a year younger than I, still in high school. Her white face and slender arms were before me every time I shut my eyes. I couldn't do homework, couldn't focus in my classes.

I tried to pray my way back to happiness. Because there was no place to be alone, I went to a corner outside the cafeteria wall, inside a small alcove of evergreens. I thought what I had to do was to give my whole being to God, every impulse, vestige of autonomy. My soul would be his. That's what devotionals in the Smith Fieldhouse told me to do. Give your will to God, and he will give it back. In my mind that would be a perfect act and after that all my days would unfold, smooth as vellum—no more feelings that I did not live in a righteous family. But I never could give all. Praying in the corner of a wall behind the tall shrubs, I always withheld a little of myself. I thought that treasuring my own identity was a sin. I don't think that now.

One problem was that God is named Father in Heaven, and I couldn't trust my earthly father. How could I give my soul to someone who might let me down? Of course, I didn't think this at the time. I was living in a fog of instinct. Or that's how it seems looking back. I was sure God

wanted to wrest control from me. He would make me give up my desire for that clear-faced girl, the silence over my father's sin, my longing for praise. How could I give God any of those?

I've never really railed at God or fate. But, as my therapist pointed out, I still resent any external control. Many of the protagonists of my favorite author, Thomas Hardy, shake their fists at God. Others, mostly women, abandon themselves to the ride. In *Under the Greenwood Tree* a woman is anxious about her husband, who is a very short man. She wonders whether she's made the right choice, but by then, for her in those times, it's already too late. She will be married. She clenches her teeth and says, "Let's go!" Tess's mother says after the rape, "Tis fate, what was meant to be." These rural women choose to be participants in their own destiny by abandoning control to accidental and purposive forces outside their own bodies. But I've always fought this realization. Passivity in the face of life has always seemed a little like taking pleasure resting in a river that is going to carry me over a waterfall.

Through therapy and on the walk across England, I solidified this second way of thinking as it applies to my relationships with people. Others don't love me for how well I manage projects for them. The students on this trip loved me for my complete self, including my lapses of competence. From this understanding I postulate that my Heavenly Parents and Christ, the son, could be the same. They might not be deities who love me only because my life is a well-tilled field.

The feeling is like a calculus of the soul.

My A. P. math teacher told us a story that explained how imprecise calculations could still be effective. I found out later it's one of Zeno's paradoxes. A boy and a girl sit on opposite ends of a park bench. He moves halfway to her and then he stops, bashful. She smiles coyly and slides halfway to him. Encouraged, he slides across half of the remaining space. Theoretically they will never reach each other because there is an infinity of halves in any space. But they get close enough. That's what happened to me in England. We had bad times, times when we nearly froze, times when we fought over writing assignments and personality differences. We were disorganized, lost until it seemed to be our natural state, sometimes irritated or angry with each other. But generally and incompletely we forgave each other. It was not perfection, but it was close enough for this life.

As I write this, I feel the confidence again. Many of the students have disappeared from my life, but I remember marching out ahead of them

and I remember that God loves me with and through and despite my flaws. How did Christ shine forth on us as we wandered England, and as I continue to wander the desert of my life? Not like a blinding light, but scattered and refracted, incomplete, a quiet light, still as the light of the moon.

Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Minnewanka Lake*, watercolor, 11" x 14", 1985, collection of the artist

Nola de Jong Sullivan, *On an Iceberg,*
watercolor, 16" x 14", artist's collection

FICTION

Roses

Douglas Thayer

The evening before Jim Wilson's family moved, he and Bob Olding rode their bikes down to the Provo River to swim one more time. The last five boys were just leaving the hole, so Bob and Jim had it to themselves. They liked swimming alone. The other boys had left their fire. Bob and Jim put some wood on before they took off their clothes. The swimming hole was fifteen feet deep and a hundred feet across. It had a ledge to dive off from and a rope tied to an overhanging cottonwood limb to swing on. A wide band of trees and willows screened the river from the few scattered houses.

Jim's family was moving to Idaho, and Bob didn't know what he was going to do. He and Jim were best friends and did everything together. Bob liked Jim's family a lot because they were friendly and welcoming and treated him as one of their own kids. Bob's father had died of sugar diabetes two years earlier in June, the same month Jim and his family had moved in, and the Wilsons living across the street helped Bob in his loneliness and sorrow. Bob's brother Jack was in the army and his mom worked late, so their house was often empty.

Later that night at the river, Bob and Jim were floating on their backs, counting falling stars, when Bob saw headlights coming down the lane through the high willows.

"Hey, look! Somebody's coming." Bob lowered his legs to tread water.

"Ah, nuts." Jim was treading water.

At the top of the river bank near where they'd left their bicycles, the headlights stopped and went out, and the car vanished against the dark trees. A man got out of the car and walked toward the fire.

"Hey, it's my dad," Jim said. "Hey, Dad!"

Jim's dad walked down to the water's edge and stood partly silhouetted by the fire. He was a big man. He wore overalls and a long-sleeved

work shirt. "You boys having a good time? You're kind of late, Son. Your mom sent me down to see if you were all right."

Bob and Jim swam in closer.

"We're just fine, Dad. Sorry Mom got worried. We forgot what time it was. The water's just great. Just perfect, Dad. The best it gets all year. Hey, why don't you come in?"

Looking at Jim's dad and hearing his voice, Bob clenched his jaws tight. Bob's dad had sometimes come down to swim with him until his diabetes got bad. Bob's brother Jack had come down, too, before he joined the army to fight in the war.

"It's really great, Dad."

Bob and Jim stood in the waist-deep water, their wet upper bodies shining in the light from the half moon, the fire reflecting off the water.

"It's been awhile." Jim's dad hesitated. "Sure, why not?"

He sat on the log by the fire to take off his shoes and socks, and then took off his clothes and piled them on the log. He waded in to his knees and then dove, swam under water and came up by Bob and Jim.

"Hey, this is great."

Jim's dad swam, dove off the ledge, and swung out on the rope, his body white in the moonlight. He ducked Jim, and then both Bob and Jim tried to duck him, but they couldn't do it, and he ducked them both, all three of them wrestling and going under and laughing when they came up. Feeling Jim's dad push him under felt like his own dad doing it, and Bob thought he might cry, but he didn't. He'd stopped crying about his dad. He, Jack, and their dad used to have great water fights.

Jim's dad didn't stay long. He got out, dried himself with his shirt, and got dressed. He told them he was putting money on the log so they could buy double-decker cones at Cook's Ice Cream on the way home, and said to enjoy themselves. Jim's dad was always telling Jim to enjoy himself.

"Now don't stay too much longer, you two. You don't want to worry your mothers."

"We won't."

Treading water, Bob watched Jim's dad vanish into the shadows. He heard the car door shut and the motor start and then saw the headlights come on. Jim's dad backed up to turn around. Bob watched the light against the high tree limbs until it vanished.

If Jim's family went to get an ice cream cone, drove up Provo Canyon

for a picnic, went to a movie, or did anything else fun, Jim's dad invited Bob. Jim's mom's kitchen was full of the smell of good food. She always had cookies and milk or a piece of pie or cake for Jim and Bob in the afternoons. Jim's dad invited Bob to supper if Bob was in the house in the evening. Bob's favorite dessert was chocolate pie with whipped cream. Working, Bob's mom didn't have much time to cook and bake. Bob and Jim were in the Scouts and the teachers' quorum together, and Jim's dad helped them earn their merit badges and took Bob with them on Scout campouts.

Bob understood that Jim's dad wanted him to feel welcome. His mom did too, but especially Jim's dad. Sometimes he would muss up Bob's hair or put his hand on his shoulder.

"How are things going, Bob? Things going okay? Can I do anything for you?"

One day Jim's mom told Bob that Mr. Wilson had lost his dad when he was a boy.

"His dad died, too?"

"Yes, I'm afraid he did, Bob. Mr. Wilson was just about your age too when his dad passed away. It was very sad."

Bob's eyes filled with tears, and Jim's mom put her arms around him and hugged him.

"Oh, Son, Son. I'm afraid there's a lot of unhappiness and misery in this old world."

When Bob helped Jim weed the vegetable and flower gardens or mow the lawn, Jim's dad gave them money for a soda or an ice cream. Jim's dad raised beautiful flowers and roses. He spent a lot of time fertilizing, pruning, and deadheading the roses that grew across the front of the house and along the path to the front door. People walking down Third West stopped to admire his roses and bent down to smell them.

Jim had a baby sister, an older sister still at home, two married sisters, one brother seventeen, and one older married brother who was in the army in the war like Bob's brother Jack. The family got together a lot for dinners and picnics. And they talked about babies, pregnancies, the war, jobs, money, the Church, and other family members. They laughed a lot, and made a lot of jokes, and made things seem natural and good. Jim's mom had a Brownie camera and was always taking snapshots, which she put up on a cork-board in the kitchen.

Jim's seventeen-year-old brother, Ken, had a steady girlfriend, Me-

lissa, and one Saturday when Bob was over for supper, Jim's dad told Ken just to take it easy because he'd been out Friday night till almost two.

"Now you just watch yourself, young man. You're only seventeen. I don't want you coming home to tell your mom and me that Melissa's pregnant."

"Ah, Dad, I got more sense than that, I hope. Pass the potatoes please."

"Well, I hope so, too. You're a good kid, and so is Melissa, so just keep it that way. You get that young lady home by twelve on weekends. Nothing you need to be doing after twelve."

"Ah, Dad."

"Just the same, you do as you're asked."

Nobody was embarrassed.

Jim pushed his baby sister in the baby buggy, and sometimes he had to change her diaper, and give her a bath, but it didn't embarrass him.

Bob never saw Jim's dad hit Jim or any of the other kids, or even threaten to. The Wilsons didn't have a list of rules and punishments. Jim knew what was right. His dad raised his voice sometimes, but he always talked to Jim about what he'd done wrong. Bob couldn't recall that Jim's dad ever punished Jim in any way. He didn't seem to believe in punishment. He was a kind, hopeful man. He didn't like people to swear; and one day when he heard Bob say, "Dammit to hell anyway," he called him on it, and Bob was embarrassed and apologized.

Even after two years, missing his dad was like an ache in his whole body. It was hard to tell other boys about how great his dad was if he was dead. Bob wanted to see his dad, hear him, and have his dad reach out to put his arm around him and hold him close like he used to, or even get mad at him sometimes. He wanted to look at his dad and see he had his dad's eyes or nose, was tall and thin like his dad, or maybe had his hair, and he wanted to smell his dad's good smell when he held him close. His dad had never whipped him.

"Your father watches over you from heaven, Son," Bob's mom told him. "He knows how hard it is for you. Your dad and I were married in the temple and we will all be together again someday. Families are eternal. You know that, Son."

Bob's mom showed him their family group sheets and pedigree charts and old photos of family members to prove to him how big their family was. She had photos of his dad when he was growing up and told

him stories, but Bob didn't find this very helpful. He didn't think that a dad who would be resurrected was as good as a live dad. Bob knew his mom was lonely, too, and worried about Jack being killed in the war, but he was too lonely himself to think about his mom much.

Bob and Jim swam for another fifteen minutes that night after Jim's dad left, and then they got out and stood by the fire. The summer night was warm, but they crouched down so they could dry off and feel the heat against their chests and arms. Then they got dressed and took the money Jim's dad had left. They didn't talk as they rode their bikes down the lane and through the dark tree-lined streets and through the pools of light under the corner lamps. After they bought their double-decker cones at Cook's, they walked their bikes and ate their cones slowly.

Jim's family left for Idaho the next afternoon. Jim's brother and sister had gone with the furniture van earlier. Neighbors and ward members stood around saying good-bye to the rest of Jim's family. Jim's dad shook Bob's hand. Then he pulled Bob to him and hugged him, both arms around him tight, pulling his face into his chest, as a dad would hug a son.

"You're a fine boy, Bob, and you've been a good friend to my Jim. You'll be okay."

Bob and Jim shook hands. Jim's mom hugged Bob and told him to be good.

Bob's mom stood by him as Jim's family drove off down Third West. She waved to Jim's mom. Deep in his pockets, Bob's hands were tight fists. He clamped his jaws hard.

"They're nice people. We'll miss them in the neighborhood. You'll miss Jim. It's hard when someone you love is gone."

Bob didn't say anything. Jim's dad's old Plymouth turned right on Third South, which was Highway 89, Jim's mom still waving from the open window, Jim's face in the open passenger window. He didn't wave.

Bob's mom ran her hand through his hair and kissed him on the cheek. "We're going to have chocolate pie with whipped cream for dessert tonight."

Bob looked up at his mom. She was smiling. He nodded. He turned and watched the corner where the Plymouth had vanished, and then, his hands still fists deep in his pockets, he followed his mom into the house.

That fall Bob turned fifteen and got a part-time job at the Cascade Print Shop cutting stock, printing wedding invitations on a small job

press, and cleaning up every evening. A man named Spears was the owner and ran the shop with another man named Mel Gibbs.

The day Spears hired Bob, he asked him about school and his family and who his father was. Bob told him his father was dead.

"Well, that's too darn bad, kid. I'm sorry to hear it."

The first day he sent Bob out to buy a pie and milk for an evening snack and told him if he worked hard he'd get a Christmas bonus and a paid summer vacation and time off at Christmas.

But by the end of the first week, Spears, who always had a cigarette in his mouth, started telling Bob jokes and stories about sex, as if that was the only thing he could think about or the only thing that pleased him, as if swearing and dirty words were the only words he knew. Men and boys needed sex all the time, and sex was a big joke that somehow women didn't understand.

"We're all wired the same inside, kid. Don't fool yourself about that. Even those cute high-school girls you like so much."

Spears enjoyed describing a world Bob didn't know and to which Spears was trying to introduce him. Bob wanted the world to be a good place. He went to church; he was a Scout and had the priesthood; he wanted to be a good person like Jim's dad said he was. Yet Bob listened, and sometimes he laughed. Spears was married and had a daughter, Betty, in college. Bob couldn't understand how Spears could be such a bad person and a good person too and have a family. Spears called his wife Dolly, and she always kissed him on the cheek when she came into the shop. She phoned him every afternoon to tell him what she was cooking him for supper.

"Hello, honey," Spears always said. "Are you having a nice day? Do you need anything? Can I bring anything home? Do you want to go to a movie or do something tonight?" Spears didn't swear when he talked to Mrs. Spears.

But it was more than the bad language and the dirty stories; it was not trusting people, too. For Spears there was little goodness or trust in the world and not much that was worthwhile. Everybody was out to get what they could, so you had to be careful or you would be cheated and lied to. Drinking, drunken parties, and sex were the only things worth telling stories about or experiencing when you were young. It was as if for Spears there couldn't be any innocence or goodness in anybody. He told Bob sto-

ries about all the crooked bankers, businessmen, and lawyers in Provo, some of them bishops. Spears wasn't a member of the Church.

"The war, kid. That shows what people are really like, don't it? Bombing and killing everybody? It's just because big businesses want to make a lot of money building bombers and tanks."

Bob couldn't get away from Spears. He needed to pay for clothes, school, and dates, and to help his mom, and he was learning how to do things in the shop. Good after-school jobs were hard to find. He couldn't give up a good job. Bob wanted Spears to be kind and good like Jim's dad and his own dad, and he couldn't understand why Spears had to be the way he was. He wanted to ask Spears what his own dad had been like, but he didn't.

It seemed strange to Bob that nobody except him knew what was happening. He thought there should be somebody to tell Spears to stop talking like he did, a policeman or Bishop Stark or maybe even his mom, but there wasn't anybody. He needed his dad or Jack to talk to Spears.

He wanted to say: "Why do you talk like this, Mr. Spears? Would you like your wife and your daughter Betty to hear you? Wouldn't that be embarrassing? Do you want them to know what you're really like? I don't want you to say those things or tell me dirty jokes anymore."

But Bob was afraid Spears might become angry and fire him. Spears taught Bob how to run the job press, set type for small jobs, and cut stock. He was often kind. Two or three times a week he gave Bob money and sent him to the Dairy Lunch next door to buy a pie or some other pastry and milk. He paid him well and gave him a Christmas bonus. If Bob had a date or wanted to leave work early for a football game or something, Spears swept up for him. Spears worked hard, was honest, and got the jobs out on time.

"Go ahead, kid. Have a good time. Enjoy yourself. You're only young once." If Bob had a date, just as he walked out the door, Spears would always say, "Tap her light, kid, okay?" And then Spears and Mel would laugh, although Bob didn't understand why. Spears always wanted to know his date's name and made Bob describe her, and the next afternoon he asked Bob what she was like and what they had done.

"You sure that's all you did, kid? You sure about that?" And he would laugh and tell a story about one of his old girlfriends when he was in high school—Brenda, Delores, Gladys, Mona, and Jolene. A girl was someone a boy had sex with and then told other boys about. Spears was al-

ways talking about the girls he made in high school. A girl wasn't worth going out with if a boy didn't make her. "Isn't that right, Mel?"

"Sure, kid. You don't want to spend all that hard-earned money for nothing."

Spears was always blinking and squinting his blue, milky eyes against the cigarette smoke when he talked. It seemed impossible to Spears that a boy in high school could date a girl without trying to have sex. Bob wanted to ask him if his daughter Betty went with boys like that when she was at Provo High, but he never did.

Spears's face was pale, as if he were always sick. He always showered in the washroom and changed his clothes at six o'clock.

"The little lady doesn't like me to come home dirty, kid. Have to do what the little lady wants, isn't that right, Mel?"

"Sure. That's the way it is."

Spears always called Mrs. Spears the little lady when she wasn't there. Spears kept a bottle of whisky in the washroom; and if he was drinking, he would sometimes stand around after his shower drying off and talking to Mel about his old girlfriends. Mel drank too. He always laughed at Spears's stories, as if that was part of his job. Bob kept busy sweeping the floor and cleaning the washbasin and toilet.

Spears never took more than a drink or two from the bottle, and he always ate mints afterwards to freshen his breath. He would wink at Bob when he did that. Spears sometimes had Bob come to his house to wash windows and do other things for Mrs. Spears. Mrs. Spears would give him a nice lunch. Spears didn't smoke in the house. He called Mrs. Spears "sweetheart" and "honey," and she called him "love." Spears kept a nice yard; he grew flowers, especially roses. He spent a lot of time taking care of his roses. Bob didn't like Spears to raise flowers and roses. It didn't seem right for him to be like Jim's dad and want to do that.

The war ended and Jack came home. He told Bob he ought to enlist when he graduated from high school so he could get the G.I. bill and go to college, and that he'd be drafted anyway.

"You need to get away from Utah and see what the world's like, Bob."

Bob talked to Jack about Spears, but Jack told him to live with it. It wasn't the end of the world.

When Bob told Spears he was going to enlist, Spears said he'd enjoy the army.

"Wish I'd joined when I was your age, kid. Lots of women around those army camps, if you know where to look."

During the three years Bob worked for Spears, he often thought about Jim and his family. When he'd eaten supper at Jim's, he'd knelt with them around the table to pray and later read scriptures. In the winter evenings in that warm house, Bob had played Rook and board games with Jim and his family, eaten cookies, cake, and fresh-baked bread with butter and jam, and chocolate pie with whipped cream, and drunk tall glasses of cold milk, and he had always felt welcome.

In basic training at Fort Bragg, Bob had a memory of the trust and love in the Wilsons' house, his friendship with Jim, and the example of Jim's dad and mom to help him. He knew a good family was possible. He'd planned to go to Idaho to visit Jim but never did. They wrote a few times and then lost touch, but Bob still remembered the Wilsons.

After basic training Bob had a short delay en route before he was shipped out to Germany. He went by to see Spears, but the shop was closed for the Christmas vacation. He didn't go to the house.

Bob was stationed in Frankfurt in the army of occupation the winter after World War II ended. He was a clerk/typist in the provost marshal's section.

Their cities mostly destroyed, the black market the only viable economy, the Germans were starving and freezing and filled with cynicism and despair. Children begged for food on the streets. Available for a bar of soap or a pack of cigarettes, German women crowded the compound gate or walked along the high fence at night in the deep snow calling to the G.I.s to come out. All the men in Bob's section had German girlfriends except him and a G. I. named Simmons. Standing at the barracks window at night watching the men go out to the German women, Bob thought of Spears and his stories, and he wasn't surprised.

Bob went to the section parties. He enjoyed sitting and talking to the men in his section and their German girlfriends, playing pinochle, and watching the couples dance to the loud German music. Even though they smoked, got drunk, and slept together, the G. I.s and their girlfriends seemed like ordinary people as far as Bob could tell. They reminded him of Spears. The German girlfriends told him about the Russians and how they raped all the German girls and women they could find. Bob knew that the German woman who cleaned up the provost marshal's offices had lost her husband and three sons in the war. She had fled from the

East Zone when the Russians came. Her husband had owned a bicycle factory.

"*Es gibt kein Gott mehre,*" she would mutter to herself and shake her head as she walked down the hall carrying her mop bucket.

Sergeant Cassill spoke German, and Bob asked him what Frau Heneken said. "She said that there isn't a God anymore."

Hundreds of thousands of people had died in the great American and British bombing raids on the German cities, the firestorms moving faster than a family with children could run. A million German prisoners of war were starving or freezing to death in Russia. The square miles of rubble and bombed-out buildings in Frankfurt helped make all these stories true for Bob.

At the section parties, the German girlfriends told him he should have a nice German girlfriend. "The war is over. You are too religious."

Bob always smiled when one of the women told him that. There was no point in trying to tell them that keeping the commandments and knowing the Church was true made him feel safe and good.

In August 1947 Bob was discharged from the army at Camp Kilmer. The day after he got home, he drove his mother's car in the late evening down to the river to go for a swim, but the hole was gone. The Army Corps of Engineers had gutted the river on a flood-control project the previous spring. Standing on a high rock dike, Bob watched the dark, moving, channeled water. He thought about the night Jim's dad swam with them.

Bob's mom had written him in her last letter before he left Germany that Spears had died of a heart attack. She'd gone to the funeral because Mr. Spears had been so good to him. Mrs. Spears remembered Bob when his mom introduced herself and said to have him come by to visit. Bob's mom reminded him of this. He went the second day he was home.

"Oh, it's so nice of you to come," Mrs. Spears said. She had him sit down in the front room. "Mr. Spears thought the world of you. He had several boys work for him through the years, and he said you were the best of the lot. He said you worked hard and you learned very quickly."

"Thank you."

"My husband was a good man, a fine man. He was a good provider. He kept the lawns and yard so nice and had such beautiful flowers. People used to stop just to admire his roses. You know yourself how he used to have you come over to wash my windows to make my life a little easier."

Mrs. Spears stood up from the sofa and took a silver-framed wedding photograph of her and Spears from the top of the piano. She polished the glass with the hem of her blue apron.

"Of course, Mr. Spears smoked, and he drank a little. I know that. But then we all have our faults and failings. Betty and I miss him so much. He always talked to me about you boys that worked for him at the shop. He liked to teach boys and help them get a start in life. Boys going out into this terrible old world need all the help they can get, don't they?"

Mrs. Spears handed the wedding photograph to Bob. Spears was dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, and tie. He looked young and handsome. He wore a white flower in his lapel. He was smiling. Bob handed the photograph back to Mrs. Spears.

"Yes, ma'am, I guess they do."

"You're certainly a fine-looking young man. The army must have been a good experience for you at your age, now the war's over."

"Yes, ma'am."

When Bob left, Mrs. Spears told him to be sure and come by again, and he said he would. Standing by his mom's car, Bob turned to look back at Spears's house. Spears had planted roses along the front of the house and up both sides of the path to the front porch. A father holding a little boy by the hand and a mother pushing a baby buggy stopped on the sidewalk to look at the roses. The father held his son up to touch a rose. In the early evening light, the red, white, and pink roses were very beautiful.

Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Winter Trees*,
watercolor, 12" x 18", 1964

Without Number

Julie J. Nichols

> *And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. . . .*
>
> *And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose. (Moses 1:30-33)*

Up already?" my father said, here early to fetch my husband. Developers and investors always on the lookout, they were on their way to Idaho for a site check. Late fall, 1978. "Baby keeping you awake?"

"Haven't been to sleep," I said, rueful. I handed him his morning Postum and he nursed it, letting warmth seep into his big workingman's hands, waiting at the counter for Paul to come downstairs. On B Street in Salt Lake City, November in the Carter years, everything spelled *safety:* well-dusted furniture, vacuumed rugs, lint-free drapes, shining stovetop. Remote threats, distant uncertainties—all bided their time. Dad loved Paul, both of them loved me, there was a baby (Christopher) and another one (Katie) on the way, and I, the best-trained technical writer at Thiokol, knew that I would never want for food, shelter, or community. The minute I wanted to quit working outside the home, I could.

"So what's bothering you?"

I shrugged. "This and that. Little things."

"Sometimes little things add up," he said. "Just don't let it go too far. Hey, Paul." My husband stood at the landing. Ready to go. Careful and secure.

* * *

I'd been out with Paul just twice when my father, his boss at Layton Construction, told me confidentially, "Better marry that one. Your mother'd approve. Never seen a better worker." From my father—who raised no hard-driven sons only because his wife died too soon to bear them—there was no higher compliment. Sometimes, during the seventies, I imagined scenarios where my mother bestowed *her* highest compliments —"never heard a funnier storyteller," or "never saw a more talented artist"—well, it was possible. But I didn't check with Dad about this. Enough for him that she'd been a saint, prettiest girl in her class at the U, Lambda Delt pres, stalwart supporter of city and church. Her death was the tragedy of his life.

And I was the light of it. By the time I graduated from their alma mater with an emphasis in technical writing so I'd never be without a job (although secretly I devoured women's lit, so I'd never be without friends)—by the time I graduated, my father, accustomed to Paul's extreme competence, made him head accountant and urged me to join the partnership.

"You let him take you to the temple. He'll take care of you for eternity," Dad said. I was almost twenty-two. Nobody at Thiokol was under thirty-five, and the Mormon engineers were all married with hordes of children. Paul was twenty-four, single, narrow-shouldered, and cosmopolitan (from Boise!). He was a prospect, all right. I lay awake at night, tabulating: on the one hand, Paul. On the other—what?

Nobody was surprised at our announcement. Paul accepted the stocks as a wedding gift; but beyond that, he said he wouldn't take any more than he earned, so my father had to find ways to give us everything he wanted to. When we burst through the bronzed doors of the Manti Temple, my father pulled us aside even before the photographer could snap us kissing in the summer heat.

"Here," he said, cramming the manila envelope into Paul's hands. "Small token of my confidence, son. I know my daughter's never going hungry." Paul was too proud to accept a house or an outright partnership in the company but too smart not to make sure the stocks rose in value. "You," Dad said, quoting Gordon B. Hinckley, "you *two*, are my most precious assets. Never forget it."

Paul took this as a challenge. Within months we had a mortgage on a house in the Avenues, a historic high-ceilinged brick arrangement on half an acre of sloping lawn and stream, with a handful of fruit trees and a

little plot for vegetables. Paul built steppingstones over the creek, a gazebo for shade. Sometimes I strolled out there in the wee hours, wrapped in chenille or silk, counting the stars or the steps. Our neighbors were kind—mostly older, crinkly with pleasure at all that lay ahead for our little family.

"I'm pregnant," I told my father under the autumn leaves one Sunday after dinner. (That was Chris.) Before the weekend, a brand new Voyager sat in the driveway, a bouquet of tiny roses in the front seat. "Car's from me, flowers are from your mother," the card read. Paul bought an infant seat even though Utah wouldn't pass the laws for another three or four years. I drove the van seven months before there was anyone to fill it. By day I wrote up specifications for the minutiae of rocketry and ordnance. I was good at detail, careful with punctuation. On my breaks I read fragments of Alice Munro, segments of Ursula LeGuin, snippets of Doris Lessing and Joanna Russ. At the end of the day, dry-throated from hours of peering silently at 10-point typeface, I drove home through a mysterious landscape, miles and miles in breadth, a bleak marathon of freeway through flat desert, long white lines ahead, in the fall and spring long gray-brown sheets of salt desert to either side, and in the winter, ice, fog particles, the road mined with hidden hazards like wandering stock or drunk hunters. I feared the sudden appearance of deer. One night at dinner I said so, during a lull.

My father said, "Honey, driving's no different from walking or cooking or breathing. You just do what you have to when the moment comes up, one thing at a time. Pass me that, will you?"

"Hmm," I said, handing over the salt. "I don't have to deal with big game when I cook." They chuckled. "Walking and breathing don't involve rubber on concrete."

"Asphalt," said Paul, handing over the butter.

In the night, I thought, *asphalt?*

Christopher was born in April. Thiokol gave me a forward-looking three-month maternity leave. What impressed my father was the request to return, the offer to pay for child care. His daughter must be good at what she did.

"Now, you know your mother took care of you till the day she died," he told me, bobbling the baby in the Land's End chaise longue as Paul mowed the lawn and I harvested early beans. "You really think you need a nanny?"

"Women have always helped each other raise their babies," I said lightly, snapping beans into a bowl. "Help with little things. Just like you have assistants. Vice presidents. Same thing."

He tried to chuckle.

"If your mother was alive, she'd take the baby for you," Paul said—my father winced—"but she's not. So what *are* you going to do?"

"Good question," Dad said. "What do you want in a nanny? Young and good-looking? Or old and experienced?" He winked at Paul.

"Well read," I said.

Paul grunted. My father said, "I'll have my secretary find somebody to fill the bill," handed me the baby, and headed inside to watch Mary Tyler Moore, his favorite. Sometimes, at night, I sat in the La-Z-Boy he'd brought from his house to ours for his after-dinner comfort—I settled into its Naugahyde sags, in the night, smelling his cologne, wondering about my mother.

* * *

"Chris is teething again," Paul said one morning in October.

"I know," I said, pulling on my Diane von Furstenburg. It wouldn't do for an increasingly-sought-after tech writer to be anything but "chick," said my father. Paul liked to help choose the dresses. This one had a tiny black and white print that could have been letters or puzzle pieces. "Also scooting. Also taking solid foods."

"Nina keeps you informed, then?" he said, referring to the nanny.

"Well, yes," I said, tying the wrap, "but I can see for myself—I feed him dinner. I play with him."

"You're home less and less," he said.

"Look who's talking," I said. "I can't imagine Dad would send you all over the eleven western states if he were worried about me."

"Somebody has to be home for the children, one parent providing the head, the other the heart," he said. His tie was smart, a four-inch Italian silk.

I straightened his collar. "What if both parents have heads?"

"Riva," he said. "I'm making enough for us to add to our family without your working." That night as he lay over me, I made a claw with my free hand above his back, tense. With the rest of my body I breathed "receptive, open," as I'd learned in birthing classes. Afterward I pulled the

extra blanket over him and went to sit in the gazebo with my arms crossed over my chest, watching Orion over the mountains through the trees. *Let him think I'm willing,* I said to myself.

And so I was, because a smooth routine mitigates the rougher parts of a marriage. Any wife knows this.

* * *

Every weekday for nearly a year, at the end of my drive, Nina was waiting there at home with chili or chops and a perfectly contented child. Like me, she had a degree in something from some university. Unlike me, she didn't use it to make her living; for all I knew, Nina's whole business in life was to come to my house, feed my child, clean my sink, make the meals my husband and I ate together. Having cued me in all my lines concerning the baby's progress, his crawling, his walking, his baby speech, she would slip quietly away, leaving us to our scenario of willing compliance.

Paul and my father and I laughed amiably over supper. Most evenings Paul was in town, we waved my father good-bye after "My Three Sons" or "Gunsmoke," then play with Christopher till he fell asleep. We lay on our king-sized waterbed to watch Johnny Carson until after a while Paul reached over absentmindedly and rubbed my feet or other parts, and eventually we ended up asleep tangled around each other. If he was away, doing a site check, settling a stock question, sometimes Nina stayed even after my father left, chatting idly about Christopher, pulling at her long brown braid.

"Do you read?" I asked sometime in January or February. Christopher was hauling himself along the coffee table, precocious. His father was in Arizona.

"All the time," she said. "You?"

When I told her I read fiction on my breaks, she said. "Sure—to improve your technical style."

"A good tech writer needs acquaintance with multiple worlds." I reached just in time to keep Christopher upright as he came to the end of the sofa.

"You do, that's for sure," she said. "You live on about five that I can see."

This interested me. "Tell," I said.

"Your dad's world," she held up her left thumb, which Christopher grabbed. "Your husband's." The index finger. "Your work—that's a whole world unto itself." Another finger, pointing at me: "This house. And then there's all that literature you read, worlds inside those pages." Christopher swayed, pulling on her splayed hand. "Want to know what I read? Astrology books." She jiggled the baby patiently. "Does that freak you out?"

"Hey, I watch the stars at night," I said.

She stood, scooping up my boy. "Come here," she said, grabbing my hand. We made our way to the gazebo, looked south over the city sprawled across the valley. "That's my world—one world, you'd think. Salt Lake City, nineteen-seventy-seven. Unified. Harmonious."

"Uh-huh," I said, rubbing the baby's back, watching the lights.

"But no." I could see her breath. Her eyes—light blue—were bright in the cold.

"No?" I said, shivering.

"There's one—that's your world, too," she said, pointing west toward Temple Square. "I was born into it as well. But I'll bet you don't even know about Cosmic Aeroplane—that's two—or Mormons for ERA—that's three—" My teeth were beginning to chatter. The baby's cheeks reddened in the chill. "Gilgal. That's a whole thing too. You know Gilgal? A sphinx with the head of Joseph Smith? Right down there in the middle of town. There are worlds in this town—" Fierce, she was. It surprised me.

"Let's get Christopher inside," I said.

"I feed him vitamins. He won't catch cold."

"I might, though," I said. I pulled her inside, turned up the radiator in the living room, rubbed my hands hard so they'd be warm as I put the baby in his pajamas.

"You might," she said, wry. "I think you're catching something already."

* * *

All spring and into the summer she brought astrology books from Cosmic Aeroplane, books about light bodies, vibrations in the universe, the paradigm shifts toward which she believed we were irrevocably streaming. She mentioned the ERA, brought newspaper clippings. At the solstice she lit candles and read from Madame Blavatsky. She be-

lieved, with Madame, that everything was a sign. Everything connected at a deep level. We co-create our reality. None of it contradicted anything I already sensed. Politics, esoteric religion, literature: Women and men are not what conventional wisdom would have us be, but energy and matter. Consciousness and content. Within this one universe lie millions of parallel ones, material or imagined but equally real. We are free agents, choosers, more than we think we are, and different. It all has to do with focus.

When Paul and my father were home, I focused on them.

"They called me to be executive secretary," Paul said one Sunday in September. Tomatoes were on, and once more the leaves were turning. We were eating outside under the sugar maples. Soon there would be frost.

"Of course you said yes." My father cut Christopher's roast into small pieces. "What about you, girl? What's your calling?"

"Mom, I guess," I said. "They haven't called me to anything."

"It's because you work full time," Paul said stiffly. He wiped his mouth hard with his linen napkin. "They told me that this afternoon."

"Well," I said carefully. "That's thoughtful of them, isn't it? I don't have time to be a Relief Society counselor."

"You could quit work," my husband said.

"Your mother was president of the stake Relief Society when she died, you know," Dad said. Christopher stopped eating. I reached over with my fork, put a bite of tomato in his mouth. He wiggled, happy. "Did I ever tell you about the time the policemen came to tell your mother about the Caribbean cruise I won in that drawing at the firemen's fundraiser? She was having a Relief Society meeting and when she saw those men in uniform, she grabbed you and hid in the closet. The other sisters had to answer the door. Afterward your mother said all she could think was that they were coming to tell her I'd died and she just couldn't face it. How about that?"

Paul nodded, approving. "Did you ever go on the cruise?"

"No," my father said, sad now. "She was the one who died."

Paul and I didn't say anything.

"You two, you better hang on to each other. That old calling, that's nothing. They're just not inspired to call Riva yet."

"Apparently not," Paul said, pushing back his chair. "However, I'm

now the exec sec, and I intend to be fully involved." He snatched up his empty plate.

"That's the way to talk, young man," my father said. He handed Paul his own plate and Christopher's. "Did I hear you say there's strawberries for dessert?" While Paul was inside he scowled at me. "Do I need to be worried about you two?"

"I hope not," I said. "Not unless he's having an affair with Nina or something."

That got a laugh. "Yeah, she's a looker," Dad said.

Nina took me to the garden of Gilgal, with its strange symbols. When I took Paul there later, while we walked with Christopher in the stroller, I pretended accidental discovery. He shook his head, incredulous. At home, by day, Christopher scrabbled in the yard in miniature corduroys, threw crayons with enthusiasm, lisped, "Mama, Nini, Papa, WANT!" After work I made tomato sauce. Raked leaves. Paul did not have an affair with Nina. That was never my worry. But then I missed two periods.

Summer deflated into autumn. The wind blew in a warm winter. No one at Thiokol noticed that sometimes, on my breaks, I cried over the news, over the workload, over my books. What my father noticed was that no matter how early he came to pick up Paul, I was already up. And not because of the baby.

* * *

On the afternoon of the day my father went with Paul to Idaho, a dark twilight two weeks before Thanksgiving, I made my way to the parking lot, gnawing a cracker, holding off nausea. A storm was coming. The sky bled black behind the plant, an opacity on the horizon west and north, racing me home. I hunched over the steering wheel, tensing myself for the onslaught of that darkness, that hard wall of thunderhead stripping the sky of light.

It seemed a sign: I must tell Paul that I was pregnant and take the consequences. If he and my father said that with two children I must stop working, I would. (Would what?) The wind flung dust and debris against the van, pattering, jittering, setting records a little further north. You can look it up still and find the reports, roofs blown off, damage from limbs

and litter. It wasn't rain, but it soon would be. At one point not a deer but a vision of my mother spun out at me from the maelstrom.

At home, "Bad night?" said Nina as she took my coat. I shook my hair out, stretching my neck left and then right.

"Pretty bad," I said. "But this place looks great." It always did, clean but not too clean, traces of the baby's dinner in the sink, a skillet of something on the stove. Good jazz on KUER, soft light in the big room holding the wind at bay.

"Both your dad and your husband called," she said, holding the baby out to me.

I raised an eyebrow.

"They won't be back tonight. Your dad's in Ogden. Paul's in Pocatello. *He'll* call later."

"Okay," I said. Then, "Will you stay?" It came out like that, unpredictable.

"All night?"

I didn't say no. We bathed Christopher together, laughing at his babbling. I read him *Goodnight Moon* till he dozed on the floor and then, sleepily, we watched television late into the night, full of sarcasm at Carson's Carnac silliness. When the phone rang at almost midnight we both jumped. Nina said, out of a half sleep like mine, splayed across the waterbed, "It's for you."

"I'll be here two nights," Paul said. "Anything I need to know?"

"Everything's fine. Take your time," I told him. Christopher stirred at my voice. I got up to rock him. Nina lay back, stretching.

"That baby," she said. "He has a great horoscope, did you know? I drew it up one day when he was sleeping. Moon in his seventh house, Jupiter in his first. Lucky. Just like his mom."

She rolled off the waterbed and took him from me. I watched her dark shape as she left our room, laid Christopher in his bed, and wandered back, graceful, strong. *Surely my mother's was a presence like that . . .* She put her hands on my shoulders and kneaded, deep into my neck and up behind my ears. Her hands—I reached up to them, held them. She bent down, kissed my cheek.

"Everything's just fine," she said.

"Is it?" I said.

"Believe it," she said, lifting me by the hand. "Now come on. Come to bed."

"Thank you," I said, and went with her. There was comfort in her arms. I slept, oblivious to the hurtling storm, the starless heavy skies to the west, to the north, the cover in all directions black, massive, dangerous.

Reflections on Darkness and Light

Judy Curtis

I The Asking

After having retired to the place I had designed to go, having looked around me, and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But, exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction—not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who had such marvelous power as I had never before felt in any being—just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. (JS–H 1:15–17)

All that has gone before makes the now, somehow.
Whys are sucked deep into the darkened spirit's
black hole where desperate reaching retrieves
distraught questions from God's battered children.
Response comes in increments,
not *yes* or *no*, but *maybe, no matter, not yet.*

Born through a veiled past
we experiment upon the Word;
begin the long quest to fade shadow into light
only to realize, when the tests
and pleadings for help are done,
that we have to write our own answers.

II The Setting

How long will you choose darkness rather than light? (Hel. 13:29)

Disembodied in darkness
sightless
there is only what we feel
what we grapple for

Actors, chained to fear,
flailing ourselves with other's lives
performing on an unlit stage,
the curtains closed

Voices of an invisible audience
taunting

III The Awakening

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. (Isa. 9:2)

Let us chant a litany to day
with its certainty of sun
its lavishness of light;
to fires that appease the specter of night;
to the spark within
that is the hugeness of us all,
that lights our dreams, our visions
and causes us to yearn
for an unfathomable love.

IV The Testing

The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed. (D&C 88:13)

Why not a passion for the source
to counter dark's obsession?
See how lightning lashes at the night,
how the prudent carry lanterns into caves
to wrestle both angels and demons,
how focused beams transform matter.

Wave, particle, quantum,
aspects of the whole.
In a universe made of
shards of shattered stars
the shadows the light.

V Double Helix

We were in the beginning. Intelligence, or the light of truth was not created or made, neither indeed can be. The body filled with light comprehends all things. (D&C 88:67)

We come knowing
but don't know we know
eons encrypted, spiraled
inside us, encoded in an
infinitude of atomic light
Intervolved between shadow
and sun, life breeds in darkness,
intaglioed leaves dying
their golden death crumble
and decay into the entropic
dregs that infuse nascent
roots with opposed force
to push stems, leaves
flowers towards visible
light, while we, in the
night, like blossoms
triggered by dusk
effloresce dreams and
visions illumined from
within to bloom in the
gardens in our minds
Let there be light and
there was . . . is . . . in
all things, through
all things, brilliant, bright

Upon the Face of the Water

Lon Young

I. Wormwood

Then the third angel sounded: and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is wormwood. (Rev. 8:10–11)

The chokecherry where we camped one June
hung low over the water, sheltering
brown shade beneath its branches
so clear the water revealed crooks in our legs
and the mushroom clouds toes make in the silt.
I hid there from my brothers
the last day until they forgot me, leaning
back in the water, chest lifting slowly on elbows
and falling,
legs sprawled wide.
Above my belly shadows of leaves tossed.
The water thinned and lapped against the bank
and a pot of beans puffed on the Coleman.
I closed my eyes and sank into molten inches of mud.

I woke when something snaked past my throat:
a sleek blackness greasing across the water,
slinging ripples against my face. I left
the water and my whole body shuddered.

II. Jesus Bugs

And it shall be said in days to come that none is able to go up to the land of Zion upon the waters, but he that is upright in heart. (D&C 61:16)

You've seen them on the water, bodies tapered
like canoes with two long pairs of oars,
four smooth silver bowls under their feet,
a pond's face dimpled.

My friend and I drifted down the Little Manistique in a canoe
the summer we graduated and watched the water-striders
scrambling across the river like hockey players.
Striders don't actually float, he tells me.
They simply *resist* sinking—something about surface tension.
Then he says you can drown them with a drop of oil.
Pour some oil on the water and it'll slick
up the hairs on their legs and they'll drown.
He laughs. It's true, he says.
And I feel our canoe sway just a little.

III. Learning to Float

And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and began to sink. (Matt. 14:29–30)

The body wants to sink.
Only my arching chest contends
against the pull of sludge and muck.

The spraddling legs, the toes, feet,
groin, belly slump and fail,
forget themselves in the dark silt.

So it's not walking on water,
but then I'm no rock either, for all
this dead weight. I might falter

but I won't take your hand.
I'll turn my back on the devil
and bare my breast to the wind.

Two Perspectives on the Life and Times of Joseph Smith

Richard Lyman Bushman with the assistance of Jed Woodworth. *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005. 740 pp., and H. Michael Marquardt, *The Rise of Mormonism, 1816–1844.* Longwood, Fla.: Xulon Press, 2006, 696 pp.

Reviewed by Newell G. Bringhurst, Professor of History and Government, College of the Sequoias, Visalia, California

The year 2005, marking the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Joseph Smith, Jr., witnessed the publication of two important book-length studies on Mormonism's founder. The first, Richard Lyman Bushman's long-awaited biography *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling,* is a massive 742-page study, meticulously researched and highly detailed in its presentation. It appeared in September 2005 from the nationally prominent, New York-based publisher, Alfred A. Knopf. In contrast, H. Michael Marquardt's *The Rise of Mormonism, 1816–1844,* an almost equally long, 680-page work, is not a biography, per se. Independently published by the author through Xulon Press of Longwood, Florida, Marquardt's carefully researched work devotes significant attention to Joseph Smith.

Both Bushman and Marquardt note how their differing perceptions of Mormonism's truth claims influenced their respective presentations. Bushman acknowledges his personal quandary as a "believing historian"—a life-long, practicing Latter-day Saint—in dealing with the myriad controversies involving Joseph Smith. His religious orientation, notwithstanding, Bushman, in his own words, attempts "to look frankly at all sides of Joseph Smith, not ducking any of the problems" (xix).

Marquardt outlines his own religious odyssey. He converted to Mormonism in 1961 after being "introduced to the story of Joseph Smith's visionary experiences." Following baptism he commenced his study into Mormon origins. Such research, however, caused doubt and ultimately disbelief. As Marquardt frankly states, "Fifteen years later, I resigned my [LDS Church] membership" (v). Marquardt's work is scholarly and based on careful research into a variety of primary sources. He sought to evaluate "the various conflicts that involved the Mormons"—this giving him "a

better understanding of the social, economic, and political happenings at the time discussed in the book" (vi).

The differing perspectives of Bushman and Marquardt notwithstanding, each scholar provides valuable insights into Mormonism's founder. Bushman's biography breaks new ground in a number of areas. Particularly valuable is his careful consideration of the Mormon leader's "religious thought." While conceding that it "is not easily encapsulated or analyzed," Bushman states: "His teachings came primarily through his revelations, which like other forms of scripture, are epigrammatic and oracular." Smith "never presented his ideas systematically in clear, logical order; they came in flashes and bursts," while "his most powerful thoughts" take the form of "assertions delivered as if from heaven" (xxi).

Nonetheless, Bushman conveys a certain rationale about the evolution of Smith's religious thought as he seeks to "recover the world of a prophet" (xxii). "The signal feature of [Joseph's] life was his sense of being guided by revelation." His revelations "came to him as experiential facts" (xxi). As a result, the Mormon leader is "the closest America has come to producing a biblical-style prophet—one who spoke for God with the authority of Moses or Isaiah" (xx).

Bushman confronts the 1820 First Vision, providing his own explanation for Smith's three seemingly conflicting accounts of this foundational event. In the first (1832) account, the vision came as a result of Joseph's devout prayer for the forgiveness of his sins, resulting in "a personal conversion"—one in which Smith "saw the Lord in the light and heard his words of forgiveness" (39). But at the same time, it represents an "abbreviated form" of Smith's total religious experience. As "Joseph became more confident, more details came out" (40). In the 1835 and 1838 accounts, Smith recalls seeing two distinct divine anthropomorphic personages—the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. There was also a shift of emphasis in God's message from one of "personal forgiveness" to concern over the "apostasy of the [existing] churches." Bushman asserts: "Joseph's own salvation gives way to the opening of a new era of history. The promise of forgiveness through faith in Christ was dropped from the narrative, and the apostasy of Christian churches stood as the central message of the vision" (40).

Bushman likewise confronts other controversies. In Joseph's bringing forth of the Book of Mormon, Bushman acknowledges that "magic and religion [melded] in Smith family culture . . . with magic serving [a]

purpose in [Joseph's] life" as a sort of "preparatory gospel" (50–51, 54). But, as Bushman further notes, the Book of Mormon's "manifest message [was] Christ's atonement for the world's sins"—a "Christian message [that] overwhelms everything else" (107–8).

Bushman also provides enlightening insights into other aspects of the Book of Mormon, underscoring its complex, multifaceted nature. "The restoration of literal Israel was the [book's] centerpiece," that is, its call for the gathering of all righteous individuals to an American Zion in preparation for the millennium and the Second Coming. The "favored people" to be restored were the Jews and especially the American Indians (103–4). Bushman also characterizes this work as a "document of profound social protest"—a reaction against "the dominant culture of Joseph Smith's time," specifically "the amalgam of Enlightenment, republican, Protestant, capitalist, and nationalist values" characteristic of Jacksonian America (104).

Bushman rejects outright those naturalistic interpretations that, in his words, "have reduced the book to almost pure autobiography," clearly referring to the work of such scholars as Dan Vogel, Robert D. Anderson, and William Morain. He does, however, concede that "one can imagine Joseph seeing himself in the text" through the words and actions of various Book of Mormon prophets. This work may have outlined "the possibilities for" Joseph Smith as "a young man still forming his own identity. Nephi, the leading character in its opening books, was like Joseph, a strong younger brother, the one to have visions and teach the others" (105–6).

Bushman outlines Smith's evolving theological concepts as they assumed greater complexity and uniqueness—thereby setting Mormonism apart from other Christian denominations. By the mid-1830s, Smith's teachings emphasized the importance of "the priesthood, endowment, and exaltation" as "distinguishing doctrines" (194).

Also carefully discussed are Smith's later doctrines introduced during the early 1840s. Among these was the temple endowment ceremony, compared by some observers to Masonic ritual but which Bushman argues was "more akin to aspects of Kabbalah." In Bushman's words: "The fundamental trajectory of the endowment coincided with the passions and expectations of mystics for centuries past and especially with the Kabbalistic dream of conjunction with the divine" (451).

Even more radical were Smith's teachings concerning the nature of

God. In 1841 he taught that "there is no other God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones" (420). And in 1844, through the King Follett sermon, characterized as "the culminating statement of Joseph's theology," the Mormon leader promoted eternal progression. Specifically, each human being had the potential of becoming a god while, conversely, God had in an earlier time been a mortal being before progressing to Godhood. This important doctrine promoted the concept of plural gods. "The King Follett doctrines" in the words of Bushman "sound profoundly American. Every man a god and a king fulfilled democratic aspirations to a degree unknown in any other religion. Joseph's assertions that 'all mind is susceptible of improvement' opened up the possibility of limitless growth" (537).

Bushman also provides frank, penetrating insights into the Mormon leader's complex personality. Most conspicuously, Joseph Smith expressed rough-hewn attributes reflective of his lower-middle-class, frontier background—such qualities clearly inspiring the book's subtitle, *Rough Stone Rolling.* "Smith called himself a rough stone, thinking of his own impetuosity and lack of polish" (xx)—this taken from a May 21, 1843, speech in which the Mormon leader compared himself to a "huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain." Bushman further notes Smith's immersion in "the culture of honor," a system that "bred deep loyalties to friends and family, while instilling a fierce urge to avenge insults. . . . The greatest fear in life, a fear stronger than death or damnation, was public humiliation. . . . In this culture . . . the Smiths had a clannish loyalty to one another, and a fiery resentment against the slightest derogation of their worth" (295).

As a result, Smith exhibited certain "learned behaviors" including an "easily bruised pride" that made him "unable to bear criticism" and resulted in his rebuking "anyone who challenged him" (295–96). He had difficulty rising "above the fray in the serene majesty of his calling," all too frequently involving himself "in a series of small quarrels, domestic disturbances, and squabbles" (295). Smith "was sensitive to insults and could not stand to be crossed" (xx). "He lashed back at critics and could be a bulldog when contradicted" (177). "When he was insulted, betrayed, or attacked, anger poured from his heart" (371).

But at the same time, Joseph Smith "hated contention," desperately wanting "to live in harmony with his brothers and sisters" (295). This desire was at the center of the Mormon leader's relentless goal of building

his envisioned Zion—a place in which "there would be no lacerating offenses, no insults, no vengeance, no infringement on honor. . . . The Saints would live together amicably, escaping the ceaseless round of insults and reprisals, of rebuke and reconciliation." All would be "of one heart and one mind" (302).

Paradoxically, Joseph Smith used his contentious personality in winning followers and retaining their loyalty. In Bushman's words: "Joseph's impulsiveness looks raw [to] modern eyes" but to his lower-middle-class flock of believers he appeared "vivid and strong. . . . The expression of [such] feelings bound people to him" (303).

Besides Smith's combative nature, a second attribute ensured his success as a visionary leader: his "iron will" (xx). Smith "had to be tough. A weaker, gentler soul could scarcely have survived the incessant hammering at the head of the Church" (177–78). Smith possessed a third attribute—an ability to both identify and bond with his followers. Such individuals Bushman characterizes as "plain people of little education and much zeal." Smith presented himself as "one of them, an ordinary man among ordinary men" (160). Smith, in fact, along with his ever-growing family, lived in strikingly modest circumstances—"more like a poor Methodist itinerant than a prophet and seer leading a church" (170). Smith "was happiest in the company of plain men" (485). He did not pursue personal wealth, an attribute possibly rooted in his own limited skills and success as a capitalist-businessman. Eschewing material self-aggrandizement, Smith diverted Church economic resources toward temple building and/or the purchase of land and resources for the poor converts flocking to Mormonism's gathering place.

A fourth quality that enabled Smith to succeed was his skill as an organizer. He "thought institutionally more than any other visionary [leader] of his time" (251). As Smith increased his own authority, he empowered his followers by creating a layered, open priesthood organization. Established over time was an array of priesthood offices, resulting in a non-professional lay organization composed of almost all adult male members. Smith's creation of an elaborate priesthood organization ensured "the survival of his movement" beyond his death (251).

In general, Richard Bushman has crafted a multi-faceted portrait of Joseph Smith, based on extensive primary sources, many previously unavailable, unknown, or under-utilized. Enhancing his presentation, Bushman has synthesized information from the outpouring of scholar-

ship produced by the New Mormon History. To his credit, the author forthrightly acknowledges "naturalistic interpretations" at variance with his own frame of reference as a believing Latter-day Saint. Rounding out this biographical portrait and, indeed, broadening the book's focus beyond Mormonism per se is the author's success in placing Joseph Smith within the larger context of his Jacksonian American environment. Bushman, moreover, draws comparisons with other contemporary religious leaders—including fellow visionaries Ann Lee, William Miller, Ellen G. White, and Mary Baker Eddy.

Its outstanding strengths notwithstanding, Bushman's biography is wanting in several ways. On a fundamental level, the biography falls short in presenting the drama of a "life being lived." While Bushman is effective in discussing the often-conflicting interpretations of Joseph Smith's life, his overall story line lacks literary flourish, not reaching the status of biography as art. The prose is tedious, often overly detailed—thus interrupting the flow of presentation. This problem is further complicated by a tendency to jump forward or backward in time. Also, in places, the story line moves away from Joseph Smith himself, reading more like a history of the LDS Church. As a result, Bushman's book sometimes gives the impression of being an encyclopedic compilation rather than a re-creation of the life and times of Mormonism's founder.

Also problematic is Bushman's treatment of Joseph Smith's scriptural writings relative to the all-important issues of race and status of dark-skinned people. I found unconvincing his argument that the Book of Mormon's "curse" represented by the "skin of blackness" was "wholly cultural and frequently reversed" (98). I also found inadequate Bushman's analysis of race in Smith's later scriptural writings. In discussing the Book of Moses, Bushman does not even mention the prominent role assigned certain biblical counterfigures identified with black people—namely Cain, Ham, and Canaan. Instead, Bushman vaguely alludes to "visions of light and truth [that] alternate with evil and darkness" (136).

Similarly, Bushman downplays the racial implications of the Book of Abraham. While conceding that "priesthood [was] a theme running through the entire work," Bushman asserts that "Joseph's concern . . . was with civilization and lineage more than race, Pharaoh, Ham, and Egyptus figure in one lineage and Abraham in another. The implications for modern race relations interested Joseph less than the configuration of family ties and the descent of authority" (289). Unfortunately, Joseph Smith's

successors, starting with Brigham Young, interpreted the Book of Abraham much differently, making it a scriptural proof text for the pernicious racist practice of denying priesthood ordination to worthy black men.

I also found extremely deficient Bushman's discussion of plural marriage. A crucial aspect of early Mormonism, Smith's embrace of this controversial practice led directly to his assassination, yet Bushman devotes a mere 20 pages of his 567- page narrative to this topic. I was unpersuaded by his assertion that Joseph Smith's involvement with Fanny Alger during the mid-1830s represents Smith's earliest effort to promote polygamy as an essential Mormon practice based on doctrine. Equally serious is Bushman's failure to discusses the dynamics of Smith's relationship with the thirty-one other women he allegedly married. The vast majority of Smith's wives are not even mentioned by name, and even those who are come across as vague, shadowy figures. It would seem that, at the very least, Bushman could have named the thirty-two women who, he acknowledges, heeded the Mormon leader's command to promote a practice that he proclaimed essential for their eternal salvation.

Also wanting is Bushman's discussion of Smith's rationale for vigorously promoting polygamy. Bushman simply argues that Joseph Smith embraced plural marriage as a matter of divine commandment. What was the influence of other factors, specifically the dynamics of evolving Mormon doctrine, and possible social-cultural influences? These omissions are perplexing, given Bushman's careful consideration of social-cultural influences on Smith's other actions. Bushman offhandedly suggests that Smith pursued plural wives "to create a network of related wives, and kinsmen that would endure into the eternities. . . . Like Abraham of old, Joseph yearned for familial plentitude. He did not lust for women so much as he lusted for kin" (445). One wishes that Bushman had further pursued this intriguing hypothesis.

A related inadequacy is Bushman's treatment of the marital relationship of Joseph and Emma. The Mormon leader's sometimes warmly affectionate, sometimes difficult, relationship with his first wife, Emma, is described throughout the text, although Bushman's narrative generates more questions than answers. What formed the foundation of Joseph and Emma's mutual attraction, especially given their contrasting personalities and the strong opposition of Emma's parents to the match? Furthermore, if Joseph Smith sincerely believed polygamy to be divinely sanctioned, as Bushman asserts, why would he withhold from Emma details of his exten-

sive involvement and particularly its divine foundation? Given what Bushman sees as Emma's sincere belief that Joseph was, indeed, a divinely ordained prophet, why didn't she support her husband in this practice?

Also problematic is the larger issue of gender in this biography. While conceding that "women were conspicuously absent" and "invisible in the organization" and "absent from most ritual events" throughout the 1830s (212, 310), Bushman fails to explore the reasons for such exclusion. He also leaves unexplained the rationale behind the Mormon leader's dramatic turnabout in the early 1840s, creating/allowing the significant female roles institutionalized in the Relief Society and the temple endowment. To what extent was such female involvement related to the concurrent introduction of plural marriage? Or was it more the product of Joseph Smith's evolving cosmology which gave family a central role? Were Smith's actions motivated by the burgeoning woman's rights movement in American society, culminating in the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848?

Such problems notwithstanding, Richard Bushman's biography is a landmark work, deserving attention from all students of the life and times of Joseph Smith and the early Latter-day Saint movement. It significantly illuminates Smith's life, carefully elucidating his shortcomings as well as strengths. A complex, multifaceted work, much like its biographical subject, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* will serve as an essential point of departure for all future studies.

Michael Marquardt's *The Rise of Mormonism: 1816–1844*, although not a biography, covers much of the same ground as Bushman. Marquardt's narrative begins with the Smith family's move to New York in 1816 when Joseph Jr. was eleven. Although Marquardt approaches Smith from a naturalistic perspective, he acknowledges the importance of religious influences on young Joseph—specifically the religious revivals of 1816–17 and 1824–25—as well as the beliefs of various family members. "Joseph, Jr.'s parents taught religious values to their children." In the words of Marquardt "Joseph's religious instruction included hearing sermons, revival homilies, private family worship, and personal Bible studies. Joseph was not uninformed, ignorant, or illiterate" (52).

Marquardt, like Bushman, discusses the Smith family's less-than-successful struggle to escape the grinding poverty of their lower-middle-class status. Marquardt examines the Smith family's involvement with treasure seeking, magic, and the occult. Also like Bushman, Marquardt links such activities to Joseph Smith's subsequent activities as religious

seeker, seer, and translator of the Book of Mormon, and ultimately founding prophet of the Latter-day Saint movement.

Marquardt carefully discusses issues surrounding the three differing accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision. His conclusions differ from those of Bushman, clearly reflective of Marquardt's naturalistic perspective. Smith's 1832 account "of Christ appearing and granting him forgiveness for his sins was similar to [the experiences] of other young people of his day" (52), while the 1835 account of "receiving the forgiveness of sins was not included because the central message was not forgiveness." It was rather "his call to be God's prophet" (494).

By 1838, when the Mormon leader related his third account, it was within the larger context of writing his "history of the [LDS] Church from the earliest period of its [existence] to the present" (491). Thus, its central focus was that all the existing Christian churches were "an abomination in his [God's] sight"—this paving the way for Joseph Smith's restoration of the one true church. Smith presented "various events in relation to this Church in truth and righteousness as they have transpired, or as they at present exist." Marquardt characterizes Smith's rendering "a theological or faith account." The key to understanding Smith's differing versions in "reconstructing" the First Vision is illuminated by Marquardt's observation: "What is important is that memory be authentic for the person at the moment of construction, not that it be an accurate depiction of the past moment" (492).

Marquardt also differs from Bushman in analyzing the Book of Mormon. Discussing the angelic 1823 visitation informing Joseph of the gold plates, Marquardt asserts that the divine personage who appeared to Smith was "named Nephi in his longest 1838 account" and became Moroni only in his later published accounts of this event (494). In his analysis of the Book of Mormon itself, Marquardt points out numerous "anachronisms [that] mark [it] as a work produced after Jesus was resurrected and the Christian church established" (173). He also notes at length the book's "literary dependence on nineteenth century events" (191–201). Furthermore, from Marquardt's perspective, the work also reflects certain crucial autobiographical events, even anticipating the testimony of the Three Witnesses (202–8). "The Book of Mormon evidences a nineteenth-century origin," writes Marquardt, "and can be identified as an example of early American religious fiction" (209). But Marquardt concedes that its central "message . . . was for others to believe in the Jesus

who spoke to Native Americans and who speaks to Joseph Smith" (209). He thus concurs with Richard Bushman on the book's primary purpose.

Marquardt, like Bushman, devotes significant space to the evolution of Mormon doctrine and theology. Foundational doctrines included restoring the true "Church of Christ" with Joseph Smith as its supreme leader, ordained with sweeping powers as its "seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and First elder" (215). In turn, the Church's central mission involved preaching the concept of gathering all true believers to Mormonism's New Jerusalem in preparation for the millennium and Second Coming. This new Zion would rise on America's western frontier, with the conversion and gathering of the American Indians or "remnants of Israel" as promised in the Book of Mormon.

Marquardt further argues that "Joseph Smith's salvation theology was developing into a theology of exaltation" (544), a trend fully evident by the Nauvoo period. Anticipating exaltation theology were certain doctrinal developments during the 1830s: heaven organized in three degrees of glory along with its promise of almost universal salvation. This development facilitated a shift in Mormon's focus away from salvation per se and toward the goal of achieving the celestial kingdom in the hereafter.

Closely tied to exaltation theology was an "emphasis on Priesthood authority," which became "an important topic in the Latter-day Saint church" and in Smith's revelations (395). One result was the establishment of new priesthood offices—specifically the Quorum of the Twelve, Quorums of the Seventies, and Church Patriarch. Priesthood authority was also a major focus in Smith's scriptural writings during this period, including his "Inspired Version" of the Bible and the Books of Moses and Abraham.

The linking of priesthood authority to exaltation set the stage for the development of temple rituals, first washings and anointings in Kirtland, then baptism for the dead, endowments, and sealings "for time and eternity" in Nauvoo. As Marquardt notes, Joseph Smith, during the Nauvoo period, "gave new emphasis to salvation theology" in developing "additional concepts relating to God, Priesthood, and temple," all of which focused "special emphasis on obedience to authority" (532).

The most controversial of these practices was, of course, plural marriage, which Marquardt examines in much greater detail than Bushman—devoting eighty pages to this topic. Marquardt lists twenty-seven women whom he accepts as plural wives, five fewer than Bushman, supplemented

by the age of each woman at the time of marriage, the sealing date, and (when known) the officiator. He also devotes an entire chapter to Sarah Ann Whitney and Emily Dow Partridge. Yet despite this extensive discussion, Marquardt, like Bushman, is inexplicably reluctant to critically analyze or even suggest reasons for Joseph Smith's fateful embrace of polygamy.

In general, *The Rise of Mormonism: 1816–1844* is a solid work based on the author's careful use of primary sources. Marquardt painstakingly outlines the evolution of Joseph Smith's religious thought—albeit from a naturalistic perspective. Thus, Marquardt goes further than Bushman in detailing controversy and inconsistencies—specifically, for the First Vision and plural marriage. Marquardt also considers a number of topics omitted or ignored by Bushman: Smith's establishment of a "War Department" in the early 1830s, the Quorum of the Anointed established in 1842, the practice "of re-baptism for the remission of sins and baptism for health," and Smith's esoteric teaching "that performing animal sacrifice was still a duty of the priesthood" (541–42).

Unfortunately, Marquardt fails to suggest possible reasons for the introduction of such practices. This omission underscores a more fundamental problem: his failure to thoroughly and critically analyze Joseph Smith's decision-making process in bringing forth new doctrines and related practices. More seriously, Marquardt's study lacks a clear central thesis, a contrast to Bushman's basic thesis that Joseph Smith was what he purported to be—a prophet of God, albeit one with significant flaws. Complicating Marquardt's lack of a clear central thesis is his failure to indicate how his work differs from the numerous other studies dealing with Joseph Smith and early Mormonism. Reflective of such problems is the book's "Conclusion: Progress of Mormonism," which comes across as rambling and disjointed and itself lacking a clear focus.

Marquardt also fails to address two fundamental questions that Bushman considers carefully. First, what qualities of Joseph Smith's life and career made him a successful leader? Second, what aspects of his leadership enabled the LDS Church, not only to survive, but also to evolve into a major American denomination manifesting a world-wide presence?

While Marquardt's narrative is more straightforward than Bushman's complex, nuanced presentation, it is less carefully written. The text is frequently cluttered with long, undigested quotations from primary sources, commendably reflecting Marquardt's conscientious effort

to document his sometimes controversial assertions. In places, sentences and paragraphs are awkward. Grammatical errors and misspellings also appear.

The Rise of Mormonism fails to probe certain topics important in the life of Joseph Smith and in the early Church. The all-important issues of race, gender, and ethnicity are not even mentioned. More fundamentally, Marquardt does not adequately consider Joseph Smith and Mormonism in the larger context of Jacksonian American society, a major contribution of Bushman's biography.

Yet despite these shortcomings, Marquardt's *The Rise of Mormonism: 1816-1844* is a valuable work, based on the careful and extensive use of important primary sources. It provides illuminating insights not found in other studies, including Bushman's. But Bushman's *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* is the more important work, in that it will stand as an essential benchmark. It will undoubtedly influence the form and content of all future studies of Joseph Smith, in a manner comparable to that of Fawn McKay Brodie's earlier, highly controversial 1945 biography, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith*, ironically published by Bushman's publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, exactly sixty years earlier.

Re-imagining Nephi

Michael D. Allred and Laura Allred. *The Golden Plates: Volumes 1–3* (Lakeside, Ore.: AAA POP, 2004-05), 192 pp.

Reviewed by Colin Austin, Senior Associate, MDC, Inc. and comic book fan, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Growing up as an avid comic reader, I was always disappointed with illustrated stories of the Book of Mormon. The figures were usually static, the action canned, and the flat progression of dialogue was easy to discard for the latest edition of "Ghost Rider." That is why I, along with other LDS comic fans across the country, sat up with attention when *The Golden Plates*, by Michael and Laura Allred, began hitting comic book stores. Michael Allred is a legitimate and recognized comic book writer and artist (Batman, Spiderman, The Fantastic Four, etc.) and Laura is an exceptional colorist. Here at last were masters of the medium who would do justice to the incredible tales of the Book of Mormon!

The Golden Plates is planned as a twelve-part series that visually retells the stories and prophecies of the Book of Mormon. Volumes 1–3, all that are currently available, present the history of Nephi and his experiences both in the Old World and the New. But *The Golden Plates* is more than a satisfying comic book—it makes possible a fresh reading of the Book of Mormon.

But why comics? What is it about this particular literary and artistic form that can enliven such a well-known and holy text as the Book of Mormon? Part of the answer lies in the perception that comics are for young readers and amusement. It seems okay to take some liberties with the original source if the medium is not considered serious. Unlike novels, drama, or even movies, comics do not pose direct competition with the Book of Mormon. Lifelong comic aficionados might challenge this perspective, but in this case the slighting of the genre is like a free pass for the imagination.

With good comics, new possibilities emerge once the reader is inside. The visuals and action move the plot quickly toward meaning. In other words, comics get to the point although the journey is constructed and embellished in the mind. The reader is able to linger or move on as desired. The result is like a personal tour that lets you add your own ideas. This is why people rarely throw out comics. They like to read them again and again because each time through is a different experience. And building yourself into the story is fun.

As Scott McCloud explains in *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (Northampton, Mass.: Kitchen Sink Press, 1993), moving through connected panels of words and pictures makes the mind of the reader work overtime. Most of the images in comics are iconic and recognizable. When these concepts are skillfully arranged in a sequence, a reader fills in the gaps between the frames. In this way, the mind can take picture fragments and develop entire scenes. What is unique to the comic book form is the powerful way in which the reader generates detail and sensory perception. According to McCloud, "Comics panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged, staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous, unified reality" (67).

The Golden Plates begins with the journey of Lehi's family. Although the plot is well ingrained in those who grew up with the Book of Mormon, the Allreds encourage new ways of envisioning the story. Angels are de-

picted, not as soft and fuzzy messengers, but as somewhat unnerving extraterrestrial beings, more like the Silver Surfer than a kindly uncle enwrapped in a comforting glow. The landscape itself emerges in the desert colors of rock and dust. The illustration of the tree of life is an amazing combination of form and texture—a gigantic, winding olive tree hung with luminous globes. All of these images help to open up a creative reader response.

Another enjoyable experience of *The Golden Plates* is that you actually see women in the story: women working, women thinking, women worshipping, pregnant women walking through the desert heat—the female presence that is implicit in the Book of Mormon but often lost behind the text. Particularly moving is the introduction to Nephi's wife—as if we were meeting her for the first time. Throughout the pages she is by Nephi's side, comforting, counseling, and sharing the joys and burdens.

The Golden Plates also provides a provocative take on the vexing issue of skin color. Instead of presenting the Nephites and Lamanites as cowboys and "redskins," the Allreds portray the curse of dark skin as disease-like blotches (114). Skin tone itself is not differentiated. While this interpretation is purely speculative, the idea and possibility of a new perspective is refreshing.

Moving across time through visual representations also allows for Nephi's aging. Seeing Nephi graying, wizened, and ultimately feeble deepens the reader's compassion for the character. The illustrations also heighten the symbolic transfer of the mantle of leadership to Jacob. The final picture of Nephi laid in his tomb (140) drives home his importance and primacy in the Book of Mormon.

Still, the Allreds do not stray too far from popular portrayals of the key characters, particularly the paintings of Arnold Frieberg. Nephi is clean-shaven. The architecture is Mayan-like. At times the visions of the prophets take shape as a pastiche of other Mormon art. But the Allreds' Lehites are not muscle-bound weight-lifters. In general, the people are more plainly dressed than Frieberg's, with fewer flashy metal accessories and weapons. The protagonists are familiar but different—more human and more realistic.

Thanks to the skills of Laura Allred, the comics are also simply beautiful to look at. Careful use of color sets moods and atmosphere. Much of the action takes place in a kind of twilight darkness until Nephi's ship arrives in the Americas and the characters step onto land in an Oz-like mo-

ment of Technicolor rain forests and macaws. The Allreds also employ an innovative blurring technique to depict motion (Nephi falling down a mountain and breaking his bow [73]) and to focus the eye on a figure or speaker (King Benjamin [191]).

Publication of *The Golden Plates* is clearly a labor of love. Michael Allred includes his own testimony on the inside cover of each book. As a part of this testimony, Allred states "Most importantly, let me make clear that this is in no way a substitute for the Book of Mormon itself, which is a sacred book. This project is a primer at best. It is a visual guide, flaws and all, that will hopefully make the events of the actual scriptures come alive and be more easily understood when they are read in full as they should be." *The Golden Plates* is a gift that will increase Book of Mormon interest and discovery for readers of all ages and religious persuasions.

These books are difficult to find through the usual commercial LDS channels. Amazingly, the best place to get copies is your local comic book shop—right alongside the *Green Lantern*, *Uncle Scrooge*, and the best graphic novels available.

An Out-of-Journal Experience for the Readers of *Dialogue*

For those of you who haven't visited the *Dialogue* website recently (www.dialoguejournal.com), may we suggest that you take a look at the Dialogue Paperless section found on the home page. Click on "News" and you will find links to news stories of interest to Mormons. If you want to respond to an article in a current issue of *Dialogue*, you can do so by clicking on "Letters." For reviews and links to reviews of recent books, click on "Books." "Dia-blog@BCC" will connect you to the By Common Consent blog site, where you will find many blogs written by board members, staff, and contributors to *Dialogue*. In "e-Papers," you will encounter feature articles not found in the printed journal. Check it out! More *Dialogue* at the click of a mouse.

AML Award in Mormon Literary Studies to the University of Utah Library

Note: The editors are pleased to reprint, with permission, an Award in Mormon Literary Studies, which the Association for Mormon Letters bestowed upon the University of Utah Library for its online archive of Dialogue *from its beginning in 1966 to the end of 2000. The award was presented on March 5, 2005, at the association's annual conference. The archive will be updated periodically. Readers can reach this collection by visiting the* Dialogue *website (www.dialoguejournal.com) and following the link on the left sidebar: "Free Archive of Vols. 1–36."*

The Association for Mormon Letters presents a special Award in Mormon Literary Studies to the J. Willard Marriott Library of the University of Utah for its digitized collection of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.*

Since its inception in 1966, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* has served as a central point for academic studies of Mormonism. *Dialogue* has promoted Mormon arts and letters by publishing hundreds of poems, short stories, personal essays, and articles of criticism. However, like many

periodicals, *Dialogue's* treasures have generally remained only as accessible as the most recent issue or two.

But *Dialogue*'s many conversations are being reopened. Nearly forty years of back issues—the entire run of this seminal periodical for Mormon studies—have now been completely digitized and made accessible to the public free of charge, thanks to the initiative of the current *Dialogue* board and the generosity of donors. This is laudable in its own right, but digital objects are often as ephemeral as the electrons that compose them. This collection would not be as valuable or secure for future generations were it not hosted by an academic institution committed to maintaining the accessibility and permanence of this collection.

The Association for Mormon Letters commends the J. Willard Marriott Library of the University of Utah for providing a permanent home for this vital digital collection and, by extension, for the university's commitment to the sustained and critical assessment of Mormon arts and letters.

CONTRIBUTORS

LAVINA FIELDING ANDERSON, an editor in Salt Lake City, delivered earlier versions of her paper at Sunstone West in San Francisco and at the Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, in 2005.

JOHN BENNION writes novels, essays, and short fiction about the western Utah desert and the people who inhabit that forbidding country. He has published a collection of short fiction, *Breeding Leah and Other Stories* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), and a novel, *Falling toward Heaven* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000). An associate professor at Brigham Young University, Bennion teaches creative writing and the British novel.

JUDY CURTIS is a graduate of BYU and Boston University. She recently completed a creative writing program at Phoenix College. She has had poems published in *Dialogue*, *Irreantum*, and *Exponent II*. She lives in Phoenix where she writes, gardens, and plans trips to see grandchildren. She is a volunteer at the Desert Botanical Garden, a Master Gardener, and a Master Watershed Steward.

RAYMOND M. KUEHNE, born in New York of German immigrant parents, studied history at the University of Utah, Marburg (Germany) University, and the University of Virginia. He served an LDS mission in Germany, and recently completed a mission with his wife, Genie, at the Freiberg Temple. He published "The Freiberg Temple: An Unexpected Legacy of a Communist State and a Faithful People," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 95–131. His article is adapted from his forthcoming book on the LDS Church in East Germany, 1945–90, that will be first published in German.

ROGER D. LAUNIUS is chair of the Division of Space History at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. Between 1990 and 2002, he served as chief historian of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. His works in the history of Mormonism include *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* (1988); *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History*, co-edited with Linda Thatcher (1994); *Cultures in Conflict: A Documentary History of the Mormon War in Illinois*,

co-edited with John E. Hallwas (1995); and *Kingdom on the Mississippi Revisited: Nauvoo in Mormon History* (1996), co-edited with John E. Hallwas.

ARMAND L. MAUSS is professor emeritus of sociology and religious studies at Washington State University and is currently visiting scholar in the School of Religion at the Claremont Graduate University. He lives with his wife, Ruth, in Irvine, California.

L. JACKSON NEWELL is president emeritus of Deep Springs College in California and professor emeritus at the University of Utah, where he continues to teach ethics and leadership. Currently serving on the boards of the Utah Humanities Council and the Virgin River Land Preservation Association, he is also writing a history of Deep Springs College. Jack and his wife, Linda King Newell, are former editors of *Dialogue*.

JULIE NICHOLS lives in an empty nest with her husband in Provo, Utah. She is an assistant professor in the Department of English and Literature at Utah Valley State College. Between classes and long road trips, she is at work on a novel about the characters in her story.

JIRO NUMANO, awarded a master's degree in linguistics from Brigham Young University, is a professor of English at Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University in Hiroshima, Japan. He also teaches linguistics and the history of cultural exchange between the East and the West. Jiro has enjoyed subscribing to *Dialogue* since 1979. He was the founding editor of an independent bi-annual journal *Mormon Forum* (Japanese), which lasted from 1988 to 2000. He lives in Higashi-Hiroshima, Japan, with his wife, Mitsuko. He expresses sincere appreciation to Ethan Yorgason, Armand Mauss, and others on the editorial board for their ideas and editorial assistance. However, he is alone responsible for the contents of his paper.

JOHN D. REMY is a database administrator for UC Irvine and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in Religious Studies at CSU Long Beach. He has been published in *Sunstone* and maintains a weblog at www.mindonfire.com.

ROBERT W. REYNOLDS is an associate professor of sociology at Weber State University, Ogden, Utah. He teaches a variety of classes including the sociology of religion, social statistics, and environment and society.

He is currently learning about religious pilgrimage, both through observation and participation.

WILLIAM D. RUSSELL is professor of American history and government at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa. He has published widely in Mormon studies and is a past president of both the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association. His special interest has been recent divisions in the RLDS Church, now Community of Christ. He presented an earlier version of his paper at the 2005 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City (audiocassette SL05-111).

G. ST. JOHN STOTT has a Ph.D. from Brigham Young University (1978), and has taught American studies in the United States, Tunisia, and Palestine. He is currently working for a joint-venture bank in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His essay is in part based on a paper for a Community of Christ colloquy on economic justice held in Independence, Missouri, 2002. Later versions were presented in a symposium marking the centennial of the College of Agriculture, Cornell University (2004), and at the 2005 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City.

DOUGLAS THAYER teaches at BYU. His novel, *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2003), won the 2003 Association for Mormon Letters Novel prize. A new novel, *Harris*, is out to a publisher, and he is finishing a collection of stories. Earlier publications include two collections of short stories, *Under the Cottonwoods* (Provo, Utah: Frankson Books, 1977) and *Mr. Wahlquist in Yellowstone* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1989), and a novel, *Summer Fire* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993).

LON YOUNG conducts wind bands and teaches guitar at a middle school in Provo. He has just completed a book-length manuscript of poetry, *muck on our backs,* for which he seeks a publisher. Lon moved recently to Spanish Fork, Utah, with his wife, Rebecca, and four daughters, Brooklyn, Camry, Liberty, and Avery, but grew up on Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nola de Jong Sullivan

Nola de Jong Sullivan was raised in Provo, where, after sojourns elsewhere, she presently resides. Her art interests began in grade school with painter Flora Fisher and received further development in the art classes of B. F. Larson at the BYU summer campus at Aspen Grove. In junior high school she was encouraged by Virla Birrell and, during her college years, by Roman Andrus. She studied at the California School of Arts and Crafts and the New York School of Visual Arts. In addition, she benefited from an immersion in the arts of the United States and Europe in the company of her parents, Gerrit de Jong and Rosabelle Winegar de Jong and others as well. With her husband, Clyde E. Sullivan, she visited and painted in China, many European countries, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

Watercolor expresses Nola's personality, and she is a joyful teacher of children and adults. For many years she has used art therapy with handicapped people in New York, California, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. She has participated in many juried shows and one-person shows. Her painting *Wet Boats* is in the permanent collection of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., the first all-woman's art museum in the world. Some of her award-winning paintings are presently in the Utah Valley Art Guild exhibit. Among the art societies of which she has been a member are the Utah Watercolor Society, Utah County Art Board Pageant of the Arts, and the Art Section of the Provo Women's Council. She has served as a docent at the Springville Museum of Art and the BYU Museum of Art.

Front cover: Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Swiss Alps*, watercolor.
Back cover (above): Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Arco de San Lucas*, watercolor.
Back cover (below): Nola de Jong Sullivan, *Lovely Fall*, watercolor.

Editors of Dialogue, *former and present, at the Fortieth Anniversary Dinner and Program of* Dialogue *September 22, 2006, Salt Lake City.* Left to right: *Robert A. Rees, Charlotte England (representing Eugene England), Mary Kay Peterson, F. Ross Peterson, Martha Sonntag Bradley, Allen D. Roberts, Mary Lythgoe Bradford, Rebecca Worthen Chandler, Levi S. Peterson, Neal Chandler, Karen Marguerite Moloney, G. Wesley Johnson (absent, Linda King Newell and L. Jackson Newell)*

Cash Awards

New Voices: Awards for New Writers

For submissions selected for consideration by the editors of *Dialogue:*
ONE-YEAR ELECTRONIC SUBSCRIPTION AND *DIALOGUE* DVD

For submissions published in *Dialogue:*
$100 FOR EACH POEM OR BRIEF PROSE PIECE
$300 FOR WORKS OF A MORE SUBSTANTIAL LENGTH

ELIGIBILITY

Persons in either of two categories qualify: (1) persons of any age currently enrolled in a degree or diploma program in a high school, college, or university; and (2) persons thirty years of age or younger, whether or not a student.

SPECIFICATIONS

Submissions of any kind (research-based articles, personal essays, short stories, poetry, visual art, etc.) are welcome as long as they are in harmony with the *Dialogue* mission statement found at the beginning of each issue. Each submission should be accompanied by a cover letter confirming its eligibility, specifying that the work is original with the submitting author, and providing contact information.

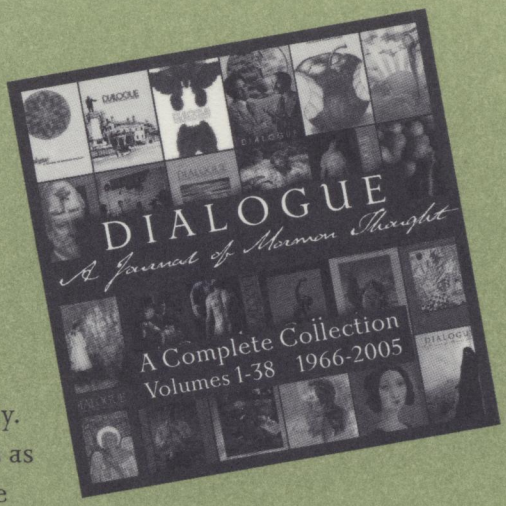
Electronic submissions are preferred. Send attachments in Word or Word-Perfect to dialoguemss@aol.com. For paper submissions, mail three copies to *Dialogue* Submissions Office, 704 228th Ave. NE, #723, Sammamish, WA 98074. Phone: (425) 898-9562. Submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition. For visual art, consult the editor at dialoguemss @aol. com or (425) 898-9562.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.dialoguejournal.com

Anonymous donors have generously provided means for making awards in two large categories—(1) New Voices: Awards for New Writers, and (2) Dialogue *Best of the Year Awards.* Dialogue *would welcome five-year pledges from other donors, which would allow us to expand the* Dialogue *Best of the Year Awards by offering awards in specified subject matters such as history (including biography), theology and scripture, social sciences, and issues and essays. To make a pledge or get further information, contact (1) the editor at dialoguemss@aol.com or (425) 898-9562; or (2) the business manager at dialoguejournal@msn.com or (801) 274-8210.*

Dialogue has gone digital !

- *Dialogue* is available on DVD for $40. This product requires a DVD drive.
- Issues included are Volumes 1-38, 1966 through the end of 2005. Yearly update.
- Search easily by author name, article titles, issue numbers, general word searches.
- Print entire articles.
- Read current issues of *Dialogue* electronically. Now you are able to download the latest issues as soon as they are published. Read, print or share articles with an e-subscription for only $25.



CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR NEWLY AVAILABLE ELECTRONIC SUBSCRIPTIONS, JOURNALS, AND DVD

Join our Dialogue – Subscribe today

In Our Next Issue:

Cetti Cherniak ..... *The Theology of Desire,* Part 1

William P. MacKinnon ..... *Loose in the Stacks: A Half-Century with the Utah War and Its Legacy*

Marianne T. Watson ..... *The 1948 Secret Marriage of Louis J. Barlow: The Origins of the FLDS Arranged Marriage System*

Subscription Rates	
3 years (12 issues)	$100
1 year (4 issues)	$ 37
1 year international rate	$ 45
1 year student rate	$ 30
DVD, volumes 1-38	$ 40
E-subscription	$ 25

Single issue price is $15. Shipping in U.S. is $2 for one issue plus $1 for each additional issue ordered. Please call for back issues or check our website for availability and prices. All funds in U.S. dollars. We accept Mastercard and Visa.

Dialogue Business Office, P. O. Box 58423, Salt Lake City, UT 84158
email: dialoguejournal@msn.com | phone/fax: (801) 274-8210

www.dialoguejournal.com

DIALOGUE
P.O. Box 58423
Salt Lake City, UT 84158

Address Service Requested

DIALOGUE
1966 2006
CELEBRATING
FORTY YEARS