

DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



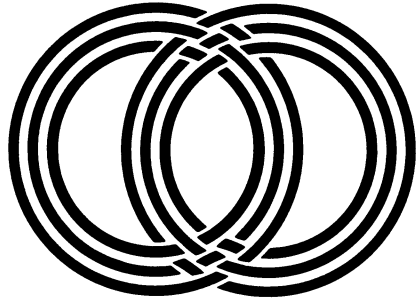
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DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

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

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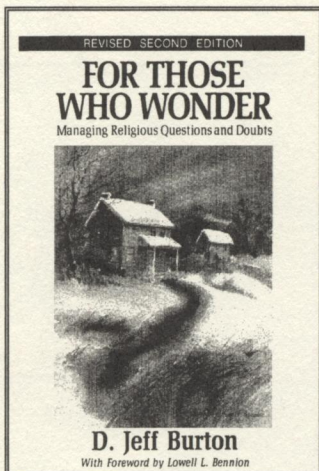
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LETTERS

The Birch Concern

Some years ago, I let my subscription lapse and got out of the *Dialogue* habit. A month ago a friend told me of Michael Quinn's essay on Elder Benson in the summer 1993 issue and lent me her copy so I could read it. I read it in one sitting.

My wife Carol and I used to live in Washington, D.C., and Carol was on Idaho congressman Ralph Harding's staff. I attended the session of Congress the afternoon Ralph gave his speech of concern about the church becoming linked to the John Birch Society through Elder Benson.

One detail that readers may find interesting is the reaction of our stake president, Milan Smith, who had served as administrative assistant to Elder Benson when he was Secretary of Agriculture. At the end of Ralph's speech, Congressman Ullman from western Oregon asked for the floor. Ullman said something to the effect that he was supporting Ralph's comments on behalf of Mormons in his district.

Ralph looked puzzled and said he didn't know Ullman was going to support his speech. Milan Smith, our stake president, said with a grin, "He's from my old district." Milan added that the speech was very important, that he would personally pay for having it mailed to the leadership of the church.

For the next few weeks, a bipartisan group of young Mormon volunteers gathered and stuffed (maybe 30,000) copies of Ralph Harding's speech into envelopes addressed to church leaders across the United States. The Birch concern ran deep in our stake.

My temple recommend interview gives an indication of the concern in my own ward about Elder Benson's activities. When my bishop asked if I sup-

ported the leadership of the church, I said, "To be frank, I'm upset with Elder Benson's activities." He said, "We all are," and signed my recommend.

Henry L. Miles
Orem, Utah

A Scrutinizing Response

I was surprised that Lavina Fielding Anderson's "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology" (Spring 1993) generated not a single scrutinizing response. Can it be that we in the Mormon intellectual community are slipping into our own comfortable Ensign-like orthodoxy?

With no intention whatsoever of denigrating what I believe to be a constructive effort, I come away with the impression that Anderson is inclined to cast the net a bit wide.

In particular, I am not convinced that the issue of Elder Ronald E. Poelman's altered October 1984 general conference address qualified as a "clash between obedience . . . and . . . conscience" (7). Despite the status this incident achieved among LDS intellectuals, Elder Poelman himself has never to my knowledge given any indication, public or private, that he disagreed with either the substance of the changes or their implementation.

Having listened carefully to both versions of Elder Poelman's address, I cannot agree with the position that, in Jackson Newell's words, Poelman's "ideas were turned inside out" ("An Echo From the Foothills," *Dialogue*, Spring 1986, 27). Although the "before and after" sample cited by Anderson (as well as other examples) appears super-

ficially contradictory, the fact is that the edited version preserved both the tone and substance of the original. Elder Poelman's fundamental message remained unchanged. I see no reason to dismiss the official explanation that the changes aimed to clarify passages which unintentionally bolstered the claims of several fundamentalist splinter groups.

Anderson inadvertently perpetuates the widely-reported myth that a "cough track" was added in retaping to create the illusion of an audience. In fact, there is no "cough track" or other audience-like noise present during the talk itself. There is a rather clumsily added congregational-response "amen" (inserted at the conclusion), the absence of which would have been conspicuous and possibly awkward. It may be bad editing, but it can hardly be considered deception.

Anderson notes that Poelman "did not speak in general conference again for four and a half years," as though this were significant. In fact, Elder Poelman's hiatus from the tabernacle pulpit was very much within the norm for a member of the Seventy. Since October 1984, as least twenty-four general authorities went as long as or longer than Elder Poelman between conference addresses: including Vaughn J. Featherstone (Oct. 1987-Apr. 1992), Rex D. Pinegar (Oct. 1985-Apr. 1990), Gene R. Cook (Oct. 1988-Apr. 1993), Hartman Rector (Oct. 1985-Oct. 1990), and Loren C. Dunn (Oct. 1985-Apr. 1991). Indeed, Elder Poelman would appear to be on a regular rotation with elders John H. Groberg and F. Enzo Busche, both of whom spoke, like him, in October 1984 and not again until April 1989.

N. Dean Meservy
Severn, Maryland

Internal Quality Control

. . . I was disappointed by Lavina Fielding Anderson's failure in the spring 1993 issue to comprehend that an employee has a duty not to distribute an employer's proprietary information (including early drafts of documents) to the public (see pp. 15-16). The church is (gratefully) not a government institution subject to the Freedom of Information Act or the Government in Sunshine acts. The public (including church members) do not have a right to be involved in the intimate details of every decision made in Salt Lake City. This would place the church's leadership and employees in the impossible position of acting without failure. To my knowledge, the church has never promulgated the doctrine of infallibility. In fact, I read our teachings to allow individuals to make mistakes so that they (and others) may learn and grow.

It would be impossible for me to function as an attorney who drafts complicated commercial contracts which are translated into multiple languages if I could not review drafts with clients and modify these drafts to make substantive changes and address cultural nuances before disclosure to the other parties at the bargaining table. Does Ms. Anderson expect church leaders to automatically produce initial drafts of documents upon which no improvements or modifications can be made after internal review? I find it refreshing to learn that the church appears to have an internal quality control program (which Ms. Anderson apparently views as censorship) which should not only improve an author's work product but also make it less susceptible to unintended cultural bias. Why should the church, which is managed by men and women with human frailties, not have

the right to keep early drafts of documents confidential so that its internal communications and work product can be improved? . . .

Douglas B. Whiting
San Diego, California

Anderson Responds

I appreciate the points raised by the above two letters. Dean Meservy's observation that the revision of Elder Poelman's talk does not constitute a "clash between obedience . . . and . . . conscience" merits discussion. It is quite true that Elder Poelman has remained silent. We simply do not know whether he agreed or disagreed with the editing of his talk.

However, given the usual procedure for generating conference talks, it seems probable to me that Elder Poelman's talk as delivered represented his own carefully considered thoughts. Let me describe that procedure.

During the time that I worked at the *Ensign* (1973-81), assignments for conference talks were made several weeks in advance of conference and finished texts were ready at least two weeks in advance. Before the first session began, the editors had checked all of the quotations, done what (usually very light) editing was required, consulted with the authors about any problems or questions that had emerged during the editing process, and typeset the talks. At the same time, the translators were preparing delivery texts in their target languages for simultaneous translation.

During delivery, we followed each talk as broadcast on television word for word, making note of even the minutest changes, and replaying the simultane-

ously produced audio-taped versions to transcribe last-minute departures of more than a word or two. These changes were rare—nearly always a sentence or two at the introduction to welcome a new general authority, express love for the prophet, etc., or inadvertent misstatements or stumbling over a word or phrase.

I am assuming that this same procedure was still in place in 1984, although I could of course be mistaken. If it was, Elder Poelman did not jot down a few hasty notes on an ill-thought-out topic on the back of an envelope before he delivered "The Gospel and the Church."

Meservy's mention of "listen[ing] carefully" to both versions adds a valuable piece of information. I have not listened to either version and appreciate knowing that there was no "cough track." That information came from Peggy Fletcher ("Poelman Revises Conference Speech," *Sunstone* 10 [1]: 44). I regret its omission from my documentation of the event (23n43). Meservy's analysis of speaking frequencies since October 1984 is also valuable and much appreciated. The change from three days of conference sessions to two days, which began in April 1977, meant that all Seventies were heard from much less frequently.

But I disagree that "the edited version preserved both the tone and substance of the original" and invite interested readers to make the comparison for themselves by reading the parallel columns version published in *Sunstone* 14 (Oct. 1990): 50-53. For a general authority's talk to be edited to this extent was simply unprecedented in my years at the *Ensign*.

Douglas B. Whiting's comments about the need to maintain confidentiality over documents in the draft stage is

one with which I certainly agree. In light of my description of the editing process described above, it will become apparent, however, that manuscripts delivered to the *Ensign* were far beyond the “draft” stage. They were given to us only at the stage when they were considered finished documents, ready for the time-consuming and expensive process of editing and typesetting. Although changes could be and were made during the editing process, they were rare. Furthermore, I think it is important to distinguish between the manuscript I *thought* I was copying and the manuscript I *actually* copied.

The manuscript I thought I was copying was the delivery text which Elder Rector had read before live television cameras and a live audience. Thousands of people heard what he had said. It cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered a confidential document after delivery.

The manuscript which I actually copied was not the delivery text but an earlier draft—an example of those rare pre-delivery changes. Because it was so rare for texts to be altered during the editing process, I simply took the bottom copy from Elder Rector’s pigeon-hole, assuming it was the delivery text. If I had known it was not the delivery text, I would not have copied it. I regret that I did so, and I accept full responsibility for my actions.

I appreciate this opportunity to clarify the points raised by these letters and welcome further questions, comments, information, or corrections. The question of the essay’s accuracy should have had a much higher priority, in my opinion, than it was during the September 1993 excommunications.

At a fireside on 20 November 1993 in Provo, Utah, where I participated on a panel, one of the written questions

submitted by the audience read: “At a recent lecture on the ‘history of apostasy’ at BYU, a professor of Near Eastern studies, while taking questions on recent events, said that he, and many others, doubted the accuracy of your article on instances of spiritual abuse. When I challenged him for examples, he stated that ‘quite a few’ of those named or made reference to in your article had publicly challenged your presentation of events. While not intending to question your integrity, I wish to ask—is any of that true? Would you now alter your allegations in any particular?”

For the record, here are the sum total of “errors” that have come to my attention. On p. 44, “Frederick W. Voros” should have been W. Frederic Voros. One individual, whose stake president was named, said he had not given me permission to use the president’s name. Louis Midgley complained in private correspondence over the summer and, this fall on Mormon-L, that I had misrepresented his position. With my permission, he posted that correspondence, including my invitation to him to take advantage of the “Letters to the Editors” column in *Dialogue* to represent his own position. As of this writing, he has submitted no letter to *Dialogue’s* editors. All three “errors” were brought to my attention privately, although Midgley has since taken his complaint to a more public forum.

I repeat my cordial invitation for those with clarifications and corrections to contact me directly.

Lavina Fielding Anderson
Salt Lake City, Utah

Get a Life

I enjoyed the articles on Brigham Young University written by Omar Kader and Paul Richards in the fall 1993 issue. Mormons take themselves so seriously!

I've graduated from BYU twice. I found my undergraduate program of experience somewhat stifling and my graduate experience to be extremely liberating.

In many areas with regard to BYU policy (e.g., dress standards), my opinion is that if you can't tolerate it, leave. Private institutions should have some say over the atmosphere they want to create. However, in areas such as freedom of speech, my opinion is that change is needed. We in the church supposedly believe in modern revelation and therefore change. Freedom of speech helps us be more committed to our beliefs because we have examined them or it lets us know which beliefs it is time to let go of.

Another observation: A segment of church members always wants to draw the box smaller and smaller with regard to what is "right." I guess they feel safe to express what I believe is a minority view because they are "righteous." I'm amazed at the things some BYU graduates get enraged about (as judged by *BYU Magazine's* letters to the editor). I want to say, "Get a life."

But I certainly cannot cast the first stone. As Paul Richards mentioned, BYU and church leaders seldom get letters from moderates or liberals. In my wards, people probably think I'm a sweet, shy thing. The reality is that I've decided it's less hassle to keep my mouth shut on Sundays. Voicing my opinion on occasion would probably help a fair number of other people feel that they not alone.

Dialogue serves that purpose for me. Your journal is a breath of fresh air to my beliefs. Most of all I love the fact that it demonstrates that people who share the same faith need not be unthinking clones.

Sharadon Smith
Penang, Malaysia

Nauvoo Polygamists

Lawrence Foster should be complimented for his essay in the winter 1993 issue of *Dialogue*, "The Psychology of Religious Genius." Here Foster brings to individual leaders the same vigorous research which he applied to innovative religious groups in his 1981 award-winning book, *Religion and Sexuality*.

Given the precise nature of his documentation, it is worth noting the absence of a source for his discussion of early Mormon polygamy on page 9 where he states that Joseph Smith "put enormous pressure on unwilling associates" and that "as many as thirty of his closest associates had taken plural wives under his influence." At a Mormon History Association session in May 1993, which Foster attended, I presented some preliminary findings on the incidence of Nauvoo polygamy, including a list of thirty male polygamists during Joseph Smith's lifetime. This demographic study appears in my essay in this issue of *Dialogue*. In a recent conversation, Foster wondered if that number wasn't "in the air." To my knowledge there exists no other source for the number thirty Nauvoo polygamists contemporary with Joseph Smith.

George D. Smith
San Francisco

Jesus Is Coming

Brent Pace

The tapping of the shower is
the insistent brush of reeds
along the Charles and the slap
of oars I've just left.
Give me a neck, chocolate
silk, to greet or give away to
another row of muddy shoes.
A hotter shower prevents my
cutting later on. I've never
called to crews through a
megaphone but have
set a rhythm by simply standing
with a yellow bike against a birch.
I've beckoned with my eyes,
my stance, my breathing—a dance
with no steps, chanting without
words, urgent, as the winter's
coming, plaintive as I've been
alone three decades. I'm hungry
for first contact, am grateful when
it's done. The boats are hauled
up the ramp, I dry off on linoleum.
I speak to a wall of photos and to
a rock which announces Christ's
return. I speak with my helmet,
anxious for tomorrow's ride.

Nauvoo Roots of Mormon Polygamy, 1841-46: A Preliminary Demographic Report

George D. Smith

POLYGAMY, MARRIAGE TO MORE THAN ONE SPOUSE at a time, cannot be seen in the fossil record of our primitive ancestor, *Homo erectus*, and no one knows if Lucy of the African Rift, reputed to be the mother of us all, was a plural mate. A recent study of the evolution of human sexuality concludes, however, that while modern man is often culturally obliged to be monogamous, he may be biologically predisposed to polygamy.¹ Therefore it should not surprise us that polygamy has been practiced in many parts of the world. Plural marriage has been found in India, Nepal, China, the Middle East, Africa, Indonesia, Australia, in early Germanic tribes, among certain native Indian societies of the Americas and Eskimos of the Arctic, and, notably, the Mormons of North America.²

There were multiple wives and concubines in ancient Mesopotamia and among Old Testament leaders of the early Hebrew peoples. Abraham, David, and Solomon had many wives, but Jewish law required monogamy by the eleventh century C.E. Polygamy was also found in pre-Islamic Arabic cultures of the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa. Later, the Koran

1. Lynn Margulis and Dorion Sagan, *Mystery Dance: On the Evolution of Human Sexuality* (New York: Summit Books, 1991). An informative study of primate evolution is Kathy D. Schick and Nicholas Toth, *Making Silent Stones Speak: Human Evolution and the Dawn of Technology* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993).

2. Polygamy has been practiced to some extent in about 80 percent of the 853 cultures on record (Delta Willis, *The Hominid Gang* [New York: Viking, 1989], 259; G. P. Murdock and D. R. White, *Ethnology* 8 [1969]: 329-69).

limited Moslem husbands to a maximum of four wives. Ancient Roman law, which recognized marriage by solemn ceremony, by purchase, and by mutual consent or extended cohabitation, eventually excluded polygamy. The marriage law of most western nations is the product of Roman Catholic canon law, which recognizes marriage as a lifelong monogamous union between a woman and a man by consent and consummation.³ Polygamy was prohibited by the Justinian Code in the sixth century C.E., is generally forbidden in Europe and the Americas, and was strictly against Illinois law when the Mormons secretly introduced the practice in 1841.⁴

POLYGAMY BEFORE JOSEPH SMITH

Mormons were not the first in America to think of plural marriage. In fact, for three centuries before Joseph Smith introduced Mormon "celestial marriage," polygamy was a popular subject of public debate in Europe and America. In 1531 Martin Luther advised England's Henry VIII to "take another queen in accordance with the examples of the patriarchs of old who had two wives at the same time"; eight years later Luther, arguing that polygamy was sanctioned by Mosaic Law and was not banned by the New Testament, gave Prince Philip of Hesse a dispensation to take a second wife.⁵ Since the Protestant Reformation had replaced the authority of the Pope with a "literally inspired" Bible, Old Testament polygamy became a persuasive argument for marital innovation in the sixteenth century.

In 1534 John Bockelson of Leyden, Holland, led the Anabaptists in Münster, Germany, in eleven months of polygamy as they awaited the end of the world. This town of 15,000 had been "purified" of all infidels—Catholics and Lutherans—and was expected to become the New Jerusalem. Revered as prophet of the Lord, Bockelson issued twelve articles revealed to him by God, including sanction for a man to take as many women to wife as he wanted. Bockelson was proclaimed king and took sixteen wives who were considered "queens." Domestic arrangements

3. See James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 52, 128, 225, 256, 299, 304, 478-79, 577, 615; Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage, *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1982), 118-28.

4. Through the Nauvoo period polygamy was a criminal act under the Illinois 1833 antibigamy laws, which remained unchanged during statute revision in 1845. Polygamy, thus defined, was punishable by fines of \$1,000 and two years imprisonment (previously married persons) or \$500 and one-year imprisonment (previously single persons) (*Revised Laws of Illinois 1833* and *Revised Statutes of the State of Illinois 1845*, secs. 121, 122, University of Chicago Law Library).

5. John Cairncross, *After Polygamy was Made a Sin: The Social History of Christian Polygamy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 36-51.

were decided by a stick placed at the dinner table in front of the queen who had been chosen to spend the night with the king. All unmarried females who had reached the marriage age of twelve were pressured to take a husband of at least fourteen years of age, but most women strongly supported the prophet⁶:

Some of the women and girls stayed on after he had preached, danced about and cried in a loud voice, Father, Father, Father, give! give! give! then they leapt up, raised their hands to the sky and clapped. Their hair undone, hung round their neck or down their back. They stared at [the] sun and imagined that God the Father was sitting up there in his glory. Then they danced like maenads in pairs through the streets and gazed at the sun till they were exhausted, white and deadly pale.

Anabaptist wives found other wives for their husbands, as Sarah had done for Abraham, and men often married their wives' sisters. The man with the most wives was considered the best Christian.

Theologians justified polygamy by appealing to its practice among Hebrew patriarchs, such as Abraham, Isaac, and David, noting that it was not forbidden in the New Testament nor by church fathers Augustine and Jerome. Social rationale linked the desirability of children to provide a worshipful population and a large labor force, the needs of men, expected displacement of prostitution, and fulfillment of man's natural patriarchal domination of women. Münster theologians also asserted that semen was precious and should not be wasted, as it would be if it did not provide offspring, for example, if a woman was menstruating, pregnant, or infertile. Assuming that "men cannot contain themselves," in order to avoid wasting semen, "hence they can marry several women."⁷

Anabaptist polygamy met with difficulty. Forced cohabitation gave rise to "constant dissension," and there was "fierce resentment" where two or three women shared a husband. Church authorities put "refractory wives" in prison and executed some who protested their husbands' taking other wives. One woman was summoned to a tribunal and sentenced to death after she completed her pregnancy. Another was pardoned when she begged her husband's forgiveness. In 1535 the town was attacked and John of Leyden was interrogated and killed; Münster has remained Catholic ever since.⁸

Writers such as Milton, Boswell, Newton, Rousseau, Spinoza, Napoleon, and the Lutheran scholar John Leyser all advocated polygamy.

6. K. Löffler, *Die Wiedertäufer zu Münster, 1534-35* (Jena, 1923), 75, in Cairncross, 10.

7. Löffler, 107, in Cairncross, 7-8.

8. Cairncross, 2-30.

Schopenhauer, who considered woman to be “Nature’s knockout blow,” endorsed Mormon plural marriage since Nature’s aim was to increase the species.⁹

In 1780 in England, Rev. Martin Madan, the disciple of John Wesley who co-wrote “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” advocated the restoration of biblical polygamy, which would “return discipline to the sexual informality of the age, correct a declining population, eliminate abortion, save innumerable women from ruin, and restore men to their rightful, patriarchal role.”¹⁰ During the years following 1817 American utopian Jacob Cochran taught a “spiritual matrimony” to communities in Maine and New Hampshire; it was “sanctioned by a ceremony of his own, within which any man or woman, already married or unmarried, might enter into choosing at pleasure a spiritual wife or spiritual husband.” Cochran reportedly had a “regular harem, consisting of several unmarried females.”¹¹ Starting in the 1830s, John Humphrey Noyes and his Perfectionists practiced another form of group marriage. Settling in Oneida, New York, in 1847, more than 500 men and women shared land, clothes, sex partners, and children. The communal spirit waned when Noyes ruled that he had first claim on the women, and in 1879 the men revolted, accusing Noyes of taking young women against their will. By 1881 the Oneida community was disbanded.

In 1837, when Mormon headquarters was located in Kirtland, Ohio, a Cleveland newspaper fifteen miles away printed a letter which argued for polygamy as a remedy for the “distress” of “so many old maids.” If a man first obtained “the consent of his wife, or wives,” the writer asked, “what evil would arise” from allowing him “as many more wives as he may judge proper?” It would be “more desirable to be the second or even third wife of a generous man, than to remain an old maid, neglected and laughed at . . . and it would eminently lessen prostitution in one sex and ranging in the other.” Furthermore, it would “not be more expensive for a man to have two wives, than to have one wife, and hire a seamstress.”¹²

That year the Mormon church responded to the idea of plural marriage with a resolution denying fellowship to any member guilty of polygamy, and it even disciplined one Solomon Freeman for “living with another

9. Cairncross, 84-93, 112-40, 153.

10. Martin Madan, *Thelyphthora; or, a Treatise on Female Ruin . . .*, 3 vols. (London: J. Dodsley, 1780-81), cited in B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: the Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 2, and Cairncross, 157-64.

11. “The Cochran Fantasy in York County [Maine],” Anonymous, Aug. 3, 1867, in *Maine Historical Quarterly* 20 (Summer 1980): 30.

12. Letter signed “Enquirer” to the *Cleveland Liberalist* 1 (Feb. 4, 1837): 164, Oberlin College Library.

woman.”¹³ Latter-day Saints publicly denied rumors of polygamy until 1852, a decade after the first plural marriages were officially recorded in Nauvoo, Illinois.

IMPORTANCE OF NAUVOO POLYGAMY

Utah polygamy has received considerable attention, but any definitive study of Mormon plural marriage must begin with its Nauvoo roots. This essay explores the extent and character of Nauvoo polygamy, from the first documented plural marriage on April 5, 1841, to the ceremonies concluded in 1846, the year of westward migration.¹⁴

Although Joseph Smith met his death at the hands of outsiders, it was internal dissent, precipitated by polygamy, which brought him to the Carthage jail in June 1844. Rumors about Smith’s extramarital relationships with women had circulated for a decade before his 1841 plural marriage and the revelation sanctioning polygamy, recorded in 1843. The story repeated most often involved Fanny Alger, a young woman whom Smith employed in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835 to help his wife Emma with housework. Several Mormon leaders claim that Fanny Alger was Smith’s first plural wife.¹⁵ Some suggest that Smith advocated polygamy as early as

13. Resolution in *LDS Messenger and Advocate*, May 1837, 511; action against Freeman in “Elders Quorum Record,” Nov. 23, 1837, archives, The Auditorium, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS), Independence, Missouri, in Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith*, 2d. ed., (New York: Knopf, 1971), 185.

14. The data on plural marriages cited throughout this essay were derived from various sources: official sealing (marriage) and temple endowment lists (the first men to receive their temple endowments were more likely to have plural families); the list of Mormon pioneers leaving Nauvoo; William Clayton’s so-called “temple journals”; census data; family history group sheets; and a variety of letters, diaries, early newspapers, and oral histories. Research was conducted in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, the Marriott Library at the University of Utah, the Utah State Historical Society, Brigham Young University’s Harold B. Lee Library, and archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Specifically, among the scholarly research that facilitated this study were Susan Ward Easton Black, *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1848*, vols. 1-50, (Provo, UT: Research Study Center, Brigham Young University, 1984-88); Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1977); Dale Morgan, *The Bancroft Research Guide*; Brodie, Appendix C; Andrew Jenson, “Plural Marriage,” *The Historical Record* 6 (May 1887): 219-40, hereafter, *HR*; and especially D. Michael Quinn, personal correspondence, Dec. 6, 1991. Further research will undoubtedly generate more accurate data for a few families, but these small differences will not change the following overall demographic portrait of the number and scope of plural marriages in Nauvoo.

15. According to Mormon apostle William McLellin, Emma witnessed her husband and Fanny in a “transaction” identified as the “first well authenticated case of polygamy”

1831, when he presented a revelation directing several married elders to take native American women as wives “that their posterity may become white, delightsome and just.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, evidence from Smith and his secretary, William Clayton, suggests that the prophet claimed to receive a separate injunction to practice polygamy in 1843.¹⁷ Although Mormon plural marriage was intended to remain a closely guarded secret, word that Joseph Smith and possibly other Mormons were practicing polygamy began to spread across towns and villages of western Illinois in the early 1840s.

(McLellin to Joseph Smith III, July 8, 1872, RLDS archives; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 6, 1875; Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986], 5-12). The prophet’s scribe, Warren Parrish, said that “he himself and Oliver Cowdery did know that Joseph had Fannie Alger as wife, for they were spied upon together.” After Book of Mormon scribe Oliver Cowdery wrote a letter characterizing Joseph’s relations with Fanny as a “dirty, nasty, filthy affair,” he was excommunicated on charges that included “seeking to destroy the character of President Joseph Smith jr by falsly insinuating that he was guilty of adultery &c.” Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 162-63 (Apr. 12, 1844); Joseph Smith et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed., B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1963), 3:16, hereafter HC. In 1899 Alger was married by proxy to the deceased prophet, and assistant church historian Andrew Jenson described her as “one of the first plural wives sealed to the Prophet” (HC, 223; Thomas M. Tinney, *The Royal Family of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr.* [Salt Lake City: Green Family Organization, 1973], 41); Heber C. Kimball also referred to Fanny Alger as Smith’s first plural wife (recounted by church patriarch Benjamin F. Johnson in a letter to George F. Gibbs, 1903, 10, LDS archives).

16. The Book of Mormon prophecies, “the scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white [pure] and delightsome people” (2 Ne. 30:6). A July 17, 1831, revelation (uncanonized) on plural marriage was asserted in W. W. Phelps’s August 12, 1861, letter to Brigham Young. LDS church president Joseph F. Smith also concluded that the principle of plural marriage must have been revealed to Joseph Smith in 1831 (*Deseret News*, May 20, 1886). In the December 8, 1831, *Ohio Star*, Ezra Booth wrote of a Mormon revelation to form a “matrimonial alliance with the natives” (Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1981], 299n28).

17. Joseph Smith’s own journal contains a contemporary account of a July 12, 1843, plural marriage revelation: “Received a Revelation in the office in presence of Hyrum and W[illia]m Clayton” (Scott H. Faulring, ed. *An American Prophet’s Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1987], 396). The entry for that date in the official church history confirms 1843 in the first person: “I received the following revelation in the presence of my brother Hyrum and Elder William Clayton,” and entitles the text, “Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including the Plurality of Wives; Given through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12th, 1843” (HC 5:500-501). Clayton also confirms that the revelation occurred in 1843: “I testify again that the revelation on polygamy was given through the prophet Joseph Smith on the 12th of July 1843” (Clayton to Madison M. Scott, Nov. 11, 1871, LDS archives).

The secret became a scandal in May 1844 when William Law, a counselor to Joseph Smith who equated polygamy in the restored church with concubinage, filed suit against Smith in the circuit court of Hancock County, Illinois. Law charged that Smith was living “in an open state of adultery” with Maria Lawrence, a teenaged orphan who was living in the Smith household. In fact, Smith had secretly married both Maria and her sister Sarah by the fall of 1843 and was serving as executor of their \$8,000 estate. Law apparently hoped that disclosing Smith’s relationship with the young girls might lead him to abandon polygamy, but Smith immediately excommunicated Law, had himself appointed the girls’ legal guardian, and rejected the charge in front of a church congregation, denying that he had more than one wife:

Another indictment has been got up against me. . . I had not been married scarcely five minutes, and made one proclamation of the Gospel, before it was reported that I had seven wives . . . This new holy prophet [William Law] has gone to Carthage [county courthouse] and swore that I had told him that I was guilty of adultery . . . What a thing it is for a man to be accused of committing adultery, and having seven wives, when I can only find one.¹⁸

The following month Law and other Mormon dissidents published the inaugural issue of the *Nauvoo Expositor* to reveal Smith’s “mormon seraglio, or Nauvoo harem; and his unparalleled and unheard of attempts at seduction.”¹⁹ Declaring the *Expositor* a public nuisance, the Nauvoo City Council, led by Mayor Joseph Smith, ordered all copies of the paper to be burned and its printing press destroyed. These actions created an uproar throughout the state, where Smith’s growing political power—as well as his alleged immorality—were both feared and resented. When Governor Thomas Ford ordered Smith arrested, Joseph and his brother Hyrum were jailed at Carthage. On June 27, a large mob overpowered the guards and shot the brothers to death.

INCEPTION OF PLURAL MARRIAGE

How did the Mormon community in Nauvoo arrive at this state of affairs? On July 12, 1843, Joseph Smith dictated a ten-page revelation to his private clerk, William Clayton, which indicated that he meant to “restore” the ceremonies and cultural patterns of ancient Israel. The revelation on

18. HC 6:403, 405, 410-11; Van Wagoner, 64; Lyndon Cook, “William Law, Nauvoo Dissenter,” *Brigham Young University Studies* (Winter 1982): 47-72.

19. Frances Higbee to Mr. Gregg, May 1844, Nauvoo, Chicago Historical Society.

plural marriage, or “celestial marriage” as it was called, claimed to restore the practice of “Moses, Abraham, David and Solomon having many wives and concubines . . . a new and everlasting covenant” in which “if any man espouse a virgin . . . [or] ten virgins . . . he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him” (D&C 132:4, 61, 62).

A few months earlier, Clayton recalled, Smith “also informed me that he had other wives living besides his first wife Emma, and in particular gave me to understand that Eliza R. Snow, Louisa Be[a]man, Desdemona W. Fullmer and others were his lawful wives in the sight of heaven.”²⁰ In fact, by the time of the 1843 revelation Smith had married at least twelve women besides his legal wife Emma, and a dozen of his most trusted followers had also taken plural wives.

About forty years later, assistant church historian Andrew Jenson collected statements from Smith’s former wives, who willingly confirmed that they had “consented to become the Prophet’s wife” and that he “associated with them as wives within the meaning of all that word implies.”²¹ On behalf of Jenson, and working with plural wife Eliza R. Snow, journalist Emmeline B. Wells wrote in 1886 to ask Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner,

to prepare a careful sketch of your life for publication in the Historical Record along with others of the wives of Joseph Smith, the prophet. Begin with your name and birthplace also date, the names of your parents and their origin whether American born etc. and from the North or the South then your conversion to the true Gospel etc. But positively your marriage ceremony to Joseph on what day and by whom performed, and who were the witnesses if any. This is the principal point such other matter in brief as may seem to you suitable. Perhaps you had better direct it to me, though it will all be submitted to someone in authority before being published.

Aunt Eliza asked me to write you and ask you to prepare this and sent her love to you. Helen who sends love, she has the same to do, also Lucy Walker Kimball. Do you know the particulars about Sister Marinda Hyde’s being sealed to Joseph & on what day or in what year, or who officiated in the ceremony?²²

Jenson published these statements in 1887, primarily in an attempt to convince Smith’s family, who remained in the Midwest after his death, that their progenitor had in fact practiced polygamy.²³

20. “William Clayton’s Testimony,” Feb. 16, 1874, Jenson, 224-26.

21. Lucy Walker affidavit in *HR*, 230.

22. Emmeline B. Wells to Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, Salt Lake City, Mar. 12, 1889, LDS archives.

23. Jenson listed Fannie Alger, Louisa Beaman, Lucinda Harris, Zina Huntington,

Just when Mormon polygamy began is conjectural, but it had clearly commenced by April 5, 1841, with Smith's first officially acknowledged plural marriage. In a ceremony beside the Mississippi River, he married twenty-six-year-old Louisa Beaman disguised in a man's hat and coat. The ceremony was performed by her brother-in-law, using words dictated by the prophet.²⁴ At that time Smith was thirty-five and had been married fourteen years to thirty-six-year-old Emma Hale Smith. They had five living children.

During the two-and-one-half years from his first official plural marriage in April 1841 to his last known marriage in November 1843, Smith took as many as forty-two wives, one or two at a time.²⁵ On average, this pace produced 1.5 new wives each month. By the end of 1843, Emma Smith's biographers observed, most close friends of Smith's legal wife had either married her husband or had given their daughters to him.²⁶ Reportedly, some of the younger women were discreetly instructed in polygamy by older women who had been inducted previously into the secret order.²⁷

Smith courted these plural wives with an offer of eternal marriage too wonderful to refuse. According to the doctrine of celestial marriage, a woman who was "sealed" (married) to a man in a special religious ceremony was united to him and their children, not only for "time"—until death—but for eternity where they eventually could become gods. Implicit in the revelation was the requirement that a man and woman must accept the "principle" of taking plural wives—known as the law of Abraham—in order to gain the highest afterlife, the celestial kingdom. Just as Abraham, David, Solomon and other Old Testament patriarchs took "many wives and concubines," the patriarchs and elders of the restored church could attain "crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds" and have descendants as "innumerable as the stars." A woman's salvation thus depended on entering into a polygamous relationship with a man of high status in the church, because such men were thought to have made the greatest progress towards godhood on earth.

Prescinda Huntington, Eliza Roxcy Snow, Sarah Ann Whitney, Desdemona Fullmer, Helen Mar Whitney, Eliza Partridge, Emily Partridge, and Lucy Walker as Smith's plural marriages prior to the 1843 revelation (*HR*, 233-34).

24. Joseph B. Noble performed the marriage. See Linda K. Newell and Valeen T. Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 95-96. Noble married his first plural wife exactly two years later, on April 5, 1843.

25. Andrew Jenson identified twenty-seven of Smith's wives (*HR*, 233-34), Fawn Brodie identified forty-nine (Brodie, 335-36, 457-88).

26. Newell and Avery, 147.

27. Elizabeth Durfee had the "duty to instruct the younger women in the mysteries of polygamy" (Joseph H. Jackson, *A Narrative of the Adventures and Experiences of Joseph H. Jackson* [Warsaw, IL, 1844], 14, in Brodie, 305).

A charismatic, handsome man, Joseph Smith apparently had little trouble persuading young women that he was their way to eternal realms of glory. Sixteen-year-old Lucy Walker, for example, had been adopted by the Smiths and worked as a maid in the Smith home. The prophet told Walker that God had commanded him to take her as a wife. She was angry and insulted, but she feared Smith's warning that if she rejected the "principle" of plural marriage, "the gate will be closed forever against you." On May 1, 1843, while Emma was shopping for supplies in St. Louis, Lucy married Joseph Smith.²⁸

For young women living in the Smith home, the prophet's advances were hard to resist. After the death of their father, Emily and Eliza Partridge came to live with Joseph and Emma Smith to care for their son, Don Carlos. Each of the sisters married the prophet, at first without Emma's knowledge, and later in another ceremony to which Emma consented. Emily wrote in her diary, "From that very hour Emma was our bitter enemy."²⁹

MARRIAGE TO SPOUSES OF LIVING HUSBANDS

Beginning in 1841, Joseph Smith took as plural wives several married women, as if exercising a variant of the feudal *droit du seigneur*: a king's right to the brides in his domain. This option was presented to the married woman as a favor to her. A woman who wanted higher status in the celestial kingdom could choose to leave a husband with lower status in the church, even if she had been sealed to him, and become sealed to a man higher in authority.

On October 27, 1841, Smith was married for eternity to Zina D. Huntington, Henry B. Jacobs's wife; Jacobs, a devout church member, consented to this "celestial marriage" even though Zina was six months pregnant with Jacobs's child. On December 11, 1841, the prophet married Zina's sister, Prescindia Huntington, who had been married to Norman Buell for fourteen years and remained married to Buell until 1846.³⁰ Prescindia then left Buell and married Heber C. Kimball "for time," that is, until the end of her life. In the afterlife, "for eternity," she would revert to Joseph Smith.

Smith married Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner in February 1842, when she was already married and eight months pregnant. "As for Sister [Elizabeth] Whitney," she wrote, "it was at her house that the Prophet Joseph first told me about his great vision concerning me." Mary was "sealed to

28. George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1991), 100; Newell and Avery, 139.

29. Autobiography of Emily Partridge, cited in HR 6:240; Newell and Avery, 138-39.

30. Van Wagoner, 41-43.

Joseph Smith the Prophet by Brigham Young in a room over the old red brick store in Nauvoo.”³¹ Apparently, Smith had planned to marry her long before her marriage to Adam Lightner; Mary was just thirteen years old when she first met the prophet in 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. As she recalled, “the Savior appeared and commanded him to seal me up to everlasting life, gave me to Joseph to be with him in his kingdom . . . Joseph said I was his before I came here and he said all the Devils in Hell should never get me from him.”³² After her celestial marriage to Joseph, Mary lived with Adam Lightner until his death in Utah and had eight children by him. In April 1842, two months after the Lightner ceremony, Nancy Marinda Johnson married Joseph Smith while her husband, Orson Hyde, was on a mission to Jerusalem. After Hyde returned, his wife went back to live with him.³³

The question of how many children came from Smith’s plural marriages has never been answered decisively. Josephine L. Fisher wrote that her mother, Sylvia Sessions, told her “that [Josephine] was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith.”³⁴ Prescinda Huntington Buell once said that “she did not know whether Mr. Buel or the Prophet was the father of her son [Oliver].”³⁵ Researchers have tentatively identified eight children that Joseph Smith may have had by his plural wives.³⁶ Emily Partridge observed: “Spiritual wives, as we were then termed, were not very numerous in those days and a spiritual baby was a rarity indeed.”³⁷

31. Mary E. Rollins Lightner to Emmeline B. Wells, summer 1905, LDS archives.

32. Autobiography of Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, quoted in Brodie, 443-444; statement in LDS archives.

33. Brodie, 119; Faulring, 396.

34. Josephine L. Fisher to Andrew Jenson, Feb. 24, 1915. On October 12, 1905, Angus M. Cannon confirmed this account to Joseph Smith III, the prophet’s son: “It was said by the girl’s grandmother that your father has a daughter born of a plural wife. The girl’s grandmother was Mother Sessions, who lived in Nauvoo.” He added that Aunt Patty Sessions “asserts that the girl was born within the time after your father was said to have taken the mother.” Cited in Van Wagoner, 48n3.

35. Mary Ettie V. Smith, *Fifteen Years Among the Mormons*, 2d. ed. (New York, 1859), 34; see Brodie, 301-302, 437-39, and photograph of Oliver Buell showing his likeness to Joseph Smith, 306ff.

36. Besides Josephine Fisher (b. Feb. 8, 1844) and Oliver Buell, named as possible children of Joseph Smith by his plural wives are John R. Hancock (b. Apr. 19, 1841), George A. Lightner (b. Mar. 12, 1842), Orson W. Hyde (b. Nov. 9, 1843), Frank H. Hyde (b. Jan 23, 1845), Moroni Pratt (b. Dec. 7, 1844), and Zebulon Jacobs (b. Jan 2, 1842). See Brodie, 345; Van Wagoner, 44, 48-49n3.

37. Emily D. P. Young, “Autobiographical Sketch,” quoted in Van Wagoner, 230. After Smith died, Emily became the wife of Brigham Young and by him bore a son whom she later carried across the Mississippi on her way to Winter Quarters. She later wrote: “While in Nauvoo I had kept my child secreted and but few knew I had one. But after I started on my journey it became publicly known and some have told me, years after that

AN INVITATION FROM THE PROPHET TO MARRY PLURAL WIVES

Although he insisted that the practice of polygamy remain secret, Joseph Smith introduced his teaching about plural wives to thirty families of his close followers among the 15,000 Mormons living in and around Nauvoo.³⁸ When he denied from the pulpit having plural wives, at least 100 other polygamous adults sitting in the congregation knew about the secret doctrine.

How did Smith convert his followers to the practice of plural marriage? One of the clearest records of how Smith persuaded married men to take additional wives comes from the pen of William Clayton. An ardent believer in Smith and in the heavenly mandate for polygamy, Clayton had been baptized in Victorian England in 1837 during the first foreign Mormon mission; he himself served on a mission to Manchester and migrated to Nauvoo in 1840. He seems to have been unaware of the earliest secret marriages—those dating from 1841 escaped mention in the meticulous diary he began in 1840.

By the time Clayton first mentions plural marriage in early 1843, he had been married to his legal wife Ruth for six years and had three children. Smith called at his home and invited Clayton for a walk, during which he said he had learned of a sister back in England to whom Clayton was “very much attached.” Clayton acknowledged the friendship, but “nothing further than an attachment such as a brother and sister in the Church might rightfully entertain for each other.” The prophet then suggested, “Why don’t you send for her?” Clayton replied, “In the first place, I have no authority to send for her, and if I had, I have not the means to pay expenses.” Smith answered, “I give you authority to send for her, and I will furnish you with means,” which, according to Clayton, he did. Noting that this day in early 1843 was the first time the prophet had talked with him “on the subject of plural marriage,” Clayton recalled the prophet’s further sanction: “It is your privilege to have all the wives you want.”³⁹

Following Smith’s admonition, Clayton fully embraced plural mar-

he was the handsomest child they ever saw. One woman told me she thought he was the smartest spiritual child she had ever seen. I said dont you think they are as smart as other children. She said no she did not think they were. There was a good deal of that spirit at that time and sometimes it was very oppressive” (“Incidents of the Early Life of Emily Dow Partridge,” typescript, Western Americana, Marriott Library).

38. *HR*, 6:219-40; Van Wagoner, 61, 77, 79, 85; Foster, 139-80. George A. Smith estimated that prior to Joseph Smith’s July 12, 1843, revelation on plural marriage only “one or two hundred persons” in Nauvoo knew that LDS leaders privately taught and practiced polygamy (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols., [London: Latter-day Saint’s Book Depot, 1854-86], 14:213), hereafter, *JD*.

39. “William Clayton’s Testimony,” *HR*, 224-26.

riage. Later in Utah he wrote: "I support a family of near forty persons on a salary of \$3,600 per annum and we live well, are well clothed and very comfortably situated . . . I have six wives whom I support in comfort and happiness and am not afraid of another one. I have three children born to me during the year, and I don't fear a dozen more."⁴⁰ Clayton eventually married a total of ten women who bore him forty-seven children.

There were other polygamous husbands in Nauvoo besides the prophet and his private clerk. Smith urged that plural marriage was essential for the church, warning that "the church could not go on until that principal [sic] was established."⁴¹ Between April 5, 1841, and January 17, 1842, he took his first four officially recorded plural wives: Louisa Beaman, Zina D. Huntington, Prescindia L. Huntington, and Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner. Theodore Turley, Brigham Young, Jonathan Holmes, Reynolds Cahoon, and Heber C. Kimball each took one plural wife in 1842. Smith married fourteen more women that year, making a total of twenty-three plural wives he and his associates married by the end of 1842. On January 18, 1843, Willard Richards took the twenty-fourth plural wife. Other new polygamous husbands in 1843 included Thomas Bullock, William D. Huntington, Lorenzo Dow Young, Orson Pratt, Joseph Bates Noble, William Clayton, Orson Hyde, James Bird, Parley P. Pratt, James Adams, William Felshaw, Amasa Lyman, Hyrum Smith, Benjamin Mitchell, John Bair, Henry Lyman Cook, Ebenezer Richardson, John Taylor, and Edwin D. Woolley. In addition, Joseph Smith contributed fifteen more women to the total of forty-two new plural wives in 1843. In 1844, up to June 27 when the prophet was killed, Erastus Snow, John D. Lee, Ezra T. Benson, and Dominicus Carter became polygamists, and nineteen more plural wives in that half-year made a grand total of eighty-four plural marriages in the Nauvoo community while Smith was still alive.

SEQUENCE OF NAUVOO PLURAL MARRIAGES
APRIL 5, 1841 - JUNE 2, 1844

<i>Husband</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Date of Marriage</i>
1. Joseph Smith	Louisa Beaman	Apr 5, 1841
2. Joseph Smith	Zina Diantha Huntington (Jacobs)	Oct 27, 1841
3. Joseph Smith	Prescendia L. Huntington (Buell)	Dec 11, 1841
4. Joseph Smith	Mary Elizabeth Rollins (Lightner)	Jan 17, 1842
5. Theodore Turley	Mary Clift	Jan 1842

40. Clayton letterbooks, Nov. 7, 1869, Marriott Library.

41. Joseph Smith to John Taylor in Nauvoo, between Mar. 1842 and Feb. 1846, Mary Isabella Hales Horne, *Autobiography*, 10-11, Utah State Historical Society, hereafter USHS.

6. Joseph Smith	Patty Bartlett (Sessions)	Mar 9, 1842
7. Joseph Smith	Nancy Marinda Johnson (Hyde)	Apr 1842
8. Joseph Smith	Delcena Johnson (Sherman)	Early 1842
9. Brigham Young	Lucy Ann Decker	Jun 14, 1842
10. Joseph Smith	Eliza Roxcy Snow	Jun 29, 1842
11. Joseph Smith	Sarah Ann Whitney	Jul 27, 1842
12. Joseph Smith	Martha McBride (Knight)	Aug [3] 1842
13. Joseph Smith	Sarah Bapson	1842
14. Joseph Smith	Agnes M. Coolbrith (Smith)	1842
15. Joseph Smith	Elizabeth Davis (Brackenbury Durfee)	1842
16. Joseph Smith	Sally A. Fuller	1842
17. Joseph Smith	Desdemona W. Fullmer	1842
18. Joseph Smith	Sarah M. Kingsley (Howe Cleveland)	1842
19. Joseph Smith	Lucinda P. (Morgan Harris)	1842
20. Joseph Smith	Elvira Annie Cowles (Holmes)	Dec 1, 1842
21. Jonathan Holmes	Elvira Annie Cowles	Dec 1, 1842
22. Reynolds Cahoon	Lucina Roberts	1842
23. Heber C. Kimball	Sarah Peak (Noon)	1842
24. Willard Richards	Sarah Longstroth	Jan 18, 1843
25. Thomas Bullock	Lucy C. Clayton	Jan 23, 1843
26. Wm D. Huntington	Harriet Clark	Feb 5, 1843
27. Joseph Smith	Ruth D. Vose (Sayers)	Feb 1843
28. Joseph Smith	Eliza Maria Partridge	Mar 8, 1843
29. Lorenzo Dow Young	Harriet Page Wheeler	Mar 9, 1843
30. Orson Pratt	Charlotte Bishop	Mar 10, 1843
31. Joseph Smith	Almera Woodard Johnson	Apr [3] 1843
32. Joseph Bates Noble	Sarah B. Alley	Apr 5, 1843
33. William Clayton	Margaret Moon	Apr 27, 1843
34. Orson Hyde	Mary Ann Price	April 1843
35. Joseph Smith	Lucy Walker	May 1, 1843
36. James Bird	Sophia A. Fuller	May 5, 1843
37. Joseph Smith	Emily Dow Partridge	May 11, 1843
38. Joseph Smith	Sarah Lawrence	May 11, 1843
39. Joseph Smith	Maria Lawrence	Spring 1843
40. Joseph Smith	Helen Mar Kimball	May 1843
41. Joseph Smith	Rhoda Richards	Jun 12, 1843
42. Parley P. Pratt	Elizabeth Brotherton	Jun 24, 1843
43. Joseph Bates Noble	Mary Ann Washburn	Jun 28, 1843
44. Joseph Smith	Flora Ann Woodworth	Spring 1843
45. James Adams	Roxena Repshire	Jul 11, 1843
46. Orson Hyde	Martha Rebecca Browett	Jul 20, 1843
47. William Felshaw	Charlotte Walters	Jul 28, 1843
48. Amasa M. Lyman	Diontha Walker	July 1843
49. Hyrum Smith	Mercy R. Fielding (Thompson)	Aug 11, 1843
50. Joseph Smith	Melissa Lott	Sep 20, 1843
51. Joseph Smith	Olive Grey Frost	Summer 1843
52. Joseph Smith	Hannah Ells	Summer 1843

53. Joseph Smith	Mary Ann Frost (Pratt)	Summer 1843
54. Benjamin Mitchell	Lovina Buckwater	Oct 10, 1843
55. John Bair	Lucinda T. Owen	Oct 19, 1843
56. Brigham Young	Augusta Adams	Nov 2, 1843
57. Brigham Young	Harriet Cook	Nov 2, 1843
58. Joseph Smith	Fanny Young (Murray)	Nov 2, 1843
59. Henry L. Cook	Lovina Thaves	Nov 5, 1843
60. Ebenezer Richardson	Polly Ann Child	Nov 1843
61. John Taylor	Elizabeth Kaighan	Dec 12, 1843
62. Edwin D. Woolley	Louisa Gordon	1843
63. Edwin D. Woolley	Ellen Wilding	Dec 28, 1843
64. Hyrum Smith	Catherine Phillips	1843
65. Hyrum Smith	Lydia D. Granger	1843
66. John Taylor	Jane Ballantyne	Feb 25, 1844
67. Theodore Turley	Eliza Clift	Mar 6, 1844
68. Erastus Snow	Minerva White	Apr 2, 1844
69. John D. Lee	Rachel A. Woolsey	Apr 19, 1844
70. John D. Lee	Louisa Free	Apr 19, 1844
71. John D. Lee	Abigail Schaeffer (Woolsey)	Apr 19, 1844
72. Theodore Turley	Sarah Ellen Clift	Apr 26, 1844
73. Ezra T. Benson	Adeline B. Andrus	Apr 27, 1844
74. Brigham Young	Clarissa Decker	May 8, 1844
75. Dominicus Carter	Mary Durfee	Jun 2, 1844
76. Joseph Smith	Sylvia Porter Sessions (Lyon)	by 1844
77. Joseph Smith	Mary Houston	by 1844
78. Joseph Smith	Nancy Maria Winchester	by 1844
79. Joseph Smith	Sarah Scott	by 1844
80. Joseph Smith	Olive Andrews	by 1844
81. Joseph Smith	Jane Tippetts	by 1844
82. Joseph Smith	Sophia Sanburn	by 1844
83. Joseph Smith	Phoebe Watrous (Woodworth)	by 1844
84. Joseph Smith	Vienna Jacques	by 1844

The thirty polygamous husbands from 1841 up to Joseph Smith's death on June 27, 1844, had married a total of 114 legal and plural wives, who had borne 131 children. These men averaged thirty-six years of age (range: 24-60) and had been married an average of ten years (1-32 years) before marrying a second wife of a mean twenty-five years of age (14-39 years). At that time, their legal wives averaged thirty-two years of age (22-56 years), four years younger than their husbands and seven years older than the first plural wife at the time of her marriage. At the time of these first polygamous marriages, the nuclear family included an average of four pre-polygamous children (0-9). During the Nauvoo years these families would grow to include an average of eight wives (2-43) and six children (1-17). In the post-Nauvoo years these original thirty families would even-

tually accumulate an average of twelve wives (2-55) and twenty-seven children each (0-65). Without Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball—the three most-married men—these families averaged four wives and six children during the Nauvoo years, and ultimately eight wives and twenty-five children each.

The thirty early Nauvoo polygamists are listed below as of the dates they first took plural wives.

NAUVOO POLYGAMISTS, 1841-44 (6/27)

	<i>Entered Polygamy</i>	<i>Prior Years Pre-Polygamy Married</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Eventual Children</i>	<i>Wives</i>
1. Joseph Smith	Apr 5, 1841	14	5	5est.	43
2. Theodore Turley	Jan 1842	20	9	22	5
3. Brigham Young	Jun 14, 1842	8	4	50	55
4. Jonathan Holmes	Dec 1, 1842	5	2	7	3
5. Reynolds Cahoon	1842	32	7	10	3
6. Heber C. Kimball	1842	20	6	65	45
7. Willard Richards	Jan 18, 1843	4	1	26	14
8. Thomas Bullock	Jan 23, 1843	4	3	23	3
9. William D. Huntington	Feb 5, 1843	3	0	7	3
10. Lorenzo Dow Young	Mar 9, 1843	16	7	26	8
11. Orson Pratt	Mar 10, 1843	6	3	45	10
12. Joseph Bates Noble	Apr 5, 1843	8	5	31	11
13. William Clayton	Apr 27, 1843	6	3	47	10
14. Orson Hyde	April 1843	8	3	26	7
15. James Bird	May 5, 1843	11	5	7	3
16. Parley P. Pratt	Jun 24, 1843	6	3	32	11
17. James Adams	Jul 11, 1843	NA	0	0	2
18. William Felshaw	Jul 28, 1843	16	9	17	3
19. Amasa M. Lyman	Jul 1843	8	2	37	9
20. Hyrum Smith	Aug 11, 1843	5	2	2	4
21. Benjamin Mitchell	Oct 10, 1843	NA	0	17	6
22. John Bair	Oct 19, 1843	14	7	32	6
23. Henry L. Cook	Nov 5, 1843	1	0	4	3
24. Ebenezer Richardson	Nov 1843	10	4	35	4
25. John Taylor	Dec 12, 1843	10	4	35	16
26. Edwin D. Woolley	1843	12	5	26	6
27. Erastus Snow	Apr 2, 1844	5	3	37	16
28. John D. Lee	Apr 19, 1844	10	6	52	19
29. Ezra T. Benson	Apr 27, 1844	12	5	34	8
30. Dominicus Carter	Jun 2, 1844	5	1	40	8
Average		10	4	27	12

This brotherhood of Mormon polygamists was expanding at a rate that alarmed William Law, who had once been dedicated to Smith's ideals and remained a believer in Mormonism. Law had always been a sympathetic listener to Emma Smith's complaints about the practice. When he learned that secret plural marriages were being performed among Joseph Smith's inner circle of followers, Law tried to persuade Smith to stop. In a desperate attempt to convince the prophet, he reportedly threw his arms about Smith's neck and begged him to abandon his polygamous relationships.⁴² Smith responded by telling Law that God had commanded him to teach the doctrine of celestial marriage. God, he said, would condemn him if he did not obey.

We know what happened next. On June 7, 1844, the reformers published 1,000 copies of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, which claimed to be "rich with facts, such expositions, as make the guilty tremble and rage."⁴³ The newspaper asserted that Smith had "introduced false and damnable doctrines into the church" such as "the plurality of wives," which "are taught secretly, and denied openly" and amount to "abominations and whoredoms." It detailed how "many females in foreign climes" were attracted by promised "blessings" from Smith regarding "the will of the Lord concerning them," only to "meet brother Joseph, or some of the Twelve, at some insulated point . . . on the bank of the Mississippi" where they were requested to "never indulge what is [then] revealed to them, with a penalty of death attached . . . that she should be his (Joseph's) Spiritual wife."⁴⁴

The *Expositor* was intended to be a weekly reformist newspaper, but the first issue was its last. Following Smith's lead, according to William Clayton's journal, June 10, 1844, "The City Council passed a resolution declaring the Printing press on the hill 'a nuisance' and ordered it destroyed if not moved in 3 hours notice. About sundown the police gathered at the Temple and after organizing proceeded to the office and demolished the press and scattered the Type." So were events set into motion which resulted in charges of riot and treason, Smith's arrest by the governor of Illinois, and the prophet's death two weeks later.

In a letter to Smith's brother-in-law, William Law described Smith's

42. "William Law," 66. Law was aware of the "doctrine . . . of Plurality and Community of wives" at least by January 1, 1844 (William Law Diary, 1844, copy in private possession).

43. William Law Diary, June 7, 1844.

44. The *Nauvoo Expositor* is available at some libraries, such as the New York Public Library, and at LDS archives. Similar penalty oaths were sworn to participants in Mormon temple ceremonies (see Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Evolution of the Mormon Temple Ceremony: 1842-1990* [Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1990], 16-22).

death as an event in which “the wicked slay the wicked,” and “the hand of a blasphemed God . . . has taken sudden judgment.”⁴⁵ Law recorded in his diary that the deaths of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum represented “the judgment of an offended god” [that Joseph Smith] “set the laws of god and men at defiance. He was naturally base, brutal and corrupt and cruel. He was one of the false prophets spoken of by Christ who would come in sheep’s clothing but inwardly be a reveling wolf . . . but god stopped him in his career and gave him to his destroyers.”⁴⁶

With such opposition to polygamy in the church itself, how could the Nauvoo community fail to connect the death of their leader with his secret marriages? Half of the 1,000 printed copies of the *Expositor*, expressing the complaints reformist Mormons shared about polygamy, had been mailed prior to the press’s destruction. Yet church members believed the denials from their leaders, that charges of polygamy were untrue. All Mormons loyal to Smith then—and many devout Mormons today—believe that Smith died a martyr, murdered because of hostility from godless outsiders, the “mob.” Brigham Young avoided mention of polygamy when he concluded, “They killed Joseph, and what for? For the Gospels’ sake. It was for no evil for I was well acquainted with him. He testified to the truth and sealed his fate with his blood.”⁴⁷

The account of Smith’s assassination in the official *History of the Church* mentions his indictment on charges of polygamy but says nothing of Smith’s having plural wives. Thomas Ford, Illinois governor in 1844, did list Smith’s marital practices as one of the issues causing internal dissent but did not mention other Nauvoo polygamists.⁴⁸ Although some scholarly writing has linked polygamy in Nauvoo to Smith’s death, studies of polygamy typically overlook Nauvoo and begin counting plural husbands and wives in 1852 when the practice was announced in Utah.⁴⁹ The

45. William Law to Isaac Hale, Nauvoo, Illinois, July 20, 1844, LDS archives.

46. William Law Diary, June 27, 1844. The memory of Law’s estrangement to Smith is preserved today in the restoration of historic Nauvoo where the foundations of Law’s unrestored house remain visible in the grass across the street from Smith’s “Red Brick Store,” in which some of the plural marriage ceremonies took place.

47. *JD* (May 6, 1877), 18:361.

48. Thomas Ford, *History of Illinois*, 2 vols. (Chicago: S. C. Griggs, 1854), 2:166-76. Ford listed the following causes of antagonism toward the Mormons: Mormon violations of freedom of the press, their religious views, polygamy, their military strength, rumors of their intent to destroy the *Warsaw Sentinel*, Mormon alliance with Indians, Joseph Smith being crowned “king,” revival of Danite vigilante bands, Mormon assertions that God had consecrated all their neighbors’ property to the Saints, and their bloc voting (Mormon approval required for election).

49. Several studies rely on Danel Bachman’s “Not Lawful to Utter—An Examination of Historical Evidence for the Mormon Practice of Polygamy Before June 27, 1844,” Aug. 1971, privately circulated. Bachman refers to Fawn Brodie’s landmark research of diaries,

recently published semi-official *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* tells different parts of the story in different sections but does not in any one place draw together Smith, his wives, the spread of the practice to other men during his lifetime, and the internal dissent over the practice which led to his death.⁵⁰

letters, and affidavits which demonstrate the extent of Smith's plural marriages in Appendix C of *No Man Knows My History*. Each of these studies in turn rely on Jenson's "Plural Marriage."

Lawrence Foster's *Religion and Sexuality* is rich in anecdotal description of Smith's polygamy but only mentions that "most Mormon leaders had taken at most two to three additional wives," citing D. Michael Quinn's Yale University Ph.D. dissertation, "The Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: An American Elite," 1976. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), mention polygamy in the 1830s, Smith's first recorded plural marriage in 1841, his teachings to close associates, and their being "sealed" to additional wives. However, they do not say anyone actually practiced polygamy: It is "not clear whether Joseph Smith lived as husband with any of his plural wives" (171).

Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), only goes so far as to say that Smith had taken several plural wives by 1842 and that he taught his most loyal friends. The Mormon dissent, which got Smith charged with adultery and polygamy, is described in detail. Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), mention polygamy in the 1830s and that Smith "had formed several plural relationships before the 1843 revelation," and recognized that he "may have sired in polygamy several children whose identities were obscured by their being raised under other surnames" (197). Polygamy is described as a "clandestine arrangement, limited to the prophet and two to three dozen of the leading men and the wives," but few are actually mentioned (199). The reformists are seen as a "small group of Mormon dissidents" who published "inflammatory allegations about the sex lives of Mormon leaders" (77-78).

Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), does connect Smith's destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, a dissident, anti-polygamous press, with his arrest and martyrdom. Although "many of the other church leaders eventually married additional wives," (6) no Nauvoo marriages are included in her calculations, which begin in 1852.

Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, relates evidence that many of Joseph Smith's secret plural wives ignited internal opposition to polygamy, which led to the prophet's arrest and death. But the story then moves quickly to the public announcement of polygamy in 1852 and its practice in Utah. Although the author is aware that "church leaders were secretly practicing polygamy long before it was publicly admitted," he does not address the scope of over 150 polygamous husbands and 585 plural wives who were involved in the secret practice in Nauvoo that would later include about 970 wives and nearly 2,800 children as part of these original Nauvoo polygamous families.

50. *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1991). The "History of the Church" (#612) and "Social and Cultural History" (#1378) entries omit mention of actual practice of polygamy; "Plural Marriage" (#1091) and "Joseph Smith" (#1337) entries make limited mention of polygamy but refrain from discussing the extent of the practice, especially in Nauvoo.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS OF NAUVOO POLYGAMY

The Nauvoo temple was the centerpiece of the physical and social arrangements of Nauvoo polygamy. Sarah Rich wrote of the temple work she and her husband, Charles, did during the wave of marriages in January and February 1846: "We were to be there at seven in the morning and remain until the work was done at ten or twelve o'clock at night if necessary. So we got a good girl Mary Philips a wife of my husband to stay and take care of the children and we helped in the house of the Lord."⁵¹

The "pecking order" among plural wives often determined how much control they had over family life. As in a complex mating dance, first wives not only directed households but also frequently chose subsequent wives. George A. Smith's first wife Bathsheba Bigler recalled: "I had since the Prophet's martyrdom, like Sarah of old, given to my husband five wives."⁵² Jane Snyder Richards told western historian Matilda Bancroft of placing a young woman as a housekeeper in a home: "In the course of a few months she married the master of the house; and the two wives had two daughters with but twelve days difference in their ages."⁵³ In a slightly different way Adelia Kimball assumed control of her marital choice: after obtaining Vilate's consent to marry Heber C. Kimball, she "concluded to become his wife."⁵⁴

Although later journals and memoirs kept by members of leading polygamous families in Utah include references to Brigham Young's Beehive House; Heber Kimball's "Big House" with its "Girls' Parlor" and separate rooms for each wife; William Clayton's "Big House"; and the Richardses' spacious two-story dwelling, these more comfortable living arrangements differed from conditions in Nauvoo, where families lived in secrecy and, as they faced intensifying persecution, anticipated leaving town. Emily Partridge Smith wrote: "Times were not then as they are now in 1877." She recalled that at the time of Smith's death she was living at the Coolidge home, and later, though remarried to Amasa Lyman, she lived with her mother before moving in with Lyman and his first wife.⁵⁵ Plural wives sometimes worked as servants in the home of the first wife, often hiding the special relationship they had with the man of the house. They had to disguise their pregnancies from citizens who had not been let in on the secret doctrine and accept their contempt for "loose women" when

51. Rich, *Autobiography*, 66-67, LDS archives.

52. Bathsheba Smith, *Autobiography*, 13, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

53. Jane Snyder Richards, "The Inner Facts of Social Life in Utah," 1880, 15, Bancroft Library.

54. Adelia Kimball, *Memoirs*, 17, USHS.

55. Emily Dow Partridge Young, "Incidents."

babies were born apparently out of wedlock. Plural wives were frowned on by some legal wives who knew about the doctrine and feared that Smith might ask their husbands to practice it.

CONVINCED BY FAITH, AUTHORITY, AND PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES

Plural wives entered polygamy with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Prescindia Huntington, third recorded plural wife of Joseph Smith, wrote late in life that

in 1841 I entered into the New Everlasting Covenant - was sealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Seer, and to the best of my ability I have honored plural marriage, never speaking one word against the principle. I have been the mother of nine children - seven sons and two daughters, two by my last husband - Heber Chase Kimball. Never in my life, in this kingdom, which is 44 years, have I doubted the truth of this great work.⁵⁶

However, some women had to struggle to accommodate their sensibilities to the radical new teaching they believed they must obey. Caroline Rogers Daniels, Nauvoo divorcee, married polygamist Abraham Owen Smoot because: "It was necessary for my salvation and exaltation."⁵⁷ Adelia Almira Wilcox Hatton Woods chose church leader Heber C. Kimball because she desired to marry a man who could not only "save himself, but also me."⁵⁸ Bathsheba Smith was convinced by "a revelation from God and having a fixed determination to attain to Celestial Glory, I felt to embrace every principle, and that it was for my husband's exaltation that he should obey the revelation on plural marriage in order to attain to kingdoms, thrones, principalities and powers, firmly believing that I should participate with him in all his blessings, glory and honor."⁵⁹

Plural wife Sarah Studevaut Leavitt of Nauvoo recalled that when "It was whispered in my ear by a friend that the authorities were getting more wives than one," [I] reasoned that "the Anointed of the Lord would not get more wives unless they were commanded to do so . . . I have seen so much wrong connected with this ordinance that had I not had it revealed to me from Him that cannot lie I should sometimes have doubted the truth of it."⁶⁰ Mercy Rachel Fielding Thompson, widow of Joseph Smith's secretary,

56. Prescindia Lathrop Huntington Smith Kimball, *Autobiographical Sketch*, Apr. 1, 1881, LDS archives.

57. Caroline Rogers Daniels, "Autobiography," in Bitton, 328.

58. Adelia Kimball, 17, USHS.

59. Bathsheba Smith, 13.

60. Sarah S. Leavitt, *Autobiography*, 22-23, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

wrote that "On the 11 of August 1843 I was called by direct revelation from Heaven through Brother Joseph Smith the Patriarch" to join her sister and become the plural wife of his brother Hyrum. Persuaded by the authority and character of Joseph Smith, she explained that she was "convinced that it was appointed by him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind."⁶¹

Eliza Maria Partridge Smith Lyman, who with her sister Emily "went to live in the family of the prophet Joseph Smith . . . about three years," wrote that "this was truly a great trial for me but I had the most implicit confidence in him as a Prophet of the Lord and [could] not but believe his word and as a matter of course accept of the privilege of being sealed to him as a wife."⁶² Sarah Dearmon Pea Rich said,

when my husband and myself had this doctrine explained and taught to us in its true light by those that had a right to teach it we both saw the propriety of the same and believed it to be true and [essential] to our future glory and exaltation hereafter we accepted the same and like old Sarah of old Joseph had in that temple given to my husband four other wives which were sealed to him in that temple by the holy order of god by one having authority to do the same.⁶³

Some plural wives told of advantages they found for themselves in polygamy. Jane Snyder Richards wrote of how faithfully Elizabeth McFate, her husband's new wife, took care of her while she was recovering from a miscarriage.⁶⁴ Though she expressed difficulties when her husband took another wife, Mary Horne found that she could "work out her individual character separate from her husband." She felt "freer" and able to "do herself individually things she could never have attempted before."⁶⁵ Lucy Walker, who was on intimate terms with Smith's other wives, the Partridge and Lawrence sisters, experienced "less room for jealousy when wives live under the same roof." She said, "Instead of a feeling of jealousy [plural marriage] was a source of comfort to us."⁶⁶

DIFFICULTIES FOR PLURAL WIVES

At times women wrote frankly about their difficulties with polygamy. For Mary Horne "Celestial marriage" was "one of the ordinances of the

61. Mercy Rachel Fielding Thompson Smith, *Autobiography*, n.d., LDS archives.

62. Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman, "Life and Journal of Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman," 1877, 13, Marriott Library.

63. Rich, 68.

64. Jane Snyder Richards, "Reminiscences," 1880, 19, Bancroft Library.

65. Horne, 22.

66. Lucy Walker Smith Kimball, *Autobiographical Statement*, 6-7, Bancroft Library.

house of God," but she felt that "no one can ever feel the fullweight of the curse till she enters into polygamy." She accepted this "great trial" because "her religion demanded it."⁶⁷ Lucy Walker Kimball regarded polygamy as "a grand school" to "learn self control, self denial."⁶⁸ Mary Ellen Kimball recorded Heber C. Kimball's analogy that plural marriage should be like a dish of water into which he puts a quart and his wives each put in a pint. She grasped the essence: "so you see our will swallowed up in his will."⁶⁹

The dilution of a woman's will, an image which would offend twentieth-century feminist sensibilities, extended to the subjugation of wives by polygamous husbands. Eventually husband to forty-five wives, Heber C. Kimball wrote that wives should be "in subjection to their husbands." He preached, "I am subject to my God, my wife is in subjection to me and will reverence me in my place and I will make her happy."⁷⁰ Kimball justified this dominance of women with the view that man was primary in a creation which only secondarily came up with a woman for man:

The man was created, and God gave him dominions over the whole earth, but he saw that he never could multiply, and replenish the earth, without a woman. And he made one and gave her to him. He did not make the man for the woman; but the woman for the man, and it is just as unlawful for you to rise up and rebel against your husband, as it would be for man to rebel against God.⁷¹

Other polygamous Nauvoo husbands also affirmed their authority over women. Amasa Lyman, who eventually married nine wives, lectured to the priesthood holders in the Nauvoo temple: "A man becomes responsible for his own conduct, and that of his wife . . . we want the man to remember that he has covenanted to keep the law of God, and the Woman to obey her husband."⁷² George A. Smith, then husband to six wives, agreed that "the woman ought to be in subjection to the man, be careful to guard against loud laughter, against whispering, levity, talebearing."⁷³ And Brigham Young, who married fifty-five women, wrote that "woman will never get back, unless she follows the man back . . . the man must love his God and the woman must love her husband."⁷⁴

67. Horne, 22.

68. Lucy Walker Smith Kimball, 8.

69. Mary Ellen Kimball, *Journal*, n.d., LDS archives.

70. "Nauvoo Temple Record," Dec. 21, 1845, in George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 222.

71. William Clayton diary, Dec. 21, 1845, in Smith, 227.

72. *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1845, 225-26.

73. *Ibid.*, 225.

74. *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1845, 239.

Martha Spence Heywood expressed the stoic attitude that some Mormon women took toward the difficult role of plural wife: "I tried to recognize the hand of the Lord in all of this for the perfecting of my character."⁷⁵

People of both genders expressed anguish over polygamy. Nauvoo polygymist Joseph Fielding wrote in the 1840s and 1850s of dissent in the Mormon community: "This is my greatest trial, and I think there is more trouble on the Subject of Plurality of Wives than anything else . . . [it] appears in general to have given great Offence to the Wife . . . some of the best of our Sisters are tyrannised [sic] over by some of the meanest." He bemoaned that "My Wives have not spoken to each other for many Months."⁷⁶ Patty Sessions, plural wife to Joseph Smith as well as the first wife of "Mr. Sessions," spoke of her husband's preference for another wife: "I feel very bad . . . he took [Harriet] to the farm with him [and] leaves me here alone."⁷⁷ Victoria Hancock Jackson, a grand-daughter of Levi W. Hancock, resented that "Some men neglected present wives with children and were captivated by a younger face."⁷⁸ Emeline B. Wells spoke of being "tortured" by her husband's inattention: "O if my husband could only love me even a little and not seem to be perfectly indifferent."⁷⁹ Adelia Almera Wilcox Hatton Wood Kimball left her first plural marriage because her husband's first wife considered a plural wife to be "nothing more than a concubine," and Adelia felt that she and her children were "looked upon as intruders."⁸⁰ Jane Richards spoke of feeling "like wringing the neck of any other child than hers that should call her husband papa."⁸¹

REJECTION

There were women who could not easily be persuaded to endorse the doctrine of plural marriage. Emily M. Austin, whose sister married polygamist Newell Knight, escaped to Ohio to avoid this "horrible" practice.⁸² Rachel Ridgway Ivins Grant, mother of future LDS president Heber J. Grant, refused even to meet with Joseph Smith, saying that she would "sooner go to hell as a virtuous woman than to heaven as a whore."⁸³

75. Martha Spence Heywood diary, 74, USHS.

76. Joseph Fielding journal (1832-59), 178, LDS archives; see also Bitton, 106-107.

77. Patty Sessions, Journal, 61, 63, USHS.

78. Victoria Hancock Jackson journal, in Bitton, 172.

79. Judith R. Dushku and Patricia R. Gadsby, "I Have Risen Triumphant': A Personal View of Emmeline B. Wells," ca. 1977, 12, USHS.

80. Adelia Kimball, 15, 17.

81. Jane Snyder Richards, "Inner Facts," 2.

82. Emily M. Austin, *Autobiography*, in Bitton, 15.

83. Ronald W. Walker, "The Continuing Legacy of the Feminine Ideal," *Dialogue: A*

The prophet faced rejection more than once. In the spring of 1842 Smith told Sarah Pratt, wife of Apostle Orson Pratt, that the Lord wanted him to take her as his "spiritual wife." Sarah refused Smith's offer and eventually exposed him to her husband. When he confronted Smith, Orson Pratt was excommunicated, but he was reinstated five months later. After Smith's death Pratt himself took plural wives, and he became the primary apologist for plural marriage when it was officially announced in Utah in 1852. Sarah ultimately left both Orson and the church; she labeled polygamy the "direst curse" which "completely demoralizes good men, and makes bad men correspondingly worse. As for the women," she wrote, "well, God help them."⁸⁴

When Smith proposed in April 1842 to Nancy Rigdon, daughter of his close friend and counselor, Sidney Rigdon, he reportedly took her into a room, "locked the door, and then stated to her that he had had an affection for her for several years, and wished that she should be his." Nancy refused him, saying she would only marry a single man. The following day Smith explained in a letter to her: "That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another." He added, "Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof." She remained unconvinced.⁸⁵

Any discussion of resistance to polygamy is incomplete if it does not mention Emma Smith's reluctance to accept co-wives. Joseph's plural marriage revelation went so far as to threaten her with destruction if she did not comply. She responded by reportedly throwing the written revelation into the fire. After Joseph Smith died, she consistently denied that her husband had ever practiced polygamy. According to Lucy Meserve Smith, Emma "bore testimony to me that Mormonism was true as it came forth from the servant of the Lord Joseph Smith but said she the Twelve had made bogus of it. She said they were living with their [plural] wives and raising children and Joseph never taught any such doctrine."⁸⁶ Even-

Journal of Mormon Thought 15 (Autumn 1982): 109. A decade later in Salt Lake City at age thirty-two, Rachel married the deceased prophet Joseph Smith by proxy and became the seventh wife of Jedediah M. Grant "for time only" (Walker, 111).

84. Van Wagoner, 29-36, 98-100.

85. Ebenezer Robinson, "Items of Personal History of the Editor," *The Return* (Davis City, IA, 1889-90); *Sangamo Journal*, Aug. 19, 1842; "The Letter of the Prophet, Joseph Smith to Miss Nancy Rigdon," Joseph Smith Collection, LDS archives; HC 5:134-36.

86. After hearing of this denial of plural marriage, Lucy's husband, Apostle George A. Smith, said "Emma knows better." He told of visiting the prophet as he had finished helping Emma deliver the child of one of his plural wives. Finding Joseph "out on the porch with a basin of water washing his hands," George A. "said to him what is up, said Joseph one of my wives has just been confined and Emma was midwife and I have been assisting her. He said she had granied [delivered] a number of women for him. This is

tually Emma Smith allowed the majority of Mormons under the leadership of Brigham Young to migrate west without her. She later became a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, headed by her son, Joseph Smith III.

SECRECY

Considering the explosive nature of what was taking place, Nauvoo polygamy was surprisingly well-concealed. The words of the early polygamists convey Joseph Smith's need for secrecy. Lucy Walker said that Joseph "lived in constant fear of being betrayed."⁸⁷ Jane Richards explained that when Joseph Smith had taken some more wives a few months previous to his death, he received a "revelation in regard to polygamy," which required that he "should do it without publicity this time" because "mob spirit was already quite excited."⁸⁸ Thus polygamy was made known only to "a few trusted ones," according to Mary Horne's account: "At first the brethren and sisters were so averse to it that it could scarcely be mentioned."⁸⁹ Joseph Lee Robinson tells the story of Smith saying in Nauvoo that if "I should reveal the things that God has revealed to me, there are some on this stand that would cut my throat or take my hearts blood."⁹⁰ Nancy Tracy recalled that Smith taught the "Celestial Order of Marriage" only to "a few that could bear it."⁹¹

Evidently one such person was Ebenezer Robinson, who recalled that the "doctrine of spiritual wives" was "talked privately in the church in Nauvoo, in 1841" but that he was invited to participate in 1843. Hyrum Smith "instructed me in Nov or Dec 1843 to make a selection of some young woman and he would seal her to me, and I should take her home," he recalled, "and if she should have an offspring give out word that she had a husband, an Elder, who had gone on a foreign mission." Possibly referring to a secluded birthplace, or conceivably to abortion, Robinson spoke of "a place appointed in Iowa, 12 or 18 miles from Nauvoo to send female vic[t]ims to his polygamous births."⁹²

word as I had it from brother G. A. Smith." Lucy Meserve Smith statement, n.d., LDS archives.

87. Diary of Lucy Walker Kimball, 7.

88. Jane Snyder Richards, "Reminiscences," 18.

89. Horne, 10.

90. Joseph Lee Robinson Autobiography and Journal, 24, LDS archives.

91. "A Sketch of the Life of Nancy Naomi Tracy," n.d., 20, USHS.

92. Ebenezer Robinson to Jason W. Briggs, Jan. 28, 1880, LDS archives. On December 29, 1873, Ebenezer and Angeline Robinson signed an affidavit saying that Hyrum Smith had come to their house in the fall of 1843 to teach them the doctrine of polygamy and that he had been wrong to oppose it.

The motif of caution recurs in the stories of early polygamy. When the pregnancy of William Clayton's first plural wife threatened to expose them, the prophet advised Clayton to "just keep her at home and brook it and if they raise trouble about it and bring you before me I will give you an awful scourging and probably cut you off from the church and then I will baptize you and set you ahead as good as ever."⁹³

According to church historian Andrew Jenson, Sarah Ann Whitney became the seventh plural wife of Joseph Smith, and the story of his marriage to her illustrates another strategy. She disguised her relationship to the prophet by pretending to marry Joseph Corodon Kingsbury on April 29, 1843. In his autobiography Kingsbury wrote: "I according to Pres. Joseph Smith & Council & others agreed to stand by Sarah Ann Whitney as though I was supposed to be her husband and [participated in] a pretended marriage for the purpose of . . . Bringing about the purposes of God in these last days . . ." Three weeks later, while in hiding, Joseph Smith wrote a revealing letter which he addressed to her parents, Newel and Elizabeth Whitney, inviting them to bring their daughter to visit him "just back of Brother Hyrums farm." He advised Brother Whitney to "come a little a head and nock [sic] at the south East corner of the house at the window." He assured them, especially Sarah Ann, that "it is the will of God that you should comfort me now." He stressed the need for care "to find out when Emma comes," but "when she is not here, there is the most perfect safty [sic]." The prophet warned them to "burn this letter as soon as you read it" and "keep all locked up in your breasts." In closing he admonished, "I think Emma won't come to night if she dont[,] dont fail to come to night."⁹⁴ In 1845-46, after now-widowed Sarah Ann went to live with Heber C. Kimball, "her husband for time," Kingsbury, married his own plural wives.⁹⁵

Most of Smith's plural wives boarded with other families, whom he visited periodically. His secretary, William Clayton, recorded one such visit to young Almera Johnson on May 16, 1843: "Prest. Joseph and I went to B[enjamin]. F. Johnsons to sleep." Johnson himself later noted that on this visit Smith stayed with Almera "as man and wife" and "occupied the same room and bed with my sister, that the previous month he had occupied with the daughter of the late Bishop Partridge as his wife." Almera Johnson also confirmed her secret marriage to Joseph Smith: "I

93. William Clayton journal, Oct. 19, 1843.

94. Joseph Smith to Newel K. Whitney family, Aug. 18, 1842, photocopy, George Albert Smith papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library. Joseph had recently married Sarah Ann Whitney on July 27, 1842.

95. "History of Joseph Kingsbury, Written by His Own Hand, 1846, 1849, 1850," Stanley Snow Ivins Collection, 15:74-76, USHS.

lived with the prophet Joseph as his wife and he visited me at the home of my brother Benjamin F."⁹⁶

After the destruction of the *Expositor* and the death of their leader, most rank-and-file Mormons did not find out about the doctrine of polygamy until the winter of 1845-46. John D. Lee wrote that "in the Winter of 1845 meetings were held all over the city of Nauvoo" to teach "celestial marriage." He tells a fascinating tale of who married whom, of partner exchanges and trades, and stresses that "plural marriages were not made public. They had to be kept still. A young man did not know when he was talking to a single woman."⁹⁷ Making the same point from a woman's perspective, Eliza Maria Partridge Smith Lyman wrote that "a woman living in polygamy dared not let it be known."⁹⁸ Jane Richards speaks of the winter of 1845-46 as the time when polygamy was first presented to the Mormon community at large: "During the winter and previous to the company starting [February 1846], Mr. Richards took his second wife, Elizabeth McFate [January 31, 1846]. Polygamy was now made known to us for the first time, and while the majority of the church were made acquainted with the doctrine, it was only practically entered into by a few."⁹⁹

The memories of Jane Richards reveal a personal culture of privacy among women. Leonora Cannon Taylor, hearing that Jane Richards's life in polygamy was going "not very well," advised her, "you have too much pride and grit to let any of your domestic trials be known to the world." Mrs. Richards passed on this "code of silence" to a younger woman, telling her that "as long as she had lived in polygamy she had never spoken to any one of her troubles or allowed that she had any trials."¹⁰⁰

NAUVOO POLYGAMY AFTER JOSEPH SMITH'S DEATH

While journals and personal writings tell a complex human story, numbers give depth to the picture. After Joseph Smith's death, the number of plural marriages in Nauvoo began to increase rapidly. In the fall of 1844,

96. HR, 222; letter, Johnson to Gibbs; Joseph F. Smith, Jr., *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1905), 70-71.

97. As an example of dispersing plural wives to pretend monogamy, Lee noted that "as far as Brigham Young was concerned, he had no wives at his house, except his first wife, or the one that he said was his first wife. Many a night have I gone with him, arm in arm, and guarded him while he spent an hour or two with his young brides, then guarded him home" (John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled, or, The Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee*, ed. W. W. Bishop [St. Louis: Byron, Brand, 1877], chap. 14).

98. Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman, 13.

99. Jane Snyder Richards, "Reminiscences," 19.

100. Jane Snyder Richards, "Inner Facts," 17-18.

Brigham Young took ten wives, Heber C. Kimball, nine; Parley P. Pratt, three; William Clayton, Isaac Morley, and George A. Smith each took a pair of wives. Of the fifty-eight plural marriages in 1844, thirty-nine (two-thirds) took place after Joseph Smith died, seven to former wives of the prophet. Many of Smith's wives were married "for time" to other men, such as Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, twenty-four during 1844-46 in Nauvoo. (They continued to be sealed "for eternity" to the dead prophet.)

Plural marriages accelerated in winter 1845-46, after the temple opened on December 10 and it became clear that westward migration would actually take place. Brigham Young urged priesthood-holders to take plural wives during their brief use of the newly-opened temple. Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Samuel Bent, Willard Richards, John Smith, John Bernhisel, Alpheus Cutler, Newel K. Whitney, Amasa Lyman, Joseph Coolidge, Winslow Farr, Peter Hawes, Cornelius Lott, and George A. Smith led the way with a total of 118 wives. By this time Smith's "inner circle" of thirty polygamous husbands had broadened to include over 150 men.

Forty of the 153 Nauvoo polygamous husbands married sisters, six before Joseph Smith's death, twenty after his death in Nauvoo, and the rest after the migration to Utah. Ultimately about one-third of Nauvoo's polygamous families included sister-wives. It was probably easier for a woman to share a husband with a sister than with a stranger. Mormons may also have seen a precedent in the Levirate marriages mandated in the Torah, where a brother had special rights and obligations to father a first-born son for his deceased brother's widow.¹⁰¹

In most sister marriages there were two sibling wives. William Clayton's first plural wife (April 27, 1843), like those of many polygamists, was his legal wife's sister, Margaret Moon. When he asked Joseph Smith in 1843 for permission to marry a third Moon sister, Lydia, Smith replied that he had just received a revelation that forbade a man from taking more than two sisters of a family. Smith then asked Clayton to petition Lydia in his favor to become one of his own plural wives.¹⁰² The marriage data indicates, however, that this proscription against more than two sister-wives was not always heeded.

For whatever reason—to provide for women during the difficult journey, to ensure a growing population in the west, or to fulfill Joseph Smith's new marital doctrine—there were fifty-six Nauvoo polygamous marriages in 1845, and 255 in 1846, primarily in January and February, up to the time when the pioneer camp began to cross the Mississippi River. During this winter of celestial marriages Heber C. Kimball took twenty-

101. James R. Baker, *Women's Rights in Old Testament Times* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 51, 142-43, 147, 151-53.

102. William Clayton journal, Sept. 15, 1843.

four wives; Brigham Young, twenty-one; John Taylor and Samuel Bent, eight; Willard Richards and John Smith, seven; John Bernhisel, Alpheus Cutler, and Newel K. Whitney, six; Amasa Lyman, five; Joseph Coolidge, Winslow Farr, Peter Hawes, Cornelius Lott, and George A. Smith, four; Benjamin Covey, Eli Kelsey, John D. Lee, William Miller, John Pack, William Sagers, William Smith, Guy Wilson, Clark Whitney, and Joseph Young, three each (Sager's and Whitney's marriages each included a legal first wife); John Bair, Rufus Beech, William Blackhurst, Benjamin Brown, John Butler, Simeon Carter, Benjamin Clapp, Frederick Cox, Charles Dana, George Dykes, David Fullmer, Alfred Hadden, Edward Hunter, Joel Johnson, Asahel Lathrop, Joseph Markham, Reuben Miller, Isaac Morley, John Parker, W. W. Phelps, Orson Pratt, Parley Pratt, Charles C. Rich, A. P. Rockwood, Samuel Russell, David Sessions, Abraham Smoot, Erastus Snow, Lorenzo Snow, Allen Weeks, and Thomas Woolsey each took two; and some sixty-seven other husbands added one more wife to their families. By the end of the Nauvoo period in 1846, the 153 polygamous husbands had married 587 women and produced 734 children. About 80 percent of Nauvoo plural marriages occurred after Smith's death.

POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES BY NAUVOO HUSBANDS

<i>Husbands</i>	<i>Total Nauvoo Wives*</i>	<i>Years</i>						
		<i>1841</i>	<i>1842</i>	<i>1843</i>	<i>To June 27, 1844</i>	<i>After June 27, 1844</i>	<i>1845</i>	<i>1846</i>
Smith, Joseph	43	3	15	15	9est.			
Young, Brigham	40	0	1	2	1	10	4	21
Kimball, Heber C.	37	0	1	0	0	9	5	21
Taylor, John	11	0	0	1	1	0	0	8
Bent, Samuel	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Lee, John D.	10	0	0	0	3	1	2	3
Richards, Willard	9	0	0	1	0	0	2	5
Lyman, Amasa	8	0	0	1	0	1	0	5
Smith, George A.	8	0	0	0	0	2	3	2
Smith, John	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Whitney, Newell K.	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Bernhisel, John	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Cutler, Alpheus	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Pratt, Parley P.	7	0	0	1	0	3	2	0
Snow, Lorenzo	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
Clayton, William	5	0	0	1	0	2	1	0
Coolidge, Joseph	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Farr, Winslow	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Hawes, Peter	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4

Lott, Cornelius	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Morley, Isaac	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Pratt, Orson	5	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Rich, Charles C.	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Smith, William	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Turley, Theodore	5	0	1	0	2	1	0	0
Bair, John	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Butler, John	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Covey, Benjamin	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Kelsey, Eli	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Miller, William	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Pack, John	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Smith, Hyrum	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Snow, Erastus	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Wilson, Guy C.	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Young, Joseph	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Beach, Rufus	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Benson, Ezra T.	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Blackhurst, William	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Brown, Benjamin	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cahoon, Reynolds	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Carter, Dominicus	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Carter, Simeon	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Clapp, Benjamin	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Cox, Frederick	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Dana, Charles	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Dykes, George P.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Felshaw, William	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Fullmer, David	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Grover, Thomas	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hadden, Alfred S.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hunter, Edward	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Huntington, Wm. D.	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Hyde, Orson	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Johnson, Aaron	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Johnson, Benj. F.	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Johnson, Joel	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Kingsbury, Jos. C.	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Lathrop, Asahel	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Markham, Stephen	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Miller, Reuben	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Nickerson, Freeman	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Noble, Joseph B.	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Parker, John D.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Phelps, William W.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Rockwood, A. P.	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Russell, Samuel	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

Sagers, William H.	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Scott, John	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Sessions, David	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Smoot, Abraham	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Stout, Hosea	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Weeks, Allen	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Whiting, Edwin	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Whitney, Clark	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Woolley, Edwin	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Woolsey, Thomas	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Young, Lorenzo	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

[76 with 2] 152

Total Wives 587

*(incl. legal marriages)

Over the six years when polygamy was practiced in Nauvoo, 1841 to 1846, Smith, Kimball, and Young were the most-married men in Nauvoo; they accounted, in fact, for 117 of the 434 Nauvoo polygamous marriages, over one-fourth of the marriages by the community of 153 polygamous husbands. After Nauvoo, Young married fifteen more wives and Kimball married eight. At the funeral of his wife, Vilate, Kimball, pointing to the coffin, said: "There lies a woman who has given me forty-four wives."¹⁰³

INCIDENCE OF NAUVOO PLURAL MARRIAGE
SHOWING THE IMPACT OF THE MOST-MARRIED MEN

	Year							
	1841	1842	1843	1844 (to 6/27)	1844 (after 6/27)	1845	1846	Cumulative
Total Nauvoo	3	20	42	19	39	56	255	434
Smith	3	15	15	9	0	0	0	42
Kimball	0	1	0	0	9	5	21	36
Young	0	1	2	1	11	4	20	39
	3(100%)	17(85%)	17(40%)	10(53%)	20(50%)	9(16%)	41(16%)	117(27%)
Total polygamous marriages, less Smith, Kimball, Young:	0	3	25	9	19	47	214	317

Joseph Smith's marriage arrangements had been distinctive. He mar-

103. Orson F. Whitney, *The Life of Heber C. Kimball, an Apostle: the Father and Founder of the British Mission* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), 436n. Whitney affirms that Kimball was the husband of forty-five wives and father of sixty-five children.

ried approximately forty-three women, but his plural wives usually lived apart in separate households or, in the case of working girls in the Smith home, were soon forced by Emma to leave. Emma's opposition to Joseph's plural wives, and perhaps his regard for them as one-time participants in a brief relationship (albeit followed by eternal marriage), may account for this unusual pattern. His followers, on the other hand, tended to marry fewer wives and formed more coherent families. Twenty-one of the thirty polygamous families during Joseph Smith's time contained just two wives, four men had three, John D. Lee, Hyrum Smith, and Theodore Turley had four, and Brigham Young had five wives. As the number of polygamous families increased from thirty to 153 in the later Nauvoo period following Smith's death, so did the number of wives per typical family, from an average of 2.5 (3.8 if Joseph Smith's forty-three wives are included) in the early period when Smith was alive, to 3.1 for the whole Nauvoo period (3.8 including Smith's forty-three, Brigham Young's forty, and Heber C. Kimball's thirty-seven). Ultimately, there were seventy-six Nauvoo families with two wives, forty-two families had three wives; ten families each had four and five wives; twelve families had six-to-eleven wives; and one family each, the cumulative households of Kimball, Young, and Smith, had thirty-seven, forty, and forty-three wives.¹⁰⁴

FREQUENCY OF POLYGAMOUS HOUSEHOLDS BY NUMBER OF MARRIAGES

A. During Joseph Smith's Lifetime

<i>Number of Wives</i>	<i>Polygamous Families</i>	<i>Marriages</i>	<i>Average Wives Per Family</i>
43	1	43	
5	1	5	
4	3	12	
3	4	12	
2	21	42	
Total	30	114	3.8
Excluding Joseph Smith	29	71	2.5

104. An interesting narrative of William Hickman's ten marriages in Nauvoo is contained in Hope A. Hilton, *"Wild Bill" Hickman and the Mormon Frontier* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988).

B. During Entire Nauvoo Period

<i>Number of Wives</i>	<i>Per Poly- gamous Families</i>	<i>Marriages</i>	<i>Average Wives Per Family</i>
43 (Smith)	1	43	
40 (Young)	1	40	
37 (Kimball)	1	37	
11	1	11	
10	2	20	
9	1	9	
8	4	32	
7	3	21	
6	1	6	
5	10	50	
4	10	40	
3	42	126	
2	76	152	
Total	153	587	3.8
Excluding Smith, Young, Kimball:	150	467	3.1

During the years after the westward migration, considering post-Nauvoo children of Nauvoo wives and later wives of these Nauvoo families and their children, the 153 families that began practicing plural marriage in Nauvoo eventually accounted for a total of 971 wives and 2,790 children, a mean incidence of 6.3 wives and 18.2 children per each family. Excluding the large families of Smith, Young, and Kimball, the ultimate size of these Nauvoo families averaged 5.7 wives and 17.8 children per household. After the Nauvoo polygamists reached the Great Salt Lake, the proportion of Nauvoo families that had two wives declined from seventy-six to sixteen; thirty-three families each had three wives; 91 families had from four to ten wives; and one to four families each had eleven to nineteen wives.

NAUVOO POLYGAMOUS FAMILIES

	<i>During Joseph Smith's Life</i>	<i>Total Nauvoo Period</i>	<i>Eventual Nauvoo Families in West</i>
Husbands	30	153	153
Wives	114	587	971
Children	131	734	2,790
Total Persons	275	1,474	3,914

LEGACY OF NAUVOO PLURAL MARRIAGE

These preliminary demographic observations indicate that the practice of plural marriage, which Joseph Smith initiated among thirty families, more than quintupled in total number of participants—husbands, wives, and children—about 10 percent of the Mormon community by the end of the Nauvoo period in 1846. Afterward, these polygamous Nauvoo families nearly tripled in size from the end of the Nauvoo period to the later Salt Lake period. It is clear from these data that Nauvoo provided the model and impetus for the later practice of polygamy in the west. These Nauvoo roots of Mormon polygamy eventually encompassed thousands of people, and the practice expanded in Utah territory to include tens of thousands of men, women, and children, involving over half of the population of some Mormon communities.¹⁰⁵

The discovery and rejection of this relatively unknown doctrine by a vocal minority seems to have been one of the primary factors leading to Joseph Smith's death. One historian concludes: "Joseph Smith's belief in, preaching about and practice of plural marriage must be considered as one of the factors precipitating the martyrdom."¹⁰⁶

Rejection of plural marriage was also one of the elements dividing the church after Smith's death. Until recently the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) never wholly accepted the idea that Smith practiced polygamy. Early RLDS leaders believed that Smith, in the last weeks before his death, told several people that his plural marriage revelation had been a mistake: "We are a ruined people. This doctrine of polygamy, or spiritual wife system, that has been taught and practiced among us, will prove our destruction and overthrow. I have been deceived

105. By 1880, at the end of Brigham Young's era and before federal raids on polygamous households, about 33 percent of Mormons in the St. George stake and 67 percent in Orderville, Utah, lived in polygamous families (Lowell "Ben" Bennion, "The Incidence of Mormon Polygamy in 1880: 'Dixie' Versus Davis Stake," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 [1984]: 27-42). Stanley S. Ivins found that a sample of 1,651 families in Utah produced an average of fifteen children per family. He also found that of 1,784 polygamists, 66 percent married one extra wife, 21 percent married three wives, nearly 7 percent four wives, and 6 percent five or more wives. Applying these ratios to an 1890 census of 2,451 plural families, we arrive at an estimate of 45,416 persons involved in polygamy.

2,451 families	x 66% x 2 =	3,235 wives	2,451 Husbands
	x 21% x 3 =	1,544	6,200 Wives
	x 7% x 4 =	686	36,765 Children
	x 6% x 5 =	735	45,416 Total
	100%	6,200 wives	

See Ivins's "Notes on Mormon Polygamy," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 (Fall 1967): 311, 313-14, 318. Current research into this subject may produce more definitive statistics which are beyond the scope of this essay.

106. Bachman, "Not Lawful to Utter," 45.

... it is wrong; it is a curse to mankind, and we shall have to leave the United States soon, unless it can be put down."¹⁰⁷ After Smith was killed, Brigham Young pushed completion of the Nauvoo temple and accelerated plural marriages, and, indeed, the Mormons were soon compelled to leave the United States for Mexico, which then included the Great Salt Lake Valley. Later, when polygamy was outlawed as a condition for statehood, Mormons who wanted to maintain their polygamous families again had to flee to Mexico (now below the Rio Grande), where remnants of these expatriate colonies still exist. Many polygamists who persisted in their belief in the divine sanction of their practice remained in the United States. Reported to number in the tens of thousands, these "Fundamentalist" Mormons have endured years of government prosecution—and official LDS censure.

What do LDS people today think about polygamy in the early Nauvoo church? Since that period was enshrouded with secrecy and denials, and the practice was not announced until 1852 from a new home in the Great Salt Lake Valley, Nauvoo polygamy has remained a mystery. The prophet's mother concluded that Joseph Smith taught plural marriage but that we have no knowledge that anyone practiced it until the later Salt Lake period under Brigham Young.¹⁰⁸ Not even the relationship between Nauvoo polygamy and the internal Mormon dissent which led to the prophet's arrest and assassination is clearly recognized. Latter-day Saints tend to identify reports of Nauvoo polygamy with anti-Mormon propaganda, which is considered to be based on unfounded rumors of Joseph Smith's illicit marriages. The community of 153 polygamous husbands, 587 plural wives, and 734 children has remained beneath the horizon of perception.

Yet these 153 families, which would themselves grow to include nearly 4,000 people after the westward migration, provided the model for the approximately 50,000 who would eventually be associated with Mormon polygamous families in Utah. Many Latter-day Saints—especially those that have polygamous ancestors—take pride in the faithful men and women who practiced plural marriage long ago. Even though LDS men take just one legal wife today, many devout Mormons still believe in the "principle" and may be sealed to more than one woman for eternity. The Mormon church's present doctrine of celestial marriage—which includes the promise of plural marriage in the afterlife, and the current practice of plural marriage among Fundamentalist Mormons, are the legacies of Joseph Smith's revelation sanctioning Nauvoo polygamy as a "new and everlasting covenant."

107. Recalled by William Marks in a letter to *Zion's Harbinger and Beneemy's Organ*, July 1853. Though the Council of the Twelve rejected it, Marks's account did fit the outcome of plural marriage in Nauvoo.

108. Lucy Mack Smith, preliminary manuscript of biography of Joseph Smith, 1845.

NAUVOO POLYGAMOUS FAMILIES

Wives

Children

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record			Marriage Age		Family Size			Total				
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Up to	Nauvoo		After			
			Birth	Marriage	Sealing	Husband	Wife	6-27-1844	after JS 1844-46	Nauvoo 1846 on					
1 Adams, James	Harriet Adams	*	1	24	1783				2	0	0	0	2	0	
	Roxena Rachel Repshire		1	31	1787	7	11	1843	5	28	1843	2	9	1847	60
2 Allen, Joseph Stewart	Lucy Diantha Morley	3	6	25	1806	9	2	1835	2	4	1846	2	4	1846	29
	Nancy Jane Putnam		10	4	1815	2	4	1846	2	4	1846	2	4	1846	39
	Karon Marie Hansen		2	20	1825	1	28	1854	1	28	1854	4	7	18	47
	Ingebord Kirstine Jespersen		11	5	1835	9	11	1857	9	11	1857	9	11	1857	51
3 Allred, Isaac	Julia Ann Taylor	4	6	28	1813	10	11	1832	1	15	1846	1	15	1846	19
	Mary Polly Henderson		2	9	1815	1	15	1846	1	15	1846	1	15	1846	32
	Emma Dewey		2	18	1823	10	7	1856	10	7	1856	10	7	1856	43
4 Allred, James	Elizabeth Warren	5	4	28	1826	1	22	1786	1	14	1803	1	14	1846	17
	Sarah Ann (Sally) Warren	*	5	6	1786	1	28	1846	1	28	1846	1	28	1846	60
5 Bair, John T.	Lydia Register		11	26	1810	8	20	1829	7	15	1989	7	15	1989	18
	Lucinda Tyler Owen	6	1	10	1812	10	19	1843	1	24	1846	32	31	31	32
	Belinda Owen		4	21	1822	1	27	1846	1	27	1846	35	23	23	35
	Jerusha Ann Richardson		5	15	1818	1	27	1846	1	27	1846	35	27	27	35
	Lucy Ann Cole		9	15	1830	7	1	1852	7	1	1852	41	21	21	41
	Mary Bigelow		10	15	1827	4	8	1856	4	8	1856	45	28	28	45
6 Barlow, Israel	Elizabeth Haven	7	9	13	1806	2	23	1840	1	17	1846	33	28	28	33
	Elizabeth Barton		9	10	1803	1	28	1846	1	28	1846	39	42	42	39
	Lucy Heap		9	24	1836	12	2	1855	12	2	1855	49	19	19	49
	Cordelia M. Dalrymple		10	4	1822	5	27	1865	5	27	1865	58	42	42	58
7 Bateman, Thomas	Mary Street	8	7	17	1808	8	12	1829	1	29	1846	21	19	19	21
	Spouse #2 (md. by H.C.K.)		5	12	1810	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	21

37 Coon, Abraham	Rosilla Milla Carter	2	22	1825	est 1846	2	6	1846	31	20	1	8	1	1	2	7	4	0
	Rebecca Atwood	10	25	1825	est 1846	1	26	1846	31	20								
	Elizabeth Yarbrough	4	3	1810	1829	5	11	1848	18	20								
	Frances Yarbrough	12	23	1808	1846	5	11	1848	35	20								
38 Covey, Benjamin	Mary Elizabeth Wilson	2	19	1827	est 1847	5	11	1848	36	20	1	4	3	0	0	4	4	0
	Sarah Wright Curtis	2	7	1812	2 7 1858	47	46											
	Almira Mack	3	9	1792	10 23 1836	1	21	1846	44	31								
	Diana Cole	4	28	1805	1 21 1846	1	21	1846	53	26								
39 Cox, Frederick Walter	Phoebe Cowles	7	26	1796	1 21 1846	1	21	1846	53	49	1	4	2	2	3	33	6	39
	Elizabeth Skinner	1	1	1805	1 21 1846	1	21	1846	53	41								
	Emeline Sally Whiting	1	20	1812	9 16 1835	1	27	1846	23	18								
	Cordelia Calista Morley	7	23	1817	1 27 1846	34	22		34	22								
40 Cutler, Alpheus	Jemima Losee	9	30	1823	1 27 1846	1	27	1846	34	22	1	11	6	0	0	0	7	11
	Lydia Margery Losee	7	24	1837	10 11 1854	10	13	1866	37	17								
	Mary Ann D. Richardson	2	28	1818	10 11 1854	42	36		42	36								
	Emma Smith Peterson	7	27	1850	10 11 1869	57	19		57	19								
41 Dana, Charles Root	Lois Lathrop	2	29	1784	11 17 1808	3	27	1933	24	20	1	7	2	0	5	17	8	24
	Luana Beebe	9	24	1788	1 14 1846	1	14	1846	61	31								
	Margaret Carr	10	13	1814	e.2 3 1846	2	3	1846	61	74								
	Abigail Carr	10	16	1771	e.2 3 1846	61	65		61	65								
42	Sally Cox	2	26	1794	e.2 3 1846	2	3	1846	61	51	1	7	2	0	5	17	8	24
	Disey Caroline McCall	10	26	1802	e.2 3 1846	2	3	1846	61	43								
	Henrietta Clarinda Miller	11	16	1822	e.2 3 1846	2	3	1846	61	23								
	Margaret Kennedy	11	8	1801	1827	1	23	1846	25	19								
43	Susan Luce Thomas	4	1	1807	1 23 1846	1	23	1846	44	38	1	7	2	0	5	17	8	24
	Emily Waterman	1	1	1808	1 23 1846	1	23	1846	44	38								
	Harriet Elizabeth Gibson	12	15	1826	12 1 1850	1	20	1852	50	19								
	Jane Dorothy Culley	4	4	1831	9 14 1857	9	14	1857	55	26								
44	Mary Ann Cato	1	2	1831	9 14 1857	9	14	1857	55	26	1	7	2	0	5	17	8	24
	Ann Barlow	8	19	1833	9 14 1857	9	14	1857	55	24								
	Elizabeth Culley	11	16	1837	9 14 1857	9	14	1857	55	19								
	Elizabeth Culley	10	11	1835	9 14 1857	9	14	1857	55	21								

63	Hatfield, John	Hannah Garlic	11	29	1819	1845	22	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
		Lucy Clark	7	14	1821	1 15 1846	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
		Lucinda Curtis	3	24	1829	1 15 1846	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6
64	Hawes, Peter	Charlotte Harrington	4	8	1798	est 1824	28	25	0	5	0	0	0	6	5	6
		Betsy Harrington	7	15	1790	est 1846	50	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Mary Quaid	6	2	1806	est 1846	50	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65	Hickman, William Adams	Sarah Morris	11	6	1810	est 1846	50	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Sarah Baldwin Smith	7	9	1794	1 30 1846	50	51	1	7	1	0	8	32	10	39
		Bernetta Burckhardt	8	8	1812	4 12 1832	16	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
66	Higbee, Isaac	Sarah Elizabeth Luce	9	12	1828	1 30 1846	30	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
		Minerva Wade	9	2	1829	5 1 1849	34	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
		Sarah Basford Meacham	10	10	1834	8 18 1850	35	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
67	Holmes, Jonathan Harriman	Hannah Diantha Harr	8	13	1836	9 11 1853	38	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
		Sarah Elizabeth (Virginia) Johnson	1829	3 28 1855	39	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
		Margaret (A Shoshone Indian)	1820	3 28 1855	39	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
68	Hunt, Jefferson	Martha Diana Case	10	8	1823	11 2 1856	41	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
		Mary Lucretia Harr	1835	8 30 1856	41	21	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Mary Jane Hetherington	3	30	1840	6 2 1859	44	19	1	1	1	1	6	4	8	2
69	Hunt, Jefferson	Keziah String	12	23	1797	2 11 1819	21	16	1	1	1	6	4	8	6	10NA
		Charlotte Woods (Carter)	12	25	1802	4 30 1842	44	27	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
		Eliza Darling	5	20	1814	1 14 1846	48	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
70	Hunt, Jefferson	Elizabeth Nelson	2	17	1814	4 2 1856	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Jane Nelson	7	29	1865	7 29 1865	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Elizabeth McClelland	7	29	1865	10 10 1868	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
71	Hunt, Jefferson	Sarah Crosby	10	10	1868	10 10 1868	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Sophia Chlorindan	10	10	1868	10 10 1868	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Margaret String	10	10	1868	8 13 1837	31	17	2	2	0	1	4	3	7	7
72	Hunt, Jefferson	Marietta Carter	4	4	1820	12 1 1842	36	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
		Elvira Annie Cowles	9	21	1816	11 29 1862	56	46	1	10	1	1	0	9	2	20
		Sarah I. Harvey	1	22	1804	12 1 1823	19	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
73	Hunt, Jefferson	Celia Mounce	9	18	1806	2 7 1846	42	18	2	7	1846	2	7	1846	2	7
		Matiida Neas	1	1	1828	2 7 1846	42	18	2	7	1846	2	7	1846	2	7
			1	1	1828	2 7 1846	42	18	2	7	1846	2	7	1846	2	7

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record			Marriage Age		Family Size				Total									
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Nauvoo												
			Birth	Marriage	Sealing	Husband	Wife	Up to 6-27-1844	after JS 1844-46	After Nauvoo 1846 on											
69 Hunter, Edward	Ann Standley Laura Lorina Kaufman Susanna Wann Henrietta Spencer	86	6	22	1793	9	30	1830	1	29	1846	1	2	0	1	11	4	13			
			2	16	1808	12	15	1845	1	29	1846	37	22						2		
			3	23	1827	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	52	18							5	
			2	18	1825	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	52	20							3	
			7	5	1806	est	1856	5	20	1856	62			1	5	1	0	2	2	7	
70 Hunter, Jesse	Keziah Brown Lydia A. Edmonds	87	12	10	1808	12	1827	2	2	1846	21	18						7			
			1	22	1824	2	2	1846	2	2	1846	39	22						0		
			2	28	1818	9	24	1839	1	16	1846	21	20	2	0	1	1	0	6	3	
71 Huntington, [William] Dresser	Caroline Clark Harriet Clark Ann Maginn	88	9	15	1819	2	5	1843	1	16	1846	24	17					7			
			8	2	1825	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	27	21						7		
			6	20	1824	1	29	1846	1	29	1846	27	21						0		
			1	8	1805	9	4	1834	1	11	1846	29	19	3	4	0	1	4	21	7	
72 Hyde, Orson	Nancy Marinda Johnson Martha Rebecca Browett Mary Ann Price Ann Eliza Vickers Julia Reinert Elizabeth Josephine Gallier Sophia Margaret Lyon	89	6	28	1815	7	20	1843	1	11	1846	38	24					10			
			6	22	1819	4	1843	1	11	1846	38	26							0		
			6	5	1816	3	12	1857	3	12	1857	52	16						6		
			1	26	1841	8	29	1863	8	29	1863	58	21						5		
			7	13	1842	1864						58	21							0	
73 Johnson, Aaron	Polly Z. Kelsey Sariah Maria Johnson Jane Scott Mary Ann Johnson Rachel Ford Harriet Fidella Johnson Eunice Lucinda Johnson Margaret Jane Ford Cecilia Elmira Sanford Sarah James Julia Maria Johnson Jemima Davis	90	2	6	1847	10	10	1865	10	10	1865	60	18					5			
			6	22	1806	9	13	1827	1	15	1846	21	18	1	4	2	0	9	45	12	49
			9	14	1808	12	22	1844	1	15	1846	38	20							4	
			5	17	1824	7	12	1845	1	28	1846	39	23							4	
			7	10	1822	5	18	1846	12	28	1847	39	14							6	
			8	3	1831	4	25	1852	4	25	1852	45	16							9	
			11	10	1835	12	16	1852	12	16	1852	46	15							4	
			8	27	1837	6	14	1853	5	30	1856	46	17							4	
			11	2	1835	5	8	1854	5	30	1856	47	23							0	
			4	17	1831	3	1	1857	7	26	1862	50	15							6	
8	22	1841	3	1	1857	3	1	1857	50	19							7				
8	13	1837	3	1	1857	3	1	1857	50	19							5				
9	14	1842	3	1	1857	3	1	1857	50	14							0				
11	4	1794	4	6	1857				50	62							0				

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record			Marriage Age		Family Size				Total						
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Nauvoo		After							
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Up to	after JS	Nauvoo							
Birth	Marriage	Sealing	Husband	Wife	6-27-1844	1844-46	1846 on											
102 Redding, Return Jackson	Laura Louisa Trask		9	26	1817			1	24	1846	0	0	2	0	1	10	3	10
	Martha Marie Hurlbutt	131	3	15	1818				1	24	1846							2NA
	Jane Fidelia Whiting		8	27	1814				1	24	1846							0
	Naomi Eliza Murray		2	29	1824				1	24	1846							0
	Sarah De Armon Pea	132	7	9	1830	2	2	1847	3	24	1975							10
103 Rich, Charles Coulson	Eliza Ann Graves		8	21	1809													51
	Mary Ann Phelps		9	23	1814	2	11	1838	1	15	1846							9
	Sarah Jane Peck		6	3	1811	1	6	1845	1	15	1846							3
	Emeline Grover		8	6	1829	1	6	1845	1	15	1846							10
	Harriet Sargent		9	15	1825	1	15	1846	1	15	1846							10
	Suzanne Stock		7	30	1831	2	2	1846	2	2	1846							8
	Franklin Dewey	133	10	23	1832	3	28	1847	3	28	1847							10
104 Richards, Franklin Dewey	Jane Snyder		4	2	1821	8	27	1865										0
	Elizabeth McFate		1	31	1823	12	18	1842										22
	Sarah Snyder		10	28	1829	1	31	1846	1	23	1846							6
	Charlotte Fox		4	11	1813	10	13	1849	10	13	1849							0
	Susan S. Peirson		3	8	1826	10	13	1849	10	13	1849							2
	Laura Altha Snyder		12	13	1831	6	26	1853	6	26	1853							0
	Nanny Longstroth (Richards)		2	14	1836	3	29	1854	3	29	1854							3
	Rhoda Harriet Foss (Richards)		4	15	1828	3	6	1857										0
	Mary Thompson (Richards)		4	19	1830	3	6	1857										3
	Josephine de la Harpe		10	21	1827	3	6	1857										4
	Ann Davis Dally		3	31	1791	3	6	1857	3	6	1857							4
	Susannah Baylis (Richards)		5	31	1812	3	19	1857	3	19	1857							0
	Levi		4	14	1799	11	6	1857										0
105 Richards, Levi	Sarah Griffith	134	12	26	1802	12	25	1843	1	27	1846							1
	Persis Goodall		3	15	1806	1	27	1846	1	27	1846							1
	Wealthy Dewey	135	11	5	1788	2	24	1818	1	22	1846							0
106 Richards, Phineas Howe	Mary Vail Morse		9	6	1786	2	8	1846										6
	Martha Allen		12	8	1809	2	8	1846										0
	Margaret Phillips		3	15	1803	11	26	1847	11	26	1847							0
			5	26	1800	2	29	1848	2	29	1848							0

107 Richards, Willard	Emily Northrop Ann Emerson Jane McBride	4 24 1822	3 24 1852 2 14 1856 6 22 1871	3 24 1852 3 9 1979 6 22 1871	63 67 82	33	2 2 7 0 5 24 14 26	0 0 0 2 4 1 0 3 2 0 0 0 1 5 8 0 0 35
	Jennetta Richards 136 Sarah Longstroth Amelia Elizabeth Peirson Alice Longstroth Nanny Longstroth Mary Thompson Jane Hall Susannah Lee (Walker) Ann Reed Braddock Susannah Baylis Rhoda Harriet Foss Emma Irene Walker Sarah Edna Hinman Ann Elizabeth Fox	6 24 1804 8 2 1817 2 19 1826 4 16 1825 1 28 1824 4 15 1828 10 21 1827 2 18 1826 5 19 1809 3 5 1794 5 31 1812 4 19 1830 7 28 1854 2 28 1828 2 17 1815	9 24 1838 1 18 1843 12 22 1845 1 25 1846 1 27 1846 1 27 1846 2 6 1846 2 6 1846 12 22 1847 11 30 1851 12 24 1872 6 9 1893	1 22 1846 1 22 1846 1 22 1846 1 25 1846 1 27 1846 1 27 1846 2 6 1846 2 6 1846 12 22 1847 11 30 1851 1 4 1875 6 9 1893	34 38 41 41 41 41 41 41 43 47 68 88	21 16 20 21 17 18 19 36 51 35 21 18 65	2 2 7 0 5 24 14 26	2 2 2 3 2 2 0 0 1 5 8 0 0 4 35
108 Richardson, Ebenezer Clawson	Angeline King Polly Ann Child Phebe W. Child Elizabeth Gilson	8 7 1815 11 25 1813 7 20 1821 1 17 1832 1 24 1843	2 27 1848 2 27 1848 5 14 1848 11 30 1860	17 28 32 26	19 22 16	2 5 0 1 2 29 4 35	12 6 11 6 6 28	
109 Robinson, Joseph Lee	Maria Wood Susan McCord Laurinda Maria Atwood Lydia Foster Mary Taylor Betsy Ann Wood Minerva Wood	2 11 1811 1 5 1806 12 14 1808 5 3 1821 1 9 1831 11 6 1835 est. 1778	7 23 1832 1 31 1846 3 21 1847 2 16 1853 2 2 1867	1 13 1846 1 31 1846 3 21 1847 2 16 1853 9 14 1870 9 14 1870	21 34 36 42 55	26 37 25 22 31	1 4 1 1 5 23 7 28	7 3 8 6 4 0 0 0 0
110 Rockwood, Albert Perry	Nancy Haven Angeline Hodgkins Alvira Wheeler (Teeple) Juliana Sophia Olsen Suzanna Cornwall	6 9 1805 6 13 1805 2 19 1820 11 11 1819 10 14 1841	2 4 1827 1 21 1846 1 21 1846 4 11 1863 1 6 1870	21 40 40 57 64	21 25 26 57 28	1 6 2 0 2 16 5 22	6 6 2 2 8 4	

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record				Marriage Age		Family Size			Total				
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Up to	After	Total					
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	6-27-1844	Nauvoo 1844-46			Nauvoo on			
111 Russell, Samuel Jr.	Frances Maria Stillman Ester Hill Mary Abigail Thorn		9	25	1812	1	20	1846	33	15	0	0	1	3	1	
	Henry Harrison		5	3	1814	1	20	1846	33	24	0	0	4	12	7	
112 Sagers, William	Olive Amanda Wheaton Sarah L. Bailey Harriet Emeline Barney Ruth Adelia Wheaton		12	3	1826	1	22	1846	31	19	0	0	0	0	0	
	Marion Smith		10	13	1830	3	1846	31	15	15	0	0	0	2	2	
	Lucy Marillo Wheaton		9	20	1832	6	1851	36	18	18	0	0	0	4	4	
	France Camelia Adams		4	15	1837	6	5	1858	44	21	0	0	0	6	6	
			1830											0	0	
113 Sanders, Ellis Mendenhall	Rachel Broom Roberts Esther Ann Pierce (Gheen) Mary Hawthorne	141	12	5	1808	11	9	1830	21	23	1	6	1	0	1	2
	Elizabeth Menery		9	10	1815	4	15	1836	24	20	0	0	0	0	0	
114 Scott, John	Mary Pugh Sarah Ann Willis Esther Yeates	142	11	10	1821	3	2	1845	33	23	1	4	2	1	2	33
	Roxey Angeline Keller		2	4	1825	3	24	1846	34	21	0	0	0	0	0	
			4	4	1843	2	18	1860	48	16	0	0	0	0	7	
115 Scovil, Lucius Nelson	Lura Snow Alice Hurst Emma Whaley Elizabeth Turner Jane Hobbs Jane Fales	143 144	3	18	1806	4	11	1868	56	16	1	5	1	5	6	18
	Hannah Maria Marsden		3	11	1807	6	18	1828	22	21	0	0	0	0	9	
	Sarah Elizabeth McArthur		2	18	1819	10	16	1844	38	25	0	0	0	0	9	
			4	12	1823	11	8	1847	41	24	0	0	0	0	0	
			10	6	1826	est	1847	10	8	1847	41	21	21	21	0	0
						9	7	1854	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	
						9	7	1854	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	
			11	22	1839	6	17	1856	50	16	0	0	0	0	7	
116 Sessions, David	Patty Bartlett Harriet Worthing [Wixon] Rosilla Cowen	145 146	2	28	1827	10	28	1857	51	30	1	9	2	0	0	1
			4	4	1790	1	28	1812	21	16	0	0	0	0	3	10
			2	4	1795	est	1846	1	13	1850	55	15	15	15	9	9
			8	14	1830	est	1846	55	15	15	0	0	0	0	1	0

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record			Marriage Age		Family Size			Total	
			Mo Day Year	Mo Day Year	Mo Day Year	Up to 6-27-1844	After JS 1844-46	After Nauvoo 1846 on				
			Birth	Marriage	Sealing	Huband	Wife					
Smith, John	(Cont)											
	Julia Hills		9 26 1783	est 1846	1 15 1846	64	62				0	
	Asenath Hurlbert		8 2 1780	est 1846	1 15 1846	64	65				0	
	Rebecca Smith		4 29 1788	est 1846	1 15 1846	64	57				0	
	122 Smith, Joseph Jr.	*	12 23 1805					43	5	0	0	43
	Emma Hale		7 10 1804	1 18 1827	5 28 1843	21	22				5	
	Louisa Bejaman	156	2 7 1815	4 5 1841	1 14 1846	35	26				0	
	Zina Diantha Huntington (Jacobs)	157	1 31 1821	10 27 1841	2 2 1846	35	20				0	
	Prescinda Lathrop Huntington (Buell)	101	9 7 1810	12 11 1841	2 4 1846	35	31				0	
	Mary Elizabeth Rollins (Lightner)	156	4 9 1818	1 17 1842	1 17 1846	36	23				0	
	Patty Bartlett (Sessions)		2 4 1795	3 9 1842	7 9 1867	36	47				0	
	Nancy Marinda Johnson (Hyde)	89	6 28 1815	4 1842	7 31 1857	36	26				0	
	Eliza Roxcy Snow	156	1 21 1804	6 29 1842	2 3 1846	36	38				0	
	Sarah Ann Whitney	99	3 22 1825	7 27 1842	1 12 1846	36	17				0	
	Martha McBride (Knight)	98	3 17 1805	8 3 1842	1 26 1846	36	37				0	
Elvira Annie Cowles (Holmes)	84	11 23 1813	12 1 1842	2 3 1846	36	29				0		
Delcena Johnson (Sherman)	158	11 19 1807	early 1842		36	34				0		
Desdemona Wadsworth Fullmer	13	10 6 1809	1842	1 26 1846	36	32				0		
Lucinda Pendleton (Morgan, Harris)	107	9 27 1801	1842	1 22 1846	36	40				0		
Elizabeth Davis (Brackenbury, Durfee)	155	3 11 1791	1842	1 22 1846	36	50				0		
Sarah M. Kingsley (Howe, Cleveland)	149	10 20 1788	1842	1 15 1846	36	53				0		
Sarah Bapson		3 27 1793	1842	4 4 1899	36	48				0		
Agnes M. Coolbrith (Smith)	149	7 11 1811	1842		36	31				0		
Sally Ann Fuller		10 24 1815	late 1842	1 29 1846	37	27				0		
Ruth D. Vose (Sayers)		2 26 1808	2 1843	4 4 1899	37	34				0		
Eliza Maria Partridge	113	4 20 1820	3 8 1843	1 13 1846	37	22				0		
Almera Woodard Johnson		10 21 1813	e.4 3 1843	3 21 1879	37	29				0		
Lucy Walker	98	4 30 1826	5 1 1843	1 15 1846	37	17				0		
Emily Dow Partridge	156	2 28 1824	5 11 1843	1 14 1846	37	19				0		
Sarah Lawrence	98	5 13 1826	5 11 1843	1 26 1846	37	16				0		
Maria Lawrence	156	12 18 1823	e.5 1843	1 24 1846	37	19				0		
Helen Mar Kimball	156	8 25 1828	5 1843	2 4 1846	37	14				0		
Rhoda Richards	156	8 8 1784	6 12 1843	1 31 1846	37	58				0		
Flora Ann Woodworth		11 17 1826	spring 1843	4 4 1899	37	16				0		
Melissa Lott	19	1 9 1824	9 20 1843	2 8 1846	37	19				0		

156	Olive Grey Frost	7	24	1816	mid	1843	1	14	1846	37	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hannah Ellis	3	4	1813	mid	1843	4	4	1899	37	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
129	Mary Ann Frost (Pratt)	1	14	1808	mid	1843	2	6	1846	37	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Fanny Young (Murray)	11	8	1787	11	2	1843	4	4	1899	37	55	0	0	0	0	0	0
102	Sylvia Porter Sessions (Lyon)	7	31	1818	1844	1	26	1846	38	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
98	Mary Houston	9	11	1818	1844	2	3	1846	38	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
98	Nancy Maria Winchester	8	10	1828	1844	2	3	1846	38	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
98	Sarah Scott	10	25	1816	by	1844	2	3	1846	38	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
156	Olive Andrews	9	24	1818	by	1844	1	15	1846	38	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jane Tippets	8	27	1804	by	1844	1	27	1846	38	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sophia W. Sanburn	8	25	1795	by	1844	1	27	1846	38	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Phebe Watrous (Woodworth)	10	1	1805	by	1844	1	27	1846	38	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Vienna Jacques	6	10	1787	by	1844	3	28	1858	38	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
123	Smith, William Francis	3	13	1811								0	0	5	3	5	8	5
	Caroline Amanda Grant	2	14	1833						21	16							2
	Mary Jane Rollins	6	22	1845						34	17							NA
159	Mary Ann Sheffield	4	30	1828	by	8	1845			34	17							0
	Priscilla Mogrige									34								0
	Sarah Libbey	5	7	1818						34	26							0
	Hannah Libbey	6	29	1828						34	16							0
	Roxie Ann Grant				5	18	1847			36								2
	Eliza Elise Sanborn				by	1858				46								3
	Rosanna Surprise					1891				79								0
124	Smoot, Abraham Owen	2	17	1815								1	1	2	0	3	24	6
	Margaret T. McMeans	4	16	1809	11	11	1838	1	9	1846	23	29						1
160	Sarah Gibbens	10	20	1800	est	1846	1	9	1846	30	45							0
	Emily Hill Harris			1816	1	18	1846	1	20	1846	30	30						4
	Diana Eldredge	3	28	1837	5	6	1855	5	6	1855	40	18						13
	Anne K. Mauritzen	12	19	1833	2	17	1856	2	17	1856	41	22						7
	Elizabeth Rogers							1	10	1894								0
125	Snow, Erastus	11	9	1818								2	3	2	1	12	33	16
	Artemisia Beman	3	3	1819	12	13	1838	1	23	1846	20	19						12
161	Minerva White	3	22	1822	4	2	1844	4	2	1844	25	22						9
	Achsach Wing	ca		1820	1	30	1846	1	30	1846	27	26						0
	Louisa Wing	ca		1820	1	30	1846	1	30	1846	27	26						0
	Elizabeth Rebecca Ashby	5	17	1831	12	19	1847	12	19	1847	29	16						10
	Julia Josephine Spencer	4	9	1837	4	11	1856	4	11	1856	37	19						6
	Mary Jane Farley	ca		1820	4	14	1866	4	14	1866	47	46						0

Husband	Wives Notes	Dates of Record		Mo Day Year		Mo Day Year		Mo Day Year		Marriage Age		Family Size			Total							
		Mo	Day	Year	Birth	Marriage	Sealing	Husband	Wife	Nauvoo		After Nauvoo 1846 on										
										Up to 6-27-1844	after JS 1844-46											
126 Snow, Erastus	(Cont)																					
	Ann McMenemy	ca	1820	10 15 1867		10 15 1867		48	47						0							
	Ann Hansen	ca	1820	5 9 1870		5 9 1870		51	50						0							
	Anna Beckstrom	4	1 1825	after 1870				52	45						0							
	Margaret Earl	ca	1820	3 28 1877		3 28 1877		58	57						0							
	Rebecca Abigail Farley	ca	1820	6 18 1880		8 12 1977		61	60						0							
	Frances "Fanny" Porter	6	17 1814	2 1 1882		2 1 1882		63	67						0							
	Matilda Wells	ca	1820	11 16 1882		1 20 1979		64	62						0							
	Inger Nielsen	4	29 1827	7 16 1884		7 16 1884		65	57						0							
	Susannah Olmstead	ca	1820	11 14 1890		11 14 1890		72	70						0							
		4	3 1814									1	0	5	0	4	42	10	42			
	127 Snow, Lorenzo	Eleanor Houtz	8	14 1831	1845		6 1 1848		31	14						8						
Mary Adeline Goddard		3	8 1812	1845		1 17 1846		31	33						3							
Hannah Goddard				1845		1845		31							0							
Sarah Ann Prichard		11	29 1826	4 21 1845		1 17 1846		31	18						5							
Charlotte Squires		11	19 1825	1 17 1846		1 17 1846		31	20						2							
Harriet Amelia Squires		9	13 1819	1 17 1846		1 17 1846		31	26						5							
Caroline Horton		12	25 1824	10 9 1853		10 9 1853		39	28						3							
Phoebe Amelia Woodruff		3	4 1842	4 4 1859		4 4 1859		45	17						5							
Sarah E. Minnie Jensen		10	10 1855	6 12 1871		6 12 1871		57	15						5							
Mary Elizabeth Houtz		5	19 1840			3 5 1857									6							
		11	6 1811									1	4	1	1	1	4	3	9			
128 Snow, Willard		Melvina Harvey	12	16 1811	5 17 1837		1 12 1846		25	25						9						
	Susan Harvey	3	12 1808	5 14 1846		1846		34	38						0							
	Mary Bingham (Freeman)	163	4 1 1820	1 16 1849		1 16 1849		37	28						0							
		12	14 1806												1	1	1	1	3	23	5	25
	Hannah Miles			9 21 1832		1 16 1846		25							3	NA						
	Lydia Leavitt	7	4 1823	8 2 1842		1 16 1846		35	19						2							
	Sally Adams	5	29 1825	1 24 1846		1 24 1846		39	20						8							
	Jane Maria Shearer (Wines?)	2	12 1819	10 17 1850		10 17 1850		43	31						5							
	Roxanna Leavitt (Huntsman)	12	15 1818	3 12 1853		3 12 1853		46	34						2							
	Ann Rogers	12	30 1834	3 13 1853		3 13 1853		46	18						8							
		3	14 1802												1	7	1	1	4	5	6	13
	129 Spencer, Orson	Catherine Cannon Curtis	165	3 21 1811	4 13 1830		1 15 1846		28	19						8						
Ann Dibble		8	18 1829	est 1846		1 15 1846		43	16						0							

140 Whitney, Newel Kimball																								
Elizabeth Ann Smith	180	2	5	1795	10	20	1822	8	21	1842	27	21	1	10	7	0	0	4	8	14				
Olive M. Bishop		12	26	1800	9	10	1844	1	26	1846	49	37								11				
Elizabeth Mahala Moore		9	13	1826	1	7	1846	1	7	1846	50	18								0				
Elizabeth Almera Pond		5	2	1827	1	7	1846	1	26	1846	50	18								0				
Abigail A. Pond		7	14	1828	1	7	1846	1	26	1846	50	17								0				
Henrietta Keys	181	12	25	1821	1	26	1846	1	26	1846	50	24								0				
Emmeline B. Woodward		2	29	1828	1	7	1846	1	26	1846	50	17								2				
Ann Houston		5	8	1821	1	7	1846	1	26	1846	50	24								1				
141 Wight, Orange Lysander		11	29	1823									1	0	1	1	13	3	14					
Matilda Carter	182				2	6	1844		1954		20									10				
Sarah Hadfield					est		1845				21									4				
Rosilia Carter																				0				
142 Willey, Jeremiah		11	6	1804									1	2	1	2	4	6	10	NA	NA	9	9	9
Bashabe Stevens					11	28	1827	1	28	1846	23									10				
Hannah Pressey								1	28	1846										10				
Samantha Call	183	11	15	1814	4	28	1839	1	28	1846	34	24								9				
Sarah Ann Ward	184	5	6	1810	e.4	28	1845	1	30	1846	40	34								1				
Electa Parker																				1				
Lucia Irene Call									11	15	1871									0				
Emma Jane Call									11	15	1871									0				
Elvira Burnham									11	15	1871									0				
143 Williams, Alexander		10	10	1803									1	9	1	3	3	9	5	21				
Isabel Gill	185	9	11	1805	9	30	1824	1	31	1846	20	19								12				
Jane Ortry					ca		1845	1	31	1846	41	44								0				
Elizabeth Jane Deck					3	2	1857	3	2	1857	53									9				
Eliza Terrill																				0				
Sarah Ann Dudley																				0				
144 Wilson, Guy Carlton		8	31	1801									1	8	3	0	0	4	8	8				
Mary Eliza Hunter	186	9	26	1803	ca		1857	2	8	1857	53	15								0				
Amelia Granger					2	27	1827	2	27	1953	25	23								8				
Jerusha Granger																				0				
Kate King Granger																				0				
145 Wilson, Lewis Dunbar		6	2	1805									1	7	1	1	2	4	12	11				
Nancy Ann Wagoner	187	7	10	1810	6	11	1830	1	20	1846	25	19								11				
Patsey M. Reynolds					2	3	1846	2	3	1846	40	17								0				
Sarah E. Waldo					12	14	1819	9	29	1851	46	31								1				
Nancy A. Cossett					2	12	1854	4	11	1854	48									0				

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record			Marriage Age		Family Size			Total						
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	Up to	After							
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo	Day	Year	6-27-1844	Nauvoo 1844-46		Nauvoo 1846 on					
146 Wood, Daniel	Mary Snider	188	10	16	1800				1	6	1	0	9	24	11	30	
	Nancy Ann Boice	189	11	25	1803	3	19	1824	1	27	1846					6	
	Fennina S. Cotten		8	12	1808	by	1835		2	6	1846					NA	
	Lydia Ann Gibbs		3	12	1827	1	27	1846	1	27	1846					7	
	Sarah Grace		8	9	1817	7	22	1851	7	22	1851					2	
	Theodosia H. Parrish		6	6	1815	1	14	1852	1	14	1852					1	
	Emma M. Ellis		3	25	1808-10				1	4	1853					0	
	Margaret Morris		7	12	1824	11	22	1853	11	22	1853					6	
	Elizabeth Hundy		9	11	1839	3	3	1857	3	3	1857					8	
	Clara A. M. Roydberg		4	16	1810	5	24	1859	5	24	1859					0	
	Maria Anning		6	2	1828				12	14	1868					0	
			12	1	1787											0	
	147 Woodruff, Wilford	Phoebe W. Carter	190	3	1	1807	4	13	1837	11	11	1843				1	35
		Mary Ann Jackson	191-2	3	8	1807	4	15	1846	4	15	1846					9
Mary Caroline Barton		192	2	18	1818	8	2	1846	39							1	
Sarah Elinore Brown			9	6	1803	3	28	1852	39							0	
Mary Meek Giles (Webster)			11	20	1834	8	2	1846	45	48						0	
Clarissa Hardy			1	1	1834	3	28	1852	45	17						0	
Sarah E. Brown		192	11	20	1834	1852			45	17						0	
Emma Smoot Smith			1	1	1834	3	13	1853	46	19						0	
Sarah Delight Stocking			3	1	1838	3	13	1853	46	15						8	
Eudora Lovina Young			6	26	1838	7	31	1857	50	19						9	
Lucy Bigelow Young			5	12	1852	3	10	1877	70	24						0	
						3	10	1877	70	24						0	
						1877										0	
148 Woolley, Edwin Dilworth		Mary Wickersham	193	6	28	1807	3	24	1831	2	6	1846				3	26
	Louisa C. Gordon	194	11	4	1808	3	24	1831	2	6	1846					8	
	Ellen Wilding	195	2	28	1820	1843			35	22						1	
	Mary Ann Olpin		4	8	1820	12	28	1843	36	23						5	
	Betsy Ann F. Jackman		3	8	1824	11	10	1850	43	25						11	
	Elizabeth Ann J. Marshall		10	7	1815	2	11	1857	49	41						1	
			ca	1768	2	11	1857	49	89							0	
			11	3	1805	4	29	1829	23	16						7	
	Mary Burrell	196	4	11	1813	1	28	1846	40	16						13	
	Elizabeth Ann Holdaway		3	4	1829	1	28	1846	40	16						11	
		7	7	1829	1	28	1846	40	16						0		
					1	28	1846	40	16						0		

Husband	Wives	Notes	Dates of Record				Marriage Age		Family Size			Total			
			Mo Day Year		Mo Day Year		Husband	Wife	Up to 6-27-1844	Nauvoo after JS 1844-46	After Nauvoo 1846 on				
			Mo	Day	Year	Mo							Day	Year	
Young, Brigham	Cynthia Porter		2	2	1783	1	28	1846	1	28	1846	44	62	0	
	Mary Eliza Nelson (Green)	204	11	24	1812	1	31	1846	1	31	1846	44	33	0	
	Rhoda Richards (Smith)	156	8	8	1784	1	31	1846	1	31	1846	44	61	0	
	Maria Lawrence (Smith)	156	12	18	1823	1	24	1846	1	24	1846	44	22	0	
	Zina D. Huntington (Jacobs, Smith)	157	1	31	1821	2	2	1846	2	2	1846	44	25	1	
	Amy Cecilia Cooper		6	30	1804	2	3	1846	2	3	1846	44	41	0	
	Mary Ellen de la Montague		5	2	1803	2	3	1846	2	3	1846	44	42	0	
	Julia Foster (Hampton)	204	10	11	1811	2	3	1846	2	3	1846	44	34	0	
	Abigail Harback		9	20	1790	2	3	1846	2	3	1846	44	55	0	
	Mary Ann Turley		7	13	1827	2	3	1846	2	3	1846	44	18	0	
	Nancy Cressy (Walker)	204	1	20	1780	2	6	1846	2	6	1846	44	66	0	
	Jane Terry		10	8	1819	2	10	1847	2	10	1847	45	28	0	
	Lucy Bigelow		10	3	1830	3	20	1847	3	20	1847	45	16	3	
	Mary Jane Bigelow		10	15	1827	3	20	1847	3	20	1847	45	19	0	
	Sarah Malin		1	10	1804	4	18	1847	4	18	1847	45	43	0	
	Eliza Burgess		1827	10	3	1852	5	1	25	5	1	25	51	25	0
	Mary Oldfield		1793	12	16	1852	6	10	1855	6	10	1855	51	59	0
	Eliza Babcock		10	8	1828	before 1853				5	1	24	51	24	0
	Catherine Reese		1	27	1804	6	10	1855	6	10	1855	54	51	0	
	Harriet Emeline Barney (Sagers)		10	13	1830	3	14	1856	3	14	1856	54	25	1	
Harriet Amelia Folsom		8	23	1838	1	24	1863	5	3	1986	61	24	0		
Mary Van Cott		2	2	1844	1	8	1868	1	8	1868	66	23	1		
Ann Eliza Webb		9	13	1844	4	6	1868	4	6	1868	66	23	0		
Elizabeth Jones		9	13	1844	4	6	1868	4	6	1868	66	23	0		
Lydia Farnsworth		2	5	1808	5	8	1870	5	8	1870	68	62	0		
Hannah Tapfield		2	5	1807	12	8	1872	12	8	1872	71	65	0		
152 Young, Joseph			4	7	1797				1	5	3	2	2	6	13
Jane Adeline Bicknell	205	8	14	1814	2	18	1834	2	18	1834	36	19	11		
Lucinda Allen		6	2	1824	1	16	1846	1	16	1846	48	21	0		
Lydia Caroline Hagar (Fleming)	206	10	13	1817	1	16	1846	1	16	1846	48	28	0		
Mary Ann Huntley (Burnham)	207	3	14	1816	2	6	1846	2	6	1846	48	29	2		
Elizabeth Stevens		11	28	1866							69	29	0		
Sarah Jane Snow		10	30	1838	4	7	1868	4	7	1868	71	29	0		

153 Young, Lorenzo Dow	10	19	1807	6	26	1826	4	7	1904	18	20	2	9	1	3	5	13	8	25
Persis Goodall	3	15	1806	6	26	1826	4	7	1904	18	20								11
Harriet Page Wheeler	9	7	1803	3	9	1843	1	26	1846	35	39								2
Susan Ann Ashby	2	1	1830	1	26	1846	1	26	1846	38	15								0
Electa Jane Lee				11	22	1855	11	22	1855	48									0
Ida Hannah Hewitt	6	11	1839	4	29	1856	4	29	1856	48	16								5
Eleanor Jones	11	16	1830	11	24	1856	11	24	1856	49	26								4
Christiana Nelson				9	13	1862	9	13	1862	54									0
Johanna Larsen	8	24	1843	4	18	1863	4	18	1863	55	19								3
Total												223	599	364	135	384	2056	971	2790

NOTES

- * = Member of inner circle of thirty Nauvoo polygamists during Joseph Smith's lifetime.
- NA = Marriage not concurrent with later marriages; wife and children not applied to polygamous totals.
1. Death date (DD) of Aug. 21, 1864, overlaps date of following marriage, confirming that the marriages were polygamous.
 2. Proxy marriage for prior husband named Higbee.
 3. Childbirth record (CR) 1836-61 overlaps date of following marriage, confirming that the marriages were polygamous.
 4. CR 1833-57.
 5. DD Apr. 23, 1879.
 6. CR 1844-59.
 7. CR 1841-54.
 8. CR 1830-49 overlaps sealing date of following spouse.
 9. CR 1836-57.
 10. CR 1847.
 11. DD Nov. 28, 1846.
 12. CR up to 1851.
 13. Marriage for time; Benson proxy for Joseph Smith.
 14. Bent proxy for Kilburn.
 15. DD Mar. 29, 1884.
 16. Bent proxy for John Hollister.
 17. Bent proxy for Hyrum Smith.
 18. DD 1865.
 19. Marriage for time; Bernhisel proxy for Joseph Smith.
 20. Daughter of preceding wife.
 21. CR 1835-48.
 22. CR 1832-49.
 23. DD Jun. 5, 1846.
 24. Marriage for time; Blackhurst proxy for John Stephenson.
 25. Family journal indicates that death date was after 1847.
 26. CR 1831-56.
 27. DD Jan. 1, 1879.
 28. CR 1843-49; Jones proxy for the two previous wives.
 29. CR 1846.
 30. CR 1839-59.
 31. CR 1831-54; DD Aug. 4, 1875.
 32. DD Jan. 27, 1880.
 33. DD 1900.
 34. DD Nov. 20, 1867.
 35. CR 1843-50.
 36. CR 1837-61; DD Oct. 6, 1867.
 37. Cahoon proxy for James Casson.
 38. CR 1835-46; died in Winter Quarters.
 39. Sealed again Nov. 20, 1849, in Salt Lake; DD Oct. 25, 1872.
 40. CR 1840-65.
 41. Listed in 1850 census as part of the family.
 42. CR 1843-66.

43. DD Dec. 10, 1866.
44. DD 1874.
45. CR 1837-57.
46. CR 1835-56; DD 1913.
47. CR 1830-49.
48. CR 1837-43; DD 1886.
49. CR 1836-63.
50. Marriage for time; to Joseph Smith for eternity.
51. Present at temple ceremonies recorded in Dec. 1845-Jan. 1846 (William Clayton).
52. DD 1850.
53. Marriage for time; Dana proxy for Nathaniel Thomas.
54. DD Jan. 10, 1881.
55. DD Feb. 25, 1888.
56. An Eliz. Allred, 40, and a William Edwards, 40, were present in the 1850 census.
57. CR 1840-61.
58. DD Mar. 10, 1893.
59. CR 1827-51.
60. CR 1837-51.
61. DD Jul. 5, 1886.
62. CR 1839-50.
63. CR 1823-48.
64. CR 1833-61.
65. CR 1838-56.
66. CR 1838-61.
67. DD Feb. 9, 1891.
68. CR 1825-Apr. 1846; DD Sep. 19, 1846.
69. CR 1841-46.
70. DD 1847.
71. CR Feb. 1847-69.
72. CR Mar. 1847-71.
73. DD Jan. 16, 1847.
74. DD Dec. 30, 1885.
75. DD 1857.
76. CR 1847-53.
77. Records indicate a Nauvoo marriage preceded by an endowment on Dec. 29, 1845.
78. Her later remarriage to Douglas David confirms that she was alive at the time of her 1846 sealing to Hatfield.
79. Marriage for time; Hawes proxy for Joshua Smith.
80. CR 1833-47; DD Dec. 27, 1886.
81. CR 1843-51; marriage for time; Higbee proxy for Gideon Carter.
82. Proxy for first wife, Keziah String.
83. DD 1853.
84. CR with Holmes 1845-56; same marriage date with Joseph Smith; sealed to Smith.
85. DD 1889.
86. Listed in the 1850 census.
87. CR 1832-43 plus two later children; died in Los Angeles.
88. Washing and anointing ceremony performed on Dec. 20, 1845; listed in the 1850 census.
89. CR with Hyde 1835-58, during which she married Joseph Smith.
90. CR 1847-63.
91. CR 1842-60; DD 1860.
92. Proxy for first wife, Anna Pixley.
93. CR 1838-60.
94. Received endowments on Jan. 24, 1846.
95. CR 1823-50.
96. CR 1842/3-49/50.
97. Marriage to Heber Kimball for time; proxy for Hyrum Smith.
98. Married Heber Kimball for time; proxy for Joseph Smith.
99. Married Joseph Smith, Joseph Kingsbury, then Heber Kimball for time; proxy for Smith.
100. Marriage for time; Kimball proxy for F. G. Williams.
101. Married Norman Buell, Joseph Smith, and Heber Kimball for time; proxy for Smith.
102. Married Windsor P. Lyon, Joseph Smith, Heber Kimball (for time, proxy for Smith), and later to Ezekiel Clark.
103. Proxy for first wife, Caroline Whitney.
104. Jane and Hannah Peacock received washing and anointing ceremonies respectively on December 19 and 18, 1845.
105. CR 1834-57; DD Jun. 4, 1866.
106. CR 1824-48.
107. Orson Pratt's mother; DD May 20, 1849.
108. Marriage for time; Lott proxy for Joseph Smith.
109. Marriage for time; Lott proxy for Joseph Knight.
110. CR 1838-61.
111. CR 1827-50.
112. CR 1836-57.
113. Marriage for time; Lyman proxy for Joseph Smith.
114. Marriage for time; Markham proxy for Oman Houghton.
115. CR 1818-46.
116. CR 1828-48.
117. CR 1837-56.

118. Marriage for time; Miller proxy for Hyrum Smith.
119. Proxy for first wife, Elizabeth Scott.
120. CR 1844-60.
121. DD Jan. 3, 1848.
122. Marriage for time; Murray proxy for A. Cravath.
123. Received washing and anointing Dec. 15, 1845; DD Mar. 22, 1860.
124. CR 1835-49.
125. CR 1834-60.
126. CR 1847-71.
127. DD Jan. 2, 1874.
128. Estimate of marriage dates based on women's ages; their receipt of endowments on Feb. 2 and Jan. 23, 1846, respectively; and their sealing dates.
129. CR 1837-58.
130. CR 1838-44; DD Aug. 24, 1891. Also married Joseph Smith in 1843 and was sealed to him with Pratt listed as proxy husband on Feb. 6, 1846. LDS archives record Mary Ann Frost's four children in connection to both of her spouses, Pratt and Smith. Fawn Brodie suggests that the fourth child, Moroni Llewellyn Pratt, born Dec. 7, 1844, might have been Smith's son (Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* [New York: Knopf, 1945], 461).
131. DD Mar. 15, 1848; proxy for first wife, Laura Trask.
132. CR 1839-59.
133. CR 1843-59.
134. DD Jun. 7, 1892.
135. DD Oct. 18, 1853.
136. DD Jul. 9, 1845.
137. CR 1834-56.
138. CR 1833-49.
139. DD Jan. 13, 1876.
140. Marriage for time after husband was killed in a Nauvoo temple construction mishap.
141. CR 1832-65.
142. CR 1837-59.
143. DD Jan. 27, 1846.
144. Proxy marriage for first wife, Lura Snow.
145. DD 1892 in Bountiful, Utah, formerly Sessions's Settlement, named after her husband.
146. Associated with the Sessions family by 1846, as per Patty Bartlett Sessions's journal.
147. CR 1833-46.
148. CR 1842-47.
149. Former wife of Don Carlos Smith, Joseph Smith's deceased brother, married Joseph Smith for time, then George A. Smith, proxy for Don Carlos.
150. Marriage for time; Smith proxy for Mark Bigler.
151. DD Sep. 21, 1852. See n171.
152. With John Taylor as proxy, sealed to Hyrum Smith Jan. 30, 1846.
153. DD Feb. 14, 1854.
154. Marriage for time; John Smith proxy for Silas Smith.
155. Marriage for time; John Smith proxy for Joseph Smith.
156. Married Brigham Young for time, proxy for Joseph Smith.
157. Married her first husband, Henry Bailey Jacobs, earlier that year on Mar. 7, 1841, and was pregnant with her first child when she married Joseph Smith that fall. Zina married Brigham Young on Feb. 2, 1846 when he was pregnant with her second child by Jacobs.
158. On Jan. 24, 1846, Delcena married for time Almon W. Babbit, proxy for Lyman L. Sherman.
159. Rollins left Smith August 1845.
160. DD 1884.
161. CR 1841-63.
162. CR 1838-52.
163. Marriage for time; Snow proxy for Elijah Freeman.
164. CR up to 1846.
165. DD Mar. 12, 1846 on trail toward Winter Quarters.
166. CR 1834-53.
167. CR 1841-52; proxy marriage for first wife, Samantha Peck.
168. Present in 1850 census.
169. Proxy marriages for first wives, Esther and Polly Knight.
170. DD Dec. 9, 1868.
171. Marriage for time; Taylor proxy for Robert Thompson.
172. CR 1822-Sep. 1842.
173. CR Oct. 20, 1842 to 1850.
174. CR 1845-47.
175. CR Jul. 12, 1845 to 1855.
176. CR 1845-55.
177. CR 1836-44; present in 1850 census.
178. CR 1842-54.
179. CR 1834-53.
180. CR 1823-47.
181. Marriage for time; Newell Whitney proxy for Alonzo W. Whitney.

182. CR 1844-66.
183. CR 1840-59.
184. Married a Mr. Sanders in 1848; DD 1886.
185. CR 1825-51.
186. Wilson died Sep. 7, 1846; Granger wives likely during the Nauvoo period. CR 1831-51; DD Jul 19, 1851.
188. CR 1826-47; DD Oct. 7, 1873.
189. DD Jun 4, 1835.
190. CR 1838-53; DD Nov. 10, 1885.
191. See Woodruff journal, May 1, Aug. 2, 1846; DD 1876.
192. Noted in Woodruff journal, Aug. 26, 1846 as "members of my family." Woodruff did not record in his journals his unhappy marriages in 1846 to Mary Ann Jackson, Caroline Barton, and Sarah Elinor Brown.
193. CR 1831-54.
194. CR 1845.
195. CR 1847-58.
196. CR 1831-58.
197. CR 1831-48, plus one child.
198. Marriage for time; Yearsley proxy for William Cauliflesh.
199. CR 1834-44.
200. Sealed by Joseph Smith; sealed again Jan. 14, 1846.
201. Marriage for time; Young proxy for Twiss.
202. Mother of Brigham Young's first wife, Miriam Works.
203. Mother of Brigham Young's second wife, Mary Ann Angell.
204. Marriage for time.
205. CR 1834-56.
206. Marriage for time; Young proxy for Isaac Fleming.
207. Marriage for time; Young proxy for James L. Burnham.
208. CR 1827-45.

Personality and Motivation in Utah Historiography

Gary Topping

BEGINNING IN THE 1930S UTAH HISTORIOGRAPHY began to grow rapidly in sophistication. Although the causes of that maturation have yet to be studied closely, it seems clear that federal relief programs for writers under the Works Progress Administration (WPA)—particularly the Historical Records Survey and the Federal Writers' Project—which provided a new generation of historians with an immense body of previously inaccessible source material and paid them to use it in writing history, was one of the primary causes. Juanita Brooks, who organized and led the vigorous project of collecting original historical material in southern Utah, and Dale L. Morgan, who worked his way up through the Writers' Project, were two of the most notable beneficiaries of the federal programs.¹

They were joined by others unaffiliated with the WPA and whose motives for writing history were diverse but who shared a similar historiographical orientation. Charles Kelly, a printer whose avocational interest in western trails and outlaws and whose ferocious antireligious bias conspired to keep him in Utah (because Mormons made convenient targets for his blasts), began researching and publishing Utah history in the late

1. The major works of Brooks and Morgan include Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1950); John D. Lee: *Pioneer Builder—Zealot—Scapegoat* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1961); *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee*, 2 vols. (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1955); *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964); and Dale L. Morgan, *The Great Salt Lake* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947); *The Humboldt: Highroad of the West* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943); *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1953); and his posthumously published fragmentary history of the Mormons, John Phillip Walker, ed., *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986).

1920s. Two less prolific members of the group were Stanley Ivins, in his day the most profound student of Mormon polygamy, and Roderic Korns, whose passionate interest in historic trails across Utah would be brought to posthumous publication by Morgan.²

Peripheral to this group, though working with various members of it with varying degrees of closeness, were Bernard DeVoto, Fawn Brodie, and Wallace Stegner. Though each of these three wrote books of importance to Utah, local history never contained them to the degree it did the others, and all made their greatest mark outside of Utah and in other fields than Utah history.

One of the factors uniting these historians was their lack of formal, academic training in history; none of them held so much as a bachelor's degree in the field. In fact, the only graduate degrees in the entire group were those held by Brooks, with a master's, and Stegner, with a Ph.D.—both in English. In time, though, the trend toward historiographical maturity spread into the academy as young scholars, primarily Mormons and to a considerable degree, no doubt, inspired by the critical and scientific spirit of those named above, began leaving Utah to gain Ph.D.s and return to teach in the state. This group included such scholars as David E. Miller, LeRoy R. Hafen, Brigham D. Madsen, Everett L. Cooley, A. Russell Mortensen, and Leonard J. Arrington.

As this process of maturation spread into academia, its historiographical unity became less tight, though its roots in the work of the original group were still discernible. The historiographical orientation of that group was generally toward a strong preference for the scientific, critical use of original sources over the received wisdom of Mormon church-sponsored secondary accounts. Their work also tended to be closely confined to concerns of chronology and geography—in short, to a narration of surface events. The history of ideas, of literature, and even of religion in its theological and philosophical content, and of the psychology of personality and motivation did not loom large in their conception of history.

The books written by this group have achieved the status of standard literature in Utah history; they are the foundation upon which subsequent literature has built. To a large degree they defined what the important topics in Utah history were and showed the proper way to deal with those topics. They established a tradition within which, for better or for worse, subsequent Utah history has been written. Finally, as Charles S. Peterson

2. The major works of this trio are Charles Kelly, *Salt Desert Trails* (Salt Lake City: Western Printing Co., 1930); *The Outlaw Trail* (Salt Lake City: Western Printing Co., 1938); Stanley S. Ivins, "Notes on Mormon Polygamy," *Western Humanities Review* 10 (Summer 1956): 229-39; and J. Roderic Korns, "West from Fort Bridger," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 19 (1951).

has pointed out, they broadened Utah and Mormon history by relating their materials to regional and national themes.³

Yet for all the work accomplished in that tradition, its narrow focus on chronological and geographical narrative has sometimes blinded its authors to rich potential in their sources and has even at times masked egregious interpretive biases. There are many instances of this problem, but three examples from the works of Dale Morgan, Juanita Brooks, and David E. Miller demonstrate, by comparison of the original sources to what the historian did with them, that the scholar's preoccupation with the chronological and geographical surfaces of historical reality has led to imperfect exploitation of the sources.

THE ENIGMATIC TRAPPER

The career of the mountain man Jedediah Strong Smith has attracted several historians, but few have ventured beyond an account of the external facts of his life. While one may regret in each instance the lack of probing into Smith's psychology, for the materials to support such a probing are rich, the disappointment is greatest in the case of Dale Morgan, whose reconstruction of Smith's life is otherwise the most complete.

Maurice S. Sullivan, to whom history is indebted for discovery and publication of the diaries of Jedediah Strong Smith and for the first full biography of that mountain man, paints an engaging literary picture of Smith's winter camp on the Wind River in 1829-30.⁴ Among the details in his description, two are significant. The first is a detail of omission, for unlike most of his colleagues in the fur trade, Smith was never known to take up with an Indian woman in the winter, and upon that and other personal idiosyncracies hang much of Smith's character. The other is the presence of a half dozen baby beavers wandering around the camp, one of which wore a red collar and was Smith's special pet. Their presence in the camp of one whose explorations had accounted for the destruction of many thousands of their species is unusual enough, but in this case they are important as symbols, for Smith's life was taking an abrupt change of course. He was leaving the mountains the following summer and planned to take the little beavers east to remind him, presumably, of the source of the considerable wealth he had won in the mountains.

Perhaps those symbols of his past, his future, and his atypical nature

3. Charles S. Peterson, "Beyond the Problems of Exceptionalist History," in Thomas G. Alexander, ed., *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited: Contemporary Perspectives* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1991), 142.

4. Maurice S. Sullivan, *Jedediah Smith: Trader and Trail Breaker* (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1936), 1-3; 198-200.

were not lost upon him, for he was clearly in a reflective mood regarding each of those matters. To take advantage of the fact that William Sublette was leaving for the East on Christmas Day and could deliver letters for him, Smith wrote several: one was a lengthy report to William Clark of his recent explorations and tribulations at the hands of Indians, one was to his parents, and one was to his brother Ralph.⁵ Perhaps the lengthy recitation of his record in the mountains helped trigger his reflections on its meaning, for the two family letters attempt to reveal an inner Jedediah Smith—his character, his motives, his attitudes toward civilization, and the civilized obligations of a free-ranging trapper. Together with another letter to his brother the next year, they offer the potential of almost the only sustained look into the inner life of one of the most enigmatic personalities in the history of the fur trade. Instead, historians who have tried to deal with Smith's personality have found that they only deepened the enigma, and so scholars have largely failed to resolve the puzzle of that unusual man.

The character of the typical mountain man has become one of the stereotypes of western history: the hard-living, hard-playing fatalist who wrested a perilous livelihood from icy mountain streams under frequent risk of Indian attack only to blow it all in a week of riotous release at the annual rendezvous and return for the fall hunt with a newly mortgaged outfit. The mystery of Jedediah Smith is that he excelled at the mountain man's virtues while exhibiting none of his vices. His deep Methodist faith kept him from drinking, smoking, swearing, and consorting with women. If the licentious life held no lure for him, then, what was it that sustained him through the three greatest Indian massacres in the history of the trade, near death on a waterless crossing of the Great Salt Lake Desert, and untold other risks and privations? Men have endured that much for money, but Smith never hints that material gain was an end in itself.

Instead, his letters are filled with religious regrets and remorse, and the desire soon to quit the mountains to take up once again a life of regular religious observance. "I feell the need of the wa[t]ch & care of a Christian Church," he wrote to his parents, "—you may well Suppose that our Society is of the Roug[h]est kind, Men of good morals seldom enter into business of this kind—I hope you will remember me before a Throne of grace." And to his brother, "As it respects my Spiritual welfare, I hardly durst speak[.] I find myself one of the most ungrateful; unthankful, Creatures imaginable[.] Oh when Shall I be under the care of a Christian Church? I have need of your Prayers. I wish our Society to bear me up before a Throne of Grace." Finally, after informing his brother that "Providence has made me Steward of a Small pittance" (it was in fact a rather

5. The text of these letters is conveniently available in Appendix B of Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*, 350-60.

considerable fortune), Smith gives instructions for dispensing that money for the benefit of his family and Dr. Titus Gordon Vespasian Simons, his old teacher. Then Smith offers the following explanation for his tribulations as a mountain man:

It is, that I may be able to help those who stand in need, that I face every danger—it is for this, that I traverse the Mountains covered with eternal Snow—it is for this that I pass over the Sandy Plains, in heat of summer, thirsting for water, and am well pleased if I can find a shade, instead of water, where I may cool my overheated body—it is for this that I go for days without eating, & am pretty well satisfied if I can gather a few roots, a few Snails, or, much better satisfied if we can affo[r]d our selves a piece of Horse Flesh, or a fine Roasted Dog, and, most of all, it is for this, that I deprive myself of the privilege of Society & the satisfaction of the Converse of My Friends!⁶

What to make of all this? There is much in it, to be sure, to tempt the psychohistorian: the man driven by religious guilt, courting privation, suffering, and perhaps even death to expiate some unspecified sin. But for any biographer, seeking the marrow of the man, these passages are frustratingly oblique, yet arresting in their frankness and passion, and one would think the literature of the fur trade would be laden—if not overladen—with ventured analyses of this enigmatic trapper.

As a matter of fact, no scholar to date, including Dale Morgan, author of the most complete biography of Smith, has attempted to penetrate much beyond the surface of the man. In Morgan's *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*, the subtitle is the tail that wags the dog, for he is much more interested in plotting, as it were, every last hoofprint of Smith's horses in exploring the American West than he is in probing for the reasons that drew—or drove—Smith there in the first place. With few exceptions, the

6. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith*, 350-53. Smith's narrative of his 1826-27 journey to California also offers interesting evidence of his psychology and motives that include no religious element. Instead, his statement near the beginning of that account focuses on a spirit of adventure and exhibits even a touch of egotism. Unfortunately, that narrative was not discovered until after the appearance of Morgan's biography. "In taking charge of our S[outh] western Expedition," Smith wrote, "I followed the bent of my strong inclination to visit this unexplored country and unfold those hidden resources of wealth and bring to light those wonders which I readily imagined a country so extensive might contain. I must confess that I had at that time a full share of that ambition (and perhaps foolish ambition) which is common in a greater or less degree to all the active world. I wa[nted] to be the first to view a country on which the eyes of a white man had never gazed and to follow the course of rivers that run through a new land." George R. Brooks, ed., *The Southwest Expedition of Jedediah S. Smith: His Personal Account of the Journey to California, 1826-1827* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1977); rpt. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 36-37.

book is the story of movement through space and time, with only the most perfunctory account of ideas, personality, and motivation.

After quoting quite fully, for example, the letters excerpted above, Morgan ventures a scant two paragraphs of general observations and speculations about Smith's personality, without ever really explicating the passages themselves and wrestling with what they might indicate about the man and his motives. "There was a sternness and austerity to his life," Morgan observes flatly, citing as evidence Smith's lack of interest in women, liquor, and tobacco, and his cleanliness in body and speech. "He may have been entirely humorless," Morgan continues, but adds that there was honesty, directness, and openness that won him friends in spite of it. Finally, Smith had courage and survival skills, but those were commonplace in that place and time, and Smith stood apart by adding to those qualities a high level of intelligence that, Morgan observes, "has never been commonplace, in the West or anywhere."⁷ And with that, Morgan is back in the next paragraph to his narration of Smith's travels.

In fairness to Morgan, one must note that he is not the only student of Jedediah Smith to fail to rise to the bait of Smith's introspective passages. The poet John G. Neihardt, for example, regards Smith's religious faith as simply a source of comfort in tribulation:

There'd be a freshness in his face and eyes
When he came striding from a spell of straying
Off trail somewhere. I know now he'd been praying.
You'd swear he knew a spring along the way,
And kept it for himself! . . .⁸

Without denying the comforting power of prayer, one might find it even more compelling to place Smith in the company of the great saints throughout history, for whom faith was as much a driving, even a tormenting, force as it was a comfort.

Maurice S. Sullivan quotes extensively from Smith's letters as well, but fails to venture even a sentimental explanation of them as Neihardt offers. He even compounds the sin by listing the books found in Smith's possession after his death and speculating that Smith may have read them in the evenings to illiterate companions—as we know literate trappers often did—but fails to analyze the values contained in them that may have shaped Smith's personality and character.⁹

7. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*, 312-13.

8. John G. Neihardt, "The Song of Jed Smith," in *The Mountain Men* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1961); rprnt. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 31.

9. Sullivan, *Jedediah Smith: Trader and Trail Breaker*, 200-202.

Only Harrison Clifford Dale, among the major students of Smith's life, makes even a tentative effort to probe beneath the surface and sentimental aspects of Smith's religion. "His letters," Dale observes, "express his spiritual longings and the crushing sense of his own sin and unworthiness. . . . The same sense of unregeneration and of unsatisfied groping after spiritual justification" in the environment of western New York during Smith's youth that led another Smith—Joseph—to establish the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹⁰

Morgan's *Jedediah Smith* is an acknowledged classic of western history and biography. Its careful narrative of Smith's travels and measured assessment of his place in the history of the fur trade and western exploration are, given the sources available to Morgan at the time, definitive. But in another sense it is a curiously shallow book, for Morgan chose to lavish his formidable analytical talents on geography rather than on psychology, and one lays down the book with a sense of emptiness, a feeling that one has encountered action, but not the actor.

THE CONVERSION OF A ZEALOT

Stylistic sophistication was a hallmark of all of the historians considered here, but one of the most dramatic passages in their works is Juanita Brooks's account of the conversion of John D. Lee that appears at the outset of her biography of him. Sitting beside the corpse of his two-year-old daughter, Lee in his emotional distress resumes reading the Book of Mormon, which he had begun during her illness. He is engrossed by the book and reads all night, but his emotion reaches its apex when he comes upon the passage in the book of Moroni, chapter 10, that enjoins readers to ask God sincerely for confirmation of the truth of what they have read. The words on the page appear to Lee to have a "lifted, bold, three-dimensional look," and he drops to his knees to follow their injunction. It is a moment of blinding revelation: "Suddenly he was filled with a joy that was a mixture of exhilaration and peace. He knew! Beyond all shadow of a doubt, he knew!" It is important to note that Brooks emphasizes the irrationality of the experience: "Other men might dissect this book, argue as to its geography, search it for evidences of fraud, compare it with contemporary

10. Harrison Clifford Dale, *The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific, 1822-1829* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1918), 300. Novelist Don Berry, in his popular history of the fur trade, states but does not develop the thesis of Smith's religion as a torment instead of a comfort: "Smith was a haunted man; his letters to his family constantly reiterate his tremendous feelings of guilt in religious matters" (*A Majority of Scoundrels* [New York: Ballantine Books, 1971], 74).

publications, but Lee brushed all these aside. For him, there was but one answer. The book was true!"¹¹

It was obviously the crucial experience in Lee's life. Brooks says his wife was also converted when he told her the next morning what had happened, and they immediately began planning to move to be with the Saints. All the drama and tragedy of the rest of his life are contained in that moment: his membership in the Danites and the Council of Fifty, the westward migration of the church, the arduous colonization of southern Utah, the Mountain Meadows massacre, Lee's Ferry, the arrest, trial, and execution. What forces and events brought him to this crisis? One need not be much of a sociologist or psychologist—or historian, for that matter—to know that such episodes, unforeseen though they may be, always have their antecedents.

Having captured the reader's attention with that dramatic opening, Brooks then flashes back to Lee's birth in 1812 to fill in the more mundane details that brought him to the conversion crisis. It is a pathetic story of orphanage, child abuse, and physical and emotional hardship through which Lee was able to persevere only by a capacity for hard work assisted by a "proud, perverse streak in his nature" that enabled him to keep external circumstance from getting the best of him. His pride and perversity alienated him from a fiancée who unwisely demanded that he give up a gambling habit as a condition of their marriage. Lee intended to give up the habit anyway, but he required that the initiative come from himself rather than from anyone else. Marriage to another came in time, as did three children and a certain modest prosperity as a farmer.

So much for the external facts of his first twenty-six years and something on the development of his personality. Brooks's sketch of Lee's religious background is much more brief; in fact, it is virtually nonexistent. Religion entered Lee's life, by her account, only the previous fall when he had met a Mormon missionary named King. Elder King lodged with the Lees for a time, but Lee forbade him to preach within his hearing. Lee was nevertheless impressed with King's sincerity and character, and his curiosity was piqued by the unusual hostility Mormon preaching provoked in members of other churches. In time, Lee's friend Levi Stewart, whose wife had become a Mormon though he himself was yet holding out, gave Lee the copy of the Book of Mormon that, with little apparent peripheral support, effected his conversion the night of his daughter's death.

Brooks's sketch of Lee's early life is a masterpiece of the kind of persistent search through fugitive local sources—family histories, genealogies, local public records—that is the hallmark of her best work and made

11. Brooks, *John Doyle Lee*, 17-18.

available to her insights that eluded less diligent scholars. But those insights rarely penetrated very far beneath the surface, so that when she faced the necessity of explaining a psychological and spiritual revolution in a man's life, she found herself out of her depth.

Her response to that dilemma was to retreat to stereotype. Her account of Lee's conversion presents it as an almost completely adventitious event of the kind dear to missionary mythology: the gospel as presented in the Mormon scriptures is so true and so compelling that any reasonable person encountering it will be converted. External agencies of persuasion, the subject's background and psychology—all are scarcely even secondary in importance to the blinding truth of the gospel.

Furthermore, Brooks's retreat to stereotype in the face of her lack of confidence in dealing with psychological and spiritual themes forced her to ignore potentially fruitful material in her sources and even to falsify facts that did not fit the stereotype. Admittedly, if the sources for the external facts of Lee's early life are fugitive and meager, the sources for his interior development are even more scanty. And they are tainted as well: the only significant primary source we have is Lee's own *Mormonism Unveiled*, the autobiography written while awaiting his execution for his role in the Mountain Meadows massacre. The title betrays its bias. Written in the full fury of his wrath over his betrayal by his church, prompted in its creation by anti-Mormon zealots who sought to use Lee as a tool for discrediting Mormonism, and forced to draw upon memories staled by a half century or more of elapsed time, it is anything but the type of source the historian would like to have. Nevertheless, it contains the seeds from which a somewhat more accurate and psychologically persuasive account of Lee's conversion could have grown rather than the one Brooks presents.

In the first place, Brooks mentions no religious affiliation in Lee's youth, but in fact there was a strong background in Roman Catholicism. "My father and mother were both Catholics," Lee relates, "were raised in that faith; I was christened in that Church. William Morrison and Louise Phillips stood as my representative god-father and god-mother. It is from that Church record that I could alone obtain the facts and date that referred to my birth."¹² Lee gives no account of the extent of his participation in the Catholic church, but he does indicate that one Catholic teaching, at least, became deeply rooted in his personal values: "My life was one of misery and wretchedness; and if it had not been for my strong religious convictions, I certainly would have committed suicide, to have escaped from the miserable condition I was in. I then believed, as I do still, that for the crime

12. John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled* . . . (St. Louis: M. E. Mason, 1891), 37.

of suicide there was no forgiveness in this world, or that which is to come."¹³ Somewhere along the line, Lee abandoned whatever formal belief and participation he had ever given to the Catholic church, with the exception of a sort of residual, though creedless, Christianity. On the eve of his conversion to Mormonism, he says, "I was not a member of any church, and considered the religion of the day as merely the opinions of men who preached for hire and worldly gain. I believed in God and in Christ, but I did not see any denomination that taught the apostolic doctrine as set forth in the New Testament."¹⁴

Lee's conversion, then, grew not from the religious void Brooks seems to think existed in Lee's mind, but rather from one religion that had grown cold and amorphous to another that seemed to fill a religious hunger that had developed in him. And that religious hunger began to gnaw at him a good while before the crisis of his daughter's death. The fires of revivalism burned brightly on the Illinois frontier, and Lee's large house was often both lodging and pulpit for traveling preachers of a variety of persuasions. Brooks's story of Lee's initial coldness toward the Mormon missionary, Elder King, is in fact the exact opposite of Lee's own account, which says that he not only allowed King to speak, but actually invited him to do so one evening following a Methodist sermon, and was so impressed that he ceased allowing any other preachers to speak there.¹⁵

If Lee's conversion had none of the abruptness of Brooks's account, neither did it have the cataclysmic emotional content she describes. In fact, in a place and time when cataclysmic emotional conversions were quite common, Lee's conversion seems to stand out by its very deliberateness and rationality. "I reflected," Lee said, "I determined, as every honest man should do, to fairly investigate his [King's] doctrines, and to do so with a prayerful heart. The more I studied the question, the more interested I became." So great was the rationality of Lee's approach to conversion to Mormonism that he rejected an opportunity to attend a Mormon meeting where speaking in tongues and other divine signs would be proof of the truth of Mormonism. "I want no signs," Lee told his companions. "I believe the gospel they preach on principle and reason, not upon signs—its consistency is all I ask. All I want are natural, logical and reasonable arguments, to make up my mind from."¹⁶

By the night of his daughter's death, the crisis on which Brooks hangs his entire conversion, Lee's conversion was already nearly complete. He indicates that he had by then "left off [his] frivolity and commenced to live

13. *Ibid.*, 38-39.

14. *Ibid.*, 51.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, 54.

a more moral life,¹⁷ and whatever remained to be done that night seems to have been little more than a reading for himself of the Book of Mormon, the source from which King had been drawing his doctrines, and confirming that they were indeed what Lee wanted to believe. "The night she lay a corpse," he says, "I finished reading the Book of Mormon. I never closed my eyes in sleep from the time I commenced until I finished the book. I read it after asking God to give me knowledge to know if it was genuine and of Divine authority."¹⁸ There are, in Lee's account, no words standing out on the page; there is no specific mention of the passage from Moroni on which Brooks hangs so much, only a general prayer for enlightenment that one would expect from an inquirer into any religion, and that before he had even reached the book of Moroni. There is no dropping to the knees, no emotional exclamations. Instead, there is the matter-of-fact statement that "by careful examination I found that it was in strict accord with the Bible and the gospel therein contained."¹⁹

One would like to be able to defend Brooks's account of Lee's conversion on grounds of literary license. Her literary instinct is sound, for Lee's conversion was indisputably the decisive event of his life, even more so than the Mountain Meadows Massacre, for it was the fierce nature of his conversion to Mormonism that led to the massacre. But I suggest instead that her alteration of factual materials and her invention of others, whatever its scholarly ethics, deprived her of the opportunity to construct an accurate and persuasive picture of the personality that perpetrated the greatest tragedy in Mormon history. If it is true, as the Catholic writer Thomas Merton has said, that the Nazis were able to effect atrocities on such a hellish scale not because they were insane, but rather because they were so ruthlessly consistent in their sanity,²⁰ then perhaps something similar could be said about personality characteristics of John D. Lee first revealed in his conversion narrative. On the eve of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, the Paiutes applied the nickname "Yawgetts" (crybaby) to Lee for the way he wept as he pled for the lives of the emigrants.²¹ That the man had a tender, emotional side is well attested by family and friends who often benefitted from his kindness. But once the plan was set and the orders given at the Mountain Meadows, it was not Yawgetts who prevailed, but the man of unshrinking commitment to cold, hard reason.

17. *Ibid.*, 52.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. Thomas Merton, "A Devout Meditation in Memory of Adolf Eichmann," in *Raids on the Unspeakable* (New York: New Directions, 1966), 45-52.

21. Brooks, *John Doyle Lee*, 210-11.

THE UNSAINTLY SAINT

The subtitle of David E. Miller's *Hole-in-the-Rock: An Epic in the Colonization of the American West* contains the earliest indication of the author's attitude toward his subject. If one misses the message there, the dedication to the Hole-in-the-Rockers themselves, "whose valiant efforts brought American culture to one of the remotest regions of the United States," makes it even more explicit. Finally, in the preface, Miller states in almost the most naked terms possible his admiration for those pioneers:

In all the annals of the West, replete with examples of courage, tenacity and ingenuity, there is no better example of the indomitable pioneer spirit than that of the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition of the San Juan Mission. No pioneer company ever built a wagon road through wilder, rougher, more inhospitable country, still one of the least-known regions in America. None ever demonstrated more courage, faith, and devotion to a cause than this group of approximately two hundred fifty men, women, and children

... They proved that virtually nothing was impossible for a zealous band of pioneers. The story of the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition is an excellent case-study of the highest type of pioneer endeavor that broke the wilderness and brought civilization to the West.²²

In the face of this genuflecting admiration, then, what is one to make of the direct contradiction on the next page, where Miller says that his "sole objective in this study is to present a true and unbiased narrative of this outstanding pioneer venture"?²³ The sentence itself contains the contradiction: if one believes the venture was "outstanding," how can one claim to be presenting a "true and unbiased narrative" of it? Miller believed in scholarly objectivity, yet at the same time objectivity had its limits. What was his conception of the relationship of the historian to his or her material, and what kind of history did that relationship produce?

Well before Miller began his research on the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition (or "The San Juan Mission," its official title), the episode had already become enshrined in the Mormon mind along with such events as the Haun's Mill massacre, the handcart journeys, and the sea gulls and the crickets, as one of the fundamental historical myths that defined Mormon identity.²⁴ Each of those myths had its message, and the message of this

22. David E. Miller, *Hole-in-the-Rock: An Epic in the Colonization of the American West* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1959), ix.

23. Miller, *Hole-in-the-Rock*, x.

24. I use the term "myth" in two different ways: to indicate "an intellectual construction that fuses concept and emotion into an image," without regard to empirical truth of that image; and to indicate a historical untruth. The context should make the meaning clear. The first usage was defined by Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The*

one was that dogged obedience to counsel can work miracles. Those who had persevered through the Hole-in-the-Rock tribulations were accorded a status, at least in southeastern Utah, analogous to that of a *Mayflower* descendant in Massachusetts. As the Hole-in-the-Rock legend grew, fact became encrusted with myth while descendants vied for position in the Hole-in-the-Rock hierarchy. Who drove the first wagon through the Hole? Whose wagon was it? Even the identity of the members of the expedition became clouded as latecomers struggled for a place in the pantheon.

History, then, for Miller meant something similar to what it meant for Morgan and Brooks: establishment of a simple factual record. Accordingly, one of the fundamental results of his research appears in Appendix I, where he presents his arduously compiled list of the members of the mission. Miller's research is impressive. Very few diaries and other primary sources were publicly available when he began his work, and even official church records had not been carefully studied. Miller gained the confidence of Hole-in-the-Rock descendants who had such materials, which he published for the most part in their entirety as appendices. And Miller always regarded his field work as his methodological hallmark; there was no part of the route from Escalante to Bluff that did not bear several sets of Miller's footprints.

To an observer less enchanted than Miller with Hole-in-the-Rock hagiography, his preoccupation with simple factual narrative punctuated by adulatory flights regarding personality and motive results in an unsatisfying product. For one thing, to a skeptic who knows something of the geography and subsequent history of that country, the San Juan pioneers can easily appear as obstinate dupes to a misguided scheme that should reasonably have been abandoned. Two much better routes from southwestern to southeastern Utah, one of them scouted by the Hole-in-the-Rockers themselves, were already known, and two more better ones—Hall's Crossing and the "Dandy Crossing" at Hite—were discovered shortly after 1880. One easily reaches the conclusion that a little less urgency, a little less eagerness to suffer for the church, and a little better scouting would have rendered the Hole-in-the-Rock tribulations unnecessary.

Miller's bias, moreover, blinded him to material in his sources that could have led to a much more realistic assessment of individual personalities and motives than the pious stereotypes he gives us. One wishes in Miller, as in Morgan and Brooks, for a little deeper probing, a little less satisfaction with surface narrative, and a little more sensitivity to individual uniqueness.

There is, for instance, good evidence that some of the Hole-in-the-

Rockers fell short of the saintly image of Miller's stereotype. The figure of Amasa Barton, who comes to light a few times in the history of San Juan County, forces Miller into tortured interpretations of his sources in order to keep Barton among the faithful.

Barton first appears in the record at the Cheese Camp where, with Parley Butt, James Dunton, and another unnamed partner, he quarreled with the rest of the party over the large herd of horses the four were driving to the San Juan to trade with the Indians. The horses were eating most of the already meager grass that the jaded wagon teams needed. It was a serious conflict, for those with wagons were ready to spill blood if necessary to ensure their safe passage. The Cheese Camp crisis was only the culmination of friction that had infected the expedition from the beginning. Miller ignores perhaps the most fundamental source of the friction: the divergent goals of Barton and his partners from those of the rest of the company. Barton, a single man with no family and, as time would show, no love for farming, was motivated by simple capitalistic gain rather than the noble goal of establishing an agricultural outpost of Zion.

Mediation by Platte D. Lyman, *de facto* leader of the mission, averted disaster by getting Barton's group to move on speedily with their horses, thus leaving behind enough feed for the other animals. Miller quotes Charles Redd to the effect that "many in the company were bitterly sorry when a compromise was made. . . . Some of the party never quite forgot this incident, and never quite forgave the men." But he pulls his punch by observing that it was amazing that more such conflicts did not develop, considering the stress the party was under and "the fact that the emigrants got along so well together under the trying circumstances demonstrates that high-caliber citizens composed the body of the company."²⁵

Even after being sent on ahead, Barton continued to haunt the main party. Lyman's diary a week later, as the pioneers were building the road off Grey Mesa, reports that "the constable of Escalante and 2 other men came into camp looking for stolen stock went ahead to see some stock that had been taken on a few days ago." Two days later, "the constable and party returned today having found 2 stolen horses in the herd of Jim Dunton & Amasa Barton." Once again Miller finds a favorable interpretation for the event: "This does not say that Dunton and Barton had stolen the horses in question. It is very likely that the animals had strayed into the herds of the expedition as the latter passed through the Escalante region. The fact that no arrests were made would tend to indicate that no man was actually accused of stealing."²⁶

25. Miller, *Hole-in-the-Rock*, 127.

26. *Ibid.*, 167, 177-78n78.

Perhaps. But there were already hard feelings between the Hole-in-the-Rockers and the people of Escalante from the past fall, when the latter had charged exorbitant prices for supplies, and one has to wonder if Barton and his partners were not simply giving themselves a rebate, thinking they would be taking the horses a long ways over rough terrain and selling them quickly, perhaps before they were missed in Escalante or could be recovered. And the constable, facing four horse thieves with only two deputies to back him up in a very remote spot, might well have decided that two stolen horses were not worth the danger of trying to make arrests and considered himself lucky just to get the horses back. Charles Redd told Miller that Barton already had a reputation as something of a rough customer: "Amasa was a big, husky, somewhat belligerent young man and thought that he could take care of himself in any company. Both he and Parley [Butt] were somewhat stiff-necked."²⁷ The truth, of course, cannot be known from the scanty available evidence, but the point is that Miller does not seem to grasp the darker potential of his sources.

Barton reappears in San Juan County history one last time. After the establishment of Bluff, Barton's wanderlust chafed under the stability required in Mormon colonies, which asked that the community stay together and each member either farm or ply his trade in town. For a time he worked as a cowboy for the big non-Mormon LC outfit, but he reappeared in the San Juan settlement to marry Parthenia Hyde, schoolteacher daughter of pioneer William Hyde. Perhaps remembering the profits he and his partners had made in horse deals with Indians, Barton went back into the trading business with his new father-in-law at Montezuma Creek. The treacherous San Juan River rose, though, and wiped them out. Hoping still to continue as a trader, Barton and his wife built another trading post a few miles downriver from Bluff near the foot of San Juan Hill.

The belligerence and obstinacy Charles Redd reported in Barton's character were the wrong personality for an Indian trader, who needed to be firm but reasonable, and brought him to a tragic end. Miller wrote a version of the story as a feature article for the *Salt Lake Tribune*.²⁸ According to him, Barton and two Navajos got into a dispute about the amount owed on pawned jewelry belonging to one of the Indians' wives. The Indian tried to cheat Barton by refusing to pay the amount previously agreed and offered instead a broken pistol in payment. The argument became violent, and Barton attempted to throw out the Indians. One of them got a rope around him and tried to shoot him with a pistol in the other hand, but

27. Charles Redd to David E. Miller, 27 Dec. 1954, Miller Papers, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

28. Miller, "Murder at the Rincon," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 Mar. 1958.

Barton's struggles threw off his aim and he instead shot his companion. Eventually, though, he killed Barton and fled.

Miller's account of the shooting is accurate, but his version of the source of the conflict is completely wrong. Historian Charles Kelly, who knew the true story from Barton's widow who was present at the murders, protested to Miller, and Miller had to admit that other people who had first-hand knowledge of the incident had also objected, and he agreed that "I just didn't check carefully enough."²⁹

The true story was told by Gladwell "Toney" Richardson, a Navajo trader turned writer and a friend of Kelly. Never one to let facts interfere with a good story, Richardson nevertheless determined in this case that truth was better than fiction. Writing as "Maurice Kildare," he took the material Kelly had gotten from Barton's widow and told the true story in *Frontier Times*.³⁰ According to this version, the altercation involved no unredeemed pawn. Instead, a young Navajo boy had been stealing small amounts of wool from Barton by inserting a stick with a frayed end between the cracks in the log walls of Barton's wareroom and twisting the wool around it. When Barton discovered him, he beat the boy almost to death. The boy barely made it back across the river, but two of his relatives returned for revenge.

Miller's research on Barton's murder, as one might expect, was impressive: in his letter to Kelly he listed several sources presumably unknown even to Kelly. The problem was that he wanted so badly to be able to believe that Barton had at least met an honorable death that he consulted only sources that would support that end. And he ignored other sources that offered other views of Barton. Charles Redd, for example, warned Miller that "It was at one time said in Bluff that Amasa Barton would never have lost his life at the hands of the Navajos if he would have obeyed counsel [thus remaining with the rest of the community at Bluff]."³¹

Morgan, Brooks, and Miller, then, tended to focus on creating an accurate factual narrative of events to the neglect of history's less tangible elements such as ideas, psychology, and personality. By default, those elements are simply ignored and eventually governed by unconscious biases that coexist incongruously with the otherwise sophisticated level of

29. Charles Kelly to Miller, 31 Mar. 1958; Miller to Kelly, 30 Apr. 1958, Miller Papers.

30. Maurice Kildare (Gladwell Richardson), "Murder at Rincon," *Frontier Times*, May, 1971, 26ff. The "rincon" is an abandoned meander of the San Juan River near the trading post which was used to identify its location. The Charles Kelly file in the Richardson Papers at Northern Arizona University contains a page of notes on Barton sent by Kelly and concluding with the suggestion, "I think you can expand this to make a good yarn."

31. Redd to Miller, 27 Dec. 1954, Miller Papers.

their work. It would be tempting to ascribe these tendencies glibly, in the case of Morgan and Brooks, at least, to their lack of academic training in history that might have sufficiently broadened their focus to include such elements as psychology and personality. But that thesis will not work in Miller's case, and in the case of Morgan and Brooks, we might well recall that Melchizedek was not a Levite, and they succeeded so embarrassingly well at other aspects of the historian's craft that one suspects they had the capability of teaching themselves this one as well. There were certainly plenty of models available to them in the field of psychohistory, for example (though that is only one possible method of dealing with personality in history), including Fawn Brodie's provocative though controversial biography of Joseph Smith.³²

A better explanation seems to be that they were imprisoned in the historiographical tradition they created. So long had factual accuracy been submerged in Utah historiography by faith-promoting legends that they considered it a daunting enough task merely to establish what those facts were, while letting the less tangible aspects of personality and motivation take care of themselves. In the light of the magnitude of their achievement within the scope they set for themselves, it is an easy enough shortcoming to forgive. Those who wish to continue to build on that tradition, though, will have to lift their eyes to a broader historiographical vista.

32. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945). Some of the leading works in this field are surveyed by David Hackett Fisher, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 188-89; and Peter Loewenberg, "Psychohistory," in Michael Kammen, ed., *The Past Before Us* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 408-32.



Intellect and Faith: The Controversy Over Revisionist Mormon History

Clara V. Dobay

THE STORY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST of Latter-day Saints provides invaluable insights into the birth of a new religious tradition in a nineteenth-century American setting. Among other things the Mormon experience affords an opportunity to probe social and intellectual cross-currents of the Jacksonian era. Anti-Mormonism holds clues to mass paranoid behavior, while the careers of Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet who was assassinated in 1844, and Brigham Young, the apostle who planted the new church in the American West, provide intriguing subjects for the study of charismatic leaders.

Literature on Mormonism also affords insights into the inherent tension between intellect and faith. Is it possible for scholars to report religious events within a naturalistic framework without casting doubt on the credibility of spiritual experiences? Can historians investigate their own church's past objectively without jeopardizing faith? To what extent do secular accounts of religious events pose problems for fundamentalist believers? Can religious communities accommodate a variety of historical interpretations without sacrificing a basic consensus vital for unity? In short, must honest intellectual study of a religion's past be compromised because of faith? Must faith necessarily be harmed by scholarly research? Emergence of revisionist Mormon histories after 1960 and introspection of scholars who engaged in research on their church, along with the reception their publications received from co-religionists, provide an opportunity to explore such questions.

The history of the Latter-day Saints has always posed formidable problems for objective scholarship. Most literature on Mormonism in the nineteenth century reflected bitter conflicts both among the Saints and with

their neighbors during the careers of founding prophets Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Non-Mormon authors generally divided into anti-Mormons who hated and feared Smith's movement and more neutral observers who wished to explain it. These two groups, along with Mormon writers intent on defending their faith, provided the major divisions of literature on the Latter-day Saints until about the mid-twentieth century.¹

Significant works by such authors as Fawn M. Brodie, Dale L. Morgan, Juanita Brooks, Leonard J. Arrington, and Thomas F. O'Dea between 1940 and 1960 prepared the way for a transformation in historical literature on Mormonism. By 1970 historiographers began referring to a new Mormon history. No sharp line separated old Mormon history and new. Historian Robert Flanders considered Brodie's 1945 biography of the Mormon prophet, *No Man Knows My History*, a "landmark" which indicated a change in direction. According to Flanders, Brodie's "transitional" work influenced all subsequent scholarship on early Mormonism. James B. Allen, former Assistant Church Historian of the LDS church, cited Juanita Brooks's 1950 revisionist treatment of the Mountain Meadows Massacre as a "symbolic turning point" of the new historiography. Non-LDS historian Moses Rischin of the University of Uppsala in Sweden believed Thomas O'Dea's 1957 *The Mormons* set the new era in motion, while Mormon historian Thomas G. Alexander considered Arrington's 1959 economic history of the Saints, *Great Basin Kingdom*, "probably the single most significant bellweather of the new Mormon history."²

The efforts of Brodie and Brooks in Mormon history exemplify patterns which characterized subsequent work in the field. Although the two women diverged dramatically in their personal relationship with the Latter-day Saint church, Brodie having abandoned the religion of her youth, while Brooks remained a faithful Mormon who continued writing in Utah during a long, productive life, the two authors shared a number of experiences common to many historians who came after them. Both Brodie

1. My interest in Mormon history began with graduate research on minority-majority conflicts during the Jacksonian era. Though a non-Mormon, I share with readers of *Dialogue* an interest in Mormonism cultivated through extensive research in both LDS history and historiography.

2. Robert Bruce Flanders, "Some Reflections on the New Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 9 (Spring 1974): 35; Moses Rischin, "The New Mormon History," *American West* 6 (Apr. 1969): 49; James B. Allen, "Since 1950: Creators and Creations of Mormon History," in Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, eds., *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 411; Thomas G. Alexander, "Toward The New Mormon History: An Examination of the Literature on the Latter-day Saints in the Far West," in Michael P. Malone, ed., *Historians and the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 354.

and Brooks experienced difficulties with church authorities over access to archival sources; both labored under the burden of anticipated disapproval of their work within the Mormon community; both brought an insider's advantage to their study having been reared in Mormon families; both employed research skills honed from university studies outside Utah; and both provided revisionist interpretations on topics of great sensitivity within the Latter-day Saint community.³

Of all transitional works usually mentioned as bridges between the old Mormon history and new, Brodie's naturalistic study of Joseph Smith by raising questions regarding the prophet's credibility and the religious context of his work touched the rawest nerve in Mormon historiography. While several authors broke new ground, Brodie's book by opening a veritable Pandora's box of controversies regarding the origins of Mormonism inspired much vigor and passion in historical writing during the past four decades. Negative reaction to Brodie's biography by church officials which culminated in her excommunication in 1946, along with efforts of Mormon scholars to deal honestly with questions she raised, contributed much to shaping subsequent struggles between faith and intellect in Mormon historiography.

The "new Mormon history" produced in university graduate schools after 1960 has been distinguished by attempts to achieve scholarly detachment, use of professional methods of research, and concentration on secular themes of broad sociological significance. During the last few decades a coterie of specialists has explored such questions as the relationship between Mormonism and its parent American culture, the processes which forged the Saints into a separate people, whether the new religion sprang from a frontier or more sophisticated environment, of Puritan or other roots, whether it evolved toward democratic or authoritarian ends.

The appearance of Robert Bruce Flander's 1965 book on Nauvoo, Illinois, and Klaus Hansen's 1967 publication, *Quest for Empire*, heralded continuation of a more liberated Mormon history. A native of Independence, Missouri, and member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Flanders evaluated Joseph Smith's secular leadership and explored various implications the Nauvoo era held for both the Missouri and Utah branches of Mormonism. A Canadian of Mormon

3. Brodie recalled her Mormon roots and experiences connected with her biography of Joseph Smith in an interview conducted by Shirley E. Stephenson, Nov. 1975, excerpts of which appeared in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Summer 1981): 99-116. For Brooks's Mormon connections, see Levi S. Peterson, *Juanita Brooks: Mormon, Woman Historian* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988). Also valuable for both Brodie's and Brooks's odysseys with Mormon history is John Phillip Walker, ed., *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism: Correspondence and a New History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986).

parentage, Hansen probed such political ideals of the early church as the Kingdom of God concept and the role played by the secret Council of Fifty.

Both authors brought independent attitudes to their work. Neither flinched from controversial issues. Flanders criticized Smith's economic policies, cast doubts on his motives as Nauvoo's chief real estate speculator, and pointed out inconsistencies between the prophet's revelations and actions.⁴ Hansen characterized Mormon political ideals as a kind of religious imperialism and portrayed the early church as elitist, undemocratic, and authoritarian.⁵ Their realistic portrayal of the Mormon prophet as an ambitious, fallible leader contributed to a de-mythologizing of the Mormon past.

Flanders, Hansen, and other scholars who wished to free Mormon history from polemical and didactic excesses found encouragement from the organization in 1965 of the Mormon History Association and the founding the next year of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Both independent of LDS church control, these vehicles, along with the establishment in 1975 of the Sunstone foundation, provided scholars new avenues for the exchange of opinion. The availability of *Dialogue*, *Journal of Mormon History*, *Sunstone*, Sunstone symposiums, along with *Brigham Young University Studies* and *Utah Historical Quarterly*, provided incentives for serious academic pursuit of Mormon studies and also forums for discussion of difficulties inherent in writing religious history.

A relaxation of restrictions on access to LDS archival sources also lured historians to engage in research. Prior to 1960 Brodie, Brooks, and other scholars had complained about the inaccessibility of documents deemed vital to their research. During the 1960s professional organization of materials and amicable relations with researchers invigorated intellectual inquiry within the Mormon academic community. After returning to Salt Lake City to work on the 1971 edition of her biography of Joseph Smith, Brodie found "a new climate of liberation" in the capital city of the Utah church. In the preface to her second edition, she remarked that "fear of church punishment for legitimate dissent seems largely to have disappeared."⁶

4. Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 23-24, 117, 121-24, 49, 243, 92.

5. Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967), 10, 135, 74-79, 20.

6. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), ii. Leonard J. Arrington describes developments in the 1960s in "The Writing of Latter-day Saint History: Problems, Accomplishments, and Admonitions," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Autumn 1981): 124-25.

The appointment of Leonard J. Arrington in 1972 as official LDS Church Historian seemed to confirm Brodie's optimism regarding improved relations between church officials and scholars. The transfer of authority to Arrington, dean of the "new historians" and a leading figure in organizing the Mormon History Association, gave encouragement to scholars who believed it possible to satisfy the intellectual requirements of their craft without jeopardizing their faith. As Arrington commented in a 1966 article, "Mormon historians act on the assumption that the Mormon religion and its history are subject to discussion, if not to argument and that any particular feature of Mormon life is fair game for detached examination and clarification." Referring to scholars who promoted the Mormon History Association and *Dialogue*, he continued, "they believe the details of Mormon history and culture can be studied in human or naturalistic terms—indeed, must be so studied and without thus rejecting the divinity of the church's origin and work."⁷

As director of the LDS history division, Arrington led a team of dedicated Mormon scholars in vigorous efforts to professionalize the history of their religion. A virtual flowering of historiography ensued as scholars plied their craft with less apprehension of negative repercussions from their leaders. The next ten years became what one participant, Davis Bitton, later described as "a golden decade" for Mormons who believed it possible to reconcile intellectual endeavor with genuine faith.⁸

New leadership in the historian's office led to prodigious, enthusiastic efforts to fill gaps in Mormon history. An explosion of monographs, articles, and reprints on a wide variety of topics began appearing regularly in the press. Along with assistant church historians James B. Allen and Davis Bitton, supported by a staff of a dozen or so historians, and in cooperation with the LDS church's official Deseret Book Company, Arrington made plans to produce a sixteen-volume history of the LDS church to commemorate its sesquicentennial anniversary in 1980.

For a time LDS officials allowed Arrington's team a greater degree of intellectual independence than in previous decades. Although such materials as minutes of the meetings of general authorities, diaries of members

7. Leonard J. Arrington, "Scholarly Studies of Mormonism in the Twentieth Century," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Spring 1966): 28; "Search for Meaning in Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 3. For other evidence of introspection, see Richard Bushman, "Faithful History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Winter 1969): 11-25; Richard Poll, *History and Faith: Reflections of a Mormon Historian* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987).

8. Davis Bitton, "Ten Years in Camelot: A Personal Memoir," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Autumn 1983): 20-33. This article provides both an insider's view of the Arrington tenure in the church historian's office and a bibliography of work produced under its auspices.

of the First Presidency, and church financial records remained sequestered, available only with special approval, many other valuable resources were opened to scholars during the Arrington era.⁹

Perhaps Mormon leaders had come to realize they had less to fear from professional history than they once believed. Perhaps image-conscious Latter-day Saints wished to project a more tolerant, democratic posture for their church. Perhaps Arrington's appointment was merely one of many moves in the late 1960s and early 1970s to reorganize church institutions by placing them in the hands of experts. Whatever the motives for this move, according to Davis Bitton the history division during the Arrington tenure was never altogether free from criticism.

Although efforts to professionalize Mormon studies won praise from academicians, revisionist history evidently stoked smoldering fears and resentments in some Mormons opposed to secularized, humanistic treatments of their church's past. Arrington's optimism regarding honest discussion of Mormon history was tested in 1974 when Reed Durham, director of the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah, presented a presidential address at the annual conference of the Mormon History Association in Nauvoo, Illinois. In his paper, Durham explored Joseph Smith's links with Masonry and his possession of a magical Jupiter talisman. Negative repercussions following Durham's appeal for an open discussion of the influence of folk magic and Masonry on Mormonism led to his public apology and reaffirmation of faith.¹⁰

The backlash which caused some Mormons to question Durham's faith continued in a number of public speeches made by Ezra Taft Benson in 1976 during which he criticized efforts to revise traditional interpretations

9. Arrington discusses the problem of availability of historical sources in Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 163-67. Other sources which discuss tensions over historical research include: Lawrence Foster, "New Perspectives on the Mormon Past," *Sunstone* 7 (Jan.-Feb. 1982): 43-44, and "A Personal Odyssey: My Encounter with Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Autumn 1983): 87-98. Martin E. Marty comments on these tensions from the point of view of religious history in "Two Integrities: An Address to the Crisis in Mormon Historiography," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1984): 3-19. One of the best defenses of revisionist history is Thomas G. Alexander, "Historiography and the New Mormon History: A Historian's Perspective," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 19 (Fall 1986), 25-49. Marvin Hill contributes to the discussion in "'The New Mormon History' Reassessed in Light of Recent Books on Joseph Smith and Mormon Origins," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Autumn 1988): 115-27.

10. Mormon critics Jerald and Sandra Tanner discuss Durham's speech in their 1980 *The Changing World of Mormonism* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 88-91. For reaction to his address, see Patricia Lyn Scott, James E. Crooks, and Sharon G. Pugsley, "'A Kinship of Interest': The Mormon History Association's Membership," *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Spring 1992): 156n.

of the history of his church. Among other things, Benson, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, objected to emphasis placed by scholars on environmental influences on early Mormonism and use of such terms as communitarianism to describe the economic theories of early church leaders.¹¹

In linking the roots of Mormonism with primitivist and millennial movements, and in portraying early Saints as seekers motivated by anxieties similar to those of many other Jacksonians, historians ruffled sensitivities of conservatives who treasured the uniqueness of their prophet's mandate to restore the true church. Linking the Word of Wisdom with the nineteenth-century temperance movement, for example, seemed to deprive this doctrine of its singularity as a revelation of God. While scholars experienced little difficulty accepting environmental influences as predisposing human instruments for God's work, naturalistic history posed difficulties for literalists who believed their religion originated in no other foundation than divine inspiration.

Some Mormon scholars were well aware that realistic recreations of the Mormon past might upset the faithful. In the foreword of his book *Establishing Zion*, published in 1988 two years after his death, Eugene E. Campbell's musings over the challenge of writing LDS history is quoted: "How do I bring a fresh, new approach to a subject that has been heard many times before by church members without upsetting their faith or—better yet—while strengthening their faith?" It might not make much difference to a scholar's faith whether Brigham Young named the Salt Lake Basin a divinely inspired place before or after settlement began, or whether early pioneers were actually saved from starvation by the miraculous appearance of sea gulls which ate rapacious crickets, but many rank-and-file Saints treasured such innocent myths.¹²

For their part Mormon historians had reason to resent lack of confidence in their work by some co-religionists. From their point of view intellectually credible history served the interest of their church better than pietistic works which disregarded evidence. It would be sheer folly to write modern histories of Mormonism without an honest discussion of polygamy, Masonry, or folk magic. If faithful Mormon scholars did not produce

11. Benson's opposition to revisionist history is discussed in Bitton, "Ten Years in Camelot," and in D. Michael Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian," 1981, privately circulated.

12. Campbell's book, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), is considered one of the best revisionist works on the early Utah period in LDS church history. Commissioned by Arrington's office to become one volume in a projected multi-volumed history of the church, it illustrates the move to independent publishers after withdrawal of official support.

credible studies of their religion's past, the field would be left to their enemies.

Actually, in varying degrees, most history written by Mormons in the more "liberated" 1970s and 1980s often betrayed a sympathetic, patronizing tone toward the humanized story which unfolded in their books. Many authors fluctuated between a defiant "let the chips fall where they may" bravado, a barely concealed sense of relief when research supported their church's position, and a defensive reaffirmation of faith when evidence posed any serious challenge to their beliefs.¹³

Some Mormon revisionist histories, although far less apologetic than official church texts, betrayed in their tone a natural tendency to empathize with past generations of Saints. Brethren were not always exemplary in their behavior but usually had good reasons for their actions; Mormon leaders made mistakes in worldly matters, but on crucial religious questions they were invariably guided by inspiration; brothers and sisters fought bitterly among themselves; sometimes they provoked the antagonism of their enemies. In short, as typical products of a rugged frontier, Mormons as a people were no better nor worse than their contemporaries as far as human behavior is concerned.

The courage and independence of Mormon researchers were tested most vigorously when discoveries seemed to pose a challenge to fundamental tenets of their religious faith. On such questions as the historicity of the Book of Mormon, the relationship between Mormon temple rituals and Masonry, the origin of Mormon plural marriage, and the credibility of their prophet, Joseph Smith, even the best revisionists betrayed in their work a nervousness as though compelled to look over their shoulders. Determined to tell the truth as they read the evidence, Mormon authors often betrayed apprehension lest their church as an institution be harmed and concern that their co-religionists might not understand and accept their work on its merits as honest history.

Many of the most highly regarded revisionist works contained professions of personal religious convictions in their authors' prefaces. Some Mormon historians openly affirmed their belief in the primacy of religious motivation in the human story they were relating. Whether overtly stated or intrinsically present in their interpretations, most revisionists made clear their faith in their religion. Although few scholars omitted controversial topics in their texts, many treated sensitive subjects circumspectly.¹⁴

13. These general, admittedly subjective impressions are based on my own reading of literature on Mormonism since 1960.

14. For professions of faith, see the prefaces of James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976); Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New

In their well-received book, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, for example, James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard denied knowledge of any convincing evidence Joseph Smith ever lived with any of his plural wives. They defended Smith's cover-up of the practice and underplayed charges of immorality as a cause of apostasies within the young church. These Mormon authors employed one sentence in their 638 pages of text to acknowledge similarities between Mormon temple ordinances and Masonic rites yet omitted any mention of the rapid growth of Masonic lodges in Nauvoo and the rivalry which erupted between Mormon and gentile Masons in Illinois in the 1840s.¹⁵

Most revisionist works left little doubt the authors revered Joseph Smith as a true prophet whose human weaknesses, as those of many other religious leaders, in no way compromised his ability to serve as a legitimate spokesman of God. Most interpretations of early Mormonism resembled Richard L. Bushman's. In his 1984 book on Mormon origins, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism*, Bushman portrayed Smith as a person "who outgrew his culture." While some aspects of early Mormonism resembled the environment, other parts could not be explained by existential experiences. This interpretational framework allowed historians to report the human story of the early church without discrediting its spiritual foundation.¹⁶

Regardless of sincere affirmations of faith by revisionist historians and their sensitive treatment of controversial issues, Latter-day Saint officials after 1980 escalated criticisms of the new Mormon history. In July 1980 Arrington moved from Salt Lake City to head a new Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History located on the campus of Brigham Young University. Although Arrington gamely accepted President Spencer W. Kimball's explanation for this relocation as an effort to enhance historical study, many omens pointed to other motives for moving scholars away from the archives in Salt Lake City. Valuable journals and letters of such nineteenth-century Mormons as William C. Clayton, John Taylor, George Q. Cannon, and Francis M. Lyman, selectively available in the 1970s, disappeared from scrutiny. Mormon officials withdrew

York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979); and D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987).

15. Allen and Leonard, 171, 70.

16. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 7. For similarities in tone, see Arrington and Bitton's *The Mormon Experience*. For a less restrained treatment of environmental influences, see Klaus J. Hansen, *Mormonism and the American Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

support for many projects initiated by Arrington, including the sesqui-centennial history.¹⁷

Arrington's division had fallen victim to the antipathy orthodox Mormons felt toward naturalistic versions of their religion's past. As Davis Bitton recalled, some Saints perceived the history division to be a "conspiratorial, anti-church cabal." Pestered by "negative rumblings" from the beginning of their work, under attack for secularizing sacred history, and suspected of affording ammunition to anti-Mormons, Mormon scholars in the 1980s began turning to independent and secular publishers as outlets for their work.¹⁸

In 1981 Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, renewed public attacks against Mormon historians which echoed those in Benson's 1976 speech. Packer's address before a symposium of Mormon educators went much farther than Benson's criticism five years earlier. Packer questioned the faith, motives, and prospects for salvation of Mormon historians who produced overly objective, impartial, honest, and neutral history. According to Packer, "Those of you who are employed by the Church have a special responsibility to build faith, not destroy it . . . Those who have carefully purged their work of any religious faith in the name of academic freedom or so-called honesty ought not expect to be accommodated in their researches or to be paid by the Church to do it."¹⁹

Packer warned Mormon historians not to include in their work controversial or sensitive material which might endanger faith. Nor should they portray church leaders as merely human beings, but should stress their spiritual strengths as prophets of God. Referring to stolen archival materials and circulation of publications harmful to faith, he chided scholars who employed pirated sources for lending support to their brethren's enemies.

In a rare public challenge to Mormon authorities, a BYU history professor, D. Michael Quinn, responded to Benson's and Packer's criticisms in a 1981 speech before the Student History Association at Brigham Young University. Quinn defended the work of professional scholars as healthier for Mormonism than "timid, defensive, or public-relations oriented" history. Scholars should not be asked to debase their work by

17. Arrington discusses this move in "The Writing of Latter-Saint History," 127. For complaints regarding disappearance of sources, see Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985), 503; Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 148; Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, Prophet's Wife, "Elect Lady," Polygamy's Foe, 1804-1879* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 329.

18. Bitton, "Ten Years in Camelot," 16-17.

19. Boyd K. Packer, "The Mantle is Far, Far Greater Than the Intellect" (Salt Lake City, 1981), 8.

omitting important evidence. Rather than protecting faith, oversimplified versions of history which offer “a mixture of platitudes, half-truths, omissions, and plausible denials” represent a “Maginot line,” easily breached by the enemy.²⁰

Further evidence of strains in the Mormon community surfaced in 1983 when BYU officials banned circulation of an independent student newspaper, *Seventh East Press*. Its 11 January issue had carried an interview conducted in 1981 with Mormon educator Sterling M. McMurrin in which he criticized efforts of officials to control the writing of LDS history as “reprehensible and odious.” In McMurrin’s opinion, suppression of honest research had created a climate within his community more detrimental to intellectual inquiry than he had ever before experienced. Expressing personal reservations regarding the emphasis placed in his church on its origins, McMurrin regretted efforts to indoctrinate members in a manipulated version of Mormon history. He believed it would be wiser for LDS officials to detach their religion from such close association with its controversial past.²¹

Escalating tensions over revisionist history created a climate in the 1980s conducive to the kind of extremism exemplified by Mark Hofmann’s career. Hofmann’s tragic interlude in Mormon historiography was both a product of and catalyst for polarization caused by the new history. The forgeries he pedaled in an effort to provide evidence supporting revisionist versions of the Mormon past highlighted and publicized tensions in his church. They also fueled a conservative backlash against the new history.

Hofmann’s career, which ended with his confession in 1987 of the brutal slayings of fellow Saints Steve Christensen and Kathy Sheets, was motivated at least in part by his family background and obsession with Mormon history. Many of his most notorious forgeries, including the White Salamander letter, provided evidence supporting anti-Mormon portrayals of Joseph Smith. Several of the letters Hofmann marketed as the work of Smith or members of his family and associates sought to substantiate a close association between early Mormonism and folk magic. Evidently Hofmann’s investigations of anti-Mormon sources had convinced him the founder of Mormonism was a fraud.

Without attempting any comprehensive psychological analysis of motives for Hofmann’s criminal activities—the challenge of duping the experts, for example, or an inordinate desire for material success and enjoyment of attention won through his forgeries—it seems plausible that one of his rationalizations was a desire to embarrass those responsible for

20. Quinn, “On Being a Mormon Historian,” 20-21.

21. Later reprinted in Blake Ostler, “An Interview with Sterling McMurrin,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Spring 1984): 18-43.

promoting what he considered to be a fairy-tale version of Mormon history.²²

The most damaging Hofmann forgeries as far as early Mormon history is concerned included a letter dated 1825 in Joseph Smith's handwriting to Josiah Stowell, which contained a discussion of their mutual involvement in a treasure hunting project, and one dated 1830 from Martin Harris to W. W. Phelps, which described how a white salamander prevented Smith from retrieving gold plates from the ground. By seeming to substantiate Smith's involvement in folk magic at the very time he was acting on the angel Moroni's instructions, the contents of these letters cast doubt on Smith's version of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Money digging and involvement in folk magic by the founders of Mormonism were not new issues. Mormon scholars had responded to growing historical evidence of these activities by explaining them as normal manifestations of early nineteenth-century mores. The Mormon prophet may have engaged in contemporary superstitions as an immature youth but had outgrown such foibles before being called to his work of translation and prophecy. By seeming to confirm Smith's intimate involvement with the occult at the same time he was founding a church, Hofmann's forgeries would have discredited this interpretation.²³

Although Hofmann's crimes caused a spate of anti-Mormon publicity in the national press and certainly must have embarrassed church officials, historians, and experts who accepted his documents as authentic, from the perspective of the past 160 years of Mormon historiography, and in view of work already in progress before Hofmann, it is doubtful his forgeries made any significant permanent impact in the field. Many outstanding scholarly works on Mormon history, most produced by such independent publishers as University of Illinois Press and Signature Books, rendered the decade of the 1980s memorable without the sensationalism Hofmann provided. His documents did spur the efforts of such Mormon scholars as Ronald Walker and D. Michael Quinn into the influence of folk magic on the early church.

22. The best source on Mark Hofmann's story from inside the Mormon community is Linda Sillitoe and Allen D. Roberts, *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988). Roberts provides valuable insights into Hofmann's motivation in "The Truth is the Most Important Thing: The New Mormon History According to Mark Hofmann," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Winter 1987): 87-96.

23. Sources on money digging before the appearance of Hofmann's forgeries include Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), and articles in *Brigham Young University Studies* 9 (Spring 1969). For discussion of the subject after the appearance of Hofmann's forgeries, see *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 19 (Winter 1986).

Before the appearance of his 1987 tome *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, Quinn had already earned a reputation as a defender of both his faith in Mormonism and the canons of rigid scholarship. In his controversial book Quinn explored a gamut of occult influences on early Mormons including seer stones, divining rods, talismans, and astrology in the context of early nineteenth-century society without overtly calling into question the divine origins of his religion. Coming thirteen years after Reed Durham's address to members of the Mormon History Association in 1974, Quinn went about as far as a believing Saint could possibly go in probing the relationship between the occult and early Mormonism. Reviews of Quinn's work revealed how deeply divided his community had become over revisionist history.²⁴

Not only on the question of Smith's connections with magic, but also on most other key issues regarding his career, the process of revisionism reached a crescendo in the 1980s. On polygamy, for example, few honest historians could question evidence that Smith began sexual experimentation outside traditional marriage as early as the 1830s; that he lived with many women; that he pursued women who were already married; that Emma Hale Smith vehemently opposed her husband's liaisons; that the marriage revelation of 1843 was partly motivated by a desire to placate Emma; or that Smith's unconventional views of marriage and sex played a major role in both internal and external conflicts which dogged the early church. The work of Lawrence Foster, Linda King Newell, Valeen Tippetts Avery, and Richard S. Van Wagoner convincingly supported revisionist positions on these controversies.²⁵

As scholars moved closer together on the factual threads of their story, divergent interpretations established during the first 160 years of LDS church history lost some of their sharpness. Willingness to credit such sources as Lucy Mack Smith's biographical sketches, Philastus Hurlbut's interviews of Smith's neighbors, and exposés led revisionists in the 1980s near a consensus on what happened during the prophet's life but did not end disputes over motivation. It is one thing for scholars to concede that Smith lived with some of his plural wives; it is another question to surmise why he initiated and encouraged the practice.

24. D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987). Quinn's book is reviewed in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Fall 1987, 88-96. For a sample of Walker's work, see his address on Martin Harris presented at the 1986 annual meeting of the Mormon History Association reprinted in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 19 (Winter 1986): 29-43.

25. Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Newell and Avery, *Mormon Enigma*; Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*.

In interpreting motives polarization persisted in the 1980s, not always on the basis of a Mormon-gentile division but according to the individual scholar's predisposition toward religion. Authors with a more skeptical intellectual attitude toward religious experiences were more apt to agree with anti-Mormons in seeking naturalistic explanations for Smith's career. Fawn Brodie and Dale Morgan provide the best examples of this category. Morgan's portrait of Smith as a talented youth who stumbled into his religious role by accident, then evolved in it to the point of believing himself a prophet, was close to Brodie's. The appearance of his unfinished work on early Mormonism in 1985, though a product of an earlier era, represented a significant contribution to early Mormon history.²⁶

On the other hand, non-Mormons with religious backgrounds and scholars who specialized in religious history, sociology, or anthropology were less likely to question the testimony of their Mormon subjects. Mario De Pillis, Jan Shipps, and Lawrence Foster explored the meaning of Mormonism within a broad context of religious history. Deeming it more important to understand the consequences of Smith's religious career than to speculate regarding his motives, these authors compared Latter-day Saints with other religious traditions and analyzed differences between nineteenth-century Mormonism and the twentieth-century church. Some non-Mormon authors, Shipps and Foster, for example, displayed in their work as much empathy for their subject as many Mormon scholars.²⁷

Three decades of revisionism in Mormon history may have made a more positive impact on the LDS church than its conservative leaders will probably ever be willing to acknowledge. The contribution of scholars in providing an intellectual foundation for the 1978 lifting of the priesthood ban on black men and revisions in the temple endowment ceremony in April 1990 which rendered them less offensive to women and rival denominations strengthened contemporary Mormonism.²⁸ In facilitating removal of practices detrimental to the public image and internal peace of their community, Mormon revisionists served their church well. As scholarship

26. Walker, *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism*.

27. See Klaus J. Hansen's review of Shipps's book *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), in *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 135-45.

28. Contributions by scholars to the race controversy include Armand L. Mauss, "Mormonism and the Negro: Faith, Folklore, and Civil Rights," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Winter 1967): 19; and Lester E. Bush, Jr. "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8 (Spring 1974): 11. For revisions in temple ceremonies, see David John Buerger, "The Development of the Mormon Temple Endowment Ceremony," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Winter 1987): 33-76; and Armand L. Mauss, "Culture, Charisma, and Change," *ibid.*, 77-83.

continues to break important ground in the 1990s, there seems little doubt that the most controversial subjects will be the historicity of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith's revision of the Bible, and issue of women and the priesthood. Only time will tell the outcome of these contributions.

While battles over the Mormon past made the decade of the 1980s a contentious one for scholars who championed the new history and conservatives who questioned it, controversy did not retard growth of the LDS church. By 1990 the miniscule community Joseph Smith founded in upstate New York in 1830 had become a world religion with over seven million members. As in other religions, the majority of believers do not accept historical evidence as capable of explaining spiritual reality. For most Mormons the complexity, consistency, and efficacy of Smith's teachings and the remarkable growth of his church provide proof enough of their divine origins.

As with all successful religious traditions, the psychological, social, and spiritual benefits of membership in a church outweigh challenges posed by rationalist critiques of its doctrines. The longer the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints continues to grow and serve the needs of its members, the greater distance in time between the contemporary church and its origins, the less tension there will be between revisionist and traditional versions of the Mormon past. Although healthy debate and argument over interpretations will continue, future battles over history will probably not pose any more danger to faith than they did in the volatile 1980s.



Sariah

Marni Asplund-Campbell

She's not Abraham's Sara,
who laughs and talks
to angels
as if the state of her womb
were the daily news.
Lehi's Sariah just murmurs and waits.

In Jerusalem, she sifts
through the pieces of her life:
the linen she wove for her wedding,
which was sturdy and coarse,
and now is smooth velvet from scrubbing.
Gold earrings from
Laman's birth—they are
almost too heavy to wear, but
soft, and rich.

She packs green figs, wine,
bread, ties two goats,
and in her pocket
a silk bag of
ginseng, for there will be children,
long, painful labors.
She stays silent, drawing together only
these simplest things.

In the wilderness she thinks
that sons can be testaments,
and children bear the language
in their blood, the record from
their mothers,
and that nations dwindle only
when they are split open,
the words soaking red into the sand.

She attends her own birth,
a small son who comes reluctantly
while she pulls on a rope she has tied
between the tent poles,
baring her teeth.

So silent are God's visions
that he must know Sariah, she assumes.
He will speak to her when he chooses,
and she will wait, saying nothing.



The “New Social History” and the “New Mormon History”: Reflections on Recent Trends

Roger D. Launius

MUCH HAS BEEN MADE RECENTLY OF THE APPARENT deceleration of historical inquiry into Mormonism. When I first became interested in Mormon studies nearly twenty years ago I was an undergraduate at Graceland College. Encouragement and an inescapable excitement pervaded the domain, and new windows of discovery seemed to be opening everywhere. Almost certainly my own lack of knowledge contributed to that sense of discovery, but the decade of the 1970s was without question a heady time for Mormon historical studies. Leonard J. Arrington, the LDS Church Historian, was modernizing LDS archives and sponsoring varied and far-reaching research. Richard P. Howard, as RLDS Church Historian, was doing the same for the Reorganized church.¹ An impressive level of historical output, both in terms of numbers and quality, was appearing every year.² The 1973 publication of the cooperative book *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History*, with six RLDS and seven

1. On these efforts, see Leonard J. Arrington, “Historian as Entrepreneur: A Personal Essay,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 17 (Winter 1977): 193-209; F. Henry Edwards, “Historians and the Department of History of the Reorganization,” *Saints’ Herald* 120 (Aug. 1973): 19-21, 120 (Sept. 1973): 24-25, 37; W. B. Spillman, “The Historian Looks at Church History,” *Saints’ Herald* 112 (15 Aug. 1967): 546-50; Richard P. Howard, “Philosophy, Problems, and Opportunities in Church History,” *Saints’ Herald* 117 (Feb. 1970): 31, 32, 117 (Mar. 1970): 22-24; W. Grant McMurray, “As Historians and Not as Partisans: The Writing of Official History in the RLDS Church,” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 6 (1986): 43-52; Paul M. Edwards, “The New Mormon History,” *Saints’ Herald* 133 (Nov. 1986): 13.

2. As an example, see “History Division Publications,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Fall 1983): 20-33.

LDS essayists, was without question a watershed event.³ So was the trade—nothing like it will come close to happening again in this century—of historic documents on microfilm between the two largest Mormon churches in 1974.⁴ There was also an important and refreshing *esprit de corps* and common purpose forged at gatherings of organizations oriented toward Mormon history. Davis Bitton, one of Arrington's associates in the LDS historical department, designated the decade between 1972 and 1982 a golden age, "a brief period of excitement and optimism—that someone has likened to Camelot."⁵

Those heady days are gone, and while we might mourn their loss we are constrained to carry on. Some blame short-sighted and anti-intellectual church officials who have neither the forbearance nor the vision to understand the historical quest. Some condemn restrictive archival practices, while others charge that the aging of professionals working in the field is detrimental to the study. Some bemoan other factors that have adversely affected aspects of historical inquiry. Any or all of these issues are legitimate contributors to the apparent malaise currently present in the field.

My own analysis of the state of Mormon history suggests that the field, while other factors have also been at work, suffers from some of the exclusiveness and intellectual imperialism that were nurtured during the glory days of the "New Mormon History" in the 1970s. In a recent essay Charles S. Peterson described what he called the exceptionalist nature of the "New Mormon History" and its isolating effect on intellectual inquiry. He charted the course of Mormon historiography from the 1958 publication of Leonard Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom*, arguing that it rapidly evolved into an "isolating interest in what might be referred to as [the] 'cult of the Prophet,' and in Church beginnings, persecutions, and conflicts both internal and external." Questions, issues, and perspectives were sometimes narrowly defined without incorporating larger contexts that informed contemporary developments in other historical disciplines. Mormon historians found themselves talking and writing for each other and for a small community of people who were mostly interested in the subject because

3. F. Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards, eds., *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History* (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1973); Richard P. Howard, "A New Landmark in Latter Day Saints Historiography," *Saints' Herald* 120 (Sept. 1973): 55, 58.

4. Richard P. Howard, "Churches Exchange Copies of Historic Documents," *Saints' Herald* 122 (Feb. 1975): 22-23.

5. Davis Bitton, "Ten Years in Camelot: A Personal Memoir," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Autumn 1983): 9-20, quote from p. 9. A good overview and sampling of historical efforts emanating from the "New Mormon History" can be found in D. Michael Quinn, ed., *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992).

they shared some aspect of Mormonism's religious heritage. While more Mormon historical articles were being produced, few outside the immediate sphere of Mormonism took much notice of them.⁶

This is not unlike what happened in the study of western American history during the recent past. I was trained as a frontier historian in graduate school because it seemed to fit best with my interests in Mormonism, but at that time the American West was considered a backwater of historical study. No one seemed to care much about cowboys and native Americans, and by the late 1970s the Turnerian construct of the "Frontier Thesis," itself an exceptionalist perspective on the past, had been demolished by later historians. The community hashed and rehashed the minutiae of the battle of the Little Bighorn, or debated the location of the ford where Jedediah Smith crossed the Colorado River on his 1826 expedition, or any of several other abstract and antiquarian concerns.⁷ I soon realized the irrelevancy of much of what was taking place in the name of western American history. Indicative of this, in the 1970s few history departments at colleges and universities throughout the nation replaced western historians when they retired.

Western history began to climb back out of the doldrums in the late 1970s, and the field has now reemerged as a central part of scholarly inquiry led by what has been popularly nicknamed the "gang of four"—Patricia Nelson Limerick, Donald Worster, William Cronon, and Richard White.⁸

6. Charles S. Peterson, "Beyond the Problems of Exceptionalist History," in Thomas G. Alexander, ed., *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited: Contemporary Perspectives* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1991), 133-51, quote from p. 146.

7. The literature, and the debate, over Custer is brutal. See Robert M. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988); Brian W. Dippie, *Custer's Last Stand: The Anatomy of an American Myth* (Missoula: University of Montana Publications in History, 1976); Paul A. Hutton, "From Little Bighorn to Little Big Man: The Changing Image of a Western Hero in Popular Culture," *Western Historical Quarterly* 7 (Jan. 1976): 19-45; Brian W. Dippie, "Of Bullets, Blunders, and Custer Buffs," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 41 (Winter 1991): 77-80. On Smith, see Dale L. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953); John G. Neihardt, *The Splendid Wayfaring: The Exploits and Adventures of Jedediah Smith and the Ashley-Henry Men* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1920); Alson J. Smith, *Men Against the Mountains: Jedediah Smith and the South West Expedition of 1826-1829* (New York: John Day Co., 1965); Maurice L. Sullivan, *Jedediah Smith: Trader and Trail Breaker* (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1936).

8. Each of these individuals has contributed exciting interpretive studies of the American West that did much to rescue it from irrelevance. See Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1987); Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985); William Cronon et al., eds., *Under the Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992); Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American*

The reasons for this change are complex. First, the “New Western History,” as it is being called, has finally thrown off the yoke of Frederick Jackson Turner and moved beyond the exclusivistic questions he posed.⁹ Second, it has embraced the idea of regionalism and no longer defines the West and the frontier as one and the same. Third, those involved in reinterpreting the West have benefited from the infusion of new methodologies and especially new questions borrowed from the “new social history.” Those new questions, taken from the larger concerns present in this multi-cultural American society in which we participate, have yielded truly exciting results. They all revolve largely around issues of power and influence and how they are played out in the themes of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. A sense of anticipation presently permeates Western history as its practitioners use these four building blocks to construct a largely new perspective on the development of the region.

Contrast those activities with that of the Mormon historical community, which seems to be in more of a holding pattern than in the past. In spite of the amount of historical research and writing being done, and there remains a prodigious output in the 1990s, there seems to be little new in “New Mormon History.” To further understanding I suggest it is time to abandon the simple, celebratory, non-analytical narrative that has characterized too much writing on the subject and form a new research agenda. In so doing, historians might be able to overcome the inherent progressivism in the “New Mormon History,” arguing as it does that God’s word is spreading to the world and that this is a positive development, when there are other appropriate ways to view the church’s past. Historians must be prepared to stand at the edge of forever and peer into the abyss, reorienting perspectives and recasting ideals and constraints beyond anything imagined before. It is a risk, for it may lead to a grimmer, harsher perspective on the Mormon past rather than to a kinder, gentler history, but it is time to move beyond the present plateau of historical inquiry.

One of the central perspectives that must be reconsidered in this process is the preoccupation with *a priori* assumptions about what is good and bad in Mormon history—that have been so carefully defined—and to jettison the interpretive framework prearranged to lean in specific pro-institutional directions. While there has, of course, been some room for permutations of interpretation, the Mormon churches have essentially

West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

9. Turner’s approach toward the frontier has been summarized in Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1920), which collects many of his essays. There are numerous recent articles in the *Organization of American Historians’ Newsletter* and the *American Historical Association’s Perspectives* that demonstrate the emerging importance of the West as a theme in American history.

drawn a line in the sand about what may and may not be considered as an interpretive framework and most historians have accepted it (or perhaps have never even considered going beyond it because of their religious convictions). As an example of this, despite its other qualities, the recent book *Zion in the Courts* assumed without serious discussion the viability and justification of a Mormon theocracy, i.e., Zion. The authors asserted that the zionic goal inevitably led to persecution endured by an innocent church through both legal and extralegal means. They wrote: "The story of the persecution Mormons suffered through the institutions of the legal system, and of their efforts to establish their own legal system—one appropriate to Zion . . . illustrates democracy's potential to oppress an insular, minority community; . . ." ¹⁰

The authors apparently believed that theocracy is both possible and desirable, but it seems to me that such a quest for empire would always run against the grain of the American mainstream and that legal institutions by definition would oppose it. Far from democracy's "oppression" of a minority, I surmise, the nation's legal system would assert itself to defend the cherished principles of the Constitution against a perceived threat to liberty from a theocracy bent on taking control. Debate over whether liberty was really threatened by Mormon theocracy is moot, but certainly non-Mormons considered the church's secular power a threat to the Constitution. The authors failed to appreciate the inherent tension between democracy and theocracy. They also seemed not to appreciate that there might be other equally valid approaches toward Mormonism's zionic quest. For some it represented a spiritual condition where righteousness and justness were partners with goodwill and charity, a position that eschewed the secular, theocratic aspects that always created ill-will between Mormons and other Americans. Unfortunately, the authors of *Zion in the Courts* did not consider criticisms of Mormonism's quest for empire: criticisms that were coherent, internally consistent, and deserving of serious consideration. They accepted at face value the Mormon dialectic. As a result, *Zion in the Courts* represented both the worst and the best of the recent writing on the Mormon past. ¹¹

What has resulted because of this type of historical writing, as well as other problems not mentioned here, is a ghettoization process that has

10. Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), xiv-xv.

11. This is an unfortunate occurrence because Firmage is a thoughtful, liberal Mormon who has challenged the Latter-day Saint status quo on more than one occasion, standing up for minority and women's rights, speaking out against war and the excesses of patriotism, and generally appreciating the pluralism of American culture.

isolated Mormon history from broader questions that should be informing it. Like a nautilus shell, or the Reorganized church's new temple in Independence, Missouri, Mormon historical studies have spiraled inward farther and farther away from relevance to anything beyond themselves. Fortunately, if historians can spiral inward we can also spiral back outward. Although we have treated it as such, Mormon history is not a discipline separate from broader historical study; it is at best only a specialty describing a minuscule part of the overall human experience. Our treating it otherwise is a form of Mormon imperialism, and it is time to move forward into the mainstream of historical studies.

Many "New Mormon Historians" have for too long approached their studies backwards. The focus has too often been on how the religious institution has affected society—positive affects, of course—when it seems more appropriate that it should be on how society has affected Mormonism. This would allow a break from the vertical study of Mormon history emphasizing hierarchical, institutional studies and toward more horizontal studies that are much broader in form and content. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this preoccupation with the organizational setting, but they largely prove the validity of the overall observation.¹² Indicative of this historiographical problem, in 1982 W. Grant McMurray delivered a presidential address to the John Whitmer Historical Association that called for a turn "to the social and cultural life of the saints." He said that "Our historiography has for too long illustrated the sectarian exclusiveness that has frequently characterized the church."¹³ I suggest that his call is still clearly resonating in the discipline and few, not even McMurray, have heeded the summons.

To broaden the horizons of Mormon history, some of the questions prompted by the modern American multi-cultural civilization being asked elsewhere are also appropriate for this field. In this essay I want to consider, perhaps in some cases to reconsider, some of the themes and ideas that I believe are important in our quixotic quest for understanding. I hope that others will investigate these themes in a more authoritative manner. In my opinion, we can expand our perspectives by investigating the really interesting questions of power: who holds it, why, and how do they use it? To

12. For example, Ron Roberts, "A Waystation from Babylon: Nineteenth-Century Saints in Lucas, Iowa," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 10 (1991): 60-70, and Thomas J. Morain, "Mormons and Nineteenth-Century Iowa Historians," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 1 (1981): 34-42, have raised fundamental questions beyond the confines of the institutional church and offered some interesting observations on the effect larger issues in society held.

13. W. Grant McMurray, "The Reorganization in Nineteenth-Century America: Identity Crisis or Historiographical Problem," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 2 (1982): 3-11, quote from p. 9.

examine these issues in the context of Mormonism I recommend borrowing from the social constructionism taking place in other historical specialties, especially the work being done on race, ethnicity, class, and gender.¹⁴ An interest in these subjects would involve, of course, a commitment to the broad scholarly understanding of the nature and meaning of oppression and the inequalities of power as manifested in relation to these four axes.¹⁵

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Some of the most significant questions about Mormonism's past revolve around the issues of race and ethnicity. Consideration of these themes in Mormon history has important ramifications for an understanding of group identity and development. Broad questions of assimilation and cultural pluralism could offer intriguing possibilities for students; as could studies of what groups assimilated to, to what degree there has been homogeneity in the institutions of Mormonism, and the nature and extent of differences sustained or synthesized. These questions are all linked with change, organizational boundaries, and group relationships, and make such studies rewarding in expanding an understanding of how Mormonism reached its present form.

Mormon historians have pursued some of these questions, but only in the case of black Americans have they approached the level of investigation required to bring significant illumination. Most of the time, furthermore, what has been produced has been oriented toward explaining the development of institutional policy. For all of the important insights acquired in this manner, this has not gotten at the larger racial and ethnic issues that would open new worlds of inquiry. I will use my own work as an example. When I wrote *Invisible Saints*, a study of African-Americans in the RLDS church, I focused on questions of institutional policy and not so much on larger questions about the creation and preservation of specific cultures and their interface with the larger body of church members.¹⁶ Those issues

14. On social constructionism, see John E. Toews, "Intellectual History after the Linguistic Turn: The Autonomy of Meaning and the Irreducibility of Experience," *American Historical Review* 92 (Oct. 1987): 879-907; David A. Hollinger, *In the American Province: Studies in the History and Historiography of Ideas* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Dominick LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).

15. Joan Kelly, *Women, History, and Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 51-64, esp. 61.

16. See Roger D. Launius, *Invisible Saints: A History of Black Americans in the Reorganized Church* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1988). I have tried to broaden my horizons in "A Black Woman in a White Man's Church: The Odyssey of Amy E. Robbins in the Reorganization." In it I grapple with the issue of race and gender and

await future investigation. Similarly, hardly anyone looking at blacks in the Latter-day Saint church have gone far beyond the issue of priesthood denial, which is a policy issue. While these considerations are important, additional work must be undertaken.¹⁷

There are many other racial and ethnic groups that require concerted study in Mormon history. One of the most important of these has been Mormon relations with native Americans. While there have been many articles published on this subject, almost all of them are policy studies on Mormon/Indian relations in the Great Basin during the nineteenth century. There is a real need for research and writing exploring attitudes toward and relations with native Americans in either the early church or in the various Mormon movements that emerged from it.¹⁸ There are a multitude of questions that need to be considered in any worthwhile study of relations with native Americans, not the least of which is an honest attempt to understand attitudes and actions on the part of people belonging to each ethnic heritage and how they related.

Mormonism was largely on the frontier in the nineteenth century and had ample contact with aboriginal peoples. It also had a special connection

how they affected and were affected by the church at the local level.

17. Newell G. Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks: The Changing Place of Black People Within Mormonism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981); Lester E. Bush and Armand L. Mauss, eds., *Neither White Nor Black: Mormon Scholars Confront the Race Issue in a Universal Church* (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1984); Stephen G. Taggart, *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1970). Jessie L. Embry has completed a manuscript, "Black Saints in a White Church," that asks some of the questions about blacks in the LDS movement that are critical to the development of a fully-rounded interpretation of the subject.

18. On early Mormons and Indians, see Ronald W. Walker, "Seeking the 'Remnant': The Native American During the Joseph Smith Period," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 (Spring 1993): 1-33; G. St. John Stott, "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware," *Journal of American Studies* 21 (Apr. 1987): 79-82; Keith Parry, "Joseph Smith and the Clash of Sacred Cultures," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 65-80; Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 145-60; Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 115-21, 133-39, 168-75; Floyd A. O'Neil, "The Mormons, the Indians, and George Washington Bean," in Clyde A. Milner II and Floyd A. O'Neil, eds., *Churchmen and Western Indians, 1820-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 77-107; Warren A. Jennings, "The First Mormon Mission to the Indians," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 31 (Autumn 1971): 288-99. For example, I found Aleah G. Koury, "The Church and the American Indian," *Saints' Herald* 123 (Apr. 1976): 212-16, 241; and Rebecca E. Haering, "A Prophecy: Revealed and Fulfilled," *Restoration Trail Forum* 4 (Feb. 1979): 1, 5, the only historical publications on the Reorganization experience with native Americans. On this whole question, see David J. Whittaker, "Mormons and Native Americans: A Historical and Bibliographical Introduction," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 33-64.

because of its peculiar scriptural record. Why, then, was there not more emphasis on mutually beneficial relations with American Indians over the history of the movement? Equally important, in what manner have native ideals and conceptions become a part of the movement? How have these peoples been accepted into the power centers of the various Mormon churches? Most important, David Whittaker has called for "more anthropologically sensitive studies on the cultures that predate Mormon contact, and we need to follow these up with continuing analysis of changing cultures once contact was made."¹⁹ His suggestion is just as valid today as when first made in 1985.

The influences and acculturation process, if it exists, would be especially useful in other aspects of ethnic groups in Mormon history.²⁰ Are their specific congregations which run along ethnic lines? For example, there are in the RLDS some largely Hispanic branches in the Southwest that use Spanish as their language of worship, but beyond their existence we know little about them. When were they created, how have they evolved over the years, and what interactions with the larger church membership have taken place over time? Additionally, perhaps the definition of ethnicity should be broadened to look at regional differences between Americans and to trace how these differences have been played out in the various ecclesiastical systems.

There is also an exciting prospect awaiting students interested in ethnicity and foreign missions, both relative to congregations established overseas and to foreigners who immigrated to the United States and began worshipping in American congregations.²¹ As one example, Dean Louder's

19. Whittaker, "Mormons and Native Americans," 46.

20. This question has been explored in three brief, suggestive essays: Jessie L. Embry, "Ethnic Groups and the LDS Church," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Winter 1992): 81-97; Jessie L. Embry, "'Separate but Equal': American Ethnic Groups in the RLDS and LDS Churches, A Comparison," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 12 (1992): 83-100; and Robert Ben Madison, "'Heirs According to the Promise': Observations of Ethnicity, Race and Identity in Two Factions of Nineteenth Century Mormonism," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 12 (1992): 66-82.

21. There has been some work done on this subject concerning the LDS church, although much remains to be done. See Marjorie Newton, "'Almost Like Us': The American Socialization of Australian Converts," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Fall 1991): 9-20; Jessie L. Embry, "Little Berlin: Swiss Saints in the Logan Tenth Ward," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 56 (Summer 1988): 222-35; Douglas D. Alder, "The Mormon Ward: Congregation or Community?" *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 61-78; Ronald W. Walker, "'Going to Meeting' in Salt Lake City's Thirteenth Ward, 1849-1881: A Microanalysis," in Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, eds., *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 138-61; Richard L. Jensen, "Mother Tongue: Use of Non-English Languages in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the United

challenging study of Anglo/French ethnic relations affecting the LDS church in Canada has no parallel for the Reorganization, although it is needed. Using sociological tools and a perspective sharpened by personal as well as scholarly experience, Louder analyzed the church's relations with French Canadians, criticizing the institution for its neglect and overarching emphasis on the Anglo-American aspects of its religious culture. He concluded that "the official church and, by extension, its membership deny the cultural specificity of Canada and the existence of an international church within that country."²² Indeed, this type of effort for the RLDS has not progressed beyond a cursory examination provided by Maurice L. Draper in his sociological analysis of foreign missions, the goal of which was much different from that of ethnic history.²³

There are also interesting questions about ethnicity and the smaller Mormon factions. Certain churches of the dispersion, or so it seems without concentrated research either to confirm or to deny, were magnets for specific ethnic groups. The Church of Jesus Christ that Sidney Rigdon founded in Pennsylvania and that was continued by William Bickerton had remarkable success among Italian immigrants of Philadelphia. At least by the 1870s this group had made many converts among the Italian ethnic population of Pennsylvania, and it has remained an important element of the institution to the present. Early in its history, for instance, Bickerton's followers translated the Book of Mormon into Italian to share it with friends and relatives. What made the church attractive to Italians, and how has it developed over the years within this segment of the population? This and other questions would prove fruitful for historians of Mormonism.²⁴

CLASS

One of the most significant areas affecting the reinterpretation of American history in the last generation has been the defining, interaction,

States, 1850-1983," in Bitton and Beecher, eds., *New Views of Mormon History*, 273-303; Dian Saderup and William Cottam, "Living Histories: Selected Biographies from the Manhattan First Ward," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Winter 1992): 58-79.

22. Dean R. Louder, "Canadian Mormon Identity and the French Fact," in Brigham Y. Card et al., eds., *The Mormon Presence in Canada* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1990), 302-27, quote from p. 322. This article, fittingly, received the Mormon History Association's Best Interdisciplinary Article Award in 1991.

23. Maurice L. Draper, *Isles and Continents* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1982).

24. Steven L. Shields, *Divergent Paths of the Restoration* (Bountiful, UT: Restoration Research, 1982), 89-98; William H. Cadman, *A History of the Church of Jesus Christ Organized at Green Oak, Pennsylvania, in 1862* (Monagahela, PA: n.p., 1945).

and conflict of various classes in the nation.²⁵ There should be no question, furthermore, that social, economic, educational, institutional, and other types of classes have always existed in Mormonism just as they do in the larger world. Mormon historians have mostly failed to identify and explore this concept in the church.²⁶ I think it probably has something to do with our longstanding fascination with individuals and elite—that is, priesthood—groups. Howard Zinn's statement is also appropriate for Mormon history: "There is an underside to every Age about which history does not often speak, because history is written from records left by the privileged. We learn about politics from the political leaders, about economics from the entrepreneurs, about slavery from the plantation owners, about the thinking of an age from its intellectual elite."²⁷

While it is a labor intensive exercise, demographic research would be vital in learning more about class structure and its role in the development of every level of church organization from local congregation to general conference. It would also be helpful in understanding the priesthood structure of the institution, for many questions about how the church has operated would be illuminated by a reasonable exploration of the class dynamic. While the LDS movement is better off in this regard—historians Dean May, Ben Bennion, Larry Logue, and a few others have been involved

25. There is a massive historiography associated with this study in American history. See, as only a few examples, Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York: Random House, 1967); Mario S. DePillis, "Trends in American Social History and the Possibilities of Behavioral Approaches," *Journal of Social History* 1 (Fall 1967): 38-60; Stuart Blumin, "The Historical Study of Vertical Mobility," *Historical Methods Newsletter* 1 (Sept. 1968): 1-13; Stephen Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964); Stephen Thernstrom and Richard Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth Century Cities: Essays in the New Urban History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969); Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970); Karen Haltunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982); Michael Kamman, ed., *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980); David Levine, *Family Formation in an Age of Nascent Capitalism* (New York: Academic Press, 1977); Bernard and Lillian Johnpoll, *The Impossible Dream: The Rise and Demise of the American Left* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981); Herbert G. Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977); Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Random House, 1972).

26. Exceptions to this statement include D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: An American Elite," Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976; Frederick S. Buchanan, *A Good Time Coming: Mormon Letters to Scotland* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988). The Quinn study, especially, explores most of the themes discussed in this arena.

27. Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1970), 102.

in demographic studies for years—there are for the RLDS virtually no demographic portraits of its members and therefore it is difficult to generalize about class structures in the organization. There is not even a demographic portrait of Lamoni, Iowa, the only town founded by the RLDS, and such work is critical to this issue.²⁸

There are many other exciting questions relating to class in Mormonism. In addition to the common economic class problems that are so much a part of American history but which have been largely ignored, one revolves around what I like to call the royal family and the court aristocracy of families of longstanding church leadership. How did members of these elite families obtain and sustain high offices in the various factions of Mormonism? How have individual members of these families fared in their ecclesiastical systems? How did other families once with members in positions of power fall from grace? What have been the interrelations of this aristocracy and how have they been played out in the history of the church? Moreover, what are its relationships *vis à vis* other leaders and the rank and file? In an article I wrote many years ago on the RLDS church's ambitious R. C. Evans—who achieved power and high church office solely on the basis of merit since he was so personally obnoxious—I argued that he was frozen out of the positions he really coveted and blamed the RLDS aristocracy.²⁹ Have there been other instances of this type of class conflict?

Also, I would like to see an investigation of the class of bureaucrats in the history of the church. What defines that status in the LDS, the RLDS, how did its members enter into it, and why have they been able to maintain that special role in the movement? Are these people essentially in agreement on most issues and engage in “groupthink” or is conflict an important part of the decision-making process?³⁰ What does the group mean to the culture of the churches they serve? How have these groups interacted with the membership and each other over the years? How have all these groups evolved? An interesting question concerning the RLDS bureaucracy, for instance, is how changes in the church bureaucratic structure, and especially the standards and expectations of those in it, changed after World War II. It seems that a rising middle class of church bureaucrats emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s, middle-level managers who had advanced

28. A premier example of LDS historical demographic research is Dean L. May, “A Demographical Portrait of the Mormons, 1830-1980,” in Thomas G. Alexander and Jessie L. Embry, eds., *After 150 Years: The Latter-day Saints in Historical Perspective* (Provo, UT: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1983), 40-57.

29. Roger D. Launius, “R. C. Evans: Boy Orator of the Reorganization,” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 40-50.

30. On groupthink, see Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983).

education and some economic power, to reorient the movement along more liberal lines.³¹ I suspect there was a similar development in the bureaucracy of the Latter-day Saints but it seemed to have an opposite outcome.

G. Edward White has described the formation of an eastern establishment in the late nineteenth century as a male order in which the progression from brahmin stock, to prep school, to Ivy League college, to men's clubs played a central role in defining an elite core of American leaders.³² Similar LDS and RLDS elites might have been formed in the twentieth century with a progression from strong ancestry in the church, to education at the church schools, to perhaps some exposure to graduate school, to full-time church employment in some capacity as a member of the priesthood. This elite structure needs sharp and incisive historical investigation and would go far toward helping to explain the role of class in the development of the various organizations.

Finally, Paul M. Edwards recently made an intriguing point about Mormonism's middle class that deserves further study:

This class is not so much economic or family-oriented (even though in both the Reorganization and LDS organizations these are important). Rather it consists of persons who are tasting both power and influence—as well as professional acceptance and understanding—outside the church. And thus, who are increasingly aware of their own authority by virtue of knowledge and ability. At the same time more aware of their lack of power within the institution. This group includes the intellectuals, and closet skeptics, as well as those faithful to the tradition but not necessarily the doctrine. It also includes persons who have come to believe their opinions reflect an honest minority. These persons considered themselves challenged—and usually blocked—by those who control the majority and who are conservatives (prescriptivists) of the Edmund Burke variety. They feel excluded from power because they are neither rich enough (in terms of holding authority) nor poor enough (willing to trade obedience for protection).³³

31. I take a stab at this subject in an article, "Coming of Age? The Reorganized Church in the 1960s," forthcoming in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, but my comments are exploratory and need much refinement.

32. G. Edward White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience: The West of Frederic Remington, Theodore Roosevelt, and Owen Wister* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 11-30.

33. Paul M. Edwards, "Ethics and Dissent in Mormonism: A Personal Essay," in Roger D. Launius and W. B. Spillman, eds., *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence, MO: Graceland/Park Press, 1991), 249-50.

A similar development has probably been the case for the Latter-day Saints and comparison of the two offers intriguing possibilities for historians interested in class structures.

GENDER

Finally, there can be no question that gender is a significant area requiring concentrated historical effort. One of the early emphases of the "New Mormon History" has been women's history. Many articles about Mormon women both individually and collectively have appeared over the years, but few get at the kinds of questions that hit the mark in the larger context of gender history.³⁴ They are usually more celebratory than should be the case, focusing on elites, the benevolent nature and work of the Relief Society, or the faith and perseverance of individual women. This area of study has not sparked the interesting explorations that could be undertaken by those working in the field.³⁵ More illuminating than most of what has been done are the questions of gender: how and why the two sexes have interacted together on a broad front beyond normal bounds. Joan N. Scott recently noted that historians have been slow to ask questions of gender in many areas, thinking that they bear little relationship to "war, diplomacy, and high politics." Scott challenged historians to move beyond the connotation of linking gender to women's history and to expand the investigation to broader concerns.³⁶

Scott's plea has exciting possibilities for Mormon historians. All the elements of Mormon historical inquiry could be illuminated by a sophisticated use of gender-related questions and themes. Historians of nineteenth-century America have developed three general themes concerning gender roles, all of which could be applied in Mormon studies. First, the doctrine of separate spheres for men and women suggested that women should work in and exercise control over the home while men should have dominion over the world outside.³⁷ Second, justifying this division of

34. For a discussion of the development of women's history, see Carol Cornwall Madsen and David J. Whittaker, "History's Sequel: A Source Essay on Women in Mormon History," *Journal of Mormon History* 6 (1979): 123-45; Patricia Lyn Scott and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "Mormon Women: A Bibliography in Progress, 1977-1985," *Journal of Mormon History* 12 (1985): 113-28.

35. An exception to this has been Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson, eds., *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), and a few other studies.

36. Joan N. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (Dec. 1986): 1053-75, quote from p. 1073.

37. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29; Nancy

spheres was the cult of true womanhood—an idealized image of women as pious, pure, domestic, and submissive.³⁸ Finally, there has developed the idea of the predatory male, a thesis that demands that middle-class men exhibit traits of self-control, economic aggressiveness, Christian kindness, worldly authority, and emotional attachments to family.³⁹

Each of these themes suggests enticing prospects for historians of Mormonism. Take as one example the development of temple rituals incorporated into the church in the 1830s and 1840s. How many of the theological conceptions that emerged in Mormonism's temple ceremonies resulted from efforts to secure traditional gender roles in a society in flux in Jacksonian America? Was the all-male priesthood headed by Joseph Smith instituting these ceremonies because of status anxiety?⁴⁰ During the era, owing to the accelerated change resulting from the Industrial Revolution, virtually all cherished ideals about life and home and family were altered in some way.⁴¹ Mark C. Carnes has argued that the popularity of fraternal lodges in the Victorian era was motivated at a rudimentary level by the desire to restore order and to resecure patriarchal authority lost in

F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977). This approach's dualism has been challenged. See Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75 (June 1988): 9-39; Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

38. Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 151-74; Charles Rosenberg, "Sexuality, Class, and Role in 19th-Century America," *American Quarterly* 25 (May 1973): 131-53.

39. Anthony E. Rotundo, "Body and Soul: Changing Ideals of American Middle-Class Manhood, 1770-1920," *Journal of Social History* 16 (Summer 1983): 23-38; Rupert Wilkinson, *American Tough: The Tough-Guy Tradition and American Character* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984); G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Horrors of the Half-Known Life: Male Attitudes Toward Women and Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

40. This theme has been explored in Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963); Rowland Berthoff, *An Unsettled People: Social Order and Disorder in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

41. This is a theme of longstanding development. See the classic statements of Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950); Alice Felt Tyler, *Freedom's Ferment: Phases of American Social History from the Colonial Period to the Outbreak of the Civil War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1944); Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984 ed.); C. S. Griffin, *The Ferment of Reform, 1830-1860* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1967); Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Experience in Lynn* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976); Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

the Industrial Revolution and its attendant social upheavals. He commented that the centrality of women in the home, and their encroachment into a variety of male social and political concerns, prompted the creation of lodges as a haven from women. "Fraternal members built temples from which women were excluded," Carnes wrote, "devised myriad secrets and threatened members with fearful punishments if they should 'tell their wife the concerns of the order,' and created rituals which reclaimed for themselves the religious authority that formerly reposed in the hands of Biblical patriarchs."⁴²

The Mormon temple concept as it emerged in Kirtland and Nauvoo seems to have possessed many of the ingredients that Carnes identified with lodges. The priesthood, of course, was an all-male club from the founding of the church, but beginning with temple rites initiated in Kirtland it took on special connotations. The secrecy, the ritualistic washings and anointings, the incantations, and the all-night vigils in the Kirtland temple's upper rooms bear a striking resemblance to the lodge experiences Carnes analyzed.⁴³ These commonalities were even more apparent in Nauvoo. The rituals became more complex; the emphasis on secrecy; the preoccupation with Old Testament images, especially those associated with biblical patriarchs; and the elaborate rites all share linkages to the religion of lodges so prominent in larger American society.⁴⁴ Could similar concerns for status and security have prompted the development of temple rituals?

One fundamental difference between the lodges and Mormon temple rites bears directly on the study of gender in Mormon history: Joseph Smith admitted women into the temple. His was a selective admittance, however, and came only after sixteen months of all-male activity. Entrance to the temple was expanded after his death, but it might have not gone so far had he lived. After all, there is good reason to believe that Smith always thought in terms of setting up hierarchies where he was

42. Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 79.

43. Roger D. Launius, *The Kirtland Temple: A Historical Narrative* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1986), 63-65.

44. The explicit connection between the Mormon temple ceremonies and lodges, especially Masonry, has been made in numerous publications. See David John Buerger, "The Development of the Mormon Temple Endowment Ceremony," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Winter 1987): 33-76; Reed C. Durham, Jr., "'Is There No Help for the Widow's Son?'" presidential address to the Mormon History Association, 20 Apr. 1974, Nauvoo, IL; Mervin B. Hogan, *Mormonism and Freemasonry: The Illinois Episode* (Salt Lake City: Campus Graphics, 1980); Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, 6-7; Roger D. Launius and F. Mark McKiernan, *Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, Red Brick Store* (Macomb: Western Illinois University Monograph Series, 1985), 28-32.

supreme, with a select few disciples placed just beneath him. He was never interested in equality, regardless of gender.⁴⁵ Indeed, the idea of eternal exaltation where faithful Mormons would "inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths" implies that others must be subservient (D&C 132:20).⁴⁶ Temple rituals, I would argue, always mandated a second-class position for women beneath their priesthood-holding husbands. The mother in heaven concept and the assertion that Mormon women would be queens and priestesses to their husbands that was explicit in Nauvoo temple ceremonies might well have been attempts to secure a patriarchal hegemony *vis à vis* female Mormons. Temple ceremonies of sealing, secret names, and entrance into celestial glory *only* if the husband calls were an effort to reenforce traditional gender roles and to ensure the place of the male as the dominant member of society.

Even in instances where practitioners have tried to demonstrate the equality of both sexes in the temple, the argument is unconvincing. LDS apostle Franklin D. Richards made a convoluted attempt to show that men and women were equal before the Mormon God in 1888. He said:

I ask any and everybody present who have received their endowments, whether he be a brother Apostle, Bishop, High Priest, Elder, or whatever office he may hold in the Church, What blessings did you receive, what ordinance, what power, intelligence, sanctification or grace did you receive that your wife did not partake of with you? . . . I hold that a faithful wife has certain gifts and blessings and promises with her husband, which she cannot be deprived of except by transgression of the holy order of God.⁴⁷

The important aspect of this is the necessary linkage of women to men. A faithful wife had gifts and promises and blessing *with her husband*, not in her own right, and this helped ensure her subservience. Although most Mormon women were pleased with this position—after all it placed them in a much higher position than non-Mormons—there is little question that

45. Ronald E. Romig has demonstrated this in relation to the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. See Ronald E. Romig, "David Whitmer: Faithful Dissenter, Witness Apart," in Roger D. Launius and Linda Thatcher, eds., *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, forthcoming), chap. 1. See how this has been played out in the larger scheme of American religion in J. Milton Yinger, *Religion in the Struggle for Power: A Study in the Sociology of Religion* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1946).

46. Verse 19 is explicit: "Then shall they be gods, . . . then shall they be above all, because all things are subject to them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them."

47. *Woman's Exponent* 6 (1 Sept. 1888): 54.

the sexes were not equal.⁴⁸ Melodie Moench Charles concluded that Mormon theology allowed women “no authority nor power; she gets no acknowledgment for her distinctive contributions, whatever they are. She has no self apart from her husband.”⁴⁹ Did this position emerge ambivalently over time or was it deliberately fostered by status anxiety or other more subtle factors? Future research should look into these questions and be willing to put forth new interpretations.

The gender issue relates to a wide body of other subjects in Mormon history. For instance, how would questions of gender relate to the development of plural marriage in the 1840s? Can polygamy be explained as a collective mid-life crisis of Mormon officials in the 1840s? Could the religious connotations associated with it have been a way to legitimize lascivious behavior? “Perhaps polygamy,” Newell G. Bringhurst speculated, “was the product of a so-called ‘middle-age crisis’ that Smith, along with other Mormon leaders, experience by the late 1830s and early 1840s. The taking of plural wives, particularly young, attractive ones, represented an effort to recapture youthful vigor and vitality.”⁵⁰ Of course, such a suggestion requires considerably more research before being raised as a legitimate theory, but it is certainly something worth exploring. Also, what about the priesthood as an all-male club, a fraternity as in college or more appropriately in men’s clubs of elites, and what did this mean for the various Mormon institutions? What was maleness all about in the nineteenth century and how was that translated into Mormonism? The same question could be asked of maleness in the twentieth century. Or even of heterosexuality and homosexuality. What male rituals have been part of the all-male Joint Council of the RLDS or Quorum of the Twelve meetings of the LDS? Why are they present and how would they have to be changed if women were admitted into those meetings? I contend that gender, as opposed to women’s, history is an important area of consideration in Mormon history.

CONCLUSION

These are some of the possibilities that are present for students of Mormon history in the 1990s and beyond. This is not a complete list, but it

48. The celebration of this position has been expressed in Carol Cornwall Madsen, “Mormon Women and the Temple: Toward a New Interpretation,” in Beecher and Anderson, *Sisters in Spirit*, 80-110.

49. Melodie Moench Charles, “The Need for a New Mormon Heaven,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Fall 1988): 73-87, quote from pp. 84-85.

50. Newell G. Bringhurst, *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1986), 54.

is a starting point. Themes of race, ethnicity, class, and gender hold promise for historians of the movement, and many can be undertaken using sources that are not restricted since they do not depend on the papers of high church officials. Their study could restructure our understanding of the church and its evolution. While new perspectives might shake up the discipline and offer different conclusions from those presently accepted, they should also instill a wider appreciation of the diversity and complexity of the religious movement we seek to understand. I appreciate that too few people, myself included, ask hard epistemological questions. This is the beginning of an attempt to frame some new ones. Of course I realize that simply asking questions is not sufficient. What is required is sustained questioning by those with differing viewpoints and a willingness to move beyond the boundaries of convention. Twenty-five years ago Mormon writer Sam Taylor described characteristics required of those who would produce great literature. With apologies and allowances for the male chauvinism in his characterization, I suggest the same attributes are required of historians who seek to explain Mormonism of all varieties. That person

is someone ridden and driven by a consuming passion that has been called the divine discontent. He is not a reporter but an interpreter; he is eternally a crusader; he is a non-conformist and a dissenter who cries out the faults of his world in his attempt to make a better one. His integrity demands that he search his environment honestly, whether he writes of the contemporary scene or of an historical setting. His drive compels him to present the essence of things as they are and were and not as positive-thinking apologists have decided they should be. He is abrasive to the organization man because no organization is perfect; most good and great creative writing is basically the literature of protest.⁵¹

Our present effort should be one that builds on the "New Mormon History"; it must move beyond it into new interpretive frameworks and totally different structural ideas. New questions, new conceptualizations, and new priorities reflecting the multi-culturalism of the United States offer a unique potential.

51. Samuel W. Taylor, "Peculiar People, Positive Thinkers, and the Prospect of Mormon Literature," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Summer 1967): 17-31, quote from p. 19.



The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation and Identity: Trends and Developments Since Midcentury¹

Armand L. Mauss

THIS ESSAY IS A *SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION* of the major developments in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since the mid-twentieth century, not a comprehensive history. It is a study in large part of the sociological consequences, whether intended or unintended, of organizational success. I think these developments and consequences occur both at the *official* ecclesiastical level and at the grassroots level of *folk* religion and folk culture. I distinguish between those developments which are more *public* and those which are more *internal* and thus perhaps less noticeable, at least to the outside. Since external or public developments are both better known and less arguable, I shall review these first and rather superficially.

PUBLIC OR EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

I take it that the following developments in the LDS church are well known and scarcely controversial, needing but little special comment from me:

1. *Rapid membership growth, doubling about every fifteen years, from a million members at the end of World War II, to about 9 million now. Certain concomitants of this growth have also been interesting and have had*

1. Of related articles I have published over the past several years, most familiar to *Dialogue* readers is "Assimilation and Ambivalence: The Mormon Reaction to Americanization," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22 (Spring 1989): 30-67.

"side-consequences" of their own: (a) a reversal of the ratio of membership baptisms to new converts; that is, earlier most membership growth came from natural increase, but now about three-fourths come from new converts; (b) a redistribution of membership, with no more than a fourth in the U.S. Far West, and about 40 percent now outside of North America altogether, especially in Latin America; (c) the emergence, for the first time in LDS history, of a second generation outside North America (still small, but emerging); (d) within North America, a new appeal of Mormonism in the deep and near South; outside of the Far West, more American converts join each year from the old Confederacy than from any other section of the country; 10 percent of all American Mormons now live in that section of the country, but 20 percent of all American *converts* come from that section; (e) Mormons still comprise only 2-3 percent of all Americans, but the LDS church has become a major American denomination, following in size only the Roman Catholics, the Southern Baptists, the Methodists, and perhaps the Lutherans, depending on how one combines or divides the various Lutheran bodies.²

2. *Rapid material gain as an institution, especially during the past thirty years.* Historian Michael Quinn has found that in 1962 the LDS church was \$30 million in debt, whereas now its assets are counted in the billions. Most of these assets are used for religious and charitable purposes, but they still constitute an enormous economic base on which the church can project future growth and assert present political and economic power of more worldly kinds.³

3. *Rapid upward mobility of American Mormons in socio-economic status* (as individuals). In the 1940s, American Mormons were still predominantly of farming and working-class origins and statuses. By 1990, Mormons ranked after only Episcopalians, Jews, and in a virtual tie with Presbyterians, in various measures of socio-economic status, such as education, occupational prestige, and income. There is evidence, however, that Mormons have not distributed themselves evenly or randomly in their choices of educational major or occupational careers, seeming to favor particularly corporate business, law, medicine, and dentistry. During the same period, Mormons have come to be slightly over-represented in national political offices, both elective and appointive, though not yet to the same degree of over-representation as Jews or Episcopalians.⁴

2. See LDS *Church News*, 10 Apr. 1993, 23, on church growth during the previous decade. See also any recent edition of the *Deseret News Church Almanac*.

3. Richard Robertson (and collaborators), "Mormon, Inc.," *The Arizona Republic*, 30 June-3 July 1991. Quinn's disclosure was made during a presentation on LDS church financial history at the August 1991 Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City.

4. For data on the relative SES of Mormons, see W. Clark Roof and William

INTERNAL AND GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENTS

The external and public developments sketched above have had some interesting internal consequences, both at the official ecclesiastical level and at the "folk" or grassroots level. These internal developments have not been attributable solely to the growth and material improvements just mentioned. They must be understood also as reactions in large part to the "Age of Aquarius," as the 1960s have sometimes been called. In any case, the internal developments can be summed up in the term "retrenchment," some of which has been led and sponsored by church leadership, and some of which has been more spontaneous, taking the form of a kind of grassroots fundamentalism.

None of this would have been predictable at midcentury (and indeed was not predicted by Thomas F. O'Dea in his classic study published at that time).⁵ By the 1950s the LDS church had been deliberately and consciously travelling an assimilationist course in its relationships with the surrounding American society, trying hard to live down the opprobrium of the nineteenth century and to acquire modern American respectability. The external developments just reviewed make it clear that this assimilationist policy worked well. The policy, furthermore, was much in line with the received theoretical wisdom of the sociology of religion, which had always predicted that new religious movements, if they survive, are inexorably assimilated and secularized by their host societies, and this as the very condition of their survival.⁶

Whether on the basis of sociological theory, therefore, or on the basis of observable empirical trends at midcentury, we should have expected the LDS church to continue down the well-worn path of secularization and assimilation made smooth by the Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, and others. Instead, LDS trends since midcentury have made for a resemblance to Southern Baptists. The church has, that is, deliberately turned partially away from Americanization toward a policy of retrenchment in an apparent effort to stop (or slow down) the erosion of the unique

McKinney, *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987). On Mormon over-representation in Congress, see James T. Duke and Barry L. Johnson, "Religious Affiliation and Congressional Representation," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 31 (1992): 324-29.

5. Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957); see especially his glance toward the future in chaps. 9 and 10.

6. For a comparison between this "received theoretical wisdom" and the newly emerging paradigm in the sociology of religion, see R. Stephen Warner, "Work in Progress toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1993): 1044-93. See also chap. 1 of my *Angel and Beehive* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994) for a discussion of the theoretical implications of the "Mormon anomaly" vis à vis traditional sociological theory.

Mormon identity and to re-establish some of its nineteenth-century image as a "peculiar people." As indicated, this retrenchment process has had both official and grassroots manifestations. Let us review the official manifestations first.

OFFICIAL MANIFESTATIONS

1. *Renewed emphasis on the claim to modern revelation.* This can be seen in the rhetoric of general conferences analyzed by sociologists Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd; in the relatively recent additions to the Doctrine and Covenants; in the increased promotion of the Book of Mormon, both inside and outside the church; and in the retroactive "Mormonization" of the King James Bible through the imposition of hermeneutics derived from latter-day scriptures and from the Joseph Smith Translation. It is as though the brethren have been reaffirming to the world that revelation did not cease with nineteenth-century Mormon prophets any more than it did with biblical prophets.⁷

2. *Renewed emphasis on genealogy and temple work.* This development hardly needs much demonstration or substantiation beyond pointing to the ambitious temple-building program of the church (from only eight temples at midcentury to more than fifty now) and to the enormous improvements in both resources and technology represented by the hundreds of computerized stake genealogical libraries around the world (recently renamed "Family History Libraries"). The new temples have a way of making this development seem quite public at times and, indeed, are widely used, both before and after dedication, for public promotional purposes. Yet genealogy and temple work remain little-known aspects of Mormon life to the outside.

3. *Family renewal and retrenchment.* This began in the early 1960s (even before the Age of Aquarius was in full sway) with new Family Home Evening manuals provided each home and the night set aside each week. More recently this motif appears also in the resistance to feminism and in a re-emphasis on the religious aspects of the role of patriarch or father. As

7. See Gordon and Gary Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed: Themes in the Development of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), for an empirical study of changing emphases in general conference addresses across Mormon history, with particular reference to changes since 1950. For the recent "Mormonization" of the King James Version of the Bible, see Edward H. Ashment, "Making the Scriptures 'Indeed One in Our Hands,'" in Dan Vogel, ed., *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 237-64; see also Armand L. Mauss and Philip L. Barlow, "Church, Sect, and Scripture: The Protestant Bible and Mormon Sectarian Retrenchment," *Sociological Analysis* 52 (1991): 397-414; and Mauss, *Angel and Beehive*, chaps. 6 and 7.

time has gone on, this aspect of LDS retrenchment has become somewhat contentious, as well-meaning Mormons and their equally well-meaning leaders have sought new ways to adapt traditional LDS values to the moral predicaments presented by the “liberated” American society of the post-1960s.⁸

4. *A tremendous upgrading of the missionary enterprise*, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In quantitative terms, we can observe that the total membership of the LDS church has increased eightfold since 1950, whereas the missionary corps has increased tenfold. About a third of all LDS men between the ages of 19 and 25 serve full-time missions, an appreciable number of young women, and increasing numbers of retired couples. In qualitative terms, we can cite the increased integration of full-time missionary work with local ward friendship networks; the improved language training at various regional training centers; the constant “fine tuning” and “course correcting” of proselyting strategies and tactics; and the little-known but highly sophisticated social science research that is conducted under church auspices and provides the basis for all this training and fine-tuning.

5. *An intensified and worldwide commitment to religious education*. The LDS seminary and institute programs, of course, have their origins early in the century, but they were always limited to Utah and a few other locales with significant Mormon numbers. Beginning in the 1960s, we can see a mushrooming of the seminary and institute programs, both in their extensiveness and in the portion of the church budget which they consume. The Church Education System (CES) now reaches far outside of North America to provide seminary classes in many parts of Europe, Asia, and Latin America. At the same time, the pedagogical philosophy of CES has manifestly changed from one of intellectual exploration and articulation to one of rote memorization and indoctrination.⁹

Now all five of these major developments in the LDS church during the past few decades have in common (a) an overt retrenchment theme; (b) roots in authentic early Mormonism; and (c) the obvious and explicit sponsorship and leadership of the general authorities of the church. It is in that sense that they must be considered both deliberate and official. Yet there is at least one more important development, this one not necessarily

8. In the new *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., (New York: Macmillan, 1992), see the entries for topics such as Abuse (Spouse and Child), Birth Control, Chastity, Divorce, Family Home Evening, Feminism, Motherhood, Women (Roles of), Men (Roles of), Procreation, and Sexuality. Taken together, these entries display an ambivalent tone, sometimes sounding traditional and sometimes modern.

9. See “Church Educational System” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. For a discussion of the changing nature of CES pedagogy, see chaps. 6, 10, and 11 of my *Angel and Beehive*.

traceable to early Mormon roots, but nevertheless extremely important to the five developments I have just outlined. I speak, of course, of the correlation movement.

Space does not permit a thorough analysis here of this organizational strategy, but I have more to say about it elsewhere, and it has been given some attention by other investigators, as well.¹⁰ Here it will suffice to note that "correlation" for Mormons refers to an organizational philosophy and strategy aimed at the *standardization* of church policies, practices, and curricula all the way down to the local level, and at the centralization, concentration, and penetration of priesthood *control* over all church programs, both vertically and horizontally. "Correlation" thus by its nature carries a strong retrenchment orientation, just as an organizational strategy, insofar as it concentrates and emphasizes *control* as its main objective. When linked with the five programmatic thrusts summarized above, "correlation" has clearly intensified the entire retrenchment motif in modern church life.

Against that background of official, ecclesiastical manifestations of retrenchment, let us turn now to some of the less official "folk" expressions of retrenchment at the grassroots. Here we shall be discussing those more psychological and subcultural developments that have made for a change in the general "feel" or quality of social and religious life in local LDS wards—or at least in most of those found in the western U.S.

FOLK MANIFESTATIONS

Of course, in Mormonism, more so than in most religions, the distinction between "folk" and "official" can be ambiguous, arbitrary, even moot. Mormon "officials," after all, from the local to the general level, are recruited directly from the "folk," without benefit of professional seminary training. In the LDS tradition, this lay ministry has always been regarded as one of the finer features of the religion; and, to be sure, it has had the advantage of involving a large proportion of the membership in leadership callings, primarily at the local ward or stake level, and thus of minimizing the cultural and intellectual gap between clergy and laity common in other religions. However, there are other aspects of the lay leadership tradition in Mormonism that contribute to the spread of folk fundamentalism, and I shall explore some of those aspects a little later. For now I shall simply

10. For a brief overview of the correlation movement, see Peter Wiley, "The Lee Revolution and the Rise of Correlation," *Sunstone* 10 (1):18-22; see also James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1992), chap. 20, and my brief discussion in chap. 6 of *Angel and Beehive*. I understand that Jan Shipps is preparing a thorough study of correlation.

review some of the more important forms in which that folk fundamentalism has expressed itself.¹¹

1. *A neo-orthodox drift in theology.* This development has been the subject of a book by O. Kendall White,¹² who points primarily to three such neo-orthodox expressions: (a) a redefinition of deity in the infinite, incomprehensible terms associated with traditional Christianity, rather than in the more contingent and finite terms used by Joseph Smith in the Nauvoo period; (b) a redefinition of human nature in the pessimistic terms associated with the traditional dogmas of original sin and human depravity, rather than in the more optimistic and perfectible terms found in early Mormonism; and (c) a redefinition of salvation more in terms of grace than of works. The exponents of this neo-orthodoxy identified by White are mostly not priesthood leaders but primarily writers and speakers from the Brigham Young University religion faculty and/or CES, who promote their ideas in books, class lectures, and on the speaker circuit.

2. *An increasing reliance on scriptural literalism and inerrancy.* A standard feature of Protestant fundamentalism, this intellectual style has always been present to some degree in Mormonism as well; yet there is evidence that the tendency has spread and increased in recent decades among Mormons, especially at the folk level, but also in some high places. Harold Christensen and Kenneth Cannon demonstrated a strong trend from the 1930s to the 1970s in fundamentalist thinking among BYU students; Martin Johnson and Phil Mullins more recently have shown a strong convergence between Mormons and Southern Baptists in certain beliefs generally considered as fundamentalist; and Beatty and Walter have done the same in a study of Mormon versus other ecclesiastical leaders. According to the research of an Arizona LDS investigator, even

11. I am using "fundamentalism" here in the sense in which it is usually understood in American religion, rather than in the peculiar Mormon reference to polygynous schismatic sects. My characterization of certain folk traits of Mormons as "fundamentalist" in the ensuing discussion is based on the descriptions of Protestant fundamentalism found, for example, in Nancy T. Ammerman, *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987), and in George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

12. See O. Kendall White, *Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy: A Crisis Theology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987). In his introduction, White indicates that by "neo-orthodoxy" he is actually referring to the fundamentalist strain in Protestantism, but that he deliberately refrained from using "fundamentalism" for fear of confusion with the unique Mormon meaning. A related discussion of the LDS drift toward Protestant fundamentalism will be found in Kent Robson, "Omnis on the Horizon: Are We Copying Protestant Theology?" *Sunstone* 8 (1983): 20-23. A similar observation is made by Richard Poll in "Liahona and Iron Rod Revisited," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Summer 1983): 69-78.

Mormon *scientists* during the past forty years have shown an increased tendency toward fundamentalism in their personal religious beliefs. Such a tendency would certainly be apparent also to anyone who has attended Sunday school and priesthood classes for as many years as I have and watched the growing resort to literalist interpretations in both lesson materials and class discussions.¹³

This preference for literalism, and the neo-orthodox tendencies above mentioned, have been expressed also by a decline in the earlier Mormon enthusiasm for reconciling science and religion once seen in both the personifications and the writings of leaders like Orson Pratt, B. H. Roberts, John A. Widtsoe, James E. Talmage, and Joseph F. Merrill.¹⁴ Instead, we see gratuitous swipes at intellectuals and evolutionists in CES materials, regular and outspoken condemnations of the theory of organic evolution by prominent apostles, and a strongly literalist inspiration for the footnoting and topical guide imposed on the 1981 editions of LDS scriptures.

3. *Growth of a control and obedience mentality in church leadership styles.* A series of expressions of this mentality have been documented in recent articles by D. Michael Quinn and by Lavina Fielding Anderson.¹⁵ While such accounts are often inadequately corroborated, and thus represent primarily the complainant's viewpoint, they at least indicate the recurrent *perceptions* of church members who have felt imposed upon by "unrighteous dominion." The incidents seem to occur mainly at the grassroots, involving well-meaning but heavy-handed bishops and stake presidents, as well as, sad to say, misguided patriarchal fathers in their own homes.

13. See Kathleen M. Beatty and Oliver Walter, "Mormons and the New Christian Right: Re-evaluating Prospects for Political Coalitions" (paper presented at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Sept. 1987); Harold T. Christensen and Kenneth L. Cannon, "The Fundamentalist Emphasis at Brigham Young University, 1935-1973," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17 (1978): 53-57; and Martin Johnson and Phil Mullins, "Mormonism: Catholic, Protestant, Different?" *Review of Religious Research* 34 (1992): 51-62. The Arizona scholar in question is Richard T. Wooton, whose longitudinal study of LDS scientists is found in *Saints and Scientists* (Mesa, AZ: EduTech Corp., 1992). See also Richley H. Crapo, "Grass-Roots Deviance from Official Doctrine: A Study of Latter-day Saint (Mormon) Folk-Beliefs," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 26 (1987): 465-85.

14. For a fine historical account of the changing attitudes toward science among Mormons and their leaders, see Erich Robert Paul, *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992). His analysis of fundamentalist, anti-scientific elements in CES materials is found in chap. 8.

15. D. Michael Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian (and Its Aftermath)," in George D. Smith, ed., *Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 69-111; and Lavina Fielding Anderson, "The LDS Intellectual Community and Church Leadership: A Contemporary Chronology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Spring 1993): 7-64.

However, periodic initiatives by individuals and groups among the general authorities in recent years raise the question of whether such a leadership mentality now represents also the collective and official preference of the presiding brethren. I am not yet prepared to conclude that it does. First-hand accounts I have received from close friends and colleagues about their personal conversations with general authorities leave me with the impression that at least some of the efforts at control from the general level in recent years have been quite controversial even among general authorities themselves, as well as among stake and regional leaders. Surely such was the case in the 1983 campaign by Elder Mark E. Petersen against a number of *Dialogue* authors such as myself; and judging from press reports, the more recent "purge" of the "September Six" was also rather a contentious issue, despite the efforts of the brethren to maintain a united front publicly.¹⁶

Until the topmost leadership of the church is once again in the hands of a full and vigorous First Presidency for an extended period, we shall probably not get a very clear idea about the extent of any official and definite change at the general level toward a more controlling leadership posture. Meanwhile, it seems reasonable to observe that when excesses occur in the exercise of priesthood authority, especially at the grassroots, they can be attributed mainly to the following factors: (a) the general retrenchment motif in recent church history, including "correlation," which seems to some to call for a "tighter ship" all around; (b) the folk fundamentalism that has increasingly infused grassroots thinking; and, perhaps most importantly, (c) the ambiguity now existing in the *scope of legitimate authority* for Mormon priesthood leaders. One of the concomitants of the venerable church tradition of a non-professional clergy is that our lay leadership receives very little training or guidance in what demands can legitimately be made upon church members in matters of life-style or intellectual controversy. Aside from the thin *General Handbook of Instructions* (a third of which is taken up with the topic of church discipline!), there is in the LDS tradition no canon law defining the limits of ecclesiastical control or prerogatives over the membership. Ideally the guidance of the Spirit fills this gap, but there remains enormous variation from one priesthood leader to the next in what he regards as a legitimate demand for

16. From the public statements of some general authorities themselves, and from Steve Benson's accounts of his interview with Elders Oaks and Maxwell, it appears that there was a variety of opinions among the presiding brethren over how to deal with those intellectuals who were excommunicated during September 1993, and some differences as well between general authorities and stake presidents. See, for example, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Oct. 1993, B-1, B-2; 25 Oct. 1993, "Commentary"; and Ogden (Utah) *Standard-Examiner*, 23 Oct. 1993, 9A.

conformity, with a lot of room for acting on personal preferences, fundamentalist or otherwise.¹⁷

4. *Susceptibility to fundamentalist "scare scenarios."* In recent years, two kinds of collective mass hysteria have found credence especially among religious fundamentalists in this country: (a) stories of satanic ritual murder, animal mutilation, sexual perversions, etc., and (b) calls by different prophets of millennial survivalism to hole up in remote sanctuaries and prepare for the promised Armageddon of the end times. As recently as the fall of 1992, there was considerable publicity around Utah and the West about an outbreak of millennial survivalism in certain Mormon stakes that provoked action by church leaders. Perhaps ironically, but not without justification, these Mormon survivalists claimed some of their warrant from the 1960s writings of church president Ezra Taft Benson himself. Another indication that church leaders, as well as the folk, might be susceptible to fundamentalist scare scenarios can be seen in the credence which a member of the Presiding Bishopric gave a couple of years ago to stories of satanic child abuse among temple-going Mormons, as recalled by some of their children years after the alleged facts.¹⁸

17. For example, does a bishop or a stake president have the legitimate right to forbid "study groups," in which LDS adults get together in each others' homes to discuss religious books or topics outside of church auspices? If so, under what circumstances or exigencies might they legitimately be forbidden? In the absence of clear and settled church doctrine or gospel principles, is such a priesthood leader entitled to impose, even by implication, his own tastes in theology, music, literature, art, political theory, or sociological theory in his instructions to members under his jurisdiction? Some church members would answer no, but others would say yes, citing the principle of "obedience." Yet such a principle does not exist in the abstract. One is obedient only to a given law, ordinance, or principle.

One is also obedient to the Lord, of course; but nowhere, not even in the temple, do Latter-day Saints commit themselves to obey any church leader, except, obviously, where he calls us to obey a gospel doctrine or principle. It is in that realm of non-doctrine, unsettled doctrine, or folk doctrine that demands for obedience to priesthood leaders become problematic. Sometimes we are asked to "sustain" our leaders, with the erroneous implication that "sustain" is more or less synonymous with "obey." However, when I "sustain" church leaders, either at general conference time or on specific occasions, I mean only that I am concurring in the legitimacy of their calls, with the presumption that the calls were divinely inspired, and that I am committing myself to follow their leadership in every respect that is scripturally and doctrinally sound. I regard *unqualified* obedience to any mortal person as a violation of the principle established by the War in Heaven. As I read the outcome of that struggle, it established the primacy of (free) agency *over* obedience, especially blind obedience.

18. For information on the Mormon millennial survivalists, and the reactions of church leaders to them, see coverage in *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Nov. 1992, A1-2, and 2 Dec. 1992, B1. For information on the communication among church leaders about reports of alleged satanic abuses by church members, see *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 Oct. 1991, *Sunstone* 15 (Nov. 1991): 58, and *Salt Lake City Messenger*, Nov. 1991 and Mar. 1992. For analyses

5. *Exaggerated forms of social conservatism.* This refers, for example, to the continuing preference in folk Mormonism for traditional gender roles. Here, however, the line between "folk" and "official" becomes blurred. President Benson's two 1987 addresses on the proper roles of mothers and fathers (respectively) seemed to give an official stamp to this preference, as did Elder Boy K. Packer's address in October 1993 general conference. The same traditional understanding of gender roles permeates the most recent lesson manuals for the various church auxiliaries. At the same time, however, a rather softened interpretation can be seen in (a) Elder Gordon B. Hinckley's address to regional representatives in early 1988, in which he extolled the worldly accomplishments of several historically important women, apparently as models for LDS young women; and in (b) Elder M. Russell Ballard's address to the October 1993 Relief Society conference, in which he clearly acknowledged the realistic need in the church to accommodate different ways of being a good Mormon woman. Operationally, of course, the large number of women on the church payroll, including many mothers of minor children, seems to undercut any claim to a formal doctrinal or theological church position on this issue, despite the obvious preferences of probably most general authorities. A careful reading of their public statements on the matter, furthermore, gives the clear impression that their chief concern is more one of insuring the adequate care and nurturing of children than the patriarchal control of women. It is thus understandable that their public statements often fall back on the patriarchal traditions of their own generation in discussing family concerns; but in doing so they sometimes use rhetoric that closely resembles the folk fundamentalism of Southern Baptist and sectarian preachers.¹⁹

The same kind of fundamentalism can be seen in the handling of sexual subjects, which at times borders on prudery. See, for example, the analysis

and general debunking of such satanism stories by social scientists, see James T. Richardson et al., eds., *The Satanism Scare* (Nawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1991), and Philip Jenkins, *Intimate Enemies: Moral Panics in Contemporary Britain* (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992).

19. On the president's preferences for traditional gender roles, see Ezra Taft Benson, "To the Mothers in Zion," 22 Feb. 1987, and "To the Fathers in Israel," 3 Oct. 1987, both published as pamphlets by the Corporation of the President and widely distributed throughout the church; see discussion of these by Lavina Fielding Anderson in "A Voice from the Past: The Benson Instructions for Parents," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Winter 1988): 103-13. Elder Packer's address is in the *Ensign* 23 (Nov. 1993): 21-24; Elder Ballard's is in the same issue, 89-93. Elder Hinckley's 1988 address is also in the *Ensign* 18 (Sept. 1988): 8-11. On the instruction of youth in traditional gender roles, see the content analyses of youth lesson manuals in K. S. Gunnell and N. T. Hoffman, "Train up a Child in the Way He Should Go: What are Little Laurels Made of?" *Sunstone* 10 (1985): 34-37, and S. B. Ingelsby, "Priesthood Prescriptions for Women: Aaronic Quorum Lesson Manuals on a Woman's Place," *Sunstone* 10 (1985): 28-33.

by Terence Day of the "erotophobia" in the widely-circulated *Parent's Guide*. Another common fundamentalist theme is the indiscriminant association of modern rock music with satanic impulses, which is exemplified in a popular book by a Mormon musician.²⁰

FACTORS FACILITATING RETRENCHMENT AND FUNDAMENTALISM

So far I have reviewed two major categories of developments in the LDS church since the mid-twentieth century: public or *external* developments through which the church has more or less deliberately presented itself to the world, and *internal* developments not necessarily hidden from the world but experienced mostly by insiders. These internal developments, in turn, I divided into *official* and *folk* categories. I indicated that this official-versus-folk division might be somewhat arbitrary or arguable, given the blurring of the line between the two in a lay ministry like that of the Mormons. The reader might be interested to know, however, that throughout my review of the various expressions of "folk fundamentalism," I used as one implicit standard for "the official" the new *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, which contains many entries bearing on the issues under discussion.

Space does not permit me to cite the many *Encyclopedia* passages I consulted, but I think an impartial reader would come to the same conclusion that I did, namely that the relevant entries in the encyclopedia do *not* embrace the expressions of fundamentalism that I have outlined, *even though some of these expressions are found in church manuals and in the public statements of church leaders*. Not all of the specifics, of course, are addressed in the *Encyclopedia*, but I think that many readers would be surprised, for example, at the explicit endorsement therein of Joseph Smith's "progressive" teachings about the nature of humanity and deity (as opposed to the "neo-orthodox" teachings); the explicit denial of any official position on organic evolution or the age of the earth; the rejection of blind obedience or of prophetic infallibility; the moderately feminist influences in the selections about Mormon women; and so on. To be sure, the *Encyclopedia* itself carries a disclaimer of official status, but one would have to be extremely naive to believe that it does not reflect the collective approval and consensus of the general authorities of the church.²¹

20. On the ambivalence about sex, even in marriage, see the content analysis of *A Parent's Guide* in Terence L. Day, "A Parent's Guide: Sex Education or Erotophobia?" *Sunstone* 12 (1988): 8-14. For a fundamentalist exhortation on the evils of modern rock music, see Lex DeAzevedo, *Pop Music and Morality* (Salt Lake City: Publisher's Press, 1982).

21. See especially the entries for Reason and Revelation, Following the Brethren,

There can be little doubt about the existence in modern Mormonism of the kinds of folk fundamentalism I have reviewed. The social scientist in me, however, requires that I concede a shortage of evidence on the *prevalence* of that fundamentalism, and on the related question of whether it has, in fact, grown and spread within Mormonism during the past few decades. The evidence that I have reviewed above in passing²² argues, at least obliquely, I think, for an increase in fundamentalism since the 1940s.²³ What explanation can be advanced for this fundamentalism and for its growth?

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Part of the explanation is psychological, but much of it is organizational. First a couple of psychological explanations, speculative but theoretically credible:

1. *A deeply felt, but rarely articulated, need to recover an eroded sense of Mormon identity.* The nineteenth-century Mormon distinctiveness and incipient ethnicity so convincingly examined by O'Dea had already eroded a great deal by the time his book appeared in 1957, and the erosion has continued.²⁴ The official retrenchment policies discussed above were, I believe, in large part a reaction by the church leadership to this eroding distinctiveness of Mormons, and a necessary reaction, at that, if the church was not to join mainline Protestantism in the oblivion of total assimilation. Even official retrenchment efforts have not been enough, however, for many individual Mormons and leaders, who find it necessary to seek the psychological security of the most conservative extremes, in order to assure themselves of their own distinctive Mormon identity. In a society which cares little about theological peculiarities, and which has itself increasingly acquired the once distinctive Mormon concerns about wholesome family life and a healthful life-style, the boundary between Mormons and others gets easily blurred without *something* conspicuous.

Obedience, Science and Religion, Creation Accounts, Evolution, Feminism, Women, Roles of, and others. For a review that explains the *de facto* official nature of the *Encyclopedia*, and the close supervision of general authorities in its preparation, see Richard D. Poll's review in *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Fall 1992): 205-13. See also several reviews of the *Encyclopedia* in *Sunstone* 16/6 (1993), including my own, "Marching Down the Mormon Middle: A Review of the Social Issues in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*."

22. See, for example, n13.

23. I treat this more thoroughly in *Angel and Beehive*.

24. See my essay, "Mormons as Ethnics: Variable Historical and International Implications of an Appealing Concept," in *The Mormon Presence in Canada*, Brigham Y. Card et al., eds., (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1990), 332-52, and chap. 5 in *Angel and Beehive*.

2. *A generalized reaction to the Age of Aquarius (1960s)*, which has called into question many "traditional" beliefs and values about sex, family, and the meaning of "liberation." More than one sociological treatise sees this reaction-psychology as the explanation for the proliferation of the new and intense forms of religious expression during the past two decades or so, that is, as "getting saved from the sixties."²⁵ This mentality has been expressed also by a felt need to "get back to basics" in church teachings and discipline and in a concomitant suspicion of "worldly" liberation movements like feminism. Some of the current efforts to "rein in" LDS scholars can also be understood in this light, I think.

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

Yet organizational changes have been even more important than psychological ones. I have already mentioned the correlation movement, which has served as the main organizational vehicle for retrenchment, and even for the spread of folk fundamentalism, to the extent that the "correlating" has been carried out by church leaders and bureaucrats, some of whom have fundamentalist ideas. There have also been other important organizational developments that have unintentionally fostered the spread of fundamentalism:

1. *The changing occupational backgrounds of the lay leadership.* Before midcentury, the leadership of the church, from the local through the general level, was recruited primarily from among people with farming, blue-collar, and small business backgrounds. Such people were not always enlightened in their attitudes, but they tended to be unpretentious and pragmatic, rather than ideologically focused. Furthermore, until midcentury, there tended to be an enormous amount of interfamily networking, even in Mormon communities outside Utah, so that many of the men and women who were leaders at ward, stake, and even general levels had had small-town or family origins in common with those among whom they served. All of this made for mutual presumptions of church loyalty and for ecclesiastical relationships of a highly familial kind, as bishops, Relief Society presidents, and other leaders rotated back and forth between lay leadership and grassroots.

In contrast, since midcentury recruitment to church leadership, especially for general authorities, has come increasingly from the world of corporate business and finance (including the corporate church bureaucracy itself), from law, from engineering, and from medicine or dentistry, without the liberal sprinkling of scholars and scientists that we once saw

25. See Steven M. Tipton, *Getting Saved from the Sixties: Moral Meaning in Conversion and Cultural Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

in the likes of Widtsoe, Talmage, and Merrill.²⁶ This change in recruitment base probably reflects changes in occupations of Mormons generally, as well as the need for expertise in business and in law for overseeing the church's enterprises. Yet an unintended concomitant of these new kinds of leaders has been a change in leadership style more akin to what one sees in the corporate world: tight controls up and down the hierarchy; the appearance of monolithic unanimity outside the "boardroom"; compliance without much question from the bottom; a highly rationalized bureaucratic approach to all aspects of governance; material cost/benefit assessments as the basis for decision-making; little tolerance for theoretical abstractions about human behavior; and little knowledge, sophistication, or respect for scholarship, especially in the social sciences. Many of these traits, especially the last, make for easy intellectual resort to scriptural literalism, blind obedience, and other elements of folk fundamentalism.

The rapid growth and geographic mobility of Mormons, furthermore, has meant that even local church leaders might know but little more about their ward and stake members than about their employees. Such increasing social distance has made the arbitrary exercise of authority, or "unrighteous dominion," much easier in the church than it was before mid-century. (After all, it was hard for bishops or stake presidents to become too high-handed when many in the flock could remember them as runny-nosed kids or teenaged trouble-makers!) All of this change has been expressed, according to one telling analysis, in a shift in the very metaphors of church discourse from familial to corporate in nature.²⁷

2. A blurring of the line between "folk" and "official," as LDS men and women (but especially men) are recruited from the grassroots to *de facto* careers in church leadership, without benefit of either the training or the discipline in any kind of canon law that would clarify the nature and scope of their priesthood prerogatives.²⁸ Accordingly, some church leaders bring

26. Frequency distributions for the occupational backgrounds of recently appointed stake presidents, mission presidents, and general authorities have been tabulated from the *LDS Church News* and reported in chap. 6 of *Angel and Beehive*. The contrast is especially striking when we note that during the first four decades of this century, an entire third of those appointed to the Council of the Twelve were men with doctoral degrees and other strong credentials in various fields of science (as contrasted with technology, engineering, law, business, and so on).

27. See John Tarjan, "Heavenly Father or Chairman of the Board? How Organizational Metaphors Can Define and Confine Religious Experience," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Fall 1992): 36-55; see also and relatedly Warner P. Woodworth, "Brave New Bureaucracy," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Fall 1987): 25-36.

28. Mormons continue to take some pride in having no "professional" clergy, a claim which is technically correct. However, there has evolved in recent decades a *career* clergy made up of thousands of men who, in effect, have parallel or "secondary" careers in

into office their own fundamentalist preferences in doctrine and leadership style; these are then imposed on folks at the grassroots, many of whom then find it difficult to distinguish what is and is not required of them to accept as loyal church members. This predicament is almost an everyday occurrence in some wards and stakes, but even at the general level the lay priesthood can function as a kind of conduit for the transmission of fundamentalist thinking out of the grassroots and into the top leadership. For example, Elder Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine* (1958), which has become something of a folk classic as an authoritative source of LDS teachings, was originally criticized severely by the First Presidency and the Twelve as permeated with doctrinal errors but was nevertheless later republished after the demise of its principal apostolic critics. Both that book and certain church curriculum materials for which Elder McConkie was ultimately responsible have promoted a fundamentalist line on such matters as the age of the earth, biological evolution, and the origin and nature of the races.²⁹ Elder Packer's public criticisms of the "new" scholarly approach to LDS history, and his unwillingness to accommodate any kind of biological evolutionary theory, have been expressed in terms also highly reminiscent of Protestant fundamentalism.³⁰

Both apostles are examples of influential general authorities who came to office at relatively young ages after education in specialized (as opposed to broad or liberal) disciplines, and after rather limited secular occupational experience. Both have obviously been great and effective stalwarts in the leadership, deeply devoted to their callings and to the church. In personal

which they work their way up the ladder from the local to the regional, or even to the general, level of church leadership. The general authorities alone, which numbered only twenty-five until midcentury, now number more than 100. In addition, there are now numerous men following career paths from bishop to high councilor to stake president (or patriarch) to regional representative (and some eventually to general authority). These careers can easily last twenty years or more, broken only by short periods of "rotation" back to the grassroots. The likelihood and progress of such careers is further enhanced, incidentally, by first having a "primary" career in the ranks of the professional church "civil service" bureaucracy, especially CES.

29. The *Mormon Doctrine* episode, by no means unknown in scholarly circles, is recounted by Paul in *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology*, 179-80, and McConkie's influence on CES manuals is illustrated on pp. 180-84 of the same book. See also David J. Buerger, "Speaking with Authority: The Theological Influence of Elder Bruce R. McConkie," *Sunstone* 10 (1985): 8-13.

30. Elder Packer's attack on historical scholarship is discussed by Quinn, "On Being a Mormon Historian," and one of his most recent public attacks on the theory of evolution (seemingly gratuitous, given that it occurred during a BYU symposium on the Book of Mormon) can be found in his sermon, "The Law and the Light," in M. S. Nyman and C. D. Tate, eds., *The Book of Mormon: Jacob through the Words of Mormon* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1990), 1-31.

experience and education, they do not typify all general authorities, but they do happen to exemplify the process by which folk fundamentalism gets disseminated upward into the leadership echelons and then back downward to the folk with an authoritative aura. The process is doubtless even more common at lower echelons throughout the church.

3. *Recurrent turnovers in the First Presidency*, which has been headed by either short-term presidents (for example, Harold B. Lee) or acting presidents (for example, Hugh B. Brown and later Gordon B. Hinckley) during approximately *half* of the years since 1940.³¹ The obvious success of the church in recent decades suggests that such turnover in the First Presidency has not meant a lack of leadership more generally, for as President Hinckley has assured us there is clearly a “back-up system.”³² Yet the point here has more to do with the *internal* politics among and between the First Presidency and the Twelve (bodies “equal in authority,” according to D&C 107:24). When presidents become aged and incapacitated, the presidency finds itself only a faltering heartbeat away from dissolution. Depending on the apostolic rank of the counselors in the presidency, they might or might not be junior to other apostles in line to succeed the president in the immediate or slightly later future. Meanwhile, if an issue arises among the brethren that is unusual, or is not covered by established policy, a “residual” First Presidency (i.e., the counselors without a lucid president) is in a weakened position to speak for the president. It is also in a weakened position to restrain or prevent controversial initiatives by powerful and assertive individuals or groups among the Twelve, including those of a fundamentalist bent. After all, if the counselors to an incapacitated president are challenged by any or all of the Twelve about the collective will of the First Presidency, a counselor is simply not in a position to declare that will without the backing of the president and prophet himself. Examples of this predicament would include the difficulties during President David O. McKay’s final days of (a) reining in the political extremism of Elder Ezra Taft Benson and of (b) achieving satisfactory resolution to the church’s racial policies. Another example occurred in 1983 under an incapacitated President Kimball, when Elder Mark E. Petersen, a powerful senior apostle, attempted to restrain a number of LDS scholars, an initiative that did not come to the attention of the First Presidency until it threatened to present

31. If we assume that the final three or four years were essentially non-functional ones for presidents Heber J. Grant, David O. McKay, Spencer W. Kimball, and Ezra Taft Benson, and count as “short-termers” presidents George Albert Smith (5 years), Joseph Fielding Smith, and Harold B. Lee (about 2 years each), then easily half of the time since 1940 the church has been governed by acting and/or “temporary” presidents.

32. See Elder Hinckley’s remarks during the October 1992 general conference, *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): 53.

a public relations problem. There is some reason to believe that even the unpleasantness of late 1993—the September excommunications—can be attributed mainly to the initiative of certain apostles, and not to a decision of the First Presidency itself.³³

4. *The change in CES pedagogical philosophy* from one of articulation and reconciliation of LDS teachings with worldly learning to one of indoctrination and rote learning of church teachings and scriptures. I have discussed this issue at greater length elsewhere, and several other publications have done so too, at least by implication. There can be little doubt about the shift in CES from an essentially scholarly and intellectual approach to a simplistic or even anti-intellectual approach to church doctrine and history, even at the college level. Scriptural pedagogy now gives preference to literalism and proof-texting, while the lesson manuals sometimes include overtly fundamentalist ideas. Given the pervasive exposure of Mormon youth, including youthful converts, to the seminary and institute programs, CES must be considered an important contributor to the spread of grassroots fundamentalism in the contemporary LDS church.³⁴

5. *Increased rates of conversion from the Bible Belt.* Earlier in this essay I pointed out that while 10 percent of American Mormons live in the Bible Belt, 20 percent of converts now come from that region, which means that southerners, in a sense, are “over-represented” among LDS American converts. This is simply an expression in Mormonism of the “southernization” that has been observed in American religion more generally. The implication here is, of course, that Mormons recruited from the South are more likely than others to bring a fundamentalist understanding of religion into the church when they join. It is hard to tell which is cause and which is effect here: Has the influx of southern converts brought more folk fundamentalism into Mormonism than it once had, or have the southern

33. The unsuccessful effort to restrain Elder Benson is fairly well known among Mormon old-timers and is recounted in detail by D. Michael Quinn, “Ezra Taft Benson and Mormon Political Conflicts,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Summer 1993): 1-87. The 1983 foray against LDS scholars by Elder Mark E. Petersen is also well known and is recounted by Lavina Fielding Anderson, see n15. Efforts late in President McKay’s administration to resolve the race issue are recounted in my article, “The Fading of the Pharaohs’ Curse,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Autumn 1981): 16-17. Accounts of the discussions and actions of church leaders responsible for the 1993 excommunications are found in, for example, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2, 11, 16, 17, 20, 25 Oct. 1993; Ogden, Utah, *Standard-Examiner*, 23 Oct. 1993; and *New York Times*, 19 Sept., 2 Oct. 1993.

34. The change in CES philosophy and curriculum is discussed at some length, with appropriate examples, in *Angel and Beehive*, chap. 6. The cognate change in churchwide manuals and instruction is discussed and illustrated in the same chapter.

converts been attracted by the fundamentalism that was already present and growing? The causal direction probably goes both ways.³⁵

CONCLUSION

Much of what I have had to say in this essay should give comfort and reassurance to Mormons and their leaders: The LDS church during the past fifty years has grown rapidly, has acquired substantial material resources, and has come to enjoy a relatively high degree of public respect as a major religious denomination in the United States (despite a persistent anti-Mormon enterprise). The church has also achieved a presence in at least 140 other countries, with noteworthy numbers in many of them. Clearly the prophets of these latter days have done well, and they are entitled to the respect and appreciation of their followers. Furthermore, whether through inspiration, intuition, or sociological insight, the presiding leaders have made just the kind of "course correction" that modern sociological theory suggests would enhance growth and commitment in the church, namely a turn toward retrenchment to recover some of the lost tension with the surrounding culture.³⁶

Yet that retrenchment motif has had some unintended concomitants, which might be of dubious value, since they have begun to change the internal culture and "feel" of Mormon religious life. One of these, which has received special attention in this essay, has been the spread of folk fundamentalism, sometimes aided and abetted by the teachings and initia-

35. On the "southernization" of American religion more generally (or at least Protestantism), see John Egerton, *The Americanization of Dixie: The Southernization of America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974); and Mark A. Shibley, "The Southernization of American Religion: Testing a Hypothesis," *Sociological Analysis* 52 (1991): 159-74. Mormon membership and convert figures for the South have been compiled from the recent General Social Surveys of the NORC and are discussed in chap. 10 of *Angel and Beehive*.

36. See the discussion of the "new paradigm" in the sociology of religion by R. Stephen Warner (see n6); see also the summary of contemporary theory about the determinants of growth and commitment in religious movements in *Angel and Beehive*, chap. 1. The benefits of "turning up the tension" with the surrounding American culture, and thereby recovering some distinctiveness or special identity, have apparently been recognized intuitively in many other religions, as well: see, for example, Nancy T. Ammerman, *Baptist Battles* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990); Frida K. Furman, *Beyond Yiddishkeit: The Struggle for Jewish Identity in a Reform Synagogue* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987); Dean M. Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches are Growing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Eugene Kennedy, *Tomorrow's Catholics, Yesterday's Church: The Two Cultures of American Catholicism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); and John Seidler and Catherine Meyer, *Conflict and Change in the Catholic Church* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989).

tives of individual church leaders. Another has been the increased bureaucratization, standardization, and centralized control, not only over the organization *per se*, but also over religious discourse, a process that owes more to the corporate business world than to the teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith. If the object of such changes has been to resist the intrusion of the worldly influences that came with American assimilation during the first half of the century, it is ironic that the influences now intruding are simply from different sectors of "the world," namely from sectarian Protestantism and from corporate business.

As we look ahead to the twenty-first century, we can foresee some potential difficulties for a church that aspires to be truly a world church. To the extent that current trends continue, we can expect a cultural and intellectual transformation in at least the American constituency of the LDS church. Converts and lifelong members of a fundamentalist bent will find the church increasingly comfortable, whereas those of a more expansive mentality will find it increasingly uncomfortable. Nor is this simply a matter of formal educational attainment: advanced education is no guarantee against a fundamentalist intellectual style, especially if the education is in business, engineering, medicine, or law. To the extent that the religious culture of American Mormons is thus transformed, it will prove no more attractive or exportable to the world than is good old-fashioned Wasatch-front Mormonism. There is reason to believe that the Mormon convert constituencies are somewhat different in cultures outside North America, and the church has yet to rear and hold a complete second generation anywhere else in the world.

It is going to prove difficult to convert and hold large numbers of non-American church members, especially of the second and later generations, as long as Mormon culture at the grassroots is permeated with American peculiarities, whether these are imported from the Wasatch Front, the Bible Belt, or corporate capitalism.³⁷ The Mormonism of the

37. Examples of Utah and/or American cultural traits that have proved problematic in the transplantation of Mormonism to various parts of the world will be found in R. D. Barney and G. G. Y. Chu, "Differences between Mormon Missionaries' Perceptions and Chinese Natives' Expectations in Intercultural Transactions," *Journal of Social Psychology* 98 (1976): 135-36; Murray Boren, "Worship through Music Nigerian Style," *Sunstone* 5 (1980): 41-43; C. Brooklyn Derr, "Messages from Two Cultures: Mormon Leaders in France, 1985," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Summer 1988): 98-111; Mark L. Grover, "Religious Accommodation in the Land of Racial Democracy: Mormon Priesthood and Black Brazilians," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Fall 1984): 23-34; G. M. Haslam, *Clash of Cultures: The Norwegian Experience with Mormonism, 1842-1920* (New York: Peter Lang, 1984); Garth N. Jones, "Expanding LDS Church Abroad: Old Realities Compounded," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13 (Spring 1980): 8-22 and "Spreading the Gospel in Indonesia: Organizational Obstacles and Opportunities," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Winter 1982): 79-90; David

twenty-first century, if it is to become a new world religion, will first have to become a *minimal* Mormonism; that is, a religion which can jettison *all* forms of American influence and reduce its message and its way of life to a small number of basic ideas and principles that will, on the one hand, unite Mormons throughout the world but, on the other hand, will leave Mormons everywhere free to adapt those principles to their own respective cultural settings. Then Mormonism, like other world religions, will begin to face the same struggle with “syncretism” everywhere that so far it has faced only in North America. But that is another essay.³⁸

Knowlton, “Missionary, Native, and General Authority Accounts of Bolivian Conversion,” *Sunstone* 13 (1989): 14-20, “Missionaries and Terror: The Assassination of Two Elders in Bolivia,” *Sunstone* 13 (1989): 10-15, and “Thoughts on Mormonism in Latin America,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Summer 1992): 58-74; F. Lambert, “Early Morning Seminary in Europe,” *Sunstone* 10 (1985): 36-37; Peter Lineham, “The Mormon Message in the Context of Maori Culture,” *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 62-93; Marjorie Newton, “Almost Like Us: The American Socialization of Australian Converts,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Fall 1991): 9-20; Jiro Numano, “How International is the Church in Japan?” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13 (Spring 1980): 85-91; Candadai Seshachari, “Revelation: The Cohesive Element in International Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13 (Winter 1980): 38-46; and F. Lamond Tullis, *Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987).

38. Optimistic (but still realistic) discussions of the prospects for the transplantation of Mormonism around the world, representing viewpoints to some extent convergent with my own, will be found in James B. Allen, “On Becoming a Universal Church,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Spring 1992): 13-36; Edwin B. Firmage, “Restoring the Church: Zion in the Nineteenth and Twenty-First Centuries,” *Sunstone* 13: 33-40; Alexander Morrison, *The Dawning of a Brighter Day: The Church in Black Africa* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990); Spencer J. Palmer, *The Expanding Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978); and F. Lamond Tullis, ed., *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978). There is little doubt that the presiding brethren understand, at least in principle, the need to “minimalize” Mormonism if it is to be successfully exported. See Elder Packer’s and President Hinckley’s remarks to regional representatives in Mar. 1990, reprinted in *Sunstone* 14 (1990): 28-33. Yet there remain many Utah and American cultural obstacles to realizing this principle in practice. See discussion in *Angel and Beehive*, chap. 12.

Mummy Pendulum

David Paxman

A man's last wish
should be sacred.

I want to be wrapped
like a ball of roots
in burlap and brown twine
and left swaying
from an oak branch
on a long rope
to soak up odors,
storm dust,
and heavy drops of rain,
till the branch sags
with my weight
and I strain
for the ground I grew on.

Those who pass may
pause at this plump bulb,
may want to feel
my wet fabric.
I will leave the smell
of loam and burlap
on their fingers.

They may swing me
with their hands;
should they sense my longing,
let them set the heft
of whole bodies—
shoulder, arm, and side—
against my slow pendulum
and leave me soaring
with gravity and time.
Let them push again;
I am heavy with desire.

As I measure time
in slow circles,
I will listen
with inert eardrums
for footsteps
and storm wind,
muffled voices
and the fluttering of birds,
while memories seep
through my wrapped roots
and something in me
readies for replanting.



The Devil Makers: Contemporary Evangelical Fundamentalist Anti-Mormonism

Massimo Introvigne

MORE THAN ELEVEN YEARS AGO ON 31 December 1982 a film entitled *The God Makers* premiered at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, before an audience of 4,000 Evangelical Protestants.¹ According to Ed Decker, an ex-Mormon who was the main producer of the film, its premiere marked the beginning of an epoch. Decker and his associate Dave Hunt, a well-known author of “anti-cult” books, subsequently published a book version of *The God Makers* in 1984. Decker later claimed that *The God Makers* had prevented millions of conversions to the Mormon church between 1982 and 1989. Even Decker was eventually forced to retract this extravagant claim.² *The God Makers*, however, was reasonably successful in Evangelical circles, and on 13 December 1992—ten years after the original film—Decker premiered in a Salt Lake City church the sequel *The God Makers II*. A book followed in 1993.³

1. Ed Decker and Dave Hunt, *The God Makers* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1984), 16.

2. In January 1990 Decker erroneously attributed to Elder M. Russell Ballard a statement that the Mormon church experienced a three million shortfall from projected conversions primarily because of the film (*Saints Alive in Jesus Newsletter*, Jan. 1990). The speech referred to by Decker, which Ballard delivered at Brigham Young University on 14 November 1989, mentioned nothing about a “shortfall”; instead it celebrated the continuing growth of the church notwithstanding the opposition of “a band of enemies.” He included the film *The God Makers* among his examples. Decker later admitted in his newsletter in July 1990, under the title “We Stand Corrected,” that he had “misunderstood” the meaning of Ballard’s speech (*Saints Alive in Jesus Newsletter*, Jan., July 1990). But the claim that *The God Makers* has prevented the conversion of millions to Mormonism is still often repeated in anti-Mormon circles.

3. Ed Decker and Caryle Matrisciana, *The God Makers II* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1993). This new book adds little to Decker’s previous criticism of Mormonism

But Daniel C. Peterson, a Mormon apologist at Brigham Young University situated at the opposite end of the spectrum from Decker, seemed in suggestive ways to echo Decker's claim that something "new" was happening when he wrote in 1991 that "a new . . . form of anti-Mormonism" had come on the scene. Almost immediately Peterson was reviewing Loftes Tryk's book, *The Best Kept Secrets in the Book of Mormon*, for the *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* published by FARMS (Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies).⁴ Peterson placed Tryk in a movement which he called "New Age anti-Mormonism." According to Peterson, Tryk, Decker, and other "New Age anti-Mormons" can be contrasted to traditional anti-Mormons such as Wesley Walters and Jerald and Sandra Tanner. "It is not," Peterson noted, "the old-time traditional anti-Mormonism in both its Protestant and its secular variants." The latter are "content to argue that Mormonism is untrue," sometimes (if the anti-Mormon is a devote Bible-believing Christian) because it "is incompatible with the Bible." But generally traditional anti-Mormons have insisted that "Joseph Smith's environment and his (wicked or pathological) character, perhaps assisted by a co-conspirator or two, are enough to account for Mormonism with no residue left over." "New Age anti-Mormonism," according to Peterson, "is quite different." It "admits the presence of the supernatural in the founding events of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is quite willing to acknowledge continuous supernatural influence in the life of the Church today." However, "unlike faithful Latter-day Saints, New Age anti-Mormons see the supernatural agents involved in the founding and progress of the Church as demonic, occultic, diabolical, luciferian." "Obsessed with demons," they offer "a mirror image, a thoroughgoing transvaluation of the views of the Latter-day Saints." Building on his claims about something "new," Peterson contends that Tryk "is genuinely original—and a spectacular illustration of the perils of innovation." After all "even in anti-Mormonism, tradition may well have a legitimate place."⁵

I agree that the new wave of counter-Mormonism which emerged in the 1980s is different from both secular and sectarian anti-Mormonisms which have existed since the birth of the Mormon church. Although new counter-Mormonism borrows themes and arguments from its predeces-

except an attempt to accuse individual LDS general authorities with homosexuality and sexual relations with black prostitutes. In a sense, however, this second film and book are worse than the first: they include an explicit call to hatred and intolerance that has been denounced as such by a number of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish organizations.

4. Daniel C. Peterson, "A Modern 'Malleus maleficarum,'" in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 3* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991): 231-60; Loftes Tryk, *The Best Kept Secrets in the Book of Mormon* (Redondo Beach, CA: Jacob's Well Foundation, 1988).

5. Peterson, "A Modern 'Malleus maleficarum,'" 10, 55.

sors, its theological and historical roots can be traced to larger movements extending beyond narrow Mormon boundaries. A consideration of the larger context thus becomes a necessary first step for understanding the nature of this “new” counter-Mormonism and the nature of its struggles with traditional anti-Mormonism. In taking this first step, we can begin an approach toward the sophisticated analysis of anti-Mormonism in a chronological framework proposed by historian Davis Bitton at the Independence, Missouri, meeting of the Mormon History Association in 1985.⁶

A large body of sociological literature exists concerning the so-called “anti-cult movement”⁷ both in the United States and internation-

6. Davis Bitton, “Antimormonism: Periodization, Strategies, Motivation,” May 1985, privately circulated. The recently published *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* also noted that no comprehensive history of anti-Mormonism had yet been published (William O. Nelson, “Anti-Mormon Publications,” in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* [New York: Macmillan, 1992], 1:45-52). A good regional and historical study does exist about Idaho: Merle W. Wells, *Anti-Mormonism in Idaho, 1872-92* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978).

In 1991 a volume in the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (David J. Whittaker, ed.) was published which included most of Nibley’s replies to anti-Mormons under the general title *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass: The Art of Telling Tales about Joseph Smith and Brigham Young*, Vol. 11 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; and Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991). While the humor of these writings is still enjoyable, even though first published more than twenty years ago, a visit to the anti-Mormon sections of most Evangelical bookstores demonstrates that the anti-Mormonism with which Nibley crossed swords is today largely out of fashion. A new generation of anti-Mormon writers has emerged, and they no longer follow Nibley’s classic instructions on “how to write an anti-Mormon book” (474-58; originally published as *How to Write an Anti-Mormon Book* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963]).

7. The question of what a “cult” is and is not has been debated for decades. Most scholars now believe that the term “cult” is best avoided; they instead prefer the term “new religious movement” (NRM). Very few scholars if any consider Mormonism a NRM in the same sense as the Unification Church (the “Moonies”) or the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (the “Hare Krishnas”). For a general overview of terminology problems connected with the use of the word “cults,” see Eileen Barker, *New Religious Movements: A Practical Introduction* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1989). For a discussion on “cults” and Mormonism, see Bitton, “Antimormonism,” 12; Daniel C. Peterson and Stephen D. Ricks, *Offenders for a Word: How Anti-Mormons Play Word Games to Attack the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Aspen Books, 1992).

Some scholars—including the Roman Catholic church in recent documents—avoid the word “cults” but utilize a larger category of “new religions” as an umbrella for different kinds of movements from new religious traditions born in the nineteenth century and not easily reduced to mainline Protestantism (including Mormonism and Seventh-Day Adventism) to the more recent “new religious movements” of both Eastern and Western background. The full text of the report by Francis Cardinal Arinze, *The Challenge of the Sects or New Religious Movements: A Pastoral Approach*, can be obtained from the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, 00120 Vatican City, Rome. A shortened version has been published in *L’Osservatore Romano*, 6 Apr. 1991. On

ally.⁸ Most students of the anti-cult movement agree that this movement consists of at least two separate and conflicting sub-movements, one secular and the other sectarian. The *secular* anti-cult movement insists on strong legal and police measures to undermine "cults," which they view as delusions perpetrated by bad characters—gurus, preachers, and self-styled prophets—who exploit the weak, the young, the gullible for power and money. The key feature—and the standard slogan—of the secular anti-cult movement is that it only discusses deeds not creeds. It is not interested whether any religious persuasion is true or false; it proclaims to be only interested in *behaviors* which it regards as harmful to individuals, families, or society at large. The secular anti-cult movement wants to free people *from* cults; it does not presume to tell them what religious or philosophical ideas they should join once they have left the "cult."

The *religious* anti-cult movement disagrees with almost every priority espoused by its secular counterpart and should perhaps instead be called a "counter-cult movement." Its proponents maintain that the borders between belief and behavior are less clearly marked than the anti-cult movement would believe. Counter-cultists insist that false belief—or heresy—breaks the law of God and this is at least as dangerous as any behavior contrary to the laws of humanity.⁹ A "cult" from this point of view is not primarily a money-making enterprise but is a heresy. A problem, of course, is that each religious persuasion has its own definition of heresy and hence of "cult." The secular anti-cult movement may or may not include Mormonism among "cults," but it would never dream of including Freemasonry or the Roman Catholic church in that category (although it

terminology, see also my "Nel paese del punto esclamativo: 'sette', 'culti', 'pseudo-religioni' o 'nuove religioni'?" *Studia Missionalia* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University) 41 (1992): 1-26.

Nevertheless sectarians who are against this type of movement generally ignore the revised scholarly terminology and continue to use the word "cults."

8. A good bibliography of pre-1983 literature is Anson D. Shupe, Jr., David G. Bromley, and Donna L. Oliver, *The Anti-Cult Movement in America: A Bibliography and Historical Survey* (New York: Garland, 1983). For an overview, see Anson D. Shupe, Jr., and David G. Bromley, *The New Vigilantes: Deprogrammers, Anti-Cultists and the New Religions* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1980); and David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe, Jr., *Strange Gods: The Great American Cult Scare* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981). See also James A. Beckford, *Cult Controversies: The Societal Response to the New Religious Movements* (London: Tavistock, 1985).

9. See Johannes Aagaard, "A Christian Encounter with New Religious Movements & New Age," *Update & Dialog* 1 (July 1991): 19-23, for the point of view of the Christian counter-cult movement and a criticism of the secular anti-cult movement. For further comments, with some references to Mormon controversies, see my "Strange Bedfellows or Future Enemies?" *Update & Dialog* 3 (Oct. 1993): 13-22.

may include some Roman Catholic organizations such as Opus Dei). The religious counter-cult movements almost always include Mormonism as a cult¹⁰ as well as Freemasonry. There is a lively debate in these groups concerning whether the Roman Catholic church is a "cult." It is not uncommon for a religious group to be at the same time part of the counter-cult movement and defined by some within that movement as a "cult." Still most scholars agree that the counter-cult movement is largely an Evangelical affair.

A similar division has always existed among the foes of the Mormon church. It is possible to distinguish between a secular *anti*-Mormon and a religious *counter*-Mormon movement. The first attempts to expose Mormonism assert that Joseph Smith was a fraud; the second is primarily interested in "winning Mormons for Jesus." The two movements may use the same arguments but with different emphasis. While, for example, anti-Mormons claim that money-digging by the Smith family shows that the Smiths had a long history of exploiting the gullibility and superstition of their neighbors, the counter-Mormons contend that it shows the Smiths indulged in occult practices forbidden by most orthodox churches.

Another area in which counter-cultists disagree with anti-cultists and among themselves is how and why "cults" continue to grow. The counter-cult movement has explained the growth of cults, particularly of Mormonism, by utilizing rationale developed in part by the secular anti-cult movements and in part by traditional theologians to explain the existence of heresy. The most recent counter-Mormon authors—including Wesley Walters, Walter Martin, and Jerald and Sandra Tanner—have advanced three main reasons for the success of Mormonism. First, human beings are gullible, and it is a fact of life that they will become victims of clever frauds, particularly in religion. This explanation is not original to the counter-Mormon movement but is largely borrowed from secular anti-Mormonism. Second—this was a favorite point of Walter Martin—"cults" such as Mormonism "succeed where the churches fail." Mormonism shows that churches have failed to keep their flocks because they have become too cold and bureaucratic and perhaps—Martin, being a conservative, suggested—also because their theologians have become too liberal.¹¹ Of course this explanation, a purely sociological one, would also be acceptable to non-religious members of the anti-cult movement and to some extent to scholars. The third reason is entirely peculiar to the counter-Mormon movement.

10. See the classic counter-cult book by Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Four Major Cults: Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Seventh-day Adventism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963).

11. See Walter R. Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1977); and his *The Maze of Mormonism*, rev. ed. (Ventura, CA: Vision House, 1978).

God, counter-Mormons say, allows evil to exist for reasons we do not completely understand. Perhaps in part it is to call men and women's attention to their sinful nature and to the need to repent—and such heresies as Mormonism are allowed to exist for this reason.¹²

Satan was seen as involved in this, but his involvement was only mentioned occasionally by those who appeared to be the leaders of the counter-Mormon movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Although these leaders were usually lacking in scholarly education, they were anxious to be taken seriously by at least a portion of the scholarly community and by the secular anti-cult movement. An insistence on Satan would not have helped them achieve this goal. Additionally, the religious counter-cult movement traditionally insisted that an unhealthy and exaggerated interest in Satan was typical of the "cults" themselves; hence the necessity to be careful to avoid being accused of the same mistake.

In recent years a different register of language has become more prominent in counter-cult discourse. This can be seen both in the larger context and within the narrower Mormon context. Decker sounds very different from traditional counter-Mormons when he talks about why a cult like Mormonism has continued to grow. According to *The God Makers*, there exists in Mormonism "something more sinister . . . than even most ex-Mormons suspect." While "most critics of Mormonism regard Joseph Smith as a fraud who deliberately deceived his followers into joining a church of his own making, and whose doctrines and rituals were borrowed from Freemasonry and other pagan religions and embellished by his vivid imagination to suit his giant ego," Decker regards this classic counter-Mormon theory as only "partially correct." Rather "a careful investigation indicates that Joseph Smith was in touch with a superhuman source of revelation and power that has been the common inspiration behind all pagan religions down through history"; this "superhuman source" is Satan.¹³

The fact that Satan jumped from obscurity¹⁴ to prominence in counter-

12. See Martin, *Kingdom of Cults*; also his *The Rise of the Cults*, rev. ed. (Ventura: Vision House, 1980).

13. Decker and Hunt, *The God Makers*, 20-21.

14. The obscurity was not total. In 1854 Orestes Augustus Brownson (1803-74), who in 1844 had converted from Spiritualism to Roman Catholicism, argued in his fictionalized autobiography, *The Spirit-Rapper*, that Joseph Smith "could not have written the more striking passages of the Book of Mormon," that the Spalding theory was "ridiculous," and that one was forced to conclude that "Mormonism is literally the Synagogue of Satan" (O. A. Brownson, *The Spirit-Rapper: An Autobiography* [Boston: Little, Brown and Co., and London: Dolman, 1854], 165-67). In 1862 Brownson's book was translated into French (O. A. Brownson, *L'Esprit frappeur. Scènes du monde invisible* [Paris: H. Casterman, 1862] and was largely used in the 6-volume, 4,000-page magnum opus on

Mormonism can only be understood when one places the new counter-Mormonism within the context of much larger changes which have occurred in the Evangelical world. C. Peter Wagner, professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, and others have spoken of a “Third Wave” in Pentecostalism, which came after the first (Pentecostal) and the second (Charismatic) movements.¹⁵ Wagner is himself a key advocate of this theology. Using concepts proposed by Pentecostal theologians in the 1970s, the Third Wave was developed in the 1980s—initially at Fuller Theological Seminary, where it has since become very controversial. The Third Wave also attracted a number of Evangelical Christians who do not regard themselves, strictly speaking, as Pentecostals. By the 1990s the Third

the Devil and Satanism by French Catholic lawyer Joesph Bizouard (1797-1870), *Des Rapports de l'homme avec le Démon. Essai historique et philosophique* (Paris: Gaume Frères and J. Duprey, 1864). Through Bizouard's work, the Roman Catholic public in France became familiar with the idea that Mormons were Satanists and agents of the Devil. The anti-Satanist scare of the 1860s was revived in France in the 1890s through publication of the enormously successful book of “Dr. Bataille” (pseudonym of Dr. Charles Hacks), *Le Diable au XIXe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Delhomme et Brigue, 1892 and 1895), and of several books and articles by Léo Taxil (pseudonym of journalist Gabriel Jogand, 1854-1907) and by “Diana Vaughan,” a Luciferian High Priestess who had been engaged in a struggle with another Satanist, Sophie Walder, for control of worldwide Satanism before converting to Roman Catholicism. Although this literature was primarily anti-Masonic, it derived from Bizouard an anti-Mormon theme and claimed that Sophie Walder was daughter of Philéas Walder, a Mormon, friend of Brigham Young, and “the real power” behind John Taylor (Bataille, *Diable*, 1:39, 108). Reportedly, Walder was a member of the Luciferian Freemasonry called Palladism but at the same time was in charge of the Mormon missions in Europe and worked as the “connection between Mormonism and Freemasonry” (*ibid.*, 2:109). Bataille's and Taxil's tall tales were widely believed, and apparently nobody in France realized that no “Phileas Walder” was ever heard of in Utah or among Mormon authorities. Eventually, however, Taxil confessed in 1897 that the books were part of a hoax masterminded by himself and Dr. Hacks to expose Catholics and anti-Masons as gullible, and that no real Diana Vaughan nor Sophie Waler existed. The real reasons and forces behind Taxil's hoax are still subject of considerable debate among historians. While in Europe it was well known that the whole Taxil literature was a fraud, in the United States the Taxil material was quoted as authoritative by Evangelical anti-Masonic authors throughout the twentieth century and, through these sources, finally landed in *The God Makers*, where Decker in order to prove the Mormons “Luciferian” quotes “Instructions” he claims Albert Pike (1809-91)—noted American Masonic scholar—wrote in 1889 (Decker, *The God Makers*, 130-31, 287). Unfortunately this document was not written by Pike but—together with the story making Pike worldwide author of Satanism and Philéas Walder his righthand man—had been created by Taxil, as the latter admitted (see Leo Taxil, “Discours prononcé le 19 avril 1897 à la salle de la Société de Géographie,” *Le Frondeur*, 25 avril 1897).

15. C. Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit: Encountering the Power of Signs and Wonders* (Ann Arbor: Servant Books, 1988); on the origins of the movements, see *Signs and Wonders Today: The Story of the Fuller Theological Seminary's Remarkable Course on Spiritual Power* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1987).

Wave has grown to include an estimated 30 million followers, mostly in the United States. It also includes megachurches such as the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim, California, pastored by John Wimber. Wimber was with Wagner a key figure in the Fuller controversies of the 1980s.¹⁶

At the center of the Third Wave is an emphasis on “spiritual warfare.” The earth is seen as the battleground between God and Satan. While “demons . . . account for all evil,” men and women also have a prominent role in this drama. Whereas some humans may have become “demonized,” others are “Christian warriors” and will provide the “prayer cover” needed by the “heavenly warriors” (angels) themselves. According to spiritual warfare theology, without sufficient “prayer cover” “heavenly warriors . . . [would be] vulnerable to the demonic hosts.” Additionally, the heavenly warriors need human beings to perform exorcisms, where the powerful name of Jesus Christ is used and demons and their human counterparts—the “demonized”—are ultimately defeated.¹⁷

The “spiritual warfare” movement gained national prominence—even outside the Third Wave—in 1986 when the best-selling novel *This Present Darkness* by Frank Peretti was published. By 1991, 1.5 million copies of the novel had been sold. A sequel, *Piercing the Darkness*, enjoyed similar success. *This Present Darkness* is about a war to control a small town in the United States between the forces of Heaven and Hell, fought by both supernatural and human warriors. At stake is much more than control of the small town. Satan wants to use the town to establish a stronghold for two of the worst evils (according to conservative Christians), the New World Order and the New Age. On the spiritual level the war is between the General, a silver-haired angel who is one of the closest associates of Jesus Christ in Heaven, and the Strongman, described as one of the few devils really intimate with Lucifer himself. The good military commander is Tal, and the military commander of the demonic forces is Ba-al Rafar, the Prince of Babylon. Among the good human warriors are the pastor of a small struggling evangelical church and a reporter who is active in

16. For a general discussion, see Thomas D. Pratt, “The Need to Dialogue: A Review of the Debate on the Controversy of Signs, Wonders, Miracles, and Spiritual Warfare Raised in the Literature of the Third Wave Movement,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 13 (Spring 1991): 7-32.

17. Robert A. Guelich, “Spiritual Warfare: Jesus, Paul and Peretti,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 13 (Spring 1991): 33-64. See Frank Peretti, *This Present Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1986), and its sequel, *Piercing the Darkness* (Wetchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989). Fuller hosted a seminar in December 1988 on spiritual warfare. Those papers have been collected in C. P. Wagner and F. D. Pennoyer, eds., *Wrestling with the Dark Angels: Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990).

exposing cults and the occult (his sister died in a ritual death). "Demonized" warriors for Satan include the pastor of the large local mainline denominational church, a psychology professor, the local chief of police (who stands for governmental bureaucracy), and a stranger (definitely not American) who is the local representative of a multi-national corporation. The battle is fought through exorcisms and prayers. Finally the battle ends when good triumphs over evil, but it is also made clear that the war will continue in the future.

Peretti's novel is premised on the idea that human beings can be "demonized," a concept that spiritual warfare theologians claim is not identical with "possession." The latter concept, most Evangelicals claim, is in fact "not biblical." According to Wimber, the demonized person still has "some control over his or her life" but is nevertheless "inhabited" by one or more demons. In the most serious cases, a "severely demonized person" is recognized through signs such as "unusual physical strength," "a new personality," "heresy," "serious sexual sin," and "the ability to convey knowledge which the inhabited person did not possess in his or her normal state."¹⁸

Spiritual warfare exorcists also claim to be able to identify and name which demon or group of demons is actually inhabiting a person, a group, or even a town or country. A manual called *Pigs in the Parlor*—one of the oldest of its kind, published in 1973—identified 220 demons and "demon groupings" with names including "Suicide" and "Harlotry." Interesting enough, one of the "demon groupings" identified in this book is called "Mormonism," and it is clearly stated that it presides over the Mormon church. (Among groups of Christian origin, only Jehovah's Witnesses and Christian Science share with Mormonism the dubious honor of having a "demon grouping" of their own.¹⁹)

Not all Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians in the United States or elsewhere are either attracted by or accept the Third Wave, spiritual warfare theology or the larger reliance on exorcism. In fact there exists a large body of literature criticizing spiritual warfare, and the Christian Research Institute—founded by the late Walter Martin—has been very vocal in opposing the exaggerations which characterize the Third Wave.²⁰

Similarly within the Mormon counter-cult movement, traditionalists such as Jerald and Sandra Tanner have become increasingly disaffected from those counter-Mormons associated with Decker. Sandra Tanner had

18. John Wimber with Kevin Springer, *Power Healing* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 111-14.

19. Frank Hammond and Ida Mae Hammond, *Pigs in the Parlor: A Practical Guide to Deliverance* (Kirkwood, MO: Image Books, 1973).

20. See Robert Lyle, "Assessing the New Books on Spiritual Warfare," *Christian Research Journal* 14 (Fall 1991): 38.

been featured in the movie version of *The God Makers*, and in the book version was described with her husband as “former Mormons who have established an international reputation for their impeccably accurate and thorough research.”²¹ By the time the book was released, however, the Tanners were already criticizing *The God Makers* because of its overemphasis of Satan’s role in Mormonism. The two brands of counter-Mormonism were slowly parting company. While *The God Makers* may still be read as a point of transition between “classic” and “New Age” (perhaps best called “spiritual warfare”) counter-Mormonism, by the time the book was published Decker and some of his friends were already attracted by more extreme counter-Mormons.

These more extreme counter-Mormons included Tom Kellie. An ex-Mormon, Kellie claimed he was “ordained to be an apostle in the Church” but for some reasons was not “allowed in the Council of the Twelve.” He claimed he was also “ordained to be a God.” Kellie insisted “that all those who were ordained to the Godhead had the satanic number ‘666’ written on their foreheads in Roman numerals.” If this was not enough, Kellie also claimed that “the wives of the Mormon apostles were compelled to submit to a special sexual type of operation” and that “it would ‘blow the minds’ of non-Mormon doctors if they could examine the wife of an apostle.” He also “strongly implied that he had the original metal plates of the Book of Mormon which he had stolen from the Mormon Church.” Although Decker later realized that Kellie “was either a deceiver or not working with a full deck,” sufficient evidence exists that Decker used Kellie for a number of months as an authoritative witness of wild, secret Mormon practices. Decker was later involved in a number of other controversies, including discussions which centered on his claim (certainly false by any linguistic or philological standard) that the words “Pay Lay Ale” in the temple ceremony meant “Wonderful Lucifer.” He also claimed that an alleged prophecy by Israeli rabbis existed which taught that the Great Salt Lake would submerge Salt Lake City if Brigham Young University did not abandon the BYU Jerusalem Center in Israel.²²

21. Decker and Hunt, *The God Makers*, 49.

22. Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1988), 9-11 (with references to Decker’s tapes in the Tanners’ archives), 11-17. Israel’s contemporary most well-known expert on new religions and related controversies, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi of the University of Haifa, assured me that the rabbis mentioned by Decker are unknown in Israel and that the language of their alleged “prophecies” published by Decker clearly indicates a forgery. In particular no real Israeli rabbi will mention a “God of Jews and Christians” as “a far greater God than the god of the Mormons” (ideas attributed to a certain Rabbi Schwartz from Jerusalem in *Saints Alive Journal*, Summer 1986). Although the Tanners did not name her, we know from Ed Decker and Bill Schnoebelen, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine: Shadow or Reality?*

In 1986 Decker met William (Bill) Schnoebelen. I have discussed elsewhere the extraordinary career of Schnoebelen,²³ but I will mention here that he was born on 24 August 1949 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was raised a Roman Catholic, dabbled in occultism, became a teacher at the Catholic Loras College in Dubuque, and finally found his true career as a professional convert. He started to convert to anything and everything and even to competing groups at the same time—for example, to Wicca, to the Church of Satan of Anton S. LaVey, to Freemasonry, to some small “independent churches” (where he was ordained a priest and even a bishop), and finally to Mormonism in 1980. Since the Mormons with whom Schnoebelen came in contact did not know the intricacies of apostolic succession theories, “wandering bishops,” and the various small churches which claim a “valid” and “Catholic” priesthood (which of course has nothing to do with being part of the Roman Catholic church), they accepted Schnoebelen’s claim that he had been a Roman Catholic priest at face value. These claims were included in the book published in 1983 by Bookcraft and edited by Stephen W. Gibson under the title *From Clergy to Convert*.²⁴ The next year Schnoebelen converted again, from Mormonism to Evangelical Christianity, and began to offer himself as a witness and speaker in counter-Mormon circles. By 1986 he was actively cooperating with Decker and wrote an article in the latter’s *Saints Alive Journal* on “Joseph Smith and the Temple of Doom.”

James R. Spencer, pastor of Shiloh Christian Center in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and publisher of the counter-Mormon newsletter *Through the Maze* (whose “loyal subscribers” could join the “Utah Liberation Army” and receive a special *Insider’s Report* newsletter) was particularly enthusiastic about Schnoebelen’s paper. Spencer teaches that the God of Mormonism is Satan and that Mormons unknowingly “serve Satan in the temple ceremony.” According to Spencer, Mormonism is in company with Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism whose roots are also “in hell.” He believes “as surely as I believe that Jesus came in the flesh [that] the Devil has spawned false religion from Babylon to Salt Lake City.”²⁵ In 1987

(Issaquah, WA: Saints Alive in Jesus, 1987), that the woman who had a spiritual experience confirming the Satanic meaning of “Pay Lay Ale” was Dolly Sackett, wife of Chuck Sackett, “expert” on temple rituals for Saints Alive.

23. See my “Quand le Diable se fait mormon. Le mormonisme comme complot diabolique: l’affaire Schnoebelen,” *Politica Hermetica* 6 (1992): 36-54.

24. William Schnoebelen and Alexandria Schnoebelen, “We Waited for Six Years,” in Stephen W. Gibson, ed., *From Clergy to Convert* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1983, 67-73). Schnoebelen also falsely stated that his wife Alexandria had been a Catholic nun.

25. See Spencer’s newsletter, *Through the Maze*, particularly no. 19, as reproduced in the documentary part of Decker and Schnoebelen, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine: Shadow or Reality?* In 1993 Schnoebelen confirmed the interview with the apostle—and added the

Spencer and Schnoebelen published a book together entitled *Mormonism's Temple of Doom*. In the book Spencer introduces Schnoebelen as a "former witch, Catholic priest [as we know, this was not true], mason and mormon"—thus neglecting half a dozen other memberships during his conversion career. Schnoebelen then attempts to build his case for the Satanic nature of Mormonism, starting from the well-known theory that the Mormon temple ceremony had its origins in Freemasonry and—taking for granted that Freemasonry is in itself wholly Satanic—concludes that Mormons are as demonized as Masons. He also claims that the rituals of Mormonism and Freemasonry are identical to those found in Wicca and that some of these rituals are devised to sexually excite both men and women. For example, Schnoebelen maintains that the marks on the Mormon temple garments "are held together by a subtle occult web of sexual energy which is activated by pressure from the two highest grips in the LDS Temple endowment."²⁶

As is usual in this milieu, if *Mormonism's Temple of Doom* was Schnoebelen's public statement, he also propagated private teachings which are still more astonishing. Tape recordings of private and public speeches demonstrate that he has claimed that a Mormon apostle confessed to him and his wife that the God of the Mormon temple is Lucifer. Schnoebelen also claimed that the architecture of the Mormon temples and other buildings—particularly "the trapezoidal shape" of the spires on the Salt Lake temple—"draw demons like flypaper." He claimed to "prove" at a counter-Mormon conference in 1987 "that the Salt Lake Temple is, in fact, a perfectly designed habitation for devils."²⁷ Not to be outdone, Decker wrote during the same year that the spires really "represent an upside down nail, pointing defiantly toward heaven—as if to impale the Lord Jesus anew when He comes in the clouds of glory!"²⁸ Of course the name of the apostle who allegedly confessed the Satanic foundation of Mormonism to Schnoebelen (before he later stated that he was no longer sure about what he had heard) was James E. Faust, who has the same name as the famous "Doctor

further detail that, recognizing in him a fellow Luciferian, the apostle suggested that Schnoebelen move to Salt Lake City to become a general authority—in the book that he co-authored with his wife Sharon, *Lucifer Dethroned: A True Story* (Chino, CA: Chick Publications, 1993), 305. The book is advertised on the back cover with the remark: "If Schnoebelen, crazed by blood lust and headed for murder, could be changed by Jesus Christ, anyone can!"

26. William J. Schnoebelen and James R. Spencer, *Mormonism's Temple of Doom* (Idaho Falls: Triple J. Publishers, 1987), 30.

27. Tanner and Tanner, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine*, 3, mention a tape-recorded speech by William Schnoebelen at the Capstone Conference (a well-known counter-Mormon gathering) delivered on 25 July 1987. A video-recorded version is in my possession.

28. See *Saints Alive Journal*, Spring 1987.

Faust" who sold his soul to the Devil in the German legend which became famous through Goethe.

At this point the "classic" counter-Mormon community said enough is enough. Wesley Walters prepared a critical reply to Schnoebelen and Decker's ideas on Mormon temple architecture.²⁹ Even though there is considerable doubt concerning the real position of Walter Martin—it is known that he felt that the film *The God Makers* was a good tool to be used against Mormonism—he was apparently against the subsequent and more extreme theories on Satanism advanced by Decker, Schnoebelen, and Spencer.

The strongest reaction was by the Tanners. In 1987 they published a booklet, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine*, in which they refuted the idea that Mormonism is Satanism in disguise and that Satan is worshipped in Mormon ceremonies.³⁰ Following publication of this booklet, there were various attempts to reconcile the sides through the "arbitration" of Walter Martin for the sake of the counter-Mormon battle. Despite these efforts Decker and Schnoebelen published a strong anti-Tanner rebuttal under the title *The Lucifer-God Doctrine: Shadow or Reality?* The title attempts to make fun of the title of the Tanners' well-known book *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?*³¹ The Tanners, who are persistent if not always scholarly investigators, published a second enlarged edition of *The Lucifer-God Doctrine* in 1988 in which they exposed some previously unknown skeletons in Schnoebelen's closet. They conclusively demonstrated that he had never been a Roman Catholic priest and that he had associated with some questionable characters in the world of "wandering bishops." The Tanners also noted that similarities in doctrines and rituals between Mormonism and some contemporary magical groups is evidence that the magical movements borrowed from Mormonism and not the other way around.³²

29. Wesley P. Walters, *A Habitation of Devils?* (N.p.: n.p.; available from the Tanners' Utah Lighthouse Ministry).

30. See Tanner and Tanner, *The Lucifer-God Doctrine*.

31. Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1982).

32. See my "The Beast and the Prophet: Aleister Crowley's Fascination for Joseph Smith," unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mormon History Association, Claremont, California, May 1991.

The Tanners' investigation of Schnoebelen was fairly complete, but some details were missing. One such detail concerns the circumstances of Schnoebelen's consecration as a bishop. Schnoebelen has never mentioned the name of the bishop who consecrated him, and when he was interviewed by the Tanners, he claimed that he had lost his certificate. I have now found the original certificate. It shows that Schnoebelen, under his assumed name of Christopher P. Syn—he had legally changed his name during his "satanic" period to honor *sin*—was consecrated as a "gnostic and theurgic Bishop" by Michael Bertiaux in Chicago on 23 July 1977 (Certificate of consecration of Christophe

Decker's and Schnoebelen's reaction to the Tanners' exposé was typical. They referred their readers to a report prepared by Blaine and Randy Hunsaker and Donald and Gwenda Meyer under the title, *The Tanner Problem* (dated 16 July 1990). The report introduces the controversy and offers two alternative—or rather complementary—explanations of the Tanners' attitude. First, "there has been information from several high level LDS sources that the LDS Church has supplied information to the Tanners for years to provide a controlled, benign criticism of the Church." "The evidence is mounting, and it would seem that the Tanners have indeed

[sic] P. Syn, Chicago, 23 July 1977, in my collection). Bertiaux, a well-known figure in the Midwest occult community, is the leader of a gnostic church known as *Ecclesia Gnostica Spiritualis*. Since he is regarded by many of his followers as a powerful magician, perhaps Schnoebelen thought it was better to leave him alone and not to mention his name. Under the pseudonym of "Aquarius," Bertiaux is mentioned by Schnoebelen in the 1993 book *Lucifer Dethroned* as "certainly the oddest man, I have ever met, and possibly the most dangerous" (Schnoebelen and Schnoebelen, *Lucifer Dethroned*, 75.)

Another interesting detail connected with this episode in Schnoebelen's career is that Bertiaux was interested in the activities of William Conway (1865-1969), a strange character who provides a link between the Mormon "fundamentalist" polygamy groups in the West and the magical/occult community. A German occult publication has recently suggested that although it is not probable that Schnoebelen, through Bertiaux, may have met Conway (who died, age 104, when Schnoebelen was twenty years old), he was certainly exposed to Conway's ideas and probably met some of Conway's followers. As a consequence, he may have developed some of his ideas about Mormonism (although in a rather strange and fringe form) well before he met the missionaries who converted him in 1980 (P. R. König, "Das OTO-Phänomen [13]: Per Aftera and Astra," *AHA* 4 [Jan. 1992]: 4-11, mentions the similarities between Conway and Schnoebelen). The paper mentions that Conway was initiated on 1 January 1945 by Franklin Thomas in the XI° grade of the occult organization OTO. In the OTO, the XI° is the degree where homosexual magic is practiced, but Conway himself probably was not homosexual according to König and practiced the sexual magic of the XI° "through ladies." According to the same paper, it was Conway who initiated in the XI° Roland Merritt Shreves, who in turn initiated Marc Lully (Marc-Antoine Lullyanov) who was operating together with Michael Bertiaux the *Ecclesia Gnostica Spiritualis* in Chicago, where Schnoebelen was consecrated as a bishop.

On Conway's Mormon claims, see Steven L. Shields, *Divergent Paths of the Restoration: A History of the Latter Day Saint Movement*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: Restoration Research, 1990), 165-66. The Tanners recently noted that "it is possible also that the [Mormon] church's reputation for promoting polygamy during the 19th century might catch the attention of those in the occult who have radical views on sexual behaviour. About thirty years ago we encountered an occultist by the name of William C. Conway who was trying to combine the teachings of Mormonism with those of Druids. He believed in Joseph Smith and accepted the Mormon Fundamentalist doctrine that polygamy should still be practiced, but combined these beliefs with the teaching of reincarnation" (Jerald Tanner and Sandra Tanner, "Ritualistic Child Abuse and the Mormon Church," *Salt Lake City Messenger* 80 [Nov. 1991]: 1-15). The Tanners, however, are apparently not aware of the connections between Conway and the Chicago occult milieu where Schnoebelen was consecrated a bishop.

been used by the LDS Church." Of course, Latter-day Saints would not recognize the Tanners' criticism as "controlled" and "benign," but this shows how strange the world of counter-Mormonism can be. Another explanation was "discovered" by Schnoebelen, Spencer, and Blaine Hunsaker during a meeting with the Tanners in Salt Lake City. According to the report, Jerald Tanner during the meeting "raised up, his body shook," and he spoke "in a different sounding voice"; his "eyes were fixed and piercing." The reaction of the authors is predictable: "We looked at one another, recognizing what this was—a demonic manifestation. We offered a ministry to the Tanners to break this spiritual bondage, but they refused."³³

Thus Salt Lake City becomes the town of Peretti's novel, and we understand why the Tanners (and other people mentioned in the report) oppose the idea that Mormonism is controlled by Satan—they are *demonized*, exactly as the liberal minister of *This Present Darkness*. And who knows whether they are not, by any chance, "stranger" or with occult connections in their family history? "We asked," says the report, "if they [the Tanners] had ever broken the generational ties to Mormonism and they said no, they did not believe in it, and refused any kind of ministry. We went away very saddened and discouraged." We know from the reply issued by the Tanners in 1991—*Serious Charges against the Tanners*—that Hunsaker recommended that the Tanners see the exorcist Gordon Gruber, an extremist exponent of the spiritual warfare movement.³⁴

Anti-Tanner literature has also been published by other representatives of this new brand of counter-Mormonism, including Loftes Tryk, who suspects that Jerald Tanner is "a Mormon double agent, an apologist, another fake."³⁵ Tryk is a particularly suspicious fellow, who even suspected that "Ed Decker has been in collusion with the Tanners." After all "if Mormonism is guided by Satan there would be no plan too elaborate in order to cover up facts."³⁶ Subsequently Tryk abandoned his suspicions about Decker, and Tryk's book *The Best Kept Secrets in the Book of Mormon*—according to the review by Daniel C. Peterson, "the worst of

33. See Blaine Hunsaker, Randy Hunsaker, Donald Meyer, and Gwenda Meyer, *The Tanner Problem*, circular letter dated 16 July 1990.

34. Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Serious Charges Against the Tanners* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1991).

35. Loftes Tryk, "Opposition in All Things," *The Jacob's Well Report*, Spring 1989, 708.

36. Loftes Tryk's *Opposition in All Things* existed in an unpublished manuscript version (quoted in Tanner and Tanner, *Serious Charges Against the Tanners*, 3); the anti-Decker reference appears to have been deleted from the version published by Tryk in *The Jacob's Well Report* for spring 1989.

all books ever published on the Book of Mormon"³⁷—is sold today by Decker through the catalogues of his organization Saints Alive.

The key point in Tryk's criticism of the Tanners is that they "contain, redirect, or moderate investigations into the Satanic nature of Mormonism" and "lead Mormonism's opponents on a merry chase" after such obviously irrelevant arguments as whether Joseph Smith "plagiarized from books of contemporary authors when writing the Book of Mormon." These themes are not really interesting if one, like Tryk, believes that the real author of the Book of Mormon is Satan, not Joseph Smith, "that Mormonism is so insidious and such a diabolical plot, that it is actually a form of devil worship, that the head ringleader behind the scenes is Beelzebub, himself, Satan." "The Tanner double-speech shows up," Tryk continues, "as they publish some of their material in such a way that it parodies the Satanic evidence, thereby discrediting other leaders of the Mormon opposition movement."³⁸ The feud is still going on. The Tanners have produced a new book criticizing the reliability of *The God Makers II* and the integrity of its authors, who are in turn striking back by claiming again that the Tanners are agents, if not of the Devil, at least of Mormon general authorities.³⁹

One may question whether this sort of disputation is worth scholarly investigation. The sociological question, however, is not whether these ideas deserve to be taken seriously, but whether they are taken seriously by social movements of some significance. Although the modern Evangelical counter-Mormon movement is not as large as it claims to be, it is also not totally insignificant, and its literature enjoys a large circulation. In order to understand how it is possible for a lunatic fringe of a movement such as this to exist, it is necessary to examine the broader context of the spiritual warfare movement and the smaller context of the in-house struggles of the counter-Mormon movement. An internecine feud began around 1986 between two different interpretations of Evangelical counter-Mormonism. One strain, "classic" counter-Mormonism, was represented by Wesley Walters, the Tanners, and at least some members of Walter Martin's Christian Research Institute. The other strain consists of Ed Decker, Bill Schnoebelen, Jim Spencer, and Loftes Tryk. Although local problems in Utah and succession questions after one generation of counter-Mormon leaders died may help explain the conflict, it cannot be entirely understood

37. Peterson, "A Modern 'Malleus maleficarum,'" 260.

38. *The Jacob's Well Report*, Spring 1989, 5-9. For the subsequent evolution of Tryk's anti-Mormonism, see Louis Midgley, "Playing with Half a Decker: The Countercult Religious Tradition Confronts the Book of Mormon," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 5 (1993): 116-71.

39. See Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Problems in The Godmakers II* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1993).

unless it is placed in the context of the larger controversy about spiritual warfare and the Third Wave, which is dividing Evangelicals and Pentecostals on a national and international level. Schnoebelen's first counter-Mormon paper appeared in the same year as Peretti's novel. The language of the "new" counter-Mormonism is typically the language of the spiritual warfare movement. Thus spiritual warfare counter-Mormonism is best understood as a segment of the larger spiritual warfare movement which views the world as a battlefield on which the righteous fights real demons and demonized human beings, including members of "cults."





Spiritualism and Mormonism: Some Thoughts on Similarities and Differences

Michael W. Homer

SPIRITUALISM AND MORMONISM WERE BOTH BORN in the “burned over district” in upper New York State within a generation of each another and teach that it is possible for the living to speak with the dead. Even though Spiritualists and Mormons have often recited these and other similarities—a hope for communitarian reform, a belief in humanity’s perfectibility and eternal progress, experimentation with marriage relationships, and possession of a sense of mission—in an attempt to explain Spiritualism’s attraction for some Mormons, and why certain Spiritualists were convinced that Mormon revelations were nothing more than Spiritualist manifestations, many similarities between the two are superficial.¹

Not all Spiritualists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were Christians; non-Christian Spiritualists exhorted fellow believers to “oppose every effort to Christianize, Mormonise, Mohammedanise, or otherwise pollute Spiritualism.”² In addition, Spiritualism unlike Mor-

1. Comparisons by Spiritualists (Emma Hardinge, William Stainton Moses, Arthur Conan Doyle) and Mormons (George Q. Cannon, William S. Godbe, E. L. T. Harrison) follow. For a modern comparison by a Mormon historian, see Ronald W. Walker, “When the Spirits did Abound: Nineteenth-Century Utah’s Encounter with Free-Thought Radicalism,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 50 (Fall 1982): 317-18; Ronald W. Walker, “The Commencement of the Godbeite Protest: Another View,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42 (Summer 1974): 227-28. See also Davis Bitton, “Mormonism’s Encounter with Spiritualism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 1 (1974): 39-50. Non-Mormon authors who have compared Mormonism and Spiritualism include Geoffrey K. Nelson, *Spiritualism and Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 71; and R. Laurence Moore, *In Search of White Crows, Spiritualism, Parapsychology, and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 5, 47, 50, 235.

2. James Burns, “Spiritualism and the Gospel of Jesus,” 4, No. 1, in *Houdini Pamphlets: Spiritualism*, Vol. 2 (Houdini Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.).

monism lacked a central church organization and except for believing in spirit messages from the dead had no universal creed.³ In fact, similarities noted by one Spiritualist faction were often used to criticize another faction. For example, in 1867 one Spiritualist magazine accused another of being a grab bag of “mormon, Methodist, Shaker, Free thinker, Free lover” thought.⁴

Even if Mormons believed in and occasionally received visions of their dead, most such apparitions occurred only to a select few, under uncontrolled circumstances, and only rarely after the death of Mormonism’s first generation.⁵ Mormons never conducted seances or took ectoplasmic apparitions or spirit photographs seriously. Given these differences, similarities may have been good arguments to convince potential converts that the two movements were harmonious but not persuasive that the movements were twins.

Although the one similarity the two movements did share—that the living can speak with the dead—and its corollary—that followers can “know” rather than “believe”⁶ that life continues after death—was also espoused by other nineteenth-century religions, it was enough to associate the two movements in the minds of critics. Many skeptics criticized both groups—sometimes in the same book or tract,⁷ others in separate

3. Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychic Research in England, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 59.

4. *Spiritual Magazine* (1867): 337ff., 434-37.

5. See Austin and Alta Fife, *Saints of Sage and Saddle: Folklore Among the Mormons* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956); Thomas E. Cheney, ed., *Lore of Faith & Folly* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971).

6. Arthur Conan Doyle in a famous Movietone interview made a point of stating that when he talked about Spiritualism “I am not talking about what I believe, I’m not talking about what I think, I’m talking about what I know” (“Conan Doyle on Screen, Creator of Sherlock Holmes Tells of His Stories and Beliefs,” *New York Times*, 26 May 1929, x, 4, 7).

7. For examples of authors who criticized Mormonism and Spiritualism in the same treatise, see Alfred Pairpoint, *Uncle Sam and His Country; or, Sketches of America, in 1855-55-56* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1857), 175-78; S. B. Emmons, *Counsels for the Cottage and the Mansion* (Boston: L.P. Crown & Co., 1856), 96-101, 118-22, later published as S. B. Emmons, *The Spirit Land* (Philadelphia: G.G. Evans, 1859), 96-101, 118-64; Martin Ruter, *A Concise History of the Christian Church* (New York: Carlton & Lanahan, 1865); William Hepworth Dixon, *New America*, 2 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1867), 1:186-359, 2:149-65; Lacon (pseud.), *The Devil in America: A Dramatic Satire. Spirit-Rapping—Mormonism; . . .* (Mobile, AL: J.K. Randall, 1867); and J. V. Coombs, *Religious Delusions, A Psychic Study* (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1904). These comparisons were not limited to British and American authors. See Emile Jonveaux, *L’Amérique Actuelle* (Paris: Charpentier, 1869), 227-49, 250, *et. seq.*; Claudio Jannet, *Les Etats-Unis contemporain*, 13ème ed., 2 tomes (Paris: Plon, 1877), 69-74; and Alexandre Erdan, *La France Mystique* (Paris: Coulon-Pineau, 1855), 363-88. Erdan, a French author,

exposés.⁸ Orestes A. Brownson (1803-76), a Universalist preacher, radical humanist, and severe critic of Spiritualism, who converted to Catholicism in 1844, wrote that Mormonism was a form “of contemporary spiritualism.”⁹ He also believed that the devil was the prime mover of Spiritualism and that the Book of Mormon was a piece of literary demonism.¹⁰ Three years later, in 1857 George Templeton Strong, a New York socialite, called the Mormons a “horde of brutalized fanatics who formed a ‘Religion of Sensuality’” and argued that if that “most beggarly of delusions should prevail,” it would only be “less astounding than the reception of ‘spiritualism’ by so many thousands as a new Gospel or a Commentary on the old one.”¹¹ That same year Alfred Pairpoint, a British traveler, criticized both Spiritualism and Mormonism and concluded that “blame-

had prepared to become a Roman Catholic priest but chose journalism instead. His book not only attacked minority religions such as Mormonism and Spiritualism but was also condemned by the Roman Catholics. More recent comparisons are contained in R. Laurence Moore, “The Occult Connection? Mormonism, Christian Science and Spiritualism,” in *The Occult in America: New Historical Perspectives*, Howard Kerr and Charles L. Crow, eds. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), and in the popular but unscholarly study by Deborah Laake, *Secret Ceremonies* (New York: William Morrow, 1993), 13, 34.

8. For examples of authors who criticized Mormonism and Spiritualism in separate works, see Count Agenor DeGasparin, *Lecture du Mormonisme, Archives du Christianisme* (1852; 1853), and his *Treatise on Turning Tables, The Supernatural in General, and Spirits*, 2 vols. (New York: Kiggins & Kellogg, 1857); William Edward Biederwolf, *Mormonism Under the Searchlight and Spiritualism and Russellism Unveiled, the Three Books in One* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1910). DeGasparin’s articles on Mormonism were criticized by T. B. H. Stenhouse in *Les Mormons et leurs ennemis* (Lausanne, 1854) while Stenhouse was LDS Swiss Mission president. See discussion in Massimo Introvigne, *Les Mormons* (Belgique: Brepols, 1991), 181. Stenhouse later wrote his own history of Mormonism, *The Rocky Mountain Saints* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1873), which has been described as a “Godbeite handbook which sought to mold Eastern opinion to the viewpoint of the Utah dissenters.” See Ronald W. Walker, “The Godbeite Protest in the Making of Modern Utah,” Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1977, 175. For a Spiritualist criticism of DeGasparin’s book on Spiritualism, see Frank Podmore, *Studies in Psychological Research* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1897), 43-47.

9. “Spiritualism and Spiritus,” *The Catholic World*, June 1869, reprinted in Orestes Brownson, *The Works* (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 346, 335.

10. Orestes Brownson, *The Spirit-Rapper: An Autobiography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co; London: Dolman, 1854). More than twenty years later Brownson wrote that alleged cures by Mormon elders were neither proofs of miraculous intervention nor “an intervention of the Evil One.” See “Review of Mgr. de Ségur’s *The Wonders of Lourdes*,” *Brownson’s Quarterly Review* 24 (July 1875): 3512-401, reprinted in Orestes A. Brownson, *Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991). See also Howard Kerr, *Mediums, and Spirit Rappers, and Roaring Radicals: Spiritualism in American Literature, 1850-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 87.

11. George Templeton Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, eds., 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1952), 2:376-77.

able as the Spiritual creed may be, it is not cursed with the disgusting details as that of Mormonism."¹² In January 1865 Abraham Hayward, another British observer, wrote in *Frasers Magazine* that the famous British medium D. D. Home "beats Joe Smith hollow; for he persuades people that they hear what they do not hear; that they see what they do not see."¹³ Orthodox ministers, both Catholic and Protestant, also found themselves agreeing that the apparitions claimed by these new religious movements were either bogus¹⁴ or inspired by the devil.¹⁵

Such comparisons and criticisms created a dilemma for followers of both movements.¹⁶ Mormons eventually adopted the position of most other sectarians, that Spiritualism was a counterfeit religion (and in the Mormon mind a counterfeit of Mormonism) inspired by the devil,¹⁷ whereas Spiritualists were content to believe that the revelations of Mormonism were genuine and, even if not fully understood by their recipients, were additional proofs of Spiritualism.

Mention of modern Spiritualism first appeared in Mormon-owned *Deseret News* in 1851, only three years after the famous Rochester, New York, knockings. At first news stories appeared without editorial com-

12. Pairpoint, 177.

13. Abraham Hayward, "Spiritualism, as Related to Religion and Science," *Frasers Magazine* 71 (Jan. 1865): 25-26.

14. See Oppenheim, 64-66.

15. *Ibid.*, 66-67.

16. Mormonism and Spiritualism share a common ancestor in Swedenborgism. Arthur Conan Doyle in *The History of Spiritualism* notes that Swedenborgism was a forerunner of Spiritualism which was born in upstate New York. He wrote that Swedenborg's "bust should be in a every Spiritualist Temple, as being the first and greatest of modern mediums" (Arthur Conan Doyle, *The History of Spiritualism*, 2 vols. [London: Cassel, 1926], 1:21). Mormon authors have also noted similarities between Swedenborg's "revelations" and Mormon doctrine. See D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 12-13, 174-75; Rick Grunder Books, *Mormon List* 36, Item 141, describing Swedenborg's treatise *Concerning Heaven . . . and Hell* (Boston, 1825 ed.). One early Mormon convert, John Hyde, returned to England and became a follower of Swedenborg. But his book *Mormonism: Its Leaders and Designs* (New York: W.P. Fetridge & Co., 1857) makes no mention of his new belief. As a result of this dilemma, Mormon and Spiritualist responses to competing revelations became increasingly defensive throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

17. Other new religious movements, such as Christian Science and Seventh Day Adventists, developed similar responses. See Russell M. and Clare R. Goldfarb, *Spiritualism and Nineteenth-Century Letters* (Rutherford, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1978), 49; and Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart, *Seeking the Sanctuary: Seventh Day Adventists and the American Dream* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1989), 64. For a Roman Catholic perspective, see Giovanni Giuseppe Franco, *Idea Chiara Dello Spiritismo* (Prato: Giachetti, Figlio e.c., 1885), and Donald Hole, *Spiritualism in Relation to Science and Religion* (London: The Society of S.S. Peter and Paul Limited, n.d.).

ment,¹⁸ but following the conversion of a few Mormons to Spiritualism LDS authorities began to actively criticize its pretensions. In 1852 a family of British converts migrating to Salt Lake City lost their faith in Mormonism after a twenty-year-old cousin, Mary Ann, died on the plains. The family was soon visited by Mary Ann's spirit who expressed satisfaction with her family's decision to settle in Ohio rather than resume its trek to Salt Lake City. She also told the family that Joseph Smith was not a prophet, the Book of Mormon was not true, and polygamy was not a divinely inspired doctrine.¹⁹

The same year Mary Ann died Mormon authorities advised members about the dangerous implications of accepting revelations received outside the context of Mormonism and assured them that the message of Spiritualism was unauthorized, confused, garbled, and self-contradictory. In February 1852 an editorial in the *Deseret News* warned against being "operated upon by a false spirit" and advised Mormons to "live by his creed, and 'mind his own business.'"²⁰ In July Heber C. Kimball, first counselor to church president Brigham Young, described "spirit-rapping" and asserted:

The invisible world are in trouble; they are knocking, and rapping, and muttering; and the people are inquiring of them to know concerning the things of God, and there is not a soul of them can tell them anything about the end of the world. They are in a dreadful situation; and in the city of Rochester, near where I used to live, the last information I received from there, there were 135 spiritual writers in that city. I have a brother-in-law

18. "Mysterious Knockings," *Deseret News*, 22 Feb. 1851, 210.

19. *Liberator*, 21 Jan. 1853, 12. Another "spiritualist and a Healer," Joseph Ashman (1834-82), confessed to have "dwelt in the tents of the Mormonites" and to have "been one of the Peculiar People." See Joseph Ashman obituary, *Medium and Daybreak* 14 (1883): 5, in Logie Barrow, *Independent Spirits: Spiritualism and English Plebeians, 1850-1910* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 215.

20. "To the Saints," *Deseret News*, 21 Feb. 1852, 2. This editorial was consistent with the teachings of Joseph Smith who shortly after the organization of the Mormon church in 1830 taught that although all persons are entitled to personal revelation (D&C 8:1-3; 42:61-62; 121:25-26) they may only receive "private" revelations and not those which concern the church (25:9; 28:2-8; 90:14; 94:3; 100:11; 107:91-92). See also, Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1958), 579-86. Smith also taught that some revelations are of the devil (D&C 28:11; 50:2) and that members can distinguish between heavenly and diabolical manifestations (129:4-9). Even Smith himself could be visited by an evil spirit with a counterfeit message (Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Century One*, 6 vols. [Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1965], 1:162-66). For an excellent discussion of this topic, see Massimo Introvigne, "Il 'canone aperto': rivelazione e nuove rivelazione nella teologia e nella storia dei Mormoni," in *Le Nuove Rivelazioni* (Leumann, Torino: Elle Di Ci, 1991), 27-85.

there, who is a Presbyterian priest: he couldn't inquire of God about future things, so he inquired of the spirits; but they could not tell him anything about the dead nor the living.²¹

Nine months later at the dedication of the cornerstone of the Salt Lake temple another Mormon apostle, Parley P. Pratt, distinguished between manifestations to Spiritualists and revelations to Latter-day prophets by observing that "ministrations for the salvation and exaltation" of the world can only be obtained "[b]y one holding the keys of the oracles of God, as a medium through which the living can hear from the dead."²² According to Pratt, Mormons must discriminate "between the lawful and the unlawful mediums or channels of communication—between the holy and impure, the truths and falsehoods, thus communicated."²³ Only in the temple is it possible for "the most holy things pertaining to the salvation of the dead, and all the most holy conversations and correspondence with God, angels and spirits" to take place.²⁴ The next day during general conference Pratt told church members that spirits are only endowed with as much knowledge as they gained on earth and that only spirits of those who had the gospel or were apostles and prophets could be expected to convey accurate information.²⁵

Jedediah M. Grant, Brigham Young's second counselor, also addressed this subject on 19 February 1854 when he informed listeners that he was "more or less familiar with the doings of the Spirit Rappers" and that although he was satisfied that "they are manifestations of spirits" he was convinced "the result of the manifestations of the spirits (wicked spirits) will be to combine their forces in as systematic an order as they are capable of, to successfully resist the Priesthood upon the earth."²⁶ When Brigham Young addressed the subject at the end of the decade (September 1859) he agreed with his counselors and apostles that the manifestations of Spiritualism were unlawful, confused, and wicked but also taught that "spirit-rapping, spirit-knocking . . . is produced by the spirits that the Lord has suffered to communicate to people on the earth" and that such manifestations were allowed by God to permit the devil to make "the people believe very strongly in revelations from the spirit world."²⁷

21. Heber C. Kimball, "Believing the Bible—the Gospel—Persecution—Spirit-Rapping, etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool, Eng: Latter-day Saints Book Depot, 1855-86), 1:36 (hereafter JD).

22. Parley P. Pratt, "Spiritual Communication," JD 2:44.

23. *Ibid.*, 45.

24. *Ibid.*, 46.

25. Parley P. Pratt, "Spiritual Communication," JD 1:6-15.

26. Jedediah M. Grant, "The Power of God and the Power of Satan," JD 2:10-11.

27. Brigham Young, "Providences of God . . .," JD 7:240.

Given these discourses in the 1850s—that Spiritualism’s spirit voices were “inferior” and confusing to believers in true revelation—it must have unnerved LDS leaders that Spiritualists did not deny manifestations experienced by Joseph Smith but instead taught that they provided additional proofs of their own movement. In 1855 a Mormon missionary in St. Louis reported that Spiritualism was “daily adding to the ranks of skepticism. The many contradictory revelations, coming thro’ the spiritual mediums, have had a tendency to destroy all faith in true revelation. One spirit says that Methodism is the only true system; others say Presbyterianism, and others say Catholicism, and so on; and some say that Mormonism is true.”²⁸ Spiritualists were eager to harmonize their experiences with those of other faiths. One Spiritualist writer in 1859 wrote that “the conclusions to which we have arrived are, that the Book of Mormon is to a very great extent, a spiritual romance, originating in the spiritual world, and that Joseph Smith was the medium or the principal one, through whom it was given.”²⁹

This Spiritualist perspective on Mormon revelation was eventually adopted by a group of Mormon merchants and entrepreneurs who became infatuated by Spiritualism beginning in 1868, and it was only then that Mormonism’s current official position—that Spiritualism is a tool of the devil—was fully developed. In 1868 William Godbe and E. L. T. Harrison began publication of *Utah Magazine*, which disagreed with the LDS hierarchy on the economic development of Utah. Brigham Young had organized a system of “cooperation” under which Mormons could only purchase from Mormon merchants, and although Godbe and Harrison were both Mormons they condemned this attempt to perpetuate church control over the economic development of the territory. Most non-Mormon merchants also objected.

Although *Utah Magazine* contained articles concerning the economic development of the territory, it also included occasional articles about the supernatural,³⁰ but editors rarely compared psychic phenomena to Mor-

28. Charles H. Bassett to B. L. Mackintosh, *Deseret News*, 20 June 1855, 120.

29. *Tiffany’s Monthly*, May 1859.

30. See, for example, “Latest Ghost Talk,” *Utah Magazine* 1 (29 Feb. 1868): 87-89; “Swedenborg’s Curious Powers,” *Utah Magazine* 1 (7 Mar. 1868): 104-105; “Curious Spiritual Manifestation,” *Utah Magazine* 1 (28 Mar. 1868): 141-42; “Testimony of the Supernatural,” *Utah Magazine* 1 (16 May 1868): 222-23; “Spirit Writing,” *Utah Magazine* 1 (27 June 1868): 293; “Chinese Spiritual Mediums,” *Utah Magazine* 2 (26 Dec. 1868): 161; “Planchette,” *Utah Magazine* 2 (16 Jan. 1869): 204; “Planchette,” *Utah Magazine* 2 (23 Jan. 1869): 216; John Lyon, “The Spirit in the Whole Body,” *Utah Magazine* 3 (11 Sept. 1869): 297-98; *Utah Magazine* 3 (18 Sept. 1869): 315; L. M. Child, “Things Unaccountable. Clairvoyance, Oracles, Visions and Seers,” *Utah Magazine* 3 (18 Sept. 1869): 311; 3 (25 Sept. 1869): 325; 3 (22 Oct. 1869): 340-41; “Emanuel Swedenborg,” *Utah Magazine* 3 (16 Oct. 1869): 380.

monism³¹ and for the most part continued to support Mormon revelations.³² In September 1868 Godbe and Harrison traveled to New York City where they attended about fifty seances and communicated with various spirits including New Testament apostles Peter, James, and John, Heber C. Kimball (who died in 1859), and Joseph Smith. These spirits instructed Godbe and Harrison to reform Mormonism from within by integrating it with Spiritualism which at the same time would provide Spiritualism with an organizational structure and a common creed. Upon their return to Utah, Godbe and Harrison chose not to reveal in the pages of *Utah Magazine* these manifestations or their fascination with Spiritualism. Nevertheless, they both continued to object to Young's economic policies and were eventually summoned before church authorities in October 1869 and excommunicated for questioning the temporal and spiritual authority of Brigham Young.³³

Godbe and Harrison did not immediately affirm their allegiance to Spiritualism³⁴—perhaps because of the stigma church authorities had placed on it by condemning it as a tool of the devil; they did, however, organize the Church of Zion and privately informed church authorities that they had received spiritual manifestations. Shortly after organizing the Church of Zion, Godbe and Harrison discontinued *Utah Magazine* and began a newspaper, *The Mormon Tribune*, which allowed them to continue criticizing the economic policies of the LDS church. In March

31. Some examples are "Spiritualism and the Priesthood," *Utah Magazine* 2 (16 Jan. 1869): 199; "We Are Nothing if Not Spiritual," *Utah Magazine* 3 (23 Oct. 1869): 390-91; Edward Tullidge, "Our Social Redemption," *Utah Magazine* 3 (23 Oct. 1869): 394-95; "Spiritualism and the Priesthood," *Utah Magazine* 3 (20 Nov. 1869): 458.

32. See, for example, "Our Right to Expect a Revealed Religion," *Utah Magazine* 3 (22 May 1869): 38; "The Doctrine of Our Divine Origin; Its Agreement with our Nature," *Utah Magazine* 3 (1 June 1869): 87; John Nicholson, "Mental Philosophy," *Utah Magazine* 3 (12 June 1869): 90; "'Mormonism' and the Question of Man's Divinity," *Utah Magazine* 3 (17 Jan. 1869): 166-67; "Necessity of an Intelligible View of a Future Life," *Utah Magazine* 3 (31 July 1869): 198-99; "Revelations to Suit the Times, Or the Question of Appealing 'To the Law and To the Testimony,'" *Utah Magazine* 3 (7 Aug. 1869): 213-14; "The Two Kinds of Immortality Offered to Man," *Utah Magazine* 3 (7 Aug. 1869): 218-19.

33. For the views of Harrison and Tullidge with respect to these excommunications, see "An Appeal to the People," *Utah Magazine* 3 (30 Oct. 1869): 406-407; E. L. T. Harrison, "Protest," *Utah Magazine* 3 (30 Oct. 1869): 407-408; William S. Godbe, "A Card by W. S. Godbe," *Utah Magazine* 3 (30 Oct. 1869): 408-11. See also "The Reformation in Utah," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine* 256 (Sept. 1871): 602-10.

34. Within a month after their excommunications Godbe and Harrison republished an article, "Spiritualism and Priesthood," which had originally appeared on 16 January 1869 in which they wrote that "we have *no* faith in Spiritualism, as a teacher or as a reliable source of enlightenment" (see *Utah Magazine* 2 [16 Jan. 1869]: 199, and 3 [20 Nov. 1869]: 458; emphasis added). George Q. Cannon's speech denouncing Spiritualism on 31 January 1869 was probably prompted by the 16 January article (see JD 12:362-72).

1870, almost six months after their excommunications, Godbe and Harrison finally disclosed in the *Tribune* their belief that similarities existed between their movement and Spiritualism.³⁵ They also responded to the LDS church's claim that their movement was "inspired by the devil" by observing that this argument was the only way the Mormon leadership had found

of dealing with any knotty subject or phenomenon which they cannot explain or reconcile with their own narrow notions . . . to pronounce it "of the devil" and throw it into the waste basket, there to await the rounds of the gentleman with tail and horns who is supposed to gather up such worthless trash as fuel for his grand and eternal apparatus for roasting humanity.³⁶

To prove that Mormon doctrine regarding Spiritualism was wrong they pointed out that a former member of the church's twelve apostles and counselor in the First Presidency had become a Spiritualist and that "[l]ooking round the other day at Bro. Amasa [Lyman], who certainly looks ten years younger since the 'buffetings' commenced upon him, we asked how he got along with his afflictions. He replied that he had just been weighed and discovered that the Devil had 'buffeted' him up of eighteen pounds! Not so bad for a very miserable apostate!"³⁷ The Godbeites also asked: "Will nothing short of the recognition of Brigham Young's infallibility, submission to all his exactions and obedience to all his requirements save humanity from the clutches of this supposed rival aspirant for universal empire?"³⁸

That same month E. L. T. Harrison wrote another article noting similarities and differences between Spiritualism and his new Church of Zion. The Church of Zion was similar to Spiritualism since "Spiritualism in its highest sense must include all manifestations of spiritual power the world has ever witnessed."³⁹ Harrison claimed that "a vision given to Swedenborg or to Andrew Jackson Davis must be produced on the same natural principles as a vision given to Paul, Peter, or Joseph Smith."⁴⁰ The differences between the Church of Zion and Spiritualism enunciated by Harrison included the church's belief that it was given a mandate to establish a "central system of Divine Controlling Powers, and our belief in being

35. E. L. T. Harrison, "The Church of Zion; or, The Question Is It Spiritualism?" *Mormon Tribune*, 26 Mar. 1870, 100-101.

36. "Spiritualism and the Devil," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Oct. 1870, 1.

37. "Being 'Buffeted,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Oct. 1870, 1.

38. "Spiritualism and the Devil," 1.

39. Harrison, "The Church of Zion," 100.

40. *Ibid.*

guided, as a Church, by them alone,"⁴¹ to unite all Spiritualists. In short, the Church of Zion believed in a central church organization which Spiritualism lacked. According to Harrison,

Joseph Smith . . . was raised up to prepare the way for the establishment of a central spiritual power which, when fully developed, shall sweep all that there is valuable . . . in Spiritualism within its ample folds; taking its highest order of seers, its prophets, its spiritual healers, its inspirational and most spiritual natures, teaching them a higher and a greater gospel, and welding them with Zion into a grand combination for the tearing down of superstition . . .⁴²

In short, Godbe and Harrison believed that the transition from Mormonism to Spiritualism would not be difficult because the Mormon church itself was "spiritualistic."⁴³ Mormonism taught that everyone may obtain "direct evidences of the truth of the fact of inspiration and Revelation," and that such "light" would "never cease so long as the ages roll along."⁴⁴ Even one of the Mormon church's twelve apostles, George Q. Cannon, seemed to agree that similarities existed. In 1869, he revealed he had read a book early in his life which contained doctrine he thought was "written by the Latter-day Saints."⁴⁵ According to Cannon,

The argument of the writer was in favor of communication with the spirit world, through the ministering of angels, being as possible in these days as at former times. He used precisely similar arguments to those used by the Elders of this Church; and quoted largely from the Bible to prove that it had been quite common for men in ancient days to have such communications and to possess the gift of prophecy and the spirit of revelation, and he argued in favor of these modes of communication in these days.⁴⁶

Seven months after making this statement, in the wake of Godbe's and Harrison's excommunications, Cannon wrote in the *Juvenile Instructor* that

41. *Ibid.*, 101.

42. *Ibid.*, 101. This view of LDS history was further elaborated by T. B. H. Stenhouse in his *Rocky Mountain Saints* and by Edward W. Tullidge in his *Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (New York, 1878).

43. E. L. T. Harrison, "The Question of the Hour: Or, Radical or Conservative Measures for Utah?" *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine*, 1 (Oct. 1880): 133.

44. *Ibid.*

45. George Q. Cannon, "Unity and Unchangeableness of the Gospel—New Revelation Needed—Spiritualism," *JD* 12:362-72.

46. *Ibid.*, 369. See also George Q. Cannon, "Thoughts on Spiritism" and "Thoughts on Spiritism Continued," in *Writings from the "Western Standard"* (Liverpool, 1864), 51 and 54. These articles were originally published in the *Western Standard*, 5 Mar., 5 Apr. 1856.

such similarities demonstrate that Spiritualism is a counterfeit form of Mormonism inspired by the devil: “[M]en and women began to receive revelations [shortly after the birth of Spiritualism], not from the Lord Jesus but from spirits, and great wonders began to be shown. . . . what a cunning plan this is of the devil to deceive people and prevent men and women from obeying the teachings of Jesus!”⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, the other apostles agreed with Cannon. On 19 December 1869 Orson Pratt told an audience in the Mormon Tabernacle that he had spoken with Godbe and Harrison prior to their excommunications and was told by them about “their supernatural manifestations, commencing some fifteen months before.”⁴⁸ During his interview with Godbe, Pratt told him that he did not believe Godbe had received visitations from ancient or modern apostles: “I do not believe one of them has been to you, it is the devil, just the same as he has manifested himself in the world.”⁴⁹ The following April, Pratt told a church congregation that the devil had introduced Spiritualism as a counterfeit of Mormonism after failing previously to convince humanity that “gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy, revelation, the ministering and discerning of spirits”⁵⁰ did not exist.

Brigham Young also rejected comparison between Mormonism and Spiritualism. On 6 October 1870 he observed that Spiritualists

would like to have it considered that “Mormonism” is nothing but Spiritualism; but it is temporalism as well as Spiritualism. A great many want to know the difference between the two. I will give one feature of the difference, and then set the whole scientific world to work to see if they can ever bring to bear the same feature in Spiritualism. Take all who are called Spiritualists and see if they can produce the order that is in the midst of this people. Here are system, order, organization, law, rule and facts. Now see if they can produce any of these features. They cannot. Why? Because their system is from beneath, while ours is perfect and is from above; one is from God, the other is from the devil, that is all the difference.⁵¹

Like the orthodox clergy—both Catholic and Protestant—Young and his fellow apostles were convinced that Spiritualism was a tool of the devil designed to lure away those who yearned for proof that life continues after

47. *Juvenile Instructor* 4 (8 Oct. 1869): 164.

48. Orson Pratt, “Revelations and Manifestations of God and of Wicked Spirits,” *JD* 13:72.

49. *Ibid.*, 73.

50. Orson Pratt, “The Latter-day Kingdom of God,” *JD* 13:134-35.

51. Brigham Young, “Texts for Preaching upon at Conference—Revelations—Deceitfulness of Riches—One-Man Power—Spiritualism,” *JD* 13:266.

death⁵² into a system with no creed or church organization. Thus, explained Young,

its members can only divide and sub-divide, produce confusion on confusion, disorder following on the heels of disorder, one to the right, another to the left, another for the front, another for the rear, one pulling this way, another pulling that, sect against sect, people against people, community against community, politically, religiously, and I may say morally to a great extent . . .⁵³

Like the devil Spiritualism was “a mass of confusion, it is a body without parts and passions, principle or power, just like, I do not like to say it, but just like the so-called Christian’s God.”⁵⁴ During another discourse in October Young expressed outrage that “We are accused of being nothing more nor less than a people possessing what they term the higher order of Spiritualism.”

“You are right,” say I. Yes, we belong to that higher order of Spiritualism; our revelations are from above, yours from beneath. This is the difference. We receive revelation from Heaven, you receive your revelations from every foul spirit that has departed this life, and gone out of bodies of mobbers, murderers, highwaymen, drunkards, thieves, liars and every kind of debauched character, whose spirits are floating around here, and searching and seeking whom they can destroy; for they are the servants of the devil, and they are permitted to come now to reveal to the people. . . . That is the difference between the two spiritual systems—yes, this is the higher order of spiritualism, to be led, governed and controlled by law, and that, too, the law of heaven that governs and controls the Gods and the angels.⁵⁵

Ironically, Godbe and Harrison agreed with Young’s assessment of Spiritualism, that it was not governed or controlled by law. For that reason they were attempting to provide it with an organization and common

52. Goldfarb, 34.

53. JD 13:266.

54. Ibid.

55. Brigham Young, “The Word of Wisdom—Spiritualism,” JD 13:274-83, 281. For additional comments by the Mormon hierarchy on Spiritualism, see Brigham Young, “Sin—The Atonement, etc.,” JD 14:72; Brigham Young, “Good and Evil, etc.,” JD 14:112-13; Orson Pratt, “The Day of Pentecost, etc.,” JD 14:179; Brigham Young, “The Training of Children,” JD 14:199-200; Orson Pratt, “The Gospel Restored from Heaven, etc.,” JD 17:271-72; Joseph F. Smith, “Arrival in Salt Lake City, etc.,” JD 19:195-96; Charles W. Penrose, “The Gospel, etc.,” JD 21:353-54; George Q. Cannon, “Discourse,” JD 24:339, 341-42.

creed. As such, the religious battle became a power struggle which extended beyond the economic policies of the territory. One Mormon critic, J. H. Beadle, claimed in 1872 that

there is no other form of apostasy the Mormon Priesthood so fear, hate, and curse, and no kind of mysticism to which apostate Mormons are so prone, as spiritualism. The whole body of the Church seems only to be kept therefrom by constantly hearing from the Priesthood that it is the "doings of the devil," and nothing seems to interest a young and skeptical Mormon so quick as "circles," *seances*, visions, shadowy hands, and conjurations with boxes, "pendulum oracles," *planchette*, and every kind of forbidden and diabolical nonsense.⁵⁶

Although Beadle's distinction between "Mormon Priesthood" and "apostate Mormons" made sense in the provincial boundaries of Utah, it did not make sense to Spiritualists who were not among those who would join a church presided over by former Mormon elders. After the organization of the Church of Zion, Utah became a stopping place for mediums and lecturers, and even if most Spiritualist writers of the period did not cite "Mormon" experiences as examples of spiritual manifestations, several prominent Spiritualist observers were impressed by Mormon sensitivity to psychic phenomena.⁵⁷ Although these observers spoke of "Mormonism" they were no doubt also describing Mormon "apostates" affiliated with the Church of Zion. Emma Hardinge Britten, the famous medium who was acquainted with the communitarian-turned-Spiritualist Robert Owen and helped organize the Theosophical Society with Madame Blavatsky, wrote in 1870:

56. William Hickman, *Brigham's Destroying Angel* (New York: George A. Crofutt, 1872), appendix, 209 (by the editor, J. H. Beadle, Esquire).

57. Spiritualists who visited Utah prior to the Godbeite schism failed to mention any similarities between Mormonism and Spiritualism. See Richard F. Burton, *The City of the Saints* (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861). Reference to Burton's belief in Spiritualism is in W. H. Harrison, ed., *Psychic Facts* (London: W.H. Harrison, 1880), 70-79. But see Fawn M. Brodie, *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Burton* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1967), 314-15. Another visitor to Utah, Samuel Bowles, *Across the Continent* (New York: Hard & Houghton, 1866), who saw nothing extraordinary in Mormon claims in revelation, became a Spiritualist after his death when he visited his mortal friends. See Samuel Bowles, *Contrasts in Spirit Life* (Springfield, MA: Star Publishing Company, 1880); Samuel Bowles, *Interviews with Spirits* (Springfield, MA: Star Publishing Company, 1885). Even anti-Mormon writer Maria Ward in *Female Life Among the Mormons* wrote that "Joseph Smith was one of the earliest practitioners in ANIMAL MAGNETISM; and it was the use of this power at that time, that convinced his disciples of his supposed miraculous gifts." Ward attributes the success of Mormonism and her conversion to this predecessor of Spiritualism. See Maria Ward, *Female Life Among the Mormons* (New York: Burdick Bros., 1857), 24.

Those Americans who have visited the singular dwellers of the desert, calling themselves "Latter Day Saints" or "Mormons" report that phenomenal gifts are abundantly poured out upon them . . . Amongst the "Mormons" resident in California and Nevada, many excellent spirit mediums are to be found, especially in the direction of prophecy and healing. They claim that these gifts are communicable by the old apostolic mode of laying on of hands, and affirm that they have received their gifts from the imposition of hands on the part of their "elders."⁵⁸

Another famous British medium and ordained Anglican minister William Stainton Moses,⁵⁹ whose book *Spirit Teachings*⁶⁰ has been called the "Bible of British Spiritualism,"⁶¹ expressed admiration for Utah and the Mormons in 1882 in an editorial published in *Light*, a Spiritualist newspaper published in London. After reading a book about the Mormons by Phil Robinson⁶² published the same year he became convinced that Mormons were, like the Shakers, "instinctive Spiritualists."⁶³

One of the chief elders of these "instinctive Spiritualists," the Society of Shakers, also agreed that "even the Mormons have had Spiritual revelations." After making this remark in 1874 Frederick W. Evans was asked whether he meant "to convey the idea that the spiritual manifestations confirm the truth of Mormonism?" Evans responded by stating, "Yea, to a certain extent." This response surprised the interviewer who said: "Why, I should have thought Mormonism, the very antipodes of your belief." Evans replied: "Mormonism is much better than your New York Christianity."⁶⁴ In correspondence to the same editor, Evans later wrote:

I consider Mormonism a revival of ancient Judaism—the God—Tutelar Deity, of the Jews, is probably the controlling spirit of Mormonism.

58. Emma Hardinge, *Modern Spiritualism: A Twenty Years' Record of the Communion between Earth and the World of Spirits* (London: James Burns, 1870), 479. See also James Bonwick, *The Mormons and the Silver Mines* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1872), 148-49.

59. For additional information on Moses, see Oppenheim, 77-81; and Frank Podmore, *Mediums of the 19th Century*, 2 vols. (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, Inc.), 2:275-88.

60. William Stainton Moses, *Spirit Teachings*, 6th ed. (London: London Spiritualist Alliance, 1907).

61. Alan Gould, *The Founders of Psychological Research* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), 78.

62. Phil Robinson, *Sinners and Saints. A Tour Across the States, and Round them; With Three Months Among the Mormons* (London: Sampson, Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1883).

63. M. A. (Oxon), "Notes by the Way," *Light* 3 (10 Nov. 1883): 487.

64. *New York Daily Graphic*, 24 Nov. 1874, in Henry S. Olcott, *People from the Other World* (Hartford: American Publishing Co., 1875), 397.

He allowed polygamy 2,000 years ago. Why not now?

But the Mormons have abolished poverty and prostitution; and from children and youth the *Social Evil*.

Is not that better than New York and co-Christianity? And would it not be well for Christians (?) to stop persecuting Mormons, until there are no poor—no hire of harlots—and those law suits are settled?⁶⁵

The passage from Robinson's book which most impressed Moses was: "The Saints have long ago formulated into accepted doctrines those mysteries of the occult world which Spiritualists outside the [Mormon] faith are still investigating. Your 'problems' are *their* axioms."⁶⁶ Robinson also maintained that Jacob Hamblin—a Mormon assigned to the far reaches of southern Utah by Brigham Young as a missionary to native Americans and whose life was filled with stories of healings, dreams, visions, and prophecies—was a perfect example of this "doctrine" because "[t]he miracles and prophecies related in connection with this phenomenal old man would . . . 'stagger even Madame Blavatsky herself.'"⁶⁷ Moses was so impressed by this description of Hamblin that he wrote, "if there be any Jacob Hamblins who have the power of their prototype and no sphere of action, let them come over to London. We want 'missionaries' of that type badly, and can employ a whole tribe."⁶⁸ A later issue of *Light* in 1884 made reference to the Godbeite schism and that "Mr. D. F. Walker, one of the leading business men in the city, is also one of the most prominent Spiritualists." Like J. H. Beadle the article claimed that "Spiritualism is, however, gradually inoculating the Mormons, or rather spreading among them, and will, no doubt, in time make itself felt. At present the great 'Know alls' of the Church of Latter Day Saints, like many of their brethren of the Protestant Church, attribute the phenomena to his Satanic Majesty."⁶⁹

65. *Ibid.*, 400. Evans later criticized U.S. attempts to disenfranchise Mormons because of the practice of polygamy. See F. W. Evans, *A Shaker's Views on the Land Limitation Scheme and Land Monopoly, and Mormon Prosecution* (Mt. Lebanon, NY, ca. 1887). In March 1831 Joseph Smith received a revelation to send Sidney Rigdon, Parley Pratt, and Lemon Copley to preach Mormonism to the Shakers. See D&C 49:1, and *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (Nov. 1832): 7.

66. Robinson, 199, in *Light* 3 (10 Nov. 1883), 487.

67. *Ibid.*, quoting Robinson, 197. It is likely that Robinson obtained most of his information about Jacob Hamblin from a book by James A. Little, *Jacob Hamblin, A Narrative of his Personal Experience, as a Frontiersman, Missionary to the Indians and Explorer* (Salt Lake City, 1881). This book has recently been republished as part of a collection edition series by Bookcraft. See *Three Mormon Classics* (Bookcraft: Salt Lake City, 1988), which includes Wilford Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal*; George Q. Cannon, *My First Mission*; and James A. Little, *Jacob Hamblin*.

68. *Light* 3 (10 Nov. 1883): 487.

69. "Spiritualism in Utah," *Light* 4 (5 Apr. 1884): 137.

Just as Moses failed to unify British Spiritualists through the London Spiritualist Alliance, and Shakers began to decline after the death of Anne Lee, the Church of Zion failed to fulfill the aspirations of the spirits which had directed Godbe and Harrison in 1868. Despite the efforts of Godbe and Harrison, every Spiritualist remained a law unto him- or herself, a criticism Mormon leaders emphasized in speeches against Spiritualism and the Church of Zion in the 1870s. Initially, Godbe and Harrison hoped to recruit Joseph Smith's eldest son, Joseph III, president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, to become the leader of the Church of Zion, but it soon became evident that young Joseph's infatuation with Spiritualism in the 1850s had subsided by the time the Church of Zion was organized in 1870.⁷⁰ The Church of Zion was short-lived because it failed to attract Mormons when it abandoned too much of Mormonism, including its leadership, but was unable to attract Spiritualists because it was located in far-away Utah and retained too much Mormonism, including its practice of plural marriage.⁷¹

The demise of Spiritualism in Utah did not deter the next generation of Spiritualists, who awoke amid the devastation and death of World War I, from making similar comparisons between Spiritualism and Mormonism. One of the most prominent Spiritualists of this new breed, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, adopted a perspective toward Mormon revelation in both his memoirs and *History of Spiritualism* which was similar to that developed by the Godbeites and popularized by Spiritualists such as Hardinage and Moses.⁷²

When Doyle visited Salt Lake City in May 1923 he was struck by the points "which Spiritualism and Mormonism have in common"⁷³ and was pleased that more than five thousand persons attended his lecture on "psychic phenomenon" in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. Doyle thought it significant that both movements originated within a short distance of each other in upstate New York; that Joseph Smith like many Spiritualists saw apparitions of extra-terrestrial beings⁷⁴; and that the message of the first Mormon prophet was similar to that of Spiritualism, since it taught "that the Christian Creeds had wandered very far away from primitive spiritual

70. See Roger D. Launius, *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 62-64.

71. For an example of Spiritualists rejecting Mormonism's practice of polygamy, see *Daily Times* (Chatanooga, TN), 14 Nov. 1883, reprinted from *Hagaman's Spiritual Light*.

72. Arthur Conan Doyle, *The History of Spiritualism*, 2 vols. (London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1926), 1:21; Arthur Conan Doyle, *Our Second American Adventure* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1924), 91-102.

73. Doyle, *Our Second American Adventure*, 87.

74. *Ibid.*, 91.

truths and . . . that ritual and forms have completely driven out that direct spirit-communion and power which are the real living core of religion."⁷⁵ Doyle also believed that Joseph Smith had experienced "psychic exhaustion" (which a Mormon might call being "overcome by the spirit"), one of the "known signs of mediumistic power."⁷⁶ During his reading of the Book of Mormon he also recognized "many passages which seem to me to be true, as they coincide with the spirit-information which we have ourselves received."⁷⁷ The Mormon doctrines with which a Spiritualist like Doyle could agree included teachings that "death confers no knowledge upon a man, but he finds his mental outfit the same as before," "that spirit is itself a superfine matter," and that "[t]rue marriage carries on, but the tepid or cold marriage dissolves."⁷⁸ Doyle later referred to some of these similarities in *The History of Spiritualism* which he published three years later.⁷⁹ In another book, published in 1930, Doyle recorded psychic experiences which had occurred in Utah and which proved the validity of Spiritualism.⁸⁰ (Shortly after his death Doyle took his proselytism to new heights by appearing in spirit to confirmed believers,⁸¹ but there is no evidence he reappeared in Salt Lake City.)

Doyle was one of the most famous Spiritualists of the twentieth century. Other believers of his generation who shared his view that Mormons were adapted to psychic phenomenon include Nellie Beighle, a sometime medium, who in 1893 wrote that "Mormonism must be set down as one of the disorderly phases of American Spiritualism . . . there can be little doubt

75. *Ibid.*, 92.

76. *Ibid.*, 94.

77. *Ibid.*, 102. Like Spiritualists of the nineteenth century, Doyle's problem with Mormonism was largely in the practice of polygamy. See, for example, Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1888), 64; Doyle, *The Stark Munro Letters* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1895), 218; Doyle, *A Duet with an Occasional Chorus* (London: Grant Richards, 1899), 133-37; and Doyle, *Our Second American Adventure*, 97-98.

78. *Ibid.*

79. Doyle, *History of Spiritualism*, 1:42. In addition to Doyle, comparisons between Mormonism and Spiritualism were made by Phil Robinson, *Sinners and Saints* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searl & Rivington, 1883); William Stainton Moses, "Notes by the Way," *Light* 3 (10 Nov. 1883), 487; Nellie Beighle, *Book of Knowledge, Psychic Facts* (n.p.: Alliance Publishing Co., 1903).

80. See, for example, Arthur Conan Doyle, "A New Light on Old Crimes," in *The Edge of the Unknown* (London: John Murray, 1930), 197-98 (originally published in *The Strand Magazine*, Jan. 1920, 65-74); and Arthur Conan Doyle, "A Strange Prophet," in *The Edge of the Unknown* (London: John Murray, 1930), 134-36 (originally published in *Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science* 7 [Apr. 1928]: 5-12).

81. Ivan Cooke, *Thy Kingdom Come* (London: Wright and Brown, 1933); Kelvin I. Jones, *Conan Doyle and the Spirits: The Spiritualist Career of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (Wellingsborough, Northamptonshire, Eng., 1989), 224-26.

that the thing has originated in real spirit agency, but not of the purest kind . . . Whatever of error and folly there may be in Mormonism, this at least is genuine and gospel truth"⁸²; and the Boston Society for Psychic Research which in 1928 cited "[a]n apparition seen, heard and felt" by the wife of T. B. H. Stenhouse, Fanny Stenhouse (who for a brief time cast her lot with the Godbeites), as an example of psychic phenomena.⁸³ Although Spiritualism is much more fragmented today than it was a hundred years ago, Spiritualist mediums, sometimes known as channelers, occasionally receive manifestations from the same spirits who visited Joseph Smith as well as from Joseph Smith himself.⁸⁴

Just as Spiritualism's acceptance of some Mormon revelation has not changed since the demise of the Church of Zion, Mormonism's current rejection of Spiritualism is consistent with the policy developed during the Godbeite schism. In 1893 George Q. Cannon wrote in the *Juvenile Instructor*:

Spiritualism professed to make it easy for all to obtain spiritual manifestations. No faith in Jesus, no repentance, no baptism, no laying on of hands, needed to obtain them. Purity of life was not essential. The wicked and the reprobate, as well as those of better lives, could receive spiritual communications. In this way Satan used Spiritualism to counteract the influence of the Gospel.⁸⁵

Six years later another Mormon apostle, James E. Talmage, wrote in a church-approved text, *The Articles of Faith*, "[T]he restoration of the priesthood to earth in this age of the world, was followed by a phenomenal growth of the vagaries of Spiritualism, whereby many have been led to put their trust in Satan's counterfeit of God's eternal power."⁸⁶ Two decades

82. Beighle, *Book of Knowledge, Psychic Facts*, 328-29.

83. Boston Society for Psychic Research, *Noted Witnesses for Psychic Occurrences* (Boston: Boston Society for Psychic Research, 1928), 226-29.

84. In his paper "Between Religion and Magic: The Case of Mormonism," Massimo Introvigne has cited examples of Spiritualists who have channeled "Mormon" spirits including messages from Moroni, received by Spiritualist minister Keith Milton Rhinehart, and the visit of Joseph Smith to a French journalist and UFO contactee, Claude Vorilhon. Contemporary authors have seen the same connection. See Jon Klimo, *Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., 1987), 94; and Scott C. Dunn, "Spirit Writing: Another Look at the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 10 (June 1985): 17-26.

85. *Juvenile Instructor* 28 (1 Mar. 1893): 162.

86. James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), 236. Although Talmage was never president of the LDS church, there is no question that his *Articles of Faith* represents official church doctrine. Only six months before ascending to the church presidency Joseph F. Smith said: "Spiritualism started in the United States about the time that Joseph Smith received his visions from the heavens. What more

later, during Doyle's visit to the United States in 1923, Mormon presiding bishop Charles W. Nibley, who later became a member of the First Presidency, wrote that Spiritualism was "the product of dimly-lighted seances" and that it was "born in darkness and is not light to me." He also claimed that "[b]ringing up evil spirits or devils is not new" and that the spirits which talk with Spiritualists are "figments of the devil."⁸⁷ A more recent treatment of this subject by Bruce R. McConkie, who also became an apostle, reflects the previously expressed sentiment by Brigham Young and other church authorities. In 1958 McConkie defined Spiritualism as:

[o]ne of the forms of witchcraft is called *spiritualism*. This doctrine, that departed spirits hold intercourse with mortals, is one of Satan's substitutes for the true doctrine of communion with angels and righteous spirits in paradise. . . . It is true that mediums do make contact with spirits during their seances. In most instances, however, spirits are the demons or devils who were cast out of heaven for rebellion.

He concluded that "Spiritualism is among the vilest of abominable and iniquitous practices."⁸⁸ Although his definition was altered in the second edition published in 1966 to exclude reference to witchcraft (except as a related reference), Spiritualism remained a tool of the devil.⁸⁹

It may be true that Spiritualism provided some dissatisfied Mormons an attractive alternative in the nineteenth century, particularly since spiritual manifestations appeared to decline after Joseph Smith's death. Some Mormon converts who were sensitive to supernatural experiences prior to

natural than that Lucifer should begin revealing himself to men in his cunning way, in order to deceive them and to distract their minds from the truth that God was revealing?" (Smith, *Conference Reports* [Apr. 1901], 73)

87. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 June 1923, CC-5.

88. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 686-87.

89. The new text reads: "Those religionists who attempt and frequently attain communion (as they suppose) with departed spirits are called *spiritualists*. Their doctrine and belief that mediums and other mortals can actually hold intercourse with the spirits of the dead is called *spiritualism*. Such communion, if and when it occurs, is manifest by means of physical phenomena, such as so-called spirit-rappings, or during abnormal mental states, such as in trances. These communions are commonly arranged and shown forth through the instrumentality of *mediums*."

"It is true that some mediums do make contact with spirits during their *seances*. In most instances, however, such spirits as manifest themselves are probably the demons or devils who were cast out of heaven for rebellion. Such departed spirits as become involved in these spiritualistic orgies would obviously be the spirits of wicked and depraved persons who because of their previous wickedness in mortality had wholly subjected themselves to the dominion of Lucifer. Righteous spirits would have nothing but contempt and pity for the attempts of mediums to make contact with them" (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 759).

joining the church and aligned themselves with it in anticipation of such experiences may have been disappointed when Mormonism's spiritual gifts seemed to decline after 1844. Nevertheless, belief in the supernatural is not unique to Mormonism or Spiritualism. Even mainstream Protestants and Catholics do not insist that all forms of heavenly intervention are impossible. One year before the president of the Mormon church, Joseph F. Smith, received his famous vision of the dead, which has since been canonized as church scripture (D&C 138), three young Catholic children saw the Virgin Mary in Fatima, Portugal. In fact, much higher profile converts to Spiritualism than Godbe or Harrison have come out of churches such as Catholicism (Doyle); Anglicanism (Moses); Universalism (Thomas Lake Harris⁹⁰ and James Martin Peebles⁹¹); and Seventh-Day Adventism (Moses Hull⁹²).

Nevertheless, as new religious movements which began in New York's burned over district both Mormonism and Spiritualism became anathema to skeptics and believers alike and were thus often compared. They both actively proselyted and successfully claimed converts from Protestants and Catholics. Their claim to new revelation was so central to their belief system and missionary message that it was only logical for detractors to claim that their revelations were satanic. Mormons also believed all revelations outside their church were unauthorized, whether a Spiritualist, Catholic, or Protestant revelation. Spiritualists were not so strict. As long as the apparition was not faked, it proved that they were right in claiming contemporary communication with spirits. It was more central to their message than that of the Mormons that everyone could see and speak with the departed and that such manifestations continued and could occur on a daily basis—and not only to a chosen few.

Thus it was easier for Spiritualists, who had no creed or central organization, to adopt an integralist perspective concerning Mormon revelation. According to this view, all revelations (including those proclaimed by Mormon prophets) if properly understood (which the Mormons did not) support modern Spiritualism and its teachings that the living can speak to the dead, and any attempt to interpret psychic experience beyond this simple truth, by organizing a priesthood or developing dogmas, are misguided. On the other hand, it was much more difficult for a new

90. See Arthur A. Cuthbert, *The Life and World-Work of Thomas Lake Harris* (Glasgow: C.W. Pearce, 1908); and Herbert Schneider and George Lawton, *A Prophet and a Pilgrim, Being the Incredible History of Thomas Lake Harris and Laurence Oliphant* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942).

91. See Andra Cutlip, *Pioneers of Modern Spiritualism*, Vol. 1 (Milwaukee: The National Spiritualist Association of Churches, n.d.).

92. See Paul Kagan, *New World Utopias* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1975).

religious movement, like the LDS church, which had a creed, organizational structure, and claimed divine authority to act in the name of God, to accept competing revelations in the same manner. To do so would increase the likelihood that the leaders' authority would be challenged and their status as the "true church" doubted. While it is likely Joseph Smith will continue to visit Spiritualists and channelers, it is unlikely that Swedenborg, Samuel Bowles, or Arthur Conan Doyle will reveal themselves to the Mormon hierarchy.⁹³



93. However Doyle does continue to speak through his books, even to Mormon general authorities. See Carlos E. Asay, "Be Men!" *Ensign* 22 [May 1992]: 41 (quoting Doyle). See also Arthur Conan Doyle, *Through the Magic Door* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1907).

Movements Giving Off Light

Dixie Partridge

Drops of water stretch and hold
in the sunlight: the small icicle
sways from the eaves in the thaw.
I see it fall
because I have come to the window
at this moment.

*

In my daughter's room: a jagged gash
of lipstick across the mirror.
She is at school—left for her early class
with the usual snatched breakfast,
but always on time.
I placed a clipping from the newspaper
on her desk—her name
highlighted in yellow: straight A's—
and looked up startled into the thick red
across the glass, moved from there
to the day's chores in slowed-motion.

*

Dusting, I move aside Rachmaninoff
at the piano where last night
she played again and again
the difficult phrasing.
Next week the recital.

The sound of water
drips a crazy rhythm
from the roof. I read the same page
over and over at my desk, finally
spend the afternoon in the kitchen
kneading dough: molasses and rye
to resilience that will pass
from hand to hand without clinging,
then rise in the slanted sunspot
on the counter.

*

She goes straight to the table
and opens her books—trigonometry,
physics. Sunlight ricochets
from the wet patio to the amber hair
at her shoulders where I place my arm.
Startled green eyes take the light.



The “Moral” Atonement as a Mormon Interpretation

Lorin K. Hansen

COMPARING RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IS AN EFFECTIVE tool for developing insight and appreciation. And there is no more important Christian concept to which this approach can be applied than the doctrine of the atonement of Jesus Christ. The Atonement, according to the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, is “the central fact, the crucial foundation, the chief doctrine . . . in the plan of salvation.”¹ Comparing how Mormons and Christians in general understand the Atonement should, therefore, bring us to the essence of Christian faith and provide valuable insight into an important Mormon doctrine.

Such a comparison, however, is complicated by the difference in the way Mormons and other Christian groups approach this doctrine. Christians in general have been inclined to explore the doctrine of the Atonement by developing rationale for the mechanism of the Atonement. They have contemplated and discussed that mechanism for centuries and, in the process, have suggested a variety of interpretations. Mormons, by contrast, generally have avoided that approach.

The Mormon doctrine of the Atonement consists mostly of simple definitions and statements about general purpose, conditions of application, and eternal consequences. Attempts to explain the actual mechanism of the Atonement are limited mostly to the use of metaphors and parables. According to typical metaphors, the Atonement is like a court of law, like the settling of a commercial debt, like a ladder dropped into a pit, like a stick held out to a drowning person, like a corporate merger, and so on.²

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Atonement of Jesus Christ,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 1:83.

2. See, for example, J. Clair Batty, “The Atonement: Do Traditional Explanations Make Sense?” *Sunstone* 8 (Nov.-Dec. 1983): 11-16; Stephen E. Robinson, “Believing

These metaphors convey the essential truths that the consequences of sin are dire, that overcoming these consequences requires great “sacrifice” on our behalf by the Savior, and that we must repent to qualify for the benefits of that gift. If we search Mormon literature to discover some deeper mechanism or rationale behind the metaphors, in the final analysis we are brought up short with such phrases as “in some mysterious way” or “though to man incomprehensible.”³ As Bruce R. McConkie reminded us, the Atonement is the “least understood of all our revealed truths.”⁴ In short, the church has a clear “doctrine” of the Atonement but no official “interpretation” for the process or mechanism of the Atonement.

Despite the lack of an accepted Mormon rationale, I can proceed with a comparison by focusing first—not on rationale—but on the fundamental theological positions that must underlie the rationale. Atonement theories of the past can be characterized and distinguished from each other by fundamental theological assumptions or positions on just a few key issues. So I note these issues and assumptions and then turn to the Mormon scriptural canon, particularly the Book of Mormon, to determine Mormon positions on those same issues.⁵ In this essay, making such a comparison, I find that Mormonism has a significant and unique position on issues basic to the Atonement. And once I define the Mormon position relative to others, I am able to suggest an Atonement interpretation or rationale that is consistent with Mormon sources. So although I cannot begin this comparison with the help of a Mormon rationale, I arrive at one through the discussion.

As Mormons, we may feel that if the Atonement is truly “incomprehensible” we will never understand it, so why speculate about rationale? After all, one may argue, it is the Atonement—not some theory of the Atonement—that saves. But surely because of the importance of the Atonement we should make the effort to understand and not settle so quickly and completely for “in some mysterious way.” Acceptance of the Atonement must ultimately rest on faith, and that faith is an essential element for bringing the influence of the Atonement into our lives. However, a rationale—even a tentative rationale—can affirm and add meaning to that faith.

Christ,” *Ensign* 22 (Apr. 1992): 5-9.

3. See, for example, John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement* (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1950), 145; James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 17th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1948), 613.

4. Bruce R. McConkie, “The Purifying Power of Gethsemane,” *Ensign* 15 (May 1985): 10.

5. I accept traditional Mormon claims for the historicity of sources such as the Book of Mormon and try to draw out from them their basic implications for understanding the Atonement.

ATONEMENT THEORIES OF THE PAST

Whether we accept any of the many Christian theories for the mechanism of the Atonement, it is instructive to note the types of explanations that have been proposed. To arrive at the fundamental issues for comparison and to develop a vocabulary for discussion, I first summarize five interpretations that have been widely accepted in Western Christianity.

1) The *Ransom theory* became a common interpretation soon after the New Testament period, particularly after Origen (in the third century) and Gregory of Nyssa (in the fourth century). That theory was an elaboration upon Jesus' prophetic metaphor that he would give his life as "a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). Early theologians claimed that Jesus delivered himself at Jerusalem into the power of the devil to satisfy the devil's rights over the souls of men and women, rights purportedly obtained because of their sins. And the devil, according to further developments of the theory, was deceived into believing he had "bargained" away the souls of men and women to obtain power over the soul of Jesus through his death. But death could not hold Jesus. So in the end Christ became victorious over evil and the devil had power over neither Christ nor humanity. This biblical metaphor, thus elaborated into crude theory, was a common Atonement interpretation for nearly a thousand years.

2) The *Satisfaction theory* was proposed by St. Anselm toward the end of the eleventh century for apologetics and to refute the idea that Christ's atonement served to satisfy some imagined rights of the devil. He proposed instead that Christ died to provide satisfaction to the offended honor and justice (or sense of rightness) of God, an offense that occurred through human sin. Even the smallest sin was an "infinite" sin because it dishonored an "infinite" being, and only the supererogative self-sacrifice of Christ could satisfy the "infinite" offense to God's justice and honor. This was an interpretation argued from metaphysical necessity (necessity within the nature of God) and presupposing medieval values—not drawn from scriptural insight. As Anselm put it in his great classic *Cur Deus Homo*: none but God could make satisfaction and none but man ought to make satisfaction, so it was necessary for Christ—as God and man—to make satisfaction. Most subsequent Atonement theories have been either influenced by this theory or have been reactions against it. Reactions against have usually faulted the theory because of its inherent medieval characterization of God. As one critic explained, the Ransom theory made the devil a god, but the Satisfaction theory made God a devil.⁶ Critics have also denounced the theory for being unethical and superficial, because the problem of sin was

6. Robert S. Paul, *The Atonement and the Sacraments* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 79.

made to be—not the effect of sin on the human soul—but its offense to the honor of God.

3) Early in the twelfth century Peter Abelard introduced the *Moral-Influence theory* as a reaction against both the Ransom theory and Anselm's Satisfaction theory. In the Moral-Influence theory, the death of Christ served as Atonement (or at-one-ment) in that it softened hearts and inspired men and women with God's love. Men and women were then inspired to reciprocate that love, to repent, and to turn to moral living. Christians had always known that the life, suffering, and death of Christ inspired love and devotion. What was new with Abelard was that this "moral influence" now became the primary mechanism and significance of the Atonement. The Catholic church condemned Abelard's theory in his lifetime, but his ideas—as a supplement to Anselm's concept of "satisfaction"—continued to influence views of the Atonement in Roman Catholicism. In Protestantism, the concept of the Atonement as moral-influence was adopted by the Socinians, the Unitarians, and by the theologians of the German Aufklärung. It has also been a common belief in modern Protestant Liberalism in America. The theory became especially popular with those (the Socinians, for example) who regarded Christ as an inspired teacher rather than the incarnation of God. The Moral-Influence theory (like the Satisfaction theory) has been criticized for treating sin superficially, in this case, by making forgiveness too easy. According to this theory, as men and women become aware of proper conduct (through Christ's teachings and example), and are motivated to repent (through the realization of God's love), forgiveness is automatic, inherent in God's loving nature. Those who believed that Christ literally died to pay our debt claimed the theory trivialized redemption, because there was no accounting for the consequences of past sins, no "clearing of accounts." And those who believed in the total moral depravity of humanity criticized it because it assumed humanity was even capable of breaking free from the power of sin without direct intervention from some outside power.

4) The *Penal Substitution theory* became widely accepted in the Reformation through the influence of Calvin and, to some extent, Luther. Both Reformers accepted Anselm's "satisfaction" interpretation of the Atonement but then extended the meaning of "satisfaction." Between Anselm's era and the Reformation, there were extensive changes in the way people viewed their obligations to government and society. They began to conceive rights and obligations not so much in terms of feudal relationships as in terms of abstract law. Judgments would come, not from personal offenses to a medieval sovereign, but from the infraction of public law. When laws were broken, "justice" required punishment. This maturing respect for law affected the Reformation concept of the Atonement so that Christ's suffering and death became a satisfaction to the "law" by serving

as substitute punishment for sins. (By contrast, Anselm never considered Christ's suffering and death to be punishment.) Now the "wrong" of the innocent suffering of Christ somehow canceled the "wrong" of human sin and allowed the redemption of humankind. Again, theologians had extended biblical metaphors (in this case, judicial metaphors, primarily in the writings of Paul) into a new theory of the Atonement. Atonement as penal substitution became the dominant view of Protestant Orthodoxy. And so it became the dominant view of early America within the Calvinist tradition (such as with Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Huguenots, and Dutch and German Reformed Christians) and among German and Dutch Lutherans.

5) The *Governmental theory* arose in the branch of the Reformed tradition known as Arminianism. According to this theory, first proposed by Hugo Grotius, Jesus was crucified, not as a substitute punishment for sin, but as God's object lesson to humanity, a demonstration of God's justice to secure order in his kingdom. That is, Christ was crucified as a deterrent to sin, crucified so that it was "safe" to forgive sin. Some early Methodists accepted this interpretation, and it became prominent in New England theology toward the end of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, as the influence there of Calvinism began to wane.

In modern times, Christians have become increasingly uneasy with these medieval and Reformation theories, sensitized no doubt by the extensive criticism over the centuries leveled back and forth between proponents of competing interpretations. Theologians have tried to reconstruct these traditional theories, sometimes by softening offensive features, sometimes by combining desirable features of different theories, and sometimes by radically altering fundamental assumptions. And in all of this there has been a trend toward what has been called a "moral" interpretation of the Atonement.⁷

Past attempts to compare Mormon views of the Atonement to these medieval and Reformation theories, I feel, have been inadequate, and even point in opposite directions. For example, Sterling McMurrin⁸ and Eugene England⁹ have claimed similarities between Abelard's Moral-Influence theory and general Mormon views and—by contrast—Blake Ostler¹⁰ and

7. For example, see L. W. Grensted, *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester University Press, 1920), 308, 364.

8. Sterling M. McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1965), 89.

9. Eugene England, "That They Might Not Suffer: The Gift of Atonement," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Autumn 1966): 152.

10. Blake T. Ostler, "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Spring 1987): 82.

Mark Thomas¹¹ have claimed similarities between Anselm's Satisfaction theory and various entries in the Book of Mormon. Keith Norman, however, has suggested the possibility for a unique Mormon synthesis for the Atonement.¹² In the present essay, I suggest that the mechanism of the Atonement appropriate for interpreting Mormon sources is a unique and thoroughgoing "moral" interpretation. And I suggest that this appropriate interpretation is more like recent developments in Atonement interpretation than the old medieval and Reformation theories.

WHAT IS A "MORAL" THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT?

In modern times there has been a growing belief among Christians that the Atonement is not a matter of metaphysical necessity in the nature of God (as in the Satisfaction theory) or legal manipulation (as in the Penal Substitution and Governmental theories). These external, *metaphysical, and transactional* interpretations may provide some insight as collateral or figurative concepts, but if pressed too far (and accepted as fundamental) they lead to moral incongruities. For example, how could God be "satisfied" by an innocent person suffering? Or how can moral obligations be transferred from one person to another? And if *someone* (the Savior if necessary) must be punished for every sin, is there such a thing as true forgiveness?

In recent times, Christians have increasingly interpreted the Atonement as a matter of the spiritual dynamics of interpersonal relations between God and man or woman and as a matter of personal, internal transformation. The Atonement then becomes a matter of love and sorrow, of sympathy and anguish, of exemplar appeal and inspiration by the Spirit, of regret and change of heart, and of forgiveness, reconciliation, and recovery of self worth. The Atonement, understood *fundamentally* in these spiritual and personal terms, and operating through moral force and response, is referred to as a "moral" atonement.

The appeal of such interpretations is that they avoid the moral dilemmas involved in understanding the Atonement as metaphysical necessity or legal transaction. The position of an interpretation (ancient or modern) between the poles of this *moral* versus *metaphysical-transactional* characterization is our first key measure for distinguishing various Atonement interpretations.

11. Mark Thomas, "Revival Language in the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 8 (May-June 1983): 22.

12. Keith Norman, "Toward a Mormon Christology," *Sunstone* 10 (Apr. 1985): 18.

OBJECTIVE ATONEMENT VERSUS SUBJECTIVE ATONEMENT

Through the centuries Christians have viewed the word “Atonement” basically in two different ways. On the one hand, there is the “Atonement” that is an act of Jesus Christ, an event at a “moment” of history—separate from human participation or contribution—that atones for men’s and women’s sins independent of whether they accept it. Christians in general refer to this as an *objective atonement* (that is, an atonement that occurs *external* to humans). On the other hand, Christians have also referred to “Atonement” as an at-one-ment between God and mortals (or a process to at-one-ment), the reconciliation between God and man or woman—accomplished by human transformation. And this they call *subjective atonement* (that is, an atonement that is *internal* to humans). The first use of the term emphasizes *God* as the focus of the Atonement; the second emphasizes *humankind*.

Actually, the Atonement as a complete event is an *act of God* introduced to achieve a *transformation in people*, so every interpretation of the Atonement should have within it both objective and subjective elements. Yet through most of Christian history theologians have placed their emphasis predominantly on one side of the interpretation or the other. For example, the Satisfaction and Penal Substitution theories of Christian Orthodoxy were predominantly objective interpretations: man and woman, according to these views, are redeemed by God’s works, not their own works, for they are morally incapable of contributing to that redemption. And the Moral-Influence theory (the predominant example of a “moral” theory of the Atonement) was a subjective interpretation; that is, man and woman are morally autonomous and are redeemed through their own initiative, responding to the moral example of Jesus Christ. So the polarization in Christian theology has been primarily one of *moral-subjective* interpretations versus *transactional-objective* interpretations.

It is important to note, however, that this particular pairing of concepts is not fundamental. The Moral-Influence theory is only a special case of a moral theory. In modern times, beginning in the nineteenth century, theologians have tried to do justice to both the objective and subjective elements of Atonement interpretation, and (as we will see) some have tried to present the objective as well as the subjective Atonement in “moral” terms.

For my purposes here, I acknowledge this distinction in the meanings of the word “Atonement” and use the terms “objective Atonement” and “subjective Atonement.” Even though Mormons do not ordinarily use these terms, we are in the habit of using the word Atonement in just those two ways. When Bruce McConkie states, “His [Christ’s] Atonement is the most transcendent event that ever has or ever will occur from Creation’s

dawn through all the ages of a never-ending eternity,"¹³ he is referring to objective Atonement. And when Hugh Nibley writes, "the at-one-ment takes place when we get there . . . Everything we do here is to prepare for the Atonement,"¹⁴ he is referring to subjective Atonement. So introducing the terminology here is useful, not only for relating the Mormon view to general Christian views, but also for adding clarity into some discussions of the Atonement found in Mormon literature. And this objective-versus-subjective component, the relative role of God and humans in the Atonement process, is our second key measure or category of classification for distinguishing various Atonement theories.

I now compare Atonement theories and Mormon views, using these two simple but revealing measures: moral-versus-transactional Atonement (with regard to the mode of operation) and objective versus subjective Atonement (with regard to the God-versus-human focus of the event).

THE ATONEMENT AND THE LOVE AND HOLINESS OF A PERSONAL GOD

I begin by first examining basic beliefs about the nature and character of God. The Atonement is first of all an act of God, and the extent to which an atonement interpretation is *moral* or *transactional* correlates with the basic understanding of God found in the corresponding theologies.

Christians in general believe in a *personal God of love and holiness*. But even on such a fundamental concept there are differences. Early Christian theologians, from the Mormon point of view, altered the Christian concept of "God as a personal being" when they drew on Greek philosophy to answer the heresies and resolve the conceptual dilemmas of their day. Using vocabulary borrowed from Platonism and Stoicism, the classical, Trinitarian creeds portrayed God as a philosophical absolute.¹⁵ Those creeds actually introduced the word "person" (the Latin *persona*) into Christian theology, but originators and later professors of those creeds believed God to be an omnipresent spirit, not "a person." From the third century until modern times, the majority of Christians held that it is more appropriate to speak of personality *in* God rather than the personality of

13. McConkie, "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," 9.

14. Hugh W. Nibley, "The Atonement of Jesus Christ," *Ensign* 20 (1990, in 4 parts: July 18-23; Aug. 30-34; Sept. 22-26; Oct. 26-31): part 3, 22.

15. See, for example, Sterling M. McMurrin, "Comments on the Theological and Philosophical Foundations of Christianity," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Spring 1992): 42; or Robert M. Grant, *The Early Christian Doctrine of God* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966), 14-36.

God.¹⁶ Even in recent times, Christians (for example, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, and Jurgen Moltmann) have claimed that God is “the ground of all that is personal,” but not actually a personal being, that the idea of God as a person is just a symbol or model to help us think of God in terms of relationships.

Furthermore, although all Christians accept that in some sense “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16), it does not follow that all Christian theories of the Atonement are adequate portrayals of that love. Hastings Rashdall for example, a proponent of the Moral-Influence theory (and thus a critic of the Satisfaction theory), refers to Anselm’s notions of God’s “justice”—acceptance of Christ’s death as satisfying God’s offended honor—as “the barbaric ideas of an ancient Lombard king or the technicalities of a Lombard lawyer.”¹⁷ It seemed to be a form of justice that hardly made room for love. In Anselm’s theological works, God (as the Father) was a metaphysical absolute—remote, enigmatic, unapproachable, and without passion—not the loving father of the Savior’s parables. Anselm’s view of God was typical of classical, medieval theology. Given the pervasive influence of that tradition, it is not surprising that some later creeds spoke of the Atonement as a means for reconciling God to humankind rather than reconciling wayward humans to God (for example, the Augsburg Confession [Art. XX] and the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England [Art. II]). Since many theologians of the past believed God to be without passion, it is not surprising that some (such as Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin) also interpreted the love of God to be “good will” rather than deep feelings of affection.

These classical concepts of God as non-“person,” apathetic, and unmoved, I suggest, diminish the view of God as a loving, personal God and leaves a discrepancy between the character of the Father and the character of the Son as seen in the New Testament. This has no doubt contributed to forming the philosophical and transactional character of orthodox theories of the Atonement. If God is conceived as unapproachable and without passion, that disposition can seem the main obstacle to redemption. And the Atonement can then seem to be the necessary means for changing that disposition. It is not surprising that those who rejected Trinitarian creeds were usually those who also preferred the Moral-Influence theory.

Mormons believe that God is literally a *personal being*. Clear references to his person, like the so-called “anthropomorphism” of the Old Testament,

16. C. C. J. Webb, *God and Personality* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1919), 61-88.

17. Hastings Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1925), 355.

are frequent in the Book of Mormon.¹⁸ The supreme being worshipped as God by the Jaredites appeared to the brother of Jared as a personage of spirit and revealed himself as the pre-existent Christ (Ether 3:14-16). Nephites worshipped God as a spiritual being—"Father," yet to be born as "Son." As the church has explained in retrospect, the pre-existent Jesus, by investiture from the Father, was acting and being worshipped as representative of the Father but was to be born in mortality as the Son, then to be *generally* recognized as truly the Son, a personal being distinct from the Father.

The Book of Mormon also speaks of the loving concern of God for humankind. At the beginning of the book we find an account of a vision about God's love that sets the theme for the rest of the book. First Lehi and then his son Nephi see in vision a tree, pure white, beautiful, and precious, that is interpreted as "the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things . . . and the most joyous to the soul" (1 Ne. 11:22-23). Nephi then saw, in specific acts, how this great love was to be expressed. He saw, some six centuries into the future, a vision of the birth, the ministry, the suffering, and the death of the Savior, "slain for the sins of the world" (v. 33). Thus the Book of Mormon begins with a concept of the Atonement as the way to human joy and salvation, and the most significant expression of the love of God. To Lehi, redemption was equivalent to being "encircled about eternally in the arms of his [God's] love" (2 Ne. 1:15). God, according to the Book of Mormon, is a personal being of love and affection.

This view—of God as a person and of our personal relationship to him—strengthened as Mormonism developed. Joseph Smith described his first vision as a vision of God as a personal being. Later, he added to this concept of God as a personal being the concept of men and women pre-existing with Jesus as spirit children of God the Father, adding new insight into the loving, personal relationship between God and ourselves. That relationship is portrayed as so intimate that it is God's work and glory "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). Joseph Smith's account of the vision of the "three degrees of glory" defined the eternal destinies of men and women in terms of eternal, interpersonal relationships with Christ and the Father (D&C 76:62, 77, 86-88). As judged by one outside observer, "No denomination holds more staunchly to this conception of God as Person than do the Mormons."¹⁹ And, I might add,

18. See, for example, Susan W. Easton, "The Book of Mormon Bears Witness of the Father through the Son," in *The Sixth Annual Church Educational System Religious Educator's Symposium on the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1982), 20-23.

19. Edmond L. Cherbonnier, "In Defense of Anthropomorphism," in *Reflections on Mormonism, Judaeo Christian Parallels*, Truman G. Madsen, ed. (Provo, UT: Religious

no denomination I know of conceives of a more intimate, personal, loving relationship between God and his children in mortality.

Thus there is a fundamental "personalism"²⁰ in Mormon sources. And this provides a simple and direct basis for understanding the Atonement in terms of our spiritual, familial, interpersonal relationships with God. It seems to me that whatever use may be made of the concepts of "satisfaction" and "substitution," an interpretation of the Atonement more in character with Mormon theology (particularly the Mormon concept of God) is an interpretation understood *fundamentally* in spiritual, interpersonal terms, that is, as *moral Atonement*.

THE ATONEMENT AND THE NATURE AND PREDICAMENT OF HUMANKIND

Specific views on the nature of God lead to associated views about humankind. Abraham Heschel, for example (concerning ancient Israel), asserted that the prophetic affirmation that man and woman were created by a personal God, in God's image, and that God is a god of love and pathos—having sympathy, tenderness, joy, and sorrow for man and woman—affirms at the same time the inherent dignity and sanctity of the human soul.²¹ That affirmation came to the ancients, according to Edmond Cherbonnier, as the exhilarating revelation that they shared "the same kind of existence which God himself enjoys . . . It made the Israelite cry, 'Hallelujah!'"²²

Also in the Book of Mormon (as in the Bible), man and woman are created in God's image (for example, Mosiah 7:27), and are the subjects of God's love. In the words of Ammon, "he loveth our souls" (Alma 24:14). And this (as in the Bible) affirms the great significance of humankind.

In the Book of Mormon and in general Mormon thought this significance for humankind combines appropriately with a positive view of the purpose of mortality. The "fall of Adam" involves a separation from God, but is not (as in Christian Orthodoxy) a tragic fall to total moral depravity,

Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), 156.

20. I am appropriating a word here. Personalism, as a philosophical position, has been defined as the "perspective for which the person is the ontological ultimate and for which personality is the fundamental explanatory principle." Paul Deats in *The Boston Personalist Tradition in Philosophy, Social Ethics, and Theology*, Paul Deats and Carol Robb, eds. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), 2. I have in mind the same emphasis, but one obtained from scripture and based on religious experience rather than philosophical analysis.

21. Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 2:6, 39-40.

22. Edmond L. Cherbonnier, "The Logic of Biblical Anthropomorphism," *Harvard Theological Review* 55 (1962): 206.

leaving humans unable to contribute to their own salvation. Whatever the process first intended for initiating mortality (perhaps different from what actually occurred, because of freedom to disobey), mortality was meant to be. So the actual process for initiating mortality is not critical for later generations. Mortality comes not as the end of free moral choices, but as a means to broaden the possibilities for those choices, and in that sense (initiated by whatever process) is a blessing (2 Ne. 2:25). According to the Book of Mormon, humans are free and responsible (vv. 26-27; Hel. 14:29-31). And men and women are expected to express that freedom through living the commandments of God. When they do not, they are expected to repent, and that repentance qualifies them for the gift of the Atonement (Alma 34:16; 42:13). That is, men and women are saved by grace, but only after all they can do (2 Ne. 25:23).

Joseph Smith expanded on these positive views of mortals and mortality. Later revelations taught that mortality was intended by God but also chosen by each of us before our birth—because of its beneficial purpose (Abr. 3:22-28)—and that as men and women live the commandments of God, they receive grace upon grace and progress eternally (D&C 93:19-20). Optimism about the destiny of men and women reached full expression in Smith's King Follett discourse, in which he elaborated on the eternal possibilities for the children of God becoming like God.

In the Book of Mormon (and in Mormon thought generally), we find a positive view of humanity tempered with serious reservations. As expressed by Truman G. Madsen, humans have been susceptible to two debilitating errors: "the blasphemous humility of considering [themselves] a worm" and "the prideful claim that [they are] not at present in a fallen and needful state."²³ Man and woman are capable of good, but all have sinned and all are capable of great evil. To give opportunity for moral choices and thus fulfill the purpose of life, it is inevitable—and serves a purpose—that there be an opposition in all things, that men and women be enticed by good and evil (2 Ne. 2:14-16). If they choose evil, they progressively bring themselves to be bound by the "chains of hell" (Alma 12:6, 11; 13:30). Thus humans are not born inherently depraved, but by ignoring the Spirit and making improper choices they easily become depraved.

The Book of Mormon presents this *fundamental predicament* of humankind in vivid, *personal* images that warn of the ultimate consequences of sin. Alma challenges the people of Zarahemla: "Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality . . . to stand before God to be judged according to the deeds which have been done in

23. Truman G. Madsen, ed., *Reflections on Mormonism, Judaeo Christian Parallels* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), 201.

the mortal body?" (Alma 5:15) According to Nephi, we will all be raised to stand before God, who abhors evil, with a perfect recollection and awareness of our life (2 Ne. 9:10-16). Because of this perfect remembrance, in a sense we become our own judge (v. 33; Alma 41:7). If we have not been cleansed through the Atonement, our sense of guilt will cause us to shrink from the presence of God with a pain and anguish that can be likened to "an unquenchable fire" (Mosiah 2:38). In the words of Alma, "our words will also condemn us, yea, all our works will condemn us . . . and our thoughts will condemn us; and in this awful state we shall not dare to look up to our God; and we would fain be glad if we could command the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from his presence" (Alma 12:12-15). To the unrepentant sinner, Moroni adds the warning: "ye would be more miserable to dwell with a holy and just God, under a consciousness of your filthiness before him, than ye would to dwell with the damned souls in hell" (Morm. 9:1-5). So Alma asks the ultimate question:

Can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands? I say unto you, can you look up, having the image of God engraven upon your countenances? . . . [T]here can be no man saved except his garments are washed white; yea, his garments must be purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of him of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins (Alma 5:19-21).

Therefore, in the Book of Mormon and in general Mormon thought, there is a critical need for divine help. But the predicament of men and women is their personal estrangement from God, not some external, metaphysical incongruity. Men and women are capable of responding from within themselves to God's commands. And their concern should be how to achieve reconciliation and eternal presence with a God of holiness who "cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance" (Alma 45:16). The Atonement is the supernal means needed to transform men and women and to bring them back unestranged—unburdened from the shame and the regrets of their own mortal probation—back into God's presence.

If the *fundamental* problem for humankind was God's *unsatisfied offended honor*, the solution could come as Jesus Christ's superabundant merits for satisfaction. If the *fundamental* problem was a requisite *cosmic balance of sin and punishment*, the solution could come as penal substitution. But if the *fundamental* problem is *personal estrangement*, then (it seems to me) the solution must come as repentance and the spiritual healing of personal relationships, again that is, as *moral Atonement*.

THE PRIMACY OF OBJECTIVE ATONEMENT IN MORMON SOURCES

The presence in Mormon thought of the moral capabilities of man and woman and of the necessity of man's and woman's participation in the "process" of redemption (subjective Atonement) suggests a correspondence of the Mormon position with Abelard's and with subsequent Moral-Influence theories (as pointed out by Sterling McMurrin and Eugene England). The comparison is intriguing and has some validity. However, most Moral-Influence theories (since Abelard) have also been (in essence) denials of the existence of objective Atonement. Through modern history, the concept of "process" and human participation in the redemption process has usually been coupled with a diminished view of the divinity of Christ (as in Protestant Liberalism). The comparison with Abelard is not so simple, therefore, since Mormon thought includes the importance of human participation (the former position), but is completely opposed to these latter views.

The Book of Mormon is, first of all, a witness that Jesus is the Christ, not just a great teacher or inspired prophet. And in the Book of Mormon, the Atonement is the "great and last sacrifice" crucial for human redemption (Alma 34:10) that was "prepared from the foundations of the world" (Mosiah 4:6,7) and consummated or "made" by Jesus during his mortal existence (Jacob 7:12; Alma 34:9, 42:15). That is, according to the Book of Mormon, Christ's Atonement is first of all an objective Atonement.

For most Christians who have believed in an objective Atonement, Calvary is the focus of that event. And this seems reasonable. Supposedly, Calvary was where the worst happened to Christ, so that is where the "satisfaction" or "substitute penalty" was achieved. And those who believed that Christ's suffering was primarily revelatory (moral influence), accomplishing subjective at-one-ment, Calvary was also where his suffering, his majestic love, and his forgiveness were most clearly on display to influence the world. So Christians (orthodox and liberal) have generally focused on Calvary when discussing the Atonement.

However, emphasizing the suffering of Calvary raises a question about why Christ was so pleading and fearful during Gethsemane and yet so calm and composed after Gethsemane, with Calvary—supposedly his greatest crisis—still ahead of him. To explain this, some Christians have speculated that the story of Gethsemane was the redaction of later editors and that the passion of Gethsemane did not really happen.²⁴ Others have accepted the passion of Gethsemane as authentic but have

24. See, for example, Martin Dibelius, "Gethsemane," *Crozer Quarterly* 12 (1953): 265; and R. S. Barbour, "Gethsemane in the Tradition of the Passion," *New Testament Studies* 16 (1969-70): 231-35.

still made Calvary the central reality of the Atonement. They have supposed that Jesus (in Gethsemane) was only mustering his composure and strength for what was ahead. For example, Paul Fiddes writes, "The Gospel scene of the agony of Christ in Gethsemane is a paradigm of suffering, where the heart of the matter is anticipation of what is going to happen; it is the *expectation* of the cross that prompts the anguish and the bloody sweat."²⁵

In the Book of Mormon and in Mormon thought generally, Gethsemane as well as Calvary are the scenes of the objective Atonement. Mormons, however, place great emphasis on Gethsemane as the primary place where Jesus suffered in the process of taking upon himself the sins of humanity. According to the Book of Mormon, it was Jesus' great anguish for human wickedness that would cause blood to extrude from his pores and bring him near to death (Mosiah 3:7). Therefore, the suffering for sin occurred primarily in Gethsemane. Support for this comes from modern revelation where the Savior declares,

For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent . . . Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men (D&C 19:16-19).

Joyce Woodbury has expressed regret that this last passage has led some Mormons to overemphasize Gethsemane at the expense of Calvary.²⁶ Christ did "partake of the cup," suffer, and take on himself the sins of the world primarily in Gethsemane, but surely Christ did not finish the bitter dregs of the cup and complete the full objective Atonement, his "preparations" for humanity, until he took the burden of those sins to the cross. It was there that Jesus proclaimed, "It is finished . . . and gave up the ghost" (John 19:30). According to the Book of Mormon, he would "*suffer* and *die* to atone for their sins" (Alma 33:22, emphasis added; see also 22:14).

Thus, in contrast to the polarizations of the past, a Mormon understanding of the Atonement must include both subjective and objective Atonement. The objective Atonement is primary and must include both Gethsemane and Calvary. And considering the appropriateness of a

25. Paul S. Fiddes, *The Creative Suffering of God* (Oxford, Eng.: Clarendon Press, 1988), 77.

26. Joyce N. Woodbury, "Christ's Atoning Sacrifice: The Role of the Crucifixion," *Sunstone* 8 (Nov.- Dec. 1983): 17-21.

“moral” interpretation for Mormon sources, I must examine further the possibilities of Atonement—particularly objective Atonement—as “moral” Atonement. Subjective Atonement is inherently a moral process. In what sense is objective Atonement “moral” as distinguished from “transactional”?

DIVINE SUFFERING THROUGH MORAL ANGUISH

The nature of the suffering of Jesus was fundamental to the christological debates of the early centuries. Unless Christ was human (and able to suffer), the early theologians reasoned, his Atonement could not be relevant to humanity. And unless Christ was in some sense God, his Atonement would not have the power to save. “How then,” they asked, “could God suffer and still be God?” Because of the prevailing influence of Greek philosophy, they had difficulty with the ideas of a passible god (a god who suffers) and a mutable god (a god who is affected by events). That aversion brought centuries of confusion into Christian theology. It led some to teach that, since Jesus was divine, he only *appeared* to suffer; his suffering was an illusion. Others taught that Jesus had two natures, that his mortal nature suffered but not his divine nature. But if that were true, did God the Father (being fully divine) not share in the anguish of the Savior and therefore not enter directly into the drama of salvation? And if Jesus had two natures, one suffering and one not, did even the divine in Christ participate in the Atonement?

Moral Vicarious Suffering in Mormon Sources

The Nephites of the Book of Mormon believed that the very God they worshipped would in mortality suffer for humankind. And that suffering would be, in part, moral suffering. In the Book of Mormon, God is a god of feeling and emotion, and these are not defects of character or limitations of mortality. In Jacob’s allegory about God’s work, the Lord of the vineyard *wept* for those that were lost (Jacob 5:41). The Son of God was to experience mortality so that *his bowels could be filled with mercy* for his people, that is, that he might experience full empathy for humankind (Alma 7:12). His true disciples would be those like him who “morn with those that morn” (Mosiah 18:9). The *perfected*, resurrected Christ in the Book of Mormon gathered his people around him and *wept for joy over them—and wept again* (3 Ne. 17:19-25).²⁷

In a moral interpretation of the Atonement, vicarious suffering is the

27. See also Easton, “The Book of Mormon Bears Witness of the Father through the Son,” 20-23.

inevitable experience of a sensitive personality. Given the love and holiness of God and the predicament of humankind, vicarious moral suffering is inevitable for God. The Father and the Son see the spiritual loss and the pain that men and women bring upon themselves and others, and suffer through empathy. And surely the “natural” experience of men and women suffering in empathy for others is but a part of the divine image within.

That divine capacity for moral suffering was a surprise to Enoch. He saw, in vision, God weeping over those of his children lost in the days of Noah: “And it came to pass that the God of Heaven looked upon the residue of the people, and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it saying: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains? And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?” (Moses 7:28-29) Then Enoch himself was shown the vision, “And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men; wherefore Enoch knew, and looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook.” Enoch saw the destruction of the people in the days of Noah. “And as Enoch saw this, he had bitterness of soul, and wept over his brethren, and said unto the heavens: I will refuse to be comforted” (Moses 7:41-44).

So it was with Jesus in Gethsemane. According to King Benjamin, Jesus would suffer in empathy, “*so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and abominations of his people*” (Mosiah 3:7, emphasis added). His suffering swept over him because of his deep love for his spiritual brothers and sisters. The suffering of Christ in Gethsemane was not only *endured* out of his love for men and women, but was *generated* out of his love for men and women.

In discussing the sentiments of the Savior in Gethsemane, we should not assume that the anguish and suffering of the Savior came only from pity that he felt for others. Love engenders wrath (or righteous anger) as well as pity. What else could Jesus feel for the evil of the world and the infliction of pain and suffering on the innocent? Those who had been sanctified by his spirit “could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence” (Alma 13:12). In this they became like him “for the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (45:16; D&C 1:31). Love, expressed as empathy and wrath, by Father and Son, appears throughout the scriptures. Paul could speak of “the goodness and severity of God” (Rom. 11:22). And John the Revelator could refer succinctly to “the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev. 6:16). Joseph Smith described the Father as “more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies . . . than we are ready to believe . . . and, at the same time, . . . more terrible to the workers of iniquity, . . .

and more ready to detect every false way, than we are apt to suppose."²⁸ The same must be true of the Savior. The pity and the wrath, both arising from love, must have been part of the suffering of the Savior in Gethsemane.

For Christ, it seems appropriate that this suffering (distinct from the personal, physical suffering of the cross) should have occurred in Gethsemane, that is, in a setting distinct from Calvary. For an objective atonement understood in moral terms, where Christ takes all of people's sins on himself, that is, on his feelings, there must be an event such as occurred in Gethsemane.

In the scriptures we learn that the fullness of joy is experienced only with spirit and element united (D&C 93:33-34), so perhaps we can presume also that only spirit and element united are susceptible to a fullness of pain. If this were the case, we could also assume that the anguish felt by the pre-existent Jesus did not compare to his suffering in mortality. As expressed by Arthur Henry King,

By taking on a body of flesh, the Lord, like us, takes a step toward perfection. In so doing, like us, he extends his powers of sensation and perception. The only difference is that the greatest spirit has entered flesh begotten of the Father, and consequently his range is immensely wider than ours . . . He was capable of experiencing more pain (as in Gethsemane) and more joy (as in the resurrection) than we are.²⁹

In Mormon thought, the dual nature of Jesus is divine spirit veiled in mortal flesh. And when Jesus suffered, he suffered a fullness of pain in "both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18).

The anguish Jesus felt in Gethsemane became pain severe to the point of death. We read that as Jesus was about to separate himself from his apostles at Gethsemane "he began to be deeply distressed and troubled" (Mark 14:33 [NIV]; or according to the Moffat translation "appalled and agitated"). He told them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death" (v. 34 [NIV]). King Benjamin referred to this deathly anguish at Gethsemane with the prophecy: "lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, *even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death*; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and abominations of his people" (Mosiah 3:7, emphasis added). The author of Hebrews also seems to refer

28. Joseph Smith, Jr., et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-51), 5:136.

29. Arthur H. King, "Atonement, The Only Wholeness," *Ensign* 5 (Apr. 1975): 17.

to Jesus suffering in Gethsemane—near unto death—with the statement that Jesus “offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death” (Heb. 5:7). Jesus submitted to the Father’s will (in Gethsemane as well as on Calvary), but it seems that he prayed for preservation from death in Gethsemane that he might successfully take humanity’s moral burden upon himself.

Divine Passibility in Modern Theology

Modern Christian theologians have been changing their views, so that few now believe in the impassibility of God.³⁰ In contrast to the orthodoxy of early Christianity, where God neither suffered nor changed, heirs of the old orthodoxy now hold that God does suffer—but only because he *chooses* to suffer—and that God is mutable—but only because he *chooses* to be affected and changed. So Christ’s suffering no longer is considered such an enigma. Also in the old transactional theories, with the emphasis on Calvary, it seemed that Christ came primarily to die. Now theologians discuss Christ’s suffering in terms, not only of the physical agonies of the cross, but also of the moral anguish of his love, extending beyond Calvary. John Caird, for example, a Presbyterian minister and principal of Glasgow University, wrote the following graphic explanation of the suffering of Christ:

[W]e are now considering . . . whether there are any elements of the suffering which flows from sin which a morally pure and sinless being can experience. . . . Not only can a good man suffer for sin, but it may be laid down as a principle that he will suffer for it in proportion to his goodness. Not only can the sinless suffer for sin, but there are sufferings for sin which only he who is himself sinless can in the fullest measure undergo. It was possible for Him who knew no sin to bear on His soul a burden of humiliation, shame, sorrow, for our sins, which in one aspect of it was more profound and intense than we could ever feel for ourselves.

Consider how far, to a very pure and holy nature, and one which is at the same time intensely loving and benignant, the sins of those who are dear to him may become a moral burden almost equivalent to his own. Let us conceive for a moment what the feeling of such an one would be, if he learned that one related to him by the ties of kindred and home, and with whose welfare his own happiness was deeply implicated—child, brother, sister, husband, wife, had fallen into dishonor and infamy. Suppose him to

30. J. K. Mozley, *The Impassibility of God* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1926), reviews the history of the concept of divine impassibility up to the beginning of the change at the turn of the century. Warren McWilliams, *The Passion of God* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), surveys the accelerated shift in thought since then.

be a man of intense affections, and of high moral principle, and think what an overwhelming inexpressible shock of pain and grief it would be to him to hear, that one dearer to him than life had been detected in some act of shameful baseness and so had fallen into irretrievable disgrace. Would he not be stung by an anguish, a borrowed humiliation, as bitter as if the sin had been his own? Nay, would not the borrowed grief be in one respect more poignant than that of the evil doer himself? For the very fact that the latter could commit the sin would indicate a comparative moral insensibility; so that it would be possible for one of keen moral susceptibility to discern, as the culprit himself could not, the gravity of the guilty deed, and to feel the burden of borrowed guilt harder to bear than the original.³¹

Caird suggested that as Jesus “was endowed with a moral susceptibility infinitely more quick and keen than the best and purest of mankind, the presence of sin created in Him a repugnance, a moral recoil, a sorrow and shame, which the fallen and guilty could never feel for themselves.” Further—and most important—he explained, this type of suffering “possesses this virtue, that it is the only kind of suffering that prepares for forgiveness.”³²

A “moral” view of Jesus’ suffering (that is, that the suffering proceeded naturally from his love for men and women) is the beginning of a “moral” interpretation of the objective Atonement. However, the one does not necessarily lead to the other. Jonathan Edwards, for example, had this “moral” view of Jesus suffering³³ but still believed that once he suffered, that suffering redeemed humanity by functioning as “satisfaction” and “substitute punishment.” And even John Caird followed the passages just quoted with the explanation that the moral suffering endured by Jesus atoned for human sins only in a mystical, representational sense. Thus we must ask ourselves not only about the source or nature of Jesus’ suffering, but also about how that suffering atones for sin.

MORAL ANGUISH AS OBJECTIVE ATONEMENT

From Gethsemane to Calvary, Jesus suffered physical abuse, the agonies of crucifixion, and finally death. Out of that suffering and tragedy came the victory of the resurrection, the breaking of the bonds of death. Calvary and especially Gethsemane were also scenes of spiritual suffering

31. John Caird, *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, 2 vols. (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1899), 2:220-22; paragraph break added.

32. *Ibid.*, 2:223.

33. Jonathan Edwards, “Concerning the Necessity and Reasonableness of the Christian Doctrine of Satisfaction for Sin,” in *The Works of President Edwards*, 10 vols. (New York: G & C & H Corvill, 1830), 7:545.

through total awareness of sin, and again there was victory, in this case a “moral” victory in Christ that opened the way for the moral redemption of humanity.

From Knowledge to Suffering and Christ’s Personal At-one-ment

It is not Jesus’ suffering per se that redeems men and women. Suffering has an effect on him, and it is that effect (or change) that makes possible human redemption. The power of redemption comes through his expanded knowledge and sensitivity, which he then expresses through his role as mediator.

From the scriptures we learn that Christ changed and grew; “He continued from grace to grace” until he obtained a fullness of grace, truth, and of the glory of the Father (D&C 93:11-17). He grew not from flawed to perfect but from incomplete to perfect through the things he suffered: “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And *being made perfect*, he became the *author of eternal salvation* unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9, emphasis added). That is, Jesus learned (or experienced) the full depth of what it means to be obedient through accepting the will of the Father, even though that took him into experiences of consuming anguish and death. *He* reached perfection by obeying the will of the *Father*, and now *we* can progress toward perfection and achieve salvation by following *Christ*. He becomes mediator not in the sense of being our substitute punishment and of pleading our case before a reluctant Father, but as one now qualified as sponsor and teacher—to lead, inspire, and transform—in preparation for reconciliation with the Father. In this process, Father and Son are at one.

Jesus grew in the knowledge of persons that reaches fullness only through total compassion. In the culture of ancient Israel, the bowels are regarded as the center of human ethical or moral sensitivities. Alma prophesied that Jesus would “take upon him their infirmities, that his *bowels may be filled with mercy*, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12, emphasis added). Jesus’ suffering thus added to his ability to comfort and spiritually nourish others. He acquired a fullness of mercy in complement to a divine sense of justice. That is, he became perfect and *at-one* in justice and mercy. It is with that added knowledge, according to Alma, that Jesus would be able to deliver his people: “Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance” (Alma 7:13).

Isaiah too, in one of the “Servant Songs,” ties together this suffering,

the knowledge associated with it, and the power of redemption that follows: "After the suffering of his soul, he [the Servant] will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11 [NIV]).

Some may interpret these passages in terms of redemption through "transactions," but they more easily lend themselves to profound statements of "moral" Atonement. I am suggesting that we should understand from these that Jesus, through a full awareness of human evil, "bore" men's and women's iniquities on his feelings and suffered intensely because of them. Through the acquired knowledge from this vicarious suffering he judges and mediates with full understanding and sensitivity. He would not, as noted by Eugene England, "offer . . . solutions without knowing the pain of the problem."³⁴ Through this experience, his forgiveness reached its full meaning and power, which then through the Spirit can comfort and transform. If Christ knew all and felt all and forgave, how then are the repentant estranged? As Isaiah foresaw, "he will see the *light of life*." The light of Jesus' understanding becomes the appeal and the means for us to achieve eternal life.

Jesus' taking upon his sensitive nature the sins of the world, opening his awareness to the totality of human evil, was in effect a *descent* into "hell." According to the *Lectures on Faith*, Jesus "*descended* in suffering below that which man can suffer; or, in other words, suffered greater sufferings, and was *exposed to more powerful contradictions* than any man can be."³⁵ According to modern revelation, this descent through knowledge was essential: "he *descended* below all things, in that he *comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth*" (D&C 88:6, emphasis added). That is, Jesus descended through awareness of human evil that he might obtain the necessary understanding to be a light to all men and women.

Joseph Smith, in an hour of imprisonment and discouragement, was encouraged to patience by reference to Jesus' suffering at Gethsemane and Calvary: "if the *heavens gather blackness*, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the *very jaws of hell* shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good . . . The Son of Man hath *descended* below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (D&C 122:7-8, emphasis added) In this, we glean insight into what Jesus went through: the descent, the receding of heaven, the frightening threat of the very jaws of hell, victorious endurance, and personal completion.

The statement that Jesus suffered through exposure to extreme *contra-*

34. England, "That They Might Not Suffer," 147.

35. Joseph Smith, Jr., *Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985), 59 (Lec. 5, par. 2), emphasis added.

dictions seems to refer to a passage in Hebrews: "For consider him that endured such *contradiction of sinners against himself*, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:3-4, emphasis added). If this passage is the referent, it is important to note that it contains a mistranslation. According to F. F. Bruce, "the oldest recoverable reading [of this passage] by the consensus of all the ancient witnesses and of most versions"³⁶ shows it should read instead, "For consider him that endured such contradiction of *sinners against themselves*." Some modern commentators reject this reading as nonsense, but it is an appropriate reading for a moral interpretation. Knowledge of sin would bring painful awareness of *contradictions* in the human personality. Jesus suffered vicariously when through judgment and empathy he *descended* with us (or in our place) and experienced through empathy what in us becomes the painful *contradiction* of self condemnation versus our yearning for divine and self approval. In Gethsemane he faced these *contradictions*—through his perception and feelings—before we do, or before we must, as we stand with perfect recollection in the presence of God. He descended into that personal contradiction—for each of us—so that he might fathom, forgive, reach, and transform, that we might avoid that end.

Until Christ was completely victorious, confrontation with evil could also come as threat and temptation. He was tempted at the beginning of his ministry (in the wilderness of Judea) and was tempted at various times during his ministry (Luke 22:28). In the end he must have been tempted to avoid the physical agonies of the cross. He must also have been tempted to avoid the confrontation with evil in Gethsemane and tempted through his awareness of the sins of humanity. But he rejected all temptation, and in this too he gained the necessary understanding and power to redeem: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be *touched with the feeling of our infirmities*; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15, emphasis added). Perhaps this is what Jesus meant just prior to Gethsemane when in prayer he committed himself to the Father: "And for their sakes I *sanctify myself*, that *they also might be sanctified through the truth*" (John 17:19, emphasis added).³⁷

36. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 332.

37. I might compare this aspect of Jesus' ordeal to the temptation a psychotherapist faces while trying to maintain a moral reference and simultaneously provide patients with unconditional acceptance. The phenomenon, called "countertransference," is the tendency for the therapist to be drawn into a problem (through the therapist's own possibly unresolved conflicts) instead of maintaining the strength and perspective for resolution of the problem. For the general analogy with psychotherapy, see Don S. Downing, *Atonement and Psychotherapy* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966). See also

The passion of Gethsemane was completed: Christ penetrated (through physical awareness) to the depths of human sin, suffered through empathy (because of the flesh) near unto death, grappled with the moral conflicts of humanity, and sanctified himself in the presence of evil. He became perfect in wisdom and knowledge, the light of all truth, supreme in obedience, at-one in justice and mercy, and armed with the full power of compassion and forgiveness. Surely, this painful, *moral* victory is the *objective Atonement*. For upon that victory our hope and assurance rest.

As mentioned, many Christians (including Mormons) use the word "Atonement" to refer to the *subjective Atonement*, that is, our process to at-one-ment. However—by contrast—the Book of Mormon uses the word Atonement only to refer to the *objective Atonement*. Therefore it seems to me this play on the structure (and origin) of the word "Atonement" in a Mormon context should first of all denote Jesus' own completion of perfection and *personal At-One-Ment*. The personal (or "moral") At-one-ment for Jesus is the objective Atonement for us.

Calvary as Christ's Supreme Witness to Humanity

At Gethsemane, Jesus through the power of love took the sins of the world on his feelings and suffered vicariously for all men and women. Through that experience came a fullness of understanding and conditional forgiveness for all. At Calvary he suffered again for those final, specific sins against him personally and, in reaction to those, demonstrated again the depths of his righteousness, love, and forgiveness. Jesus had taught that we would "find" our lives through "losing" our lives in service to others, and he lived as he had taught. On the cross, Jesus completed the perfect life through the literal giving of his life for others in selfless love. If humankind could not understand what had happened at Gethsemane, they could at least be moved by the love and forgiveness of Gethsemane extended and made visible at Calvary.

Jesus was the ultimate challenge to the empty social customs of his day and the most penetrating judgment on human vanity, ambitions, and immorality. Unfortunately, he could not teach his truths, provide his moral example, and declare his identity without pushing evil people to their limit. When he told them who he was, they were beside themselves to kill him, and he would not pull back—compromise his witness—to avoid it. His suffering and death were the inevitable outcome of the love, righteousness,

the discussion by R. G. Bruehl for the entry "Countertransference," in *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, Rodney J. Hunter, ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 239-41.

and holiness of God in an evil world. He was crucified *because of sin* (that is, by sinful people) and allowed himself to be crucified *for sin*, that is, as a witness, to enable others to overcome sin.

Thus both Gethsemane and Calvary were necessary parts of the objective Atonement. Gethsemane was necessary because it was the essential approach to understanding and forgiveness, Jesus preparing for the role of mediator. And the crucifixion of Jesus was necessary (in the sense that it was inevitable) and necessarily allowed (to preserve human freedom and present an effective witness).

History comes to a focus in Jesus Christ, and the whole life and mission of Christ come to a focus in Gethsemane and Calvary. Throughout his life, Jesus taught and exemplified the life of righteousness and selflessness, but especially in those last hours, he became the supreme revelation of the love and holiness of God. The more people brought evil on him, the more vividly he revealed the loving, suffering, and forgiving character of God. And because of this, the more he (even today) engenders acceptance and the more motivates to righteousness. As he told disciples at Jerusalem, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me*" (John 12:32, emphasis added; see also 3 Ne. 27:14-15). Now all nations look to this decisive moment and the life it represents. And the visible *reality* of the objective Atonement *enables* the subjective at-one-ment.³⁸

SHOULD WE BORROW FROM MEDIEVAL AND REFORMATION THEORIES?

Usually, when discussing the Atonement, Mormon writers cautiously avoid speculation and stay close to the language of the scriptures. They simply repeat the metaphors (or invent similar ones) and avoid attempts at deeper explanation. Because of that, we as Mormons have not defined a Mormon position relative to other Christian theories of the Atonement. As a result, we have left a vacuum, and occasionally expressions from medieval and Reformation theories creep into our thinking.

For example, even a writer as perceptive and informed as B. H. Roberts could write the following concerning the Fall and the Atonement: "The sin of Adam was a sin against divine law; a sin against the majesty of God. Only a God can render a satisfaction to that insulted honor and majesty.

38. For lack of space, I do not make the processes of the subjective Atonement part of the present comparison, but some excellent discussions of those processes from a Mormon perspective can be found in writings by Eugene England, for example, "That They Might Not Suffer," 141-55, which also appeared in his *Dialogues with Myself* (Salt Lake City: Orion Books, 1984), 77-92; "'Means unto Repentance': Unique Book of Mormon Insights into Christ's At-one-ment," in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1990), 153-67; and *The Quality of Mercy* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992).

Only a Deity can satisfy the claims of Deity."³⁹ Given the historical meaning of such words in the theory of Anselm, they seem inappropriate as an expression of the Mormon position.

As another example, Hyrum Andrus presents the following:

To satisfy the demands of divine justice and institute a plan of mercy, an Atonement had to be made. The Father is a God of Justice; and justice had to be paid. The Father's will in regard to this matter had to be fulfilled. The honor and integrity of the man of Holiness had to be sustained in the redemption of the earth and its inhabitants. Justice required the Father to cause the chosen redeemer to suffer. It had to be; truth and consistency made it so.⁴⁰

Again, this is more a caricature of the Satisfaction and Penal Substitution theories than an appropriate statement of Mormon thought.

Most early Mormons came out of a religious tradition where substitute punishment was the predominant interpretation of the Atonement, so it is not surprising that this legalistic interpretation has crept into some Mormon writings. One example is Eliza R. Snow's text to a popular sacramental hymn: "Behold the great Redeemer die,/ A broken law to satisfy."⁴¹ Another example from our hymns is a text by Edward P. Kimball: "He came as man, though Son of God,/ And bowed himself beneath the rod./ He died in holy innocence,/ A broken law to recompense."⁴²

B. H. Roberts also borrowed from this penal-substitution interpretation: As with the idea of correcting the offense against God's honor, there is "the same necessity for one not only willing but capable of making the Atonement, by suffering the penalty due to the sins of all men. He must suffer for them; for the ground work of their forgiveness and restoration to union with God must be that the penalty due to their sin has been paid."⁴³ Roberts also borrowed frequently from the Governmental theory of the Atonement.⁴⁴ In fairness, we should add that (despite this eclectic ten-

39. B. H. Roberts, *Seventies Course in Theology*: 1908-12, 5-year manuals republished in 2 vols. (Dallas: S. K. Taylor Publ. Co., 1976), 2 (fourth year): 94. For similar examples, see 2 (fourth year): 99, 108, 118, 126.

40. Hyrum L. Andrus, *God, Man, and the Universe* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968), 396.

41. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 191.

42. *Ibid.*, no. 187.

43. Roberts, *Seventies Course in Theology*: 1908-12, 2 (fourth year): 102. For similar examples, see 2 (fourth year): 94, 103, 109, 112.

44. *Ibid.*, 2 (fourth year): 92, 98, 108, 126.

dency) he seemed also to be searching for an interpretation of the Atonement uninfluenced by classical philosophy.⁴⁵

These anomalous statements suggest that, for some Mormons, the old traditional theories represent acceptable Mormon doctrine, or perhaps (to be more generous) these old theories have now become new metaphors. Unfortunately, as history has shown, metaphors are often not recognized as metaphor. What begins as metaphor sometimes ends as literal interpretation, and confusion follows (see, for example, Matt. 16:6-12).

If it is true that the traditional theories of the Atonement are inappropriate for expressing Mormon concepts, we should take care not to assimilate them. Those who borrow from these old theories should realize that it is God's love that is satisfied, not his offended honor or offended sense of justice. And "penalty" or "punishment" are not used in the Book of Mormon to explain the suffering and death of Jesus.⁴⁶ Suffering or dying "for men" can also mean "for the benefit of men" and suffering and dying "for men's sins" can mean "as a means to help men overcome sin." For example, a person can suffer, put his or her life at risk, and even die "for" another (that is, to benefit another) without that suffering and death being a direct substitute penalty. Many have died for their country, but not as a substitute punishment.⁴⁷ If sympathetic, love-generated suffering leading to the full At-one-ment of Jesus provides a warning and an assurance of love and forgiveness to others, and that warning and assurance are the means to bring some person to repentance, and that person does not suffer—because of his repentance and forgiveness—then there has been vicarious suffering and even *substitute suffering*, but not *penal substitution*. Surely the power of the Atonement is love, not legal or metaphysical bookkeeping. And surely the difficulty in understanding the Atonement is in the breadth of the awareness and the depth of that love, not in the enigmas of moral incongruities.

45. Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts: The Book of Mormon and the Atonement," in *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 308.

46. The Book of Mormon explains the Atonement in terms of ceremonial sacrifice in the Law of Moses which was not based on vicarious penal substitution. See, for example, Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), 49-75; or Robert J. Daly, *Christian Sacrifice* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1978), 120-27. The Atonement is contrasted with substitute punishment in Alma 34:11-12.

47. On this same point (the meaning of "for men") as used in the New Testament argued from the meaning of the original Greek, see, for example, R. G. Crawford, "Is the Penal Theory of the Atonement Scriptural?" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23 (Aug. 1970): 257-72; or George B. Stevens, *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), 100-102.

The Book of Mormon (the Bible also) indicates that Jesus took on himself the *infirmities* of men and women. Again this is neither a “substitute punishment” nor a literal “gathering up” of the ills of humanity. It is the process of Jesus becoming one with men and women, taking their burdens—sins and infirmities—on his feelings, that he might comfort and bless them.

As Eugene England⁴⁸ has pointed out, the Book of Mormon portrays the Atonement redeeming people generations before Gethsemane and Calvary, before any “required transactions” could have taken place. The word had been declared in all ages that people “might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he [Christ] had already come among them” (Mosiah 3:13). This alone should lead us to conclude that the Atonement does not refer to a literal *quid-pro-quo* substitution as prerequisite transaction. In the Book of Mormon, the people of King Benjamin knew what Jesus would do. That alone affected their relationship to him, and that was enough to bring the redemptive process into effect. “[T]he Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come” (Mosiah 4:3). When the Atonement is a “moral” atonement, the redemptive process (through faith and the Spirit) can happen before Gethsemane and Calvary as well as after.

THE MODERN SEARCH FOR A CONCEPT OF MORAL, OBJECTIVE ATONEMENT

I have contrasted the Mormon concept of Atonement and the suggested Mormon, moral interpretation of the Atonement with medieval and Reformation theories. If, however, I turn to recent (late nineteenth- and twentieth-century) developments in Atonement interpretation and note, in particular, the tendency to interpret Atonement as moral Atonement, I find a closer correspondence to the interpretation I am suggesting. Moral theories of the Atonement, of course, go back at least to Abelard’s Moral Influence theory in the twelfth century, and some see its beginning in early Christianity.⁴⁹ But only in the mid-nineteenth century do we begin to see a balance in Atonement interpretation, that is, including both objective and subjective elements, with both explained as moral Atonement.

Perhaps the first to attempt an interpretation of both subjective and objective Atonement in moral terms was John McLeod Campbell (1800-72), a minister in the Church of Scotland. Campbell sought to dispel old

48. England, “That They Might Not Suffer,” 145; *The Quality of Mercy*, 24.

49. H. E. W. Turner, *The Patristic Doctrine of Redemption* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1952), 29-46.

Calvinistic notions of "Atonement only for the elect few" and "Atonement as substitute punishment." Jesus' suffering, he claimed, was moral suffering from love and empathy for the sinner. Because of these teachings, Campbell was first condemned and then in 1831 ostracized from his denomination. He was able to continue working as a minister, but only through friends who helped him set up an independent congregation. During that ministry he was able to publish his pioneering work, *The Nature of the Atonement*.⁵⁰ Ironically, before the century was over the Church of Scotland changed its views and accepted many of his ideas.

In attempting to explain the objective Atonement, Campbell claimed that Jesus so identified himself with the sinner that he was able to offer "vicarious confession and repentance" in the name of the sinner, thus accomplishing moral or *ethical satisfaction* to God. In this way, Campbell abandoned the idea of legalistic substitute punishment but retained objective Atonement by moralizing and thus softening Anselm's notion of satisfaction to God. Many have acknowledged an indebtedness to Campbell, but this last notion has been difficult for many to accept. It still leaves some disturbing questions: Does it make any more sense for Jesus to repent for someone else than it does for him to be punished for someone else? Is the notion of a god who can be satisfied by substitute repentance any more acceptable than the notion of a god who can be satisfied by substitute punishment? Despite these reservations, Campbell is important for his attempt to understand the Atonement in terms of God's universal love and interpersonal relations. Whatever the defects of his interpretation, he began the search for a concept of moral objective Atonement.

Probably the most important pioneer for a complete moral interpretation of the Atonement was Horace Bushnell (1802-76), a Congregational minister in Hartford, Connecticut. Like Campbell, he sought to reformulate the orthodoxy of his day, to mediate between Unitarian Liberalism and orthodox Calvinism. He first stirred controversy by speaking and writing against the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and by teaching that children could be raised through "Christian nurture" to be in a state of grace from birth instead of needing to be rescued in mature years from a state of moral depravity by revivalist conversion. For these ideas, he also was ostracized from his denomination, and he also was protected by his own parish, who in his case withdrew from the Hartford North Consociation to become an independent parish.

Like Campbell, Bushnell taught that Jesus suffered through empathy with the sinner, and he also published a moral-influence interpretation of

50. John McLeod Campbell, *The Nature of the Atonement* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1873).

the Atonement, his *Vicarious Sacrifice*.⁵¹ Because he was influential in turning American Protestantism to a Moral-Influence interpretation of the Atonement and because of his work on Christian nurture, he has been called the father of Protestant Liberalism in America. His work on the Moral-Influence interpretation of the Atonement is widely recognized. What is less recognized is his own dissatisfaction with that work. He felt it fell short because it lacked a “moral” interpretation of the objective Atonement, and in his later years he continued to search for such an interpretation. Eventually, he found the interpretation he sought (he claimed, by inspiration) and presented it in *Forgiveness and Law*,⁵² published as a correction to his earlier work.

In this later work Bushnell referred to God’s objective Atonement as God’s “self propitiation,” which he explained as follows:

It is objected that God loves his adversary already, and needs not love him more to forgive! Of course he need not love him more, and it is no office of the propitiation to produce in him a greater love for that purpose. The propitiation itself proceeds from that love, and is only designed to work on other unreducible sentiments that hinder his love, in forgivenesses it might otherwise bestow. Our own love, as we saw, might be sufficient if it were not hindered by certain collateral, obstructive sentiments, and God is in this moral analogy with us. He is put in arms against wrong doers just as we are, by his disgusts, displeasures, abhorrences, indignations, revulsions, and what is more than all, by his offended holiness, and by force of these partly recalcitrant sentiments he is so far shut back, in the sympathies of his love, that he can nerve himself to the severities of government so long as such severities are wanted. He is not less perfect because these antagonistic sentiments are in him, but even more perfect than he would be without them; and a propitiation is required, not because they are bad, but only to move them aside when they are not wanted.⁵³

LDS readers can perhaps best appreciate this process—of first feeling or expressing righteous anger and then (through love) setting aside those unwanted sentiments—by comparing it to the “doctrine of the priesthood” (a guide for acting in the name of Christ) given through Joseph Smith. According to that guide, judgment and reproof are appropriate when prompted by the Holy Ghost, but then for the sake of the person rebuked,

51. Horace Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice* (New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1868).

52. Horace Bushnell, *Forgiveness and Law* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1874).

53. *Ibid.*, 54.

that response must be “set aside” and replaced by persuasion, long suffering, gentleness, meekness, love unfeigned, pure knowledge (which enlarges the soul without hypocrisy and guile), with bowels full of charity toward all people, and with virtue garnishing one’s thoughts unceasingly. That sense of justice and that accommodation (as in Gethsemane) has the power to redeem (D&C 121:41-46).

Bushnell’s view of Christ forgiving men and women—through a painful achievement of at-one-ment between his abhorrence of sin and his love of individuals—should not be confused with an earlier notion of Martin Luther in which God is torn between a wrathful urge to punish and annihilate a sinful world and a parallel urge to forgive and to bless. According to Luther, God (in Christ) accepts the punishment in vicarious suffering and then allows the blessing to proceed in love. Luther’s view is not (as Alma would say) “mercy appeasing the demands of justice.” Luther’s view is more a case of mercy being allowed to proceed only after justice has extracted its vengeful due from a substitute victim.⁵⁴

Bushnell’s correction to his earlier work has been largely ignored or forgotten. However, a few have been influenced by it and have published their own variations of objective Atonement as moral Atonement. These include such theologians as H. R. Mackintosh,⁵⁵ in his discussion of the “journey of forgiveness” that Jesus’ suffering involves; Donald Baillie,⁵⁶ with his discussion of empathic suffering as objective Atonement; and Fisher Humphreys,⁵⁷ with his concept of “cruciform forgiveness.”

In this century, there has been another attempt to resynthesize the doctrine of the Atonement, in this case by breaking free from concepts imported into Christian thought from Greek philosophy. This second movement is actually part of a broader movement to reformulate Christian theology as a whole by replacing foundational concepts from classical philosophy with those of modern process philosophy. Theologians of the broader movement (for example, Charles Hartshorne, John Cobb, Schubert Ogden, Daniel D. Williams, and Norman Pettinger) have rejected the idea of an “immutable God” and have built a “process theology” upon the idea of God (through Christ) changing and growing. The implications of this process theology for the doctrine of the Atonement have been outlined

54. See the discussion by Fiddes, in *The Creative Suffering of God*, 22-23.

55. H. R. Mackintosh, *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness* (London: Nisbet and Co., 1927), 183-91. See also Paul S. Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1989), 173-75.

56. Donald M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1948), 157-202.

57. Fisher Humphreys, *The Death of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1978), 116-35.

recently by Paul Fiddes,⁵⁸ Vernon White,⁵⁹ and David Wheeler.⁶⁰ And they have presented both subjective and objective Atonement as moral Atonement. In their case, the moral, objective Atonement is not the painful, internal resolution in Christ after an awareness of the sins of humanity (as with Bushnell). Instead, they emphasize Jesus' added perception and moral authenticity coming directly from his suffering at Calvary. White, for example, observes, "They [the theologians in the classical tradition] may betray a religious unease at any thought of a God who uses human experience to 'complete' his own."⁶¹ However, "Far from implying divine inadequacy, it may be a metaphysical and religious *compliment* to deity to conceive God taking up human experience into his own."⁶² As White explains, Jesus' suffering "achieves a victory over evil forces, and both God and man are [then] free to relate without their malevolent interference."⁶³ "He [Christ] is made perfect through suffering, and rises with the capacity to make others perfect through theirs."⁶⁴

Fiddes also speaks of God through Christ suffering change, thus providing the *objective* basis for the At-one-ment. He speaks of Calvary, but what he says is especially true (according to the present essay) of Gethsemane:

The most perfect forgiver that could be conceived still has to change—not from a reluctance to forgive to a willingness to do so, not from anger to mercy, but rather into new areas of experience. He has to move in his experience from having the *desire* to forgive to such an immersion into the experience of the other that he *can* win the other to himself. The other finds him to be the sort of person from whom he can accept reconciliation . . . A suffering God who was and is always willing to forgive gains through the cross a new experience of the human condition that gives him access into our resistant hearts. He suffers change in order to change us. This is the permanent validity of those so-called "objective" models of the Atonement which present a change in God as well as in the sinner. They certainly mistake the sort of change involved by presenting it as a change of attitude on God's part, as if God needed to have his law satisfied before he could forgive. There can be no question of change of attitude in a merciful God,

58. Fiddes, *The Creative Suffering of God and Past Event and Present Salvation*.

59. Vernon White, *Atonement and Incarnation* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

60. David L. Wheeler, *A Relational View of the Atonement* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1989).

61. White, *Atonement and Incarnation*, 63.

62. *Ibid.*, 64.

63. *Ibid.*, 52.

64. *Ibid.*, 104.

but there can be what we might call a “change of approach,” gained through new experience.⁶⁵

It seems that these two modern concepts of moral-Atonement-as-objective-Atonement are not mutually exclusive. Bushnell’s concept of the painful “self propitiation” of Jesus at Gethsemane could be added to the “process” concept of Jesus experiencing and changing at Calvary, both to become the objective enabler of subjective Atonement. In this combined interpretation, these two experiences (Gethsemane and Calvary) are the total experience by which the Savior gains the necessary understanding and authenticity to reach humanity. Taken together, these views seem to come closer to the concept of the Atonement found in Mormon sources than do the old traditional theories of medieval and Reformation Christianity.

CONCLUSION

I distinguish the various Christian interpretations of the Atonement, ancient and modern, by whether they describe the Atonement process as “moral” or as “metaphysical and transactional.” I also distinguish them by whether they describe the mechanism of the Atonement as a God-oriented, objective *event* or as a humanity-oriented, subjective *process*—or some combination of both. If I then use these distinctions to characterize Mormon sources, I find that the Mormon concept of Atonement (in contrast to traditional Orthodoxy) has a rich concept of subjective process and (in contrast to traditional Liberalism) has an unequivocal concept of Atonement as objective event. In contrast to both Orthodoxy and Liberalism, Mormonism has a sense of the importance (to the Atonement) of Gethsemane as well as Calvary. Mormon sources do not establish objective Atonement or subjective Atonement, one at the expense of the other. Rather in those sources the objective event is the necessary enabler for the subjective process. And when I consider the Mormon concepts of God, of humankind, and human predicament, I also find a simple and unique personalism that suggests the appropriate Mormon understanding of the Atonement should be *fundamentally* one of “moral” Atonement. This is strongly reinforced by the specific descriptions of the objective Atonement found in Mormon sources. I therefore suggest for consideration that in Mormon sources there is a basis for a unique concept of thoroughgoing (that is, objective and subjective) “moral” Atonement and that Jesus’ achievement of personal at-one-ment in response to our moral predicament is the objective Atonement for us.

65. Fiddes, *The Creative Suffering of God*, 166-67.

Hobby Horses

Lance Larsen

What holds us together is our discourse—
hints and asides, a whisper in the cloakroom,
School of the Prophets held across the backyard hedge.
Stealth gives Adam-God a reviving breath,
let Gog and Magog flex their muscle in the U.N.

And if our proselyting discloses a doubting Thomas,
we simply shrug, our talk erasable and unfootnoted.
We didn't *really* mean the Lost Tribes are cavorting
within the crust, or that the Illuminati has our grinning
president-elect in its hip pocket. Just an idea.

Like the idea a Gospel Doctrine teacher passed to me
over the urinal once: "This reincarnation business
is easily explained. Each of us has a guardian angel,
right? Who had his own life, right? Couldn't he
seed our minds with his own landscapes and faces?"

Or a patriarch's musings after a barbecue:
"As for the spirit, it gives off this definite aura,
prickly quills of heat you can feel with your hand,
and not to be bragging, but when Brother H. tested me,
I was like a puffed-up pheasant—pure feathers."

Angels, pheasants? At least, no one can fault us
for believing too little. And if thought is action,
then we're pioneers—paving a highway through chaos.
Delivering worlds out of a desert of unknowns.
Puddle-jumping our mortal dust straight to Kolob.

The Coyote Hunter

Tracie Lamb-Kwon

ALL THE TIME I WAS GROWING UP, my father would go out coyote hunting. His was the typical beat-up pickup with the full gun rack in the back window. He had a gun cabinet in the house and a pistol in the seat pocket in his car. He prominently displayed his NRA membership sticker on all his outfits.

This doesn't accurately describe him, however. It's all true, but it sounds like he was a gun-toting fanatic or a flagrant gun-slinger. He wasn't. In his hands, a gun was a tool, not a weapon.

I am uncomfortable now with the fire-power in and around my father's house. But it is a recently acquired discomfort. I grew up with his guns and was a pretty good shot myself. I took and passed Hunter's Safety. I only went hunting once, however, with my uncle and cousin and got a rabbit right in the eye or wherever you are supposed to get a rabbit. It's a distasteful memory to me as I think of my cousin showing me how to step on the rabbit's head and pull on the body to tear the head off. As disgusting as the thought is to me now, I was proud then.

Other more pleasant memories are of target shooting with friends and surprising the guys by beating them. One of my fondest Christmas memories is going trap shooting on Christmas day to try out my brother's new skeet shoot. I was not uncomfortable with firearms until I lived in a few big cities and began to understand the myriad uses for guns other than hunting.

Dad grew up in a western wilderness. He talked about being lucky to have grown up when "we had the outdoors to ourselves." I grew up in the same hometown he did—the same one his mother did. It's small now, maybe 500 people. Then, the town consisted of about 100. And my father and his younger brother spent a lot of time with their father on the mountain. Grandpaps was a shepherd and a trapper for the government. Dad trapped and hunted all of his life. It was what he had learned when he was a boy.

Dad's favorite pastime was coyote hunting. "I'm goin' out after coyotes," he'd say and be gone for several hours. Though I grew up there, I

never became as familiar as he was with the geography of the area. There was South Valley, Sheep Creek, Dowd Mountain. He would drive around in his pickup looking for coyotes. His eyes were always keen. He only started needing glasses for reading his last couple of years.

Once when we were visiting home and my first daughter was old enough to enjoy it, we went for a ride all together on an unpaved backroad to Henry's Fork. After a ways, we pulled off the road on a hill overlooking a valley. It was almost dusk. When the engine stopped, a stillness settled in. An autumn chill was in the air, the valley in blue shadow, the field full of deer. From across the valley, a coyote howled. The deer started and ran. Dad returned the coyote call. We listened and an answering call came. Dad was too out of breath from emphysema to continue, but his great pleasure in the surroundings was obvious. This was what he was about.

The Dad I knew was a quiet, solitary person although later I came to realize he was social in his own way. Though there is no bank, movie theater, library, or doctor, there have always been two or three cafes open in town. And Dad would visit at least one every day for coffee. I think then he could be quite talkative. And first thing in the morning and last thing at night, he would visit his folks up the hill for a cup.

To explain Dad, I probably should explain about his family some. Paps and Gramma lived up the hill from us near the school. They also had a ranch about ten miles out of town. Gramma would go "out to the ranch" at least once a day, usually driven by one of her kids or grandkids.

Dad's family was unpretentious. Much of what Dad was came from the way his parents were, I think. They always had company. Family and friends could drop by anytime. Gramma would say, "Set ya down." And when you had to go, she'd say, "Don't need to rush off," even if you'd been there for hours. And then as you'd go out the door, she'd say, "Slip back." It wasn't effusive hospitality you felt there. Sometimes it seemed like indifference. But maybe it was acceptance for what you were; acceptance of what they were. Had the Queen of England or the President of the United States come to visit, they would not have been treated any differently than any other visitor. They would have been offered a seat and a cup of coffee and asked to join in the pinochle game that was invariably going on.

And that was how Dad was. He didn't expect people to be different than what they were. I always tried to make him proud of me. I think he was, but I don't remember him ever saying it. Maybe it was because he would have felt the same about me whatever I had done. He would have loved me. He would have tried to help me if he could. Whatever accomplishments I had were nice, but they weren't necessary. Maybe that's how he felt.

Dad's variety of fatherhood consisted mainly of keeping the family fed and warm which he did well. He was a hard worker. He was not a

demonstrative person for whatever reason, and he didn't believe in the need to teach people (i.e., his kids) things. "Nobody taught me," he'd respond to my mother's injunctive to teach us something.

Perhaps one reason he hadn't needed to be taught was because he was very observant. One of his baffling abilities was to guess what he was getting for Christmas. No matter how carefully wrapped, how cleverly concealed, how painstakingly disguised his presents were, he could stroll over to the Christmas tree, sit back on one heel, shake his present a little, and then guess what it was. Every time. His quiet observations served him well at Christmas present guessing. And at other things, too, I imagine.

Much of what Dad learned came from growing up in the country, hours away from shops and stores. He had to learn to fix things himself, and he could fix anything. He used to work on the t.v. That was back in the days of those damn horizontal and vertical knobs. Lines on the t.v. would go up and down, back and forth. Our t.v. would get to where we couldn't watch it without getting sick or having to sit with one hand on the knob turning whenever the mechanical vertigo would start.

Dad would move the t.v. away from the wall—no easy task in an age of console t.v.'s. My job was to hold a mirror in front so Dad could see the picture as he worked on the back. He would bark orders at me to hold the mirror still. He'd work on whatever it was that was back there until the quality of the picture satisfied him or he had to admit it was unfixable.

Once after I was married, Dad was visiting our home and helping put something together. I found the instructions and gave them to him. "I don't use the instructions," he said, half apologetically. I was surprised and impressed. I have had to become the handy-person in my family. I grew up watching Dad fix things, so I know it can be done. But I need instructions—careful step-by-step instructions with big pictures. Then I can eventually put it together—usually.

When I was six months pregnant, I naively bought a lawn mower still in the box. I asked the salesman if it was difficult to put together, and he said no. He was obviously a man who had put a lot of lawnmowers together. When I opened the box, a myriad of parts and wires spilled out. But there were instructions. So with three-year-old in tow, I put the thing together. Not without calling Dad several times, however, to find out for sure which was the cotterpin or which the hex nut.

Once in college the fuel pump went out on my car. It was one of those rare occasions when I had a boyfriend. And he offered to fix the car. We bought the part and proceeded to get to know one another better than was good for our relationship. We got the fuel pump on, but the car still didn't work. Half-way around the block on the test drive, it quit again. Had there been a cliff handy, this story would have a different ending. Instead, I called Dad. School was a 160 miles and three hours from home, and in about three

hours, Dad was there to fix the car. We had gotten the wrong part. Dad got the right one and fixed the car.

Usually he didn't have to come, but could diagnose the problem over the phone. One of my cars was a hands-on lesson in mechanics. I am quite confident around cars when it comes to batteries, fuel lines, and tires, but especially carburetors. My car kept dying, and Dad thought that my carburetor probably had some dirt in it, and if I would just get a rock and tap on the top, it would loosen the dirt and the car would start. I eventually bought a big wrench which worked nicely whenever the carburetor needed a good tap.

The first time I couldn't get the car started, however, was when I was in a mall parking lot. While there was an abundance of cars, there were no rocks to be had. Dad's advice to get a rock showed what a country father I had. His world view included rocks wherever you needed them.

Dad didn't live by a schedule. Most of his life he worked for himself and kept his own hours. He drove the school bus for close to thirty years, but that was mostly for the insurance and left him free during the day for his other jobs. City people think driving school bus is an easy job and entails going up and down blocks. For us, it was a job for the best and strongest drivers. One run brought kids from Dutch John over the mountain—close to an hour one way. And in the winter, the roads could be and often were treacherous, the pavement icy, the switchbacks steep. And one year Dad drove that bus there was a flood in Sheep Creek Canyon wiping out the paved road. The only way over the mountain for a good year after that was on the old dirt switchbacks which were only wide enough for one vehicle. If two cars met, one would have to back up to a wide space in the road and let the other pass.

I remember going on the school bus with him one time. It was such a long way that he would stay overnight in a little trailer and get up early and bring the bus back over the mountain in the morning. I stayed with him that night. It was a little blue trailer. I remember there wasn't much to it, just a place for Dad to sleep, a stove, a small bathroom, a cupboard with a few cans of soup.

The other bus route he drove until he retired was a rough one, too. He would drive up to Birch Creek in the very early hours. In winter, he would have to go extra early to give the bus time to warm up. He rigged up a heater for his truck that he could plug in at night so the truck would start in the mornings.

Dad was so quiet and unassuming, he was like a part of the bus, seemingly oblivious to the squawking and mayhem going on behind him. But he was alert and aware. The kids never got too carried away because he'd stopped the bus by the side of the road a time or two.

Once on a hot day the kids got him to stop at a cafe on the edge of town

so they could get ice cream cones. When they came back, a couple of the little ones who had no money and no older sibling or friend to fend for them came back empty handed. Dad was pretty irritated at the other kids for not getting the little ones some ice cream and went and bought them some himself.

One of Dad's jobs was a sheep shearer. He had his own equipment. It's still up in the old house somewhere. He told about the summer before he got married, he got a job shearing sheep and was paid \$1 a head. That day he sheared one hundred sheep earning himself \$100. That was the most he ever sheared in one day, he told me proudly.

For those who don't know, sheep shearing is back-breaking work. Only a canvas bag serves as a gate to the sheep pens. The animals could bolt and run, but they're too dumb to know they can get by the canvas.

First, you reach past the canvas and grab a sheep by the leg, usually a hind leg. Sheep kick like the devil. You pull the sheep out and flip it onto its back and set it up holding its head between your knees. Then you shear down the neck, over the belly and inside the legs. You turn the sheep over and catch its head between your legs again and finish shearing the wool, over the back, down the legs. A good shearer like Dad never nicked the skin or drew blood and could shear the wool off in one piece.

Shearing for Paps and Gramma was a family project. Dad was their oldest son. When I was little, I helped out, too. The little kids were responsible for catching the lambs. We'd chase them down and bring them in to be docked and castrated. I never did try the after-shearing delicacy of Rocky Mountain oysters.

The men sheared sheep and the women fixed lunch. The bigger kids stuffed the wool into burlap bags that must have been ten feet long. The bags were put onto a big wooden tower with a platform at the top that had a round hole in the middle. The opening of the sack was attached to the hole by a big metal ring. Then the wool was passed up to someone on top who would put the wool into the bag. One of us would be inside the bag and tromp down the wool as it was put in. When it was full and packed down tight, we'd sew it shut with a big needle and twine and replace it with an empty sack.

We always had to check carefully for ticks after we'd been shearing. We especially had to check in our hair. We'd pick one another over monkey fashion to make sure we were tick-free. When we weren't, we'd have to go through the de-ticking process. If you put salad oil on the tick to smother it, it will back out of your skin. Then you burn it because you can't kill it any other way. At least that's what we believed. I guess we could have flushed it down the toilet, but burning it was so much more satisfying.

Mom always told Dad how soft his hands were after he'd been shear-

ing. The lanolin in the wool made his rough, calloused hands soft and smooth.

Dad had a funny way with money. He always paid his bills, and he was never broke. He always had at least two jobs and usually more. Money came in from here and there. None of us children learned how to hold on to money—but Dad knew how.

Once when I was pretty little, I went down to the basement to get something and there was Dad counting a wad of money. When he saw me, he put the money back into a coffee can and then inside a cinder brick block in the wall. He didn't say anything about it. I sneaked down later and counted it a couple of times. I don't remember how much was there, but it was a lot. One time when I went to see it, it was gone—off to some other hiding place.

When I was a teenager, my mom hollered at me to come here. She was cleaning out a closet. She handed me some cash—over \$8,000. She'd found it hidden away in an envelope underneath the filing cabinet. All his life, he kept some money hidden. It wasn't all he had, but enough to make himself feel safe, not having to trust completely in financial institutions.

My father was a good man. He did not live within the graces of the church though he came from a long line of Mormons and had been baptized as an adult. He and his brother and a couple of buddies were all baptized the same day. I found this out when I was working on his personal history. What made them decide to get baptized, I asked him. He couldn't remember just why they'd all decided to take the plunge that day.

Dad smoked from the time he was a teenager, and that's what killed him. He was sick with emphysema for a long time. He'd had trouble breathing for years. Ever since I could remember, the first sound in the morning would be Dad coughing after he got up. He'd been to several doctors, had been down to Mexico to get medication banned in the U.S.

He could have lived to be an old, old man because longevity ran in his family. And his heart was strong until the end. It kept him going long after he wanted to. His biggest lesson in life, he told me, was not to smoke cigarettes.

Toward the end he got so sick he had to go to the hospital. We all thought he was going to die then, but he pulled through enough to come home, to wait there to die.

My husband and kids and I were able to stay with my parents for a couple of weeks after he got home from the hospital, and I knew it was probably the last time I would see him. I kept feeling like I wanted to make sure nothing was left unsaid. Several times I went into his room to tie up all loose ends. But it was never right, and I finally realized it would never be right because it wasn't him to say everything—it wasn't us. So I just sat

in his room with him. Sometimes we talked. Mostly we didn't. Nothing was left unsaid that shouldn't have been.

In his last months of life, his biggest concern was not to put anyone out. He was an invalid, bedridden, yet he didn't expect, let alone demand anything from anyone except maybe Mom. While I was with them, I took care of him while Mom went back to work. I would fix his meals and take them in to him. I was touched by my mother's meticulous care of him. She carried his food in on a cookie sheet covered with a place mat and set carefully with silverware so that it would be nice. I tried to do the same.

I found some instant breakfast in the cupboard and made him a fancy shake trying to get as many calories in as possible. He drank it every morning and thanked me. After a few days when I went to make it, Mom was there and told me that Dad didn't like the chocolate instant breakfast. But he had never said anything. He didn't want to put me out or act unappreciative.

There was so much more to my father than I knew. I began to understand this a little when I saw the outpouring of support and care from the community. Those small town people are always available when someone needs help. Still, the sustained support and kindness were unbelievable. While I was there, visitors would come daily and would sit with Dad and chat. I heard a lot of stories from the past and came to know my father a little better. He was much more talkative with his old friends than I had ever known him to be.

He is gone now. Even though his death was expected and even prayed for, I wince with the memory of his passing. And though I believe in and am grateful for the plan of salvation, it's sometimes not enough. I don't doubt that he is somewhere. But he is not here. And I miss him.

My father was a simple man, lacking in ways. Yet there was more good in him than his quiet demeanor and solitary style would suggest. A few months before he died, I finished his personal history. I'm grateful I persisted in getting it done. I was able to learn a lot about him from that. When I asked him how he wanted to be remembered, he said, "I want people to remember that I was honest and a hard worker." I do, Dad. I remember.

To Joseph of Nazareth: Patron Saint of Fathers Dispossessed

Harlow Söderborg Clark

Joseph, I too have known that sad angelic word
Visitation
Which renders a father not-father.
Your children
(My seminary teacher told us the angel told you)
Your children would belong to God
Be sealed to their mother and her
Husband-God
(Can't have God's son without being sealed
To God, my seminary teacher said).
You would be lifted to the highest heaven
For your gift to God.

I have not been stripped of fatherhood by God.
That privilege belonged only to you
(The angel told you that, my teacher told us).
But my children's courteous mother
Would like the heavenly court
To name my children not-my-children
As earthly court has named me visitor
And I wonder,
Oh Father saint of fathers dispossessed
(Fathers-not-fathers your children)
Wandering the Heavenly courts
Do you feel a loss for the children
You fathered for the Father?

Regard, oh Father, my case,
You who know that visitor
Does not have the ring
Of Father.



TEARE

Gnosticism Reformed

Bertrand C. Barrois

MORMONS ARE NOT THE ONLY EARNEST SEEKERS after plain and precious ideas suppressed by the early Christian church. Scholars may have found a few in recently discovered manuscripts that illuminate the beliefs of the Gnostic sects that were serious competitors to mainstream Christianity for over three centuries. But what the scholars have found is not what Mormons are after. I would not recommend searching through *The Nag Hammadi Library* for hidden treasures of knowledge.¹ The Gnostic scriptures are too much like strong drink: intoxicating but ultimately hallucinatory.

The late LDS apostle James E. Talmage took a dim view of ancient Gnosticism. He wrote that it had contributed to the great apostasy by “grafting foreign doctrines onto the true vine of the gospel” and injecting the myriad philosophical controversies of the pagan world into Christianity. He cited its boastful claims to special knowledge of God, its wild cosmological speculations, its extremes of austerity and amorality, and its “perverted view of life” that set body against spirit.²

This unflattering assessment prevailed until the discoveries at Nag Hammadi and Qumran in 1947 prompted some Mormons to start fantastic rumors that the manuscripts contained a version of Isaiah similar to Nephi’s, sacramental prayers identical to Moroni’s, and accounts of sacred secrets more dangerous than Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s. Translations eventually proved them wrong, but wild stories continue to circulate.

More sober scholars have mined the ancient literature in search of precedents for distinctive Mormon doctrines and ordinances, and they have found many. Hugh Nibley discusses early prayer circles and secret teachings.³ Eugene Seach traces evolving Jewish and Gnostic concepts of a Father-Mother-Son-Bride godhead and the holiness of sexuality.⁴

1. James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977).

2. James Talmage, *The Great Apostasy* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1909).

3. Hugh Nibley, *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987).

4. Eugene Seach, *Mormonism, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Nag Hammadi Texts*

Both serious scholars and popularizers infected with “parallelomania” like to argue that the Gnostic sects were the last corrupt remnants of primitive Christianity and to interpret the eclipse or suppression of Gnosticism by a self-defined orthodoxy as the consummation of the great apostasy. Their reflexive sympathy for fellow victims of orthodox denunciations is misplaced. Gnosticism was decaying on its own. The most enduring Gnostic sects were those that taught a dour ascetic dualism antithetical to Mormonism, whereas the sects whose doctrines more accurately foreshadowed Mormonism were unworthy models in other respects.

Among non-Mormon writers, Harold Bloom sees Gnosticism as a trans-historical tendency, pervasive in American religion, characterized by a belief that the spirit is older than the world itself and by a claim of a special relationship to God.⁵ His definition fits Mormonism so well because it was tailored to emphasize the similarities between historic Gnosticism and modern religious movements. The Mormon doctrines of uncreated intelligence, literally begotten spirits, personal revelation, and progression to godhood have apparently become Bloom’s criteria.⁶

Less friendly commentators define modern Gnosticism in terms of its literal meaning: a claim to special knowledge and insight. They condemn its speculative and esoteric tendencies and the arrogance implicit in rejecting centuries of tradition and consensus, however forcibly imposed.

Sterling McMurrin has formulated a typology of religions that is helpful in characterizing affinities of outlook among otherwise dissimilar sects.⁷ One may elaborate his framework to classify religions by their optimistic or pessimistic attitudes toward humanity’s past, present, and future. For example, dismal Calvinism proclaimed guilt on all and damnation to most; conservative Christianity labors under an oppressive sense of original sin but points the way to salvation; liberal Christianity affirms the good in men and women but is silent on eschatology.

Gnosticism and Mormonism occupy a separate category, however. They offer grand eschatologies of exaltation along with harsh critiques of the present condition that imply no burden of guilt from original sin. Mormons analyze the problem as sectarian fragmentation due to apostasy,

(Midvale, UT: Sounds of Zion, 1980).

5. Harold Bloom, *The American Religion* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

6. Bloom’s assessment is not unflattering since he prophesies facetiously that Mormons will be eating their stored food long after 3000 A.D., the seven-thousandth and final year of earthly history by one popular reckoning.

7. Sterling McMurrin, in *And More About God* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992).

while Gnostics saw it as fragmentation of the divine nature itself. Religions that take such dim views of the present but bright views of past and future seem to have the greatest motivation and self-confidence for radical doctrinal innovation. They aim to make things whole once more.

Similarities between historic Gnosticism and Mormonism run deep, but so do differences. Both isms started with the ambition to know more and be more than mainstream religion could offer, but they arrived at opposite conclusions in the field of practical religion. Mormons may view their own religion as Truth Restored, but as an outsider I have come to view it as Gnosticism Reformed.

Similarities may appeal to intellectual curiosity, to a taste for historical patina, or to a genealogical urge to unearth philosophical ancestors, but they are fundamentally irrelevant to an appreciation of either the ancient or the modern religion. Parallelomania serves the purposes of the missionary program by furnishing "proofs" of Mormon claims about the restoration of primitive practices, but intellectual integrity requires equal attention to the differences. It is important to understand the nature of the reform effected in reversing the the ancient Gnostics' pessimistic, dualistic, and ultimately nihilistic outlook toward mortal life itself.

MYTH AND DOCTRINE

The dualistic myth common to all Gnostic sects opposed God's realm of light to the world, which was seen as a realm of darkness, created not by God, but by lower powers, variously known as the *archons*, the *aeons*, or the *demiurge*. The Father was all-good, infinite, unknowable, and remote; whereas the Creator, identified with the God of the Jews, was seen as an arbitrary, arrogant, and wrathful lawgiver.⁸

I might venture to recast this myth in Mormon terms: After Satan's plan of salvation had been rejected, he proceeded to create the world anyhow and to imprison humankind on it, making himself the unauthorized god of this world. The Gnostics might not have been amused by such fanciful slander against Satan since they preferred to blame Jehovah for all ills. They spun new interpretations of the role of the serpent in the garden of Eden and absolved Adam of any genuine transgression, and the Ophite sect made the serpent a symbol of liberation. (The same could almost be said of Mormons, who see Adam's fall as beneficent and make the serpent instrumental in bringing the plan of salvation to pass, while paradoxically continuing to blame him for the existence of evil.) A lunatic

8. Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958).

fringe even made heroes of Cain and the Sodomites for defying the Creator.

The Gnostic concept of salvation was liberation via *gnosis*: the knowledge of whence we come, why we are here, and where we are going.⁹ The mission of Jesus Christ, the true Son, was to teach us this saving knowledge, to redeem us from bondage to the creator Jehovah, and to lead us back to the true but unknown Father. In fact, the Savior's suffering and death were mere illusions. By one account, the divine Christ cheated the Creator by abandoning the human Jesus on the cross. So much for Gnostic soteriology!

Gnostics greatly admired the apostle Paul for his rejection of Jewish law and his emphasis on justification by faith, an easier path to salvation. They expanded on his mention of the *archons* of this *aeon* (1 Cor. 2:6-8) and his trichotomy among spiritual (*pneumatic*), natural/animal (*psychic*), and carnal/clay/material men (1 Cor. 2:14, 3:1, 15:48) as they spun their esoteric interpretations of his epistle, which also foreshadowed Mormon teaching on the three kingdoms. In the ungenerous Gnostic version, spiritual men share in the fullness (*pleroma*) of the Father, but natural men remain with the nasty Creator, and carnal men just rot.

Paul did not reciprocate the admiration. His epistle chided the pneumatics, who were puffed up with knowledge, who fancied themselves perfect, and who considered everything lawful unto themselves (1 Cor. 8:1, 2:6, 10:23). As early as 50 A.D., Paul was fighting fires that he had inadvertently fueled. The later, doubtfully attributed epistle to Timothy concludes with an explicit warning against the falsely so-called *gnosis*.

These doctrines led to paradoxical extremes in moral attitudes. On the one hand, contempt for the degradation of the material world formed a basis for asceticism. On the other, contempt for the Creator and his laws and a doctrine of unconditional salvation by knowledge formed a basis for libertinism.¹⁰ Thus, the Marcionites and Manichaeans discouraged reproduction, while the Valentinians and Cainites developed a reputation for immorality at an early date. (Of the lewd Barbeloites, more later.) "Gold immersed in muck retains its luster," they said, and wallowed. In short, Gnosticism divorced the issue of salvation from that of moral effort, in clear perversion of Paul's intent.

The Gnostics did not stop at dualism. Their diverse cosmologies posited elaborate genealogies of the lower powers that separate us from God. An *aeon* was at once an eternity of time, a kingdom of space, and the *archon* who ruled it. Most of the genealogies descended from a great mother,

9. Elder LeGrand Richards addressed these questions in *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, but the Valentinians asked them first, in almost identical words quoted by Clement of Alexandria. Their answers were less satisfying.

10. Jonas, 270.

consort of the Father, and reconverged upon a foolish virgin Wisdom and her misbegotten son, the Demiurge, which means creator. An early Gnostic cult known to Paul had filled the calendar with such beings (Gal. 4:8-10). Somewhat later, the Valentinians conceived a lineage of thirty aeons male and female in conjugal pairs, naming them with philosophical terms of the corresponding grammatical gender: Forefather and Thought, Mind and Truth, Word and Life, Man and Church, etc., ending with the foolish Wisdom and her son. (Christ and his bride the Holy Spirit were mere afterthoughts, whether of Valentinus or of the Forefather, I do not know.) The Ophites started with Father and Thought, Son and Holy Spirit, adding a separate Christ, Wisdom, and seven archons. They called the creator Yaldabaoth, which means Child of the Void, and gave the remaining archons hellenized names of the despised God of the Old Testament: Iao (Jehovah), Eloaios (Elohim), Adonaios, Sabaoth, etc.

Gnosticism has been described as Platonism run wild. In creating their genealogies of aeons, the Gnostics may have been showing off, but they were not consciously inventing abstract nonsense. They were systematizing perceived realities. In Platonist metaphysics, based on the theory of ideal forms, qualities became entities, and abstractions became real.¹¹ Not all Platonists turned to irresponsible speculation, however. Early Christians were equally steeped in Platonism, and their trinitarian abstractions were amply mystifying, but their faith has passed a test of time. Systems of metaphysics come and go, but God lives.

In the strange speculations of the Gnostics, one can discern grotesque prototypes of Joseph Smith's later teachings on the Father's abode in a place of eternally burning light, a mother in heaven, and an entire lineage of gods. However, unlike the idle cosmologies of the Gnostics, the Mormon vision of a heaven filled with the perfected forms of choice things on earth furnishes a model that men and women can aspire to and live by. Like no other modern religion, Mormonism endeavors to remake earth in the

11. Plato considered the ideal forms of universal qualities as real as the entities possessing them, but modern empiricists would say that only the observable instances are real. Mormon metaphysics arguably includes elements of Platonist realism, along with the prevailing modern nominalism and a unique materialism. Descriptions of God as an exalted man and of heaven as a celestialized earth sound like ideal forms by other names, but there is a technical difference between perfected forms of particulars and ideal forms of universals. As sometime realists, Mormons believe in a transmissible priesthood distinct from its bearers. Their passionate attachment to emblems of God-Family-Country, a triad of universals, is also characteristic of realism. As nominalists, they worship the god who is their Father, and not another, for there are gods many and lords many. And as materialists, who equate matter and spirit, they give him a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's.

image of a material heaven, although cynics might say that it tends to remake heaven in the image of earth.

The Book of Abraham reads like a highly compressed Gnostic treatise in code. Its teachings on the plurality of gods echo any number of Gnostic cosmologies, its teachings on preexistent matter echo Hermogenes,¹² and its teachings on antemortal callings echo Valentinus, who maintained that “souls that possess the seed of Achamoth [Wisdom] are dearest to the Demiurge, though he knows not why, wherefore he distributes them to prophets, priests, and kings.”¹³ Its geographic and literary settings echo a lovely hymn in the Acts of Thomas, in which the imprisoned apostle sings of going down into Egypt to recover a lost pearl and of reunion with his heavenly parents.¹⁴ It conspicuously uses the Hebrew word *gnolaum*,¹⁵ which is an exact translation of the Greek word *aeon*. But ironically, the Gnostics disliked Abraham and Moses for serving the hated Creator.

RITES AND ORDINANCES

Let us now examine the antecedents of the temple ordinances that Joseph Smith restored on a Platonist model. Although the core of Mormon doctrine is solidly opposed to the negative outlook of Gnosticism, Joseph knowingly or unknowingly made increasing use of Gnostic symbolism over the course of his prophetic career. Just as he had warmed to Masonry, his unfolding ideas of eternal progression led him to weave the central Gnostic image of “passing the angels” into Doctrine and Covenants 132:19 and the temple endowment rite. All serious scholarship points to the roots of Mormon ritual in Masonry,¹⁶ but Masonry purports to draw on more ancient traditions. Whatever its provenance, the modern LDS temple rite follows the pattern of ancient mystery rites with remarkable fidelity, although its moral message is radically different.

12. Tertullian of Carthage, *Against Hermogenes; Against Marcion; Against the Valentinians.* *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 3* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989). Circa 208.

13. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies.* *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 1.7.3. Circa 180.

14. Edgar Hennecke, “The Acts of Thomas,” *New Testament Apocrypha* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963); Willis Barnstone, *The Other Bible* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984).

15. Pop etymologists have noted that this idiosyncratic transliteration bears a suspicious resemblance to a combination of *gnosis* + *'olam*.

16. David John Buerger, “The Development of the Mormon Temple Endowment Ceremony,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Winter 1987): 33-76; Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Mission, 1987).

A full Valentinian initiation comprised five rites: baptism in water, anointing with oil, a eucharist of bread with wine and water, redemption from the archons, and the mystery of the bridal chamber.¹⁷ The first three were common to all Christian sects, but they acquired presumptuous twists in Gnostic usage.¹⁸

Anointing (chrismation) made the initiate a literal christ. Baptism washed off the material world, not sin, and multiple rebaptism was common. And among the Marcionites, the eucharist was celebrated with the water of life alone, omitting the wine that represents the Savior's blood, shed for the remission of sins.¹⁹

Such twists can be traced doctrinally to Gnostic nihilism and docetism (denials of moral law, sin, and the Savior's passion), but they also indicate arrogance. The problem of striking a balance between self-esteem and humility is always delicate, but it is doubly so for self-proclaimed spiritual elites. Despite superficial parallels in Mormon Pelagianism and oenostaurophobia (denial of original sin and distaste for sacramental wine and crosses), Mormons cannot fairly be accused of arrogance on these grounds. Mormons seem to maintain a healthy degree of humility by reminding themselves of the lifelong need for repentance. The Gnostics saw no need for it.

The rites of redemption and the bridal chamber were distinctively Gnostic. Initiates were sworn to secrecy, but general features that are sure to bring shivers of recognition to temple-going Mormons can be reconstructed.

The rite of redemption was an allegorical passage through the lower realms into the presence of God. One sect ascended seven stairs separated by gates, and other sects may have used chambers separated by veils. To thwart the archontic gatekeepers, who represented obstacles rather than benign sentinels, the initiate was obliged to recite a series of formulae with the force of passwords, numerous examples of which have been exposed by the church fathers:

To thee, Yaldabaoth, first and seventh, [who wast] born to have power and boldness, I, [who am] a word of pure intelligence, a perfect work for Son and Father, bear this [amulet] carved with a picture of [the tree of] life, and open the world-gate that thou hadst locked with thine aeon, to pass by

17. Wesley Isenberg, "The Gospel of Philip," *The Nag Hammadi Library* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977).

18. Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1987).

19. Philip Amidon, *The Panarion of St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, Selected Passages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 42.3. Circa 375.

thy power free again. May grace be with me, Father, may grace be with me.²⁰

I am a son from the Father, the Father who is preexistent, and a son who is preexistent in him. I have come to behold all things, both those which belong to myself and others, although they do not belong to others, but to Achamoth [Wisdom], who made these things for herself. For I derive from him who is preexistent, and I come again to my own place from which I went forth.²¹

I have recognized myself and gathered myself together from all sides and have not sown children to the archon but have uprooted his roots and have gathered the scattered members, and I know who thou art, for I belong to those from above.²²

Zozeze! Fall back . . . you archons of the first aeon, because I challenge you: Eaza zeozaz zozeoz!²³

The Gnostic attitude toward the gatekeepers was anything but respectful, and the formulae were totally unlike the Mormon self-blessing of body, spirit, and posterity. Gnostics cared little for the holiness of their bodies, and less for their posterity.

Gnostics were also among the first to use handshakes as sacred symbols. Although the "right hand of fellowship" is mentioned by Paul (Gal. 2:9), it only became widespread through Manichaean usage.²⁴ To the Manicheans, handshakes commemorated the tokens of greeting given to Primal Man by his heavenly parents as he departed for and returned from the war with Darkness. In the ancient world, handshakes were not customarily used for greeting but for sealing legal or religious covenants. It is hard to imagine what sort of covenants the disorderly Gnostics might have wished to make, and it seems more likely that their handshakes symbolized the helping hand of the Savior pulling man out of darkness.

The themes of the Gnostic rite were liberation from fate and recovery of lost free agency, without the accompanying responsibilities. By contrast, Mormonism proclaims that men and women are already free. Instead of needing liberation from oppressive law, they need a period of probation and repentance to learn moral discipline. Endowed Mormons earn their

20. Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 6.31. Circa 248. Ophite formula.

21. Irenaeus, 1.21. Valentinian formula.

22. Amidon, 26.13. Barbeloite formula.

23. Rudolph, 173. Unknown sect.

24. Jonas, 223.

passage through the kingdoms by making covenants to live the principles of the gospel, obedience, sacrifice, chastity, and consecration.

In accordance with their opposing themes, the modern and ancient rites used clothing in contrasting ways. Gnostics doffed the impure garments of the world to be reborn naked as they overcame the archons. They often described their bodies as the ultimate rags, and might gladly have doffed them too.²⁵ Mormons don the pure garments of the priesthood as they make their covenants, and shift their robes to mark their spiritual progress, using an ancient symbolism, also of Gnostic origin, in which left connoted carnal, and right natural or spiritual.

The mystery of the bridal chamber may have been a narcissistic travesty of temple marriage as Mormons know it. It remains unclear whether the rite demanded a vow of sexual abstinence to avoid sowing children to the archon, whether it granted a license for sexual excesses by immunizing the initiate against spiritual defilement, or whether it permitted conjugal relations in emulation of male and female aeons above. Irenaeus says that the Valentinians considered sexual relations a virtual duty.²⁶ Read in this light, the Gospel of Philip suggests they performed actual marriages for eternity in a mirrored holy-of-holies, while deprecating earthly marriage as a defilement:

Great is the mystery of marriage, for without it the world would not exist. . . . [But] its image is a defilement of the form. . . . No man shall be able to escape [defilement by unclean spirits] since they detain him if he does not receive a female power in the mirrored bridal chamber. . . . If the image and angel are united, none can venture to [defile] the man or the woman.²⁷

The bridal chamber is called the holy-of-holies because before the veil was rent, we had none other than the image of the bridal chamber above. . . . For this the veil was rent, because it is fitting for some below to go upward.

The separation [of man and woman] was the beginning of death. . . . Eve separated from Adam because she had not united with him in the bridal chamber. . . . Christ came to repair the separation and to give life to those who had died as a result. . . . Those who are united in the bridal chamber will no longer be separated.²⁸

25. Jonas, 166.

26. Irenaeus, 1.6.4.

27. Isenberg, 139.

28. *Ibid.*, 142.

[Secret begetting is superior to open creation.] If there is a hidden quality to the [earthly] marriage of defilement, how much more is the undefiled [heavenly] marriage a true mystery.²⁹

However, the rite is a mystery to scholars because other Gnostic scriptures have an unambiguously anti-sexual message. According to the Acts of Thomas, the apostle was executed for persuading a nobleman's wife to take a vow of lifelong sexual abstinence. Read in this context, his hymn hints that the initiate donned a royal robe fit for a god and wed his own reflection in a mirror, to symbolize reunion with a divine self from whom the material world had separated him: "As I now beheld the robe, it seemed suddenly to become a mirror-image of myself. I saw myself entire in it, and I saw it entire in myself. We were two in separateness and yet again one in sameness."³⁰ Tertullian says that the rite prepared the initiate, of either sex, to become the bride of a male angel.³¹ The Gnostics apparently aspired to literal androgyny in the hereafter.

However, there were some who preferred bisexuality in this life. By the fourth century, the degenerate Barbeloites were reported to engage in obscene rites meant to prevent reproduction, to spite the creator Yaldabaoth, and to draw upon the power of his mother Barbelo.³² Even the usually ascetic Marichaeans devised a rite to desecrate sexuality.

The pagan writer Celsus sneered that Gnostic initiates ("who have wretchedly learned the names of the doorkeepers by heart") memorized the passwords of redemption with numbing literalism. Similarly, Brigham Young's literalistic instruction (that "the Endowment . . . is to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, signs, and tokens pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell") tends to perpetuate a mechanical understanding of the sacred words and gestures. More than a few Mormons, undoubtedly

29. Ibid, 148.

30. Hennecke, *loc. cit.*

31. Tertullian, "Against the Valentinians," chap. 32.

32. St. Epiphanius says that Barbeloites greeted one another with a lewd parody of the sacred handshake, engaged in assorted unnatural sex acts, aborted accidental conceptions, cannibalized the fetuses (nicely prepared with pepper and honey), and performed an even viler parody of the eucharist. His accusations sound as sensational as those by certain ex-saints in these latter days, but he did have first-hand information. A brazen woman, wife of the sect's chief cook, had once tried to seduce him. Many of these degenerates were masquerading as members of the mainstream church, but Epiphanius had them run out of town (Amidon, 26.1-17). St. Augustine, the reformed libertine, described a similar *excrement* among the Marichaeans, to whom he had once belonged (Barnstone, 675).

hard-boiled modernists impatient with unexplained symbolism, have complained that they were ill-prepared for their endowments and felt more baffled than inspired. There is much that they could learn by studying Gnostic symbolism with duly critical eyes.

The Platonists' dream was to get in touch with the universal realities: to enter the eternal world of ideal forms. They would have understood the Mormon dreams of circumscribing universal Truth and of rejoining the ideal Father on high.

Modern Mormons, unattuned to the Platonist viewpoint, may find it difficult to appreciate the metaphysical realities behind the symbols. They never forget that the Savior's life and death were real events, through which mortality met immortality at the center of history. The first lesson of the mysteries is that the temple is a place where the heavens meet earth and time intersects eternity.

A DIFFERENT WORLD VIEW

What else could modern Mormons learn from these ancient sectarians who made an utter hash of the gospel? A clearer understanding of their own roots, their own heterodoxy, and perhaps their own destiny. As adherents of a young but successful religion, Mormons might well ask themselves whether they are avoiding the fatal errors of the Gnostics.

Although obsessed with numerology, the Gnostics did not attempt to replicate their cosmologies in church organization, which instead resembled the primal chaos. The roles of men and women, deacons, priests, and bishops were interchangeable; and authority counted for nothing. The moral and ecclesiastical anarchy of Gnostics undoubtedly contributed to their eclipse by orthodox Christianity.³³ The elaborately organized Mormon church is in no comparable danger of decorrelation, although it may err on the side of rigidity in matters of patriarchy and authority.

The missionary urges of the Gnostics were hardly sufficient to compensate for their other vices. The snobbish Valentinians admitted only free men and virgins to their mysteries, the lascivious Barbeloites were always happy to seduce a comely new member, and the ascetic Marcionites needed converts because they did not reproduce. Most major Gnostic sects collapsed in the late fourth century under pressure from the mainstream church, by then legally established. Only a few far-flung pockets of Manichaeans, who had a well-organized missionary program and had moderated their asceticism by permitting marriage to an outer circle of believers, lingered into the middle ages.

33. Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Random House, 1979).

Doctrinal and ritual similarities notwithstanding, the ancient and modern world views are antithetical. To the Gnostic, the material world separated humanity from God, creation was an unfortunate accident, earthly marriage a defilement, and life a misery. To the Mormon, matter and spirit are one, creation was a purposeful and beneficent part of a plan of salvation, the body is a temple, and life offers a fullness of joy. By strictly pragmatic standards, Mormonism has the more constructive outlook.

Are Mormons actually happier? I have never met an ancient Gnostic, but I have met a number of Mormons who seem to stagger under the burden of perfection imposed by their church, and for whom Mormonism is not the religion of joy that Joseph Smith intended. The less-than-fully-perfect can be as guilt-ridden as Catholics oppressed by original sin. The Gnostics, on the other hand, may have enjoyed pessimist chic.

If the Gnostics had an opportunity to express an opinion of Mormonism, one can well imagine that they would laugh loudly and scornfully at Mormons' legalistic obsession with keeping commandments in emulation of Jewish Halakhah. But their laughter would ring hollow, because the Gnostics, like the mocking occupants of the floating building in Lehi's dream, lacked a moral foundation.

Other Christians might fault both Gnostics and Mormons for opposing God's justice to his mercy, although in different ways. Whereas Marcion revered the good Father while reviling the strict Creator, early Mormon thought (Mosiah 2:39; Alma 42:25) places justice above mercy. Christians view them as inseparable. Whatever the theoretical merits of these positions, the practical results of emulating different divine models are that the Gnostics were mostly loose, while Mormons are often disciplinarian, and mainstream Christians ideally (but all too seldom) forgiving.

Later Mormon thought reconciles mercy with justice by promising a telestial salvation to all but total reprobates, but some prospective gods seem inclined to take a harder line with their own spirit children. The more-than-fully-perfect can be hell on the rest in any religion.

Gnostics and Mormons have also taken polar positions on justification by faith or works. In my own gentile view, the convergence of sectarian positions toward consensus on the central and indispensable role of universal grace as a guiding principle is one of the great events of the Millennium. Protestants now agree with James that faith needs to be vivified by works. Catholics now agree with Paul that human works in-and-of-themselves are petty things and have deemphasized ritual requirements. Even Mormons have stopped pummeling the defunct Calvinist strawmen of selective grace and predestination, and they have begun to admit that the reason humankind needs a savior is that human beings, even Mormons, are not perfect, at least not yet. Only the Gnostics stuck with their theory of salvation by secret knowledge to the end.

Their pride proved fatal. Gnostic initiates fancied themselves a perfect elect by virtue of their esoteric knowledge. But elitism, whether moral or esoteric, is not the stuff of which enduring universal religions are made.

I do not think that Mormon missionaries will get far in this world by emphasizing a materialist vision of a tangible heaven or by self-congratulation. The strengths of Mormonism that set it apart from Gnosticism are its optimistic views of life and human potential and its sound values to guide men and women through a disorderly world. The missionaries will have much to teach the Gnostics in the next.

HOMEWORK FOR HISTORIANS

No matter how intriguing, the details of similarities between isms many centuries apart are less significant than the reasons for their existence. We may never know with certainty whether they are due to a common source in revelation, a shared philosophical tendency, coincidence, or borrowing.

The hypothesis that the prophet Joseph Smith was aware of and reacted to Gnostic teaching presents a number of difficult questions, best left to historians: Could Joseph have been introduced to Gnostic ideas through Masonic channels³⁴ or by the learned Sidney Rigdon? Did he have Sidney comb the writings of the church fathers³⁵ for traces of the plain and precious things lost? And if so, was their joint vision of the three kingdoms or were Joseph's later teachings colored by what they learned?

His followers like to believe that Joseph arrived at his teachings independently, by revelation. His detractors prefer to believe that he arrived at them by speculation *ex nihilo*, and that he was too unlettered to do otherwise. However, it is possible that he sought his learning by study as well as by faith. While this would make him more seeker than seer, his reform and reorganization of preexistent ideas would be no less of a wonder.

If the similarities are attributed entirely to shared tendencies, they might be explained by McMurrin's typology, which classifies Gnosticism

34. Speculative doctrines formerly taught to Masons of the higher degrees were frankly Gnostic, placing Lucifer (who is not Satan) above Adonai (who is not the Father). Various legends link masons to the Templars, who were accused of propagating the neo-Manichaeian Catharist heresy.

35. Although the Nag Hammadi trove came forth in this century, the classic heresiologies by Irenaeus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others were available to scholars in the nineteenth. Joseph Smith's explorations in patristics left a telling trace in his remark that "Chrysostom says that the Marchionites practiced baptism for their dead" (Joseph Fielding Smith, ed., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972], 222).

and Mormonism as hopeful religions with liberal views of humanity but critical views of the world. However, this scheme fails to explain the very different achievements of their radical theologies. Gnosticism broke free of the grim Judeo-Christian calculus of guilt and expiation but replaced it with amoral selfishness. Mormons have done the former without losing their moral bearings, by reinterpreting the Fall, demoting hell to a simile, and replacing expiation through suffering with a constructive, forward-looking doctrine of repentance and self-improvement. They have also eradicated dualism's most baleful legacies to later Christian thought: the hard dichotomies between matter and spirit, human and divine, which devalue human physical existence. Their greatest teachers (from Alma to Talmage) have ironically found it difficult to explain atonement without reference to original sin, but they have been singularly clear in proclaiming the purpose of life.

Historians ask about the origin and evolution of religion, while would-be prophets ask about the origin and destiny of man. Only those who bear a three-fold message of integrity, charity, and hope give satisfying answers. The original Gnostics, sadly, did not.



Strong Like Water

Robert Hodgson Van Wagoner

THE SAME WEEK KARMINE DISCOVERS HER HUSBAND is having an affair with a man, she takes her mother to a doctor who finds a tiny patch of cancer on the tip of the old woman's nose. Abby, Karmine's seventy-five-year-old mother, cannot be convinced she has not contracted the malignancy from her former neighbor, a young woman stricken with lymphoma who regularly, at the conclusion of Abby's visits, kissed the old woman on the nose. Abby's little spot is a garden variety cancer, the result of too many years' unprotected exposure to the sun, years and years of wear; its removal requires but a small operation and the maintenance of a periodic check-up. But as far as Abby is concerned, she has caught lymphoma from kissing. She is convinced she will shortly die.

"You're not going to die," Karmine says. "There's nothing fatal about a tiny spot on the end of your nose." It is snowing hard—icy flakes click softly when they hit the car. It is the sound, Karmine imagines, of parakeet feet, unnumbered parakeet feet, walking on glass. She has turned the windshield wipers to the highest speed. The blades rush back and forth, and though Karmine doesn't entirely realize what is happening, the vigorous back and forth, this motion of winding a watch, has begun to stiffen her neck.

"Lymphoma," Abby insists. She examines her nose in the visor mirror, but she doesn't touch the cancer. "I should have never let her kiss me."

Karmine is Abby's youngest child, and for all practical purposes, Abby's only child. Harlan, Karmine's older brother, lives in Detroit, an automotive engineer. He calls Abby weekly, and visits as he can, usually on major holidays. It causes a guilty moment, this resentment she feels for her brother, his distance and freedom from Abby's unreasonable aging. Karmine resents Harlan for his careless assumptions, and for his useless and insufficient gratitude. She resents him most, however, for the same reason she resents her father who is dead—she resents them both for leaving her alone and terrified that Abby will die.

"You're not listening," Karmine says. "There are no lymph nodes on

the end of your nose. And even if there were, it simply isn't possible to *catch* cancer from another person."

Abby pushes the visor to the ceiling, and as an afterthought, though they are almost to her home, checks to make certain she has locked her door. "This is the beginning of the end," she says calmly. "You remember this conversation. This is the beginning of the end. I give myself three months."

In Abby's driveway, Karmine turns off the car. The windshield wipers stop, and she is immediately grateful for the stillness. "The beginning of the end," as far as Karmine is concerned, has long passed. The end had begun five years earlier when Karmine's father, a man ten years older than Abby, died of heart failure. On the day of her father's funeral, Karmine hadn't given her despondent mother three months, much less, five years. Now, Karmine is distressed, put off, by Abby's arbitrary death predictions. She is put off by the arbitrariness of death. For five years Abby has deteriorated—lost much of her sight, some of her balance, a little of her memory—but she has not died. Abby slips away much like a child grows, in increments beyond perception, with only memory and the passage of time for measurement. And the more frail Abby seems, the more frightened Karmine becomes. Strange, it strikes Karmine, that now, when Abby can no longer offer the comfort and reassurance of the mother, that she, Karmine, is most terrified of losing her. And perhaps it is because they need each other again, as in the child's early life. For very different reasons they need, though they can no longer truly help one another. Karmine sometimes wonders if it would have been easier (for her, for Abby, for Harlan) if Abby had, in fact, died as predicted, shortly after her husband's death.

"I hope Peter doesn't take this too hard," Abby says. Peter is Karmine's husband. "I was hoping he'd come along today; he usually does. He'd have been very upset by the lymphoma. I don't think Peter is going to take this well."

Karmine gets out and comes around to help Abby. Abby adores Peter, and Peter adores Abby. They have adored each other for twenty-six years, since before Karmine adored Peter. Peter's adoration of Abby was one of Karmine's first reasons for adoring Peter. In the twenty-five years of Karmine and Peter's marriage, Peter has made no distinction in time and concern and service between Abby and his own mother. So much adoration, in light of all that Karmine must keep to herself, must keep from her mother, only complicates the needing—needing Peter, needing Abby.

"Peter had a meeting after school," Karmine says. She holds onto Abby's elbow, pulls her gently from the car, bracing herself against a slip. It is still snowing, and through Karmine's feet she senses the uncertain grounding, that rigid insecurity born in the snowy layer separating her

boots from concrete. Her muscles, without permission, tighten, a phenomenon she remembers from years of carrying infants across Utah winters.

"A meeting?" Abby scoffs. She knows few meetings keep Peter away. "I hope it wasn't a *church* meeting."

"No church meeting," Karmine assures. "A meeting with the administration to plan this year's tour. He would have canceled had it been anything else."

Abby grunts but seems satisfied with Karmine's explanation. Near the back door the old woman stops and looks at her yard. It is January, and it has already been a hard winter. Drifts from Peter's shoveling stand as tall as Abby, taller in places. He has shoveled off her carport and beaten the snow from her bushes. The temporary stain of Ice Melt stretches like a blue carpet to the carport where Abby's car awaits Peter or one of the older grandchildren, Harlan when he is in town, the few people who drive the aging vehicle, now and then, for the sake of maintenance.

"It's going to snow for a long time," Abby says, stepping toward the door, pulling Karmine with her. "I can feel it. I wish you Mormons would stop praying for snow."

"We stopped a long time ago," Karmine says. "We're praying for snow-blowers now."

Because of Peter, Karmine and Abby can say these things to each other. Karmine's conversion to Peter's faith, the fact that she has abandoned her parents' faith, works because Abby loves Peter. It has worked because Karmine and her parents, always suspicious of Mormons, loved Peter more than they suspected Mormonism. And it has worked because Peter never once asked Karmine to convert, because he married her expecting full-well that she never would. Peter, himself, has suspected Mormonism, he has been openly skeptical at times, which is why, perhaps, he has never been promoted in the lay clergy beyond choir director. On the other hand, his persistent service with those hopeless congregational choirs, the fact that he is never called to serve elsewhere, may simply be the consequence of being very good at what he does.

Inside Abby's house, Karmine helps her mother remove her winter clothing. She hangs Abby's coat in the closet, removes the old woman's boots, and covers her feet with lamb-skin slippers. Positioned haphazardly about the house are a half-dozen walkers, four pronged canes, landmarks of Karmine's determination to keep her mother on her feet. They are rentals Karmine has picked up, some with wheels, some without, different designs on the hope that variety and novelty will tempt Abby to use one. Karmine picks up the nearest walker and places it next to the couch, where her mother sits.

"Diane next door was skin and bones by the time she went," Abby says. She shakes her head sadly, but without the drama Karmine has come to

expect from Abby. Abby is convinced she has lymphoma, and she seems remarkably content to have it. It occurs to Karmine that her mother is more concerned with the fact, the certainty, of the disease, than she is troubled by the consequences of having it.

"You're going to lose some skin off your nose, Mom." Karmine smiles. "There's no bone, only cartilage, at the end of your nose. Your nose is already down to skin and cartilage."

Abby glances at her daughter, a look of mild reproach. She points at her nose without touching it. "It's like the entrance to a coal mine," she says. "One little opening for all those miles and miles and layers and layers of tunnels inside."

Karmine imagines her mother as a diagram, something late nineteenth century with obscure, ominous markings, a cut-away illustrating a network of roughly organized mining tunnels beginning at the tip of Abby's nose, arrows and measurements indicating the intended direction of the invisible miners still burrowing away inside. It is an image Karmine understands; it explains so much. The hollowing out, being consumed a bite at a time from the inside. She wonders what such a diagram of herself might reveal, how complicated the tunnels would be, which pieces of what would be missing. And a diagram of Peter? How much of Peter would be gone?

"Well," Karmine sighs. "When the doctor takes off the tip of your nose, I'll have him shine a light down the shaft. If the back of your head glows, we'll run tests for lymphoma."

Abby throws her head back and laughs. Karmine smiles, and after a moment, she laughs, too.

"I have to tell you something," Abby finally says. She smooths the front of her blouse. "For the last week, your father has been spending the nights. He sleeps right where I'm sitting. On the couch."

Karmine blinks rapidly. She resists an impulse to open her mouth wide, as in a yawn, to open the chamber and release a sudden pressure behind her ears. For the past nineteen years, since converting to Mormonism, she has slowly assumed the accouterments of the faith. It is no longer beyond her, as it was before her conversion, to consider the spirit world viable, the distance between mortals and their predecessors, small. It is something she sometimes hopes for, and sometimes dreads. Yet, even after so many years, she is not certain her hoping constitutes actual belief.

Karmine looks at the couch. Since before her father's death, her mother has slept on the living room floor. Every night for five years, Abby has unrolled the foam-rubber mattress, made her bed with sheets and blankets. Every morning she has removed and folded the bedding, rolled the mattress. What began as a service to her ailing husband is now a safeguard

against falling out of bed. And, too, it is warmer, she claims, on the floor near the heat vent.

"Every night?" Karmine asks.

"Except for last Thursday," Abby says. "He didn't come at all last Thursday. But every other night. He comes after I go to bed. When I wake up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom he's there, so I put a blanket on him. It's been so cold. His hair still has that beautiful black curl. He's always gone by the time I get up in the morning."

Abby is pleased with her secret, as pleased to have such a secret as to have her husband again spending the nights. Karmine does not begrudge her mother her pleasure, nor her visions, but she is distressed and angry, nonetheless. She is angry because a sign, if it is a sign, should bring more comfort than distress. Comfort to her, Karmine, as well as Abby. She is angry, too, because her mother, who has never believed in the supernatural, the preternatural, the spiritual, has without question accepted the whole as real. And Karmine is distressed, for she has heard of such things before. Whatever the cause, whatever the reality, she suspects that in the world at large people experience similar occurrences quite regularly. And usually (in Karmine's limited experience) to their own demise.

Abby stands, using the walker to pull herself up. "I'm going to show you something." She abandons the walker and crosses the room. She passes into the hall and returns a minute later carrying an accordion folder. Before returning to the couch, she drops the folder in Karmine's lap.

"Diane next door went about this thing the wrong way," Abby says. "The way she shriveled away to nothing."

Karmine opens the folder. It is full of papers, pamphlets, envelopes. She dumps the contents on her lap. "The Hemlock Society," she says.

"My damned eyes," Abby laments. "Four years I've been a member and I've never been able to read more than the headlines. Given the clientele, you'd think they'd print everything in that big, oversized script."

Karmine stares at the pile. She cannot make herself touch the papers. She is thinking that Peter will soon have to climb on the houses, Abby's and their own, to shovel off the snow. Peter is a large man, very strong, sure on his feet. He is capable of shoveling heavy snow for hours, throwing it, if needs be, fifteen or twenty feet without shifting his feet for balance. His physical strength, and the way he smells after working hard, musky but without the strong odor Karmine has smelled on other men, are qualities she has always loved. Karmine wonders what Abby would say about Peter. She wonders what Peter would say about the Hemlock Society.

"You do not have lymphoma, Mother," Karmine says. "*You simply do not have lymphoma.*"

"Fine." Abby smiles. "But browse a little, anyway. Tell me what you think."

Her children grown, no longer demanding her time, Karmine often walks to the high school to watch Peter rehearse the wind ensemble. Summer through fall, marching band season, she takes an active role, sewing uniforms for the flag team, filling large water coolers with Gatorade for those long pregame rehearsals. Peter respects her opinion; he asks for her criticisms and suggestions. And over time, Karmine has assumed an interest, staked a claim in his artistry of proportions that at times, she suspects, may be intrusive. Standing high on the bleachers to better view the formations, sitting in the band room listening to Peter work the counterpoint between the trombones and the French horns, Karmine has sometimes lost herself in the precariousness of Peter's work. All of those awkward children struggling too hard to be indispensable, yet fearing, as they squeeze those sometimes paltry notes to life, that the opposite may be true. And during transitional years, when the performances have not been the best (though, even in bad years, the bands have been large), Karmine has watched and listened and smiled, knowing that some people are at their best when they are bridging chasms created by those around them.

It has been a week since Karmine has attended a rehearsal, and though it is cold outside, she still walks the two blocks to the high school. Peter appears pleased when she comes in. Students are opening cases, sucking on reeds, screwing on slides. It is already much too noisy to talk, and Peter is much too busy, so Karmine removes her coat and pulls a chair from Peter's office.

"You're feeling better!" a young flutist calls. Some of the other students wave. Karmine smiles and nods and returns the waves. Apparently, Peter has explained her absence as illness, and perhaps this is, after all, not such a bad explanation. In the middle of the band, their youngest child, Timothy, warms up with the French horns. If he is surprised or pleased or unhappy to see Karmine he doesn't indicate it. This is Timothy's usual response, and Karmine is not offended. She knows it must be difficult for a fifteen-year-old boy to have his father for a teacher and his mother for a teacher's aide.

Karmine has taken another step toward a routine, the routine that is her routine, because she can determine no other step to take. So far, Peter has not said what he intends to do. What are you going to do? As a question, a sentence, it has dangled between them, a bilateral blight that no one has ventured to address. Their three children know nothing.

Karmine is not sure what it means, that her husband is having an affair with a man. She is not sure she understands the specifics of such an affair;

she is not sure she understands the generalities either. For that much, she cannot blame Peter. He has tried—and there is something of a tidal wave in his efforts—to convince Karmine to listen, to let him talk. And despite her resistance, Peter seems hopeful.

Karmine watches Peter tune the band. From the director's podium, he leads his students through a series of simple sounding exercises, *études* derived from the mountains of tricky sounding exercises he has, over the years, abandoned because they did not work. When it comes to training a band, Peter says, the deceptively difficult is almost always more effective than the blatantly difficult. Peter claims this to be one of his most valuable secrets, a secret not because he hides it, but because so many of his colleagues find it difficult to understand. Karmine, sitting in this same chair listening to these same exercises, has watched Peter produce some of the state's finest high school bands.

Karmine has seen the man Peter loves, but she does not know him. He plays keyboards, does freelance work for the ballet, the opera, the local theaters. For years, Peter has brought in extra money playing freelance—the ballet, the opera, the local theaters. French horn, like Timothy. Peter has a reputation for being consistent and dependable. Peter says it has been evolving for years, this love affair, though only recently has he allowed it to become physical. Physical, Karmine thinks. Physical. When Karmine thinks of physical, Peter as physical, she sees him throwing snow twenty feet without shifting his stance, she sees him moving quickly for such a large man, and confidently, down the basketball court at the church gymnasium, a forward on the church basketball team. Only recently has he allowed it to become physical? Karmine does not feel much of anything one way or another for Peter's pianist.

She does, however, feel very foolish. She feels foolish for having never suspected Peter, and though now, looking back, there may have been much to suspect, she is still rather confused as to which of those things, exactly, she should have suspected. And how she should have known. It is not computing well, Peter's claim after a quarter of a century of marriage, that he has, through the years, been desperately lonely in his attraction to some man. Surrounded by his family, in bed with his wife, he has been so hopelessly lonely it was all he could do to hold his secret until morning. And from morning until night. Twenty-five years. Where had *she* been those twenty-five years? This is not Peter's question, but her own. When Peter gets to this point in his story, Karmine refuses to hear more, but she remembers some of those moments, finding him soaking in the bathtub, lights out, weeping for no explainable reason. More times than she can separate into a single memory, Karmine has felt surprise—she remembers the surprise—and relief, when after weeks,

sometimes, without feeling him, he has suddenly reached for her under the covers.

And here, in fact, is the most confusing element—that while his touch has been unpredictable (with passing anniversaries, little more than seldom), when he has touched her, when he does touch her, he is a wholly unselfish lover. Peter has declared extraordinary gratitude in lovemaking, particularly when Karmine has been needful, giving herself over to selfishness. Not always, but often enough, their lovemaking has been of a quality and a sincerity that tempers, almost removes, the uncertainty created in the gentle but passionless companionship between touches. Karmine has been uncertain, but her uncertainty has moved along like a narrow road cutting at night through the wheat fields of some distant state, rolling slightly, taking the pit of her stomach one moment, compressing her the next. And if Karmine has been uncertain to whether she is traveling up or down it hasn't much mattered, for the road has at least taken her forward. Until now, the rolling road has never dropped too quickly nor risen too steeply.

Karmine studies Peter as he tests the trumpet section, player by player, to see if a difficult fanfare has been mastered. He taps his baton against the stand, meting out the beat so the nervous students can concentrate on the manuscript and the fingering. Without harassing, Peter teases the students, and his smile, when he compliments, encourages, criticizes, never changes. He is forty-seven, two years older than Karmine, and except at his center, where he has begun slightly to widen, he has managed to remain respectably firm. On the podium, rehearsing and performing, he moves lithely like a dancer, like an athlete.

Karmine, too, has maintained herself. She has given birth to three children, but, being small and elastic, has never had to struggle with weight. All the same, her confusion during Peter's periods of disinterest has often found her looking twice in mirrors. Though Peter insists it is not so, assumes the blame fully, she knows she has failed her womanhood, that her womanhood has failed her, and in a way, to an extent, that is beyond anything she might have feared, turning this way and that way in the mirror, wondering when Peter would again reach for her.

Peter wants to know what she is going to do. Karmine does not even know what the options are. She is waiting for him to decide what he is going to do. She knows less today than she did a week earlier when, for that instant after his confession, she had understood how some people can kill.

The bell rings, the students disassemble their instruments. Wind ensemble is the final class of the day, and the students move off at different speeds. Some students remain seated, rehearsing their parts. Timothy waves, finally, as he carries his French horn to his father's office. It has been

the same ritual for all of their children, Peter carrying instruments to and from school each day, even on days he did not drive, so the children, without the hassle of dragging the instruments back and forth on their own, could have them at home to practice.

"I'm going to the writing lab," Timothy says, hurrying from the office. He makes a face. "I'll be a little later than usual."

Karmine smiles, and without cause or precedent doubts her son's excuse.

The room is nearly empty before Peter is freed from the questions and answers and excuses that detain him. Karmine attempts her typical concern for the few students who stop to tell her how they've been. Peter gathers his music and puts it in a folder. He comes down from his podium.

"This is a good sign, maybe?" he asks. Karmine can tell by his open, awkward posture that he wants to embrace her. But he doesn't dare.

"It's not really a sign at all," she says.

Peter nods too agreeably. Lately, they are both thin-skinned; it is too easy to draw blood—her own, Peter's. She doesn't apologize.

"I remembered some things about Mom's visit to the doctor," she says. "I forgot to tell you the other day. That's why I'm here."

"Okay," Peter says. They both know she could have waited until later, at home, but he doesn't point this out. "Do you want to sit down?"

"No." Karmine looks at the door. "I *don't* want to sit down."

"Okay," Peter says again.

Karmine pauses; she does not like the sound of spite, particularly in her own voice. She does not like to sound out of control. "Mom seems to be convinced she has lymphoma."

"Lymphoma?"

"The spot on the end of her nose." Karmine sighs. "She thinks she caught lymphoma from Diane, her next door neighbor."

"Mmm," Peter says. He purses his lips seriously, looks at the ceiling, nods his head.

"Right," Karmine agrees. "She gives herself three months."

"So long?"

"That's not all." Karmine breathes deeply. "Apparently, Dad's been spending the nights. He sleeps on the couch and she covers him in the middle of the night with a blanket when she gets up to go pee."

"Holy cow!"

Karmine smiles despite herself. She has always liked Peter's self-deprecating use of phrases like "holy cow" and "groovy" and "neato."

"Dad's hair is as black and curly as ever."

"I always liked your dad's hair." There is no mockery, only seriousness in Peter's consideration. "And how does Mom feel about having only three months?"

Karmine thinks of the Hemlock Society. She has hidden the accordion folder in the downstairs freezer, behind a case of orange juice. She has mentioned it to no one. "If she doesn't die, she's going to be mad as hell."

"Ohhh," Peter groans. He touches his chest. "Maybe I should talk to her. Do you think it would help if I talked to her?"

Karmine shrugs. She is determined not to show Peter the gratitude she feels, the hope she holds in his concern. Though she knew Peter would make such an offer, she is more relieved than she'd thought possible.

"It might," she says.

Peter begins sleeping in Karmine's sewing room. Karmine calls it her sewing room though she has only recently moved the machine and the table from the basement, upstairs. For eighteen years the room has been Marcee's, and it still is, though Karmine's only daughter is away at school, a freshman at Brigham Young University. Marcee lives with her older brother, Mark, and his wife. Mark is a graduate student in music and his wife is trying to finish her bachelor's degree. Karmine suspects her daughter-in-law is also trying to get pregnant. Karmine must resist the impulse to call Marcee and beg her to major in prelaw, premed, to resist the Mormon influence and forget about marrying young. Except for the sewing table, the machine and Peter, Marcee's room remains the same. Karmine wonders what they will do when Marcee comes home for a weekend. She wonders what they will do when Timothy begins asking questions.

It has been three weeks. Karmine, when she counts the days, does not know how time can pass so fiercely, with the blurring velocity of a summer storm, and not blow or wash or dissolve something away. Peter is still here, and Karmine, and maybe Peter's pianist, though Karmine is not certain. Abby is still around, and her lymphoma, though the tip of her nose is now missing. The Hemlock Society is still frozen, gathering ice behind the orange juice in the freezer. Abby's daily question is always the same, and Karmine's answer: "I'm still reading." She lies, assures Abby she is sifting through the pamphlets, the newsletters, the legal action forms. "And by the way," she sometimes adds, "how's Dad?" Karmine appreciates the irony—that at about the same time her father returns from the dead to sleep with her mother, her own husband retreats, moves to their daughter's room.

As much as anything, it is the nothing that is killing Karmine. Peter is kind and gentle and patient, the things he has always been. But he is something less, too: He is helpless. He is incapable of being more than he has always been. He defers and defers and defers with courage and stamina and humility. For her more than for himself, he has moved out of their bedroom. He is trying, but he has, at present, so little to work with. Karmine longs for something more than nothing. And, to Karmine's chagrin, when

nothing takes a turn toward something, she discovers too late that there is much, after all, to appreciate about nothing.

"There are two middle-eastern women sitting in my car," Abby tells Karmine. It is late afternoon, clear, cold. The sun is preparing to set. Karmine shifts the phone to her other ear.

"Middle-eastern?" Karmine asks. "Like from Saudi Arabia?"

"How should I know?" Abby shrieks. "They're wearing turbans and those things over their faces. How do you expect me to know which one of those countries they're from?"

Without thinking, Karmine turns off the stove. The oven is on, too, a casserole inside, but Karmine has not for any conscious reason turned the surface element to off and she does not think to do the same with the oven. Instead, she wedges the phone between her ear and shoulder and places her hands, palms flat, on the warm oven door. She leans forward, siphoning the heat into her hands and her thighs.

"Well, Mom—" she says.

"Don't 'Well Mom' me, Karmine," Abby snaps. "They've been sitting there all day long. I want to know what they're doing. What if they steal my car?"

"Do they look like they're trying to steal your car?" Karmine, who cares little for Abby's car, is beginning to feel frantic. Cautiously, Peter appears at the kitchen door; he has been reading in the other room. Karmine, still leaning against the stove, sees him from the corner of her eye. She doesn't look in his direction, but she grimaces for his benefit. He puts his hands in his pockets and leans against the door frame.

"What would that look like?" Abby asks. Karmine can see her mother, bent over the kitchen window sill, straining with bad eyes to see two turbaned women sitting in the old Chrysler.

"Like they're trying to start the car, Mom," Karmine says, shaking her head. She suspects she is neither asking the correct questions nor giving the correct answers. "I don't know, maybe they'd be fiddling under the dashboard."

"They're not fiddling," Abby declares. "They're just sitting there, the same as they've been sitting there all day long."

"It's awfully cold to be sitting—"

"I know how cold it is," Abby says. "Any minute they're going to want to come inside and get warm. What am I going to do then?"

Karmine looks at Peter. "I'm coming over."

"Good," Abby says. "And bring Peter: Who knows what these people intend to do."

Karmine lets Peter drive—she has always let Peter drive. They have

spent so much time sidestepping, watching each other from afar, that it feels strange to be sitting beside Peter, sharing the same air.

"Have you said anything to the children?" Peter asks.

"No," Karmine says.

"The children will hate me." Peter does not look at Karmine when he makes his declaration. He steers with both hands, looking straight ahead. Karmine's earlier self-consciousness is gone; she studies him openly.

"Yes," she says. And she knows it is true. Peter is not trying to elicit pity, nor is he asking Karmine to keep his secret. His is a pronouncement, part of an ongoing progression of circumstantial, consequential awareness that has come to them both in one-line snippets.

"The church will excommunicate me." Yes.

"Our friends will desert us." Yes.

"I am too old, too damaged to start again." Yes.

Yes.

It is not the first time in these three weeks Karmine has felt so bad for Peter, for what Peter is doing to himself, that she has forgotten, for an instant, what Peter is doing to her. And perhaps this is why she has said nothing to anyone: If she cannot find a way to hold him, she can, at least, for a time, protect him.

"I have stopped seeing him," Peter says.

His pianist. Karmine chews on her lip and watches the road.

"I'll understand whatever you decide to do," he says. "But I've stopped seeing him. I've stopped seeing him no matter what you decide. I can live without all of that. I didn't know it before, but I do now. There are too many other things I don't want to live without."

Peter looks at Karmine, she can feel it; he takes his eyes from the road until Karmine's silent, forward stare convinces him that she will not look, too. She wants to know about the "all of that," why a month ago, two months ago (years ago for all she really knows), he couldn't live without it. And she wants to know about the "other things," too, the "many other things" he, at one point, must have been willing to risk for the "all of that." Peter's decision to stay doesn't surprise Karmine. She has expected it. But she wants to know about the "all of that" and the "many other things," the interchangeability, particularly considering what seems to Karmine a ponderous inequality between the two. Had Peter somehow felt it an even trade, a man in exchange for a wife and three children, a life, so many lives?

Karmine rolls down the window and turns her face into the frigid wind.

At Abby's house, Peter parks at the base of the driveway. Karmine and Peter climb from the car. They pause, doors open, to look up the drive to the carport. At the back of the yard, the car stands beside the barn-like workshop, under the pitched overhang. Abby has turned on the carport

lights, and unless the Arab women are ducking, Karmine can see no one sitting in the car.

"Must have heard the Marines were landing," Peter says. He starts up the drive.

"They're probably in the house torturing Mom," Karmine says. She closes the door, and follows Peter.

Abby is waiting at the back door, coat in hand. She has seen them pull in. "That was good thinking," she says. "Blocking the driveway so they can't make off with the car."

Karmine kisses her mother on the cheek and steps into the house. "Peter watches a lot of spy movies," she says. It has been two days since Karmine's last visit. As a rule, she sees her mother three, four times a week; she calls her twice a day. In two days, the house has taken a sour odor. Abby looks tired and disheveled and frantic.

"You should have called us earlier, Mom." From the kitchen window, Karmine can plainly see that no one is sitting in Abby's car.

"When did you first see them?" Peter asks. He has joined Karmine at the window.

"Yesterday night," Abby says. "Or maybe yesterday morning. I keep hoping they'll just go away."

"I think they finally have," Karmine says.

Abby hurries slowly to the window. She looks at the car, then casts her daughter a disgusted glance. Karmine can smell Abby, the sour, acrid odor of the house, but stronger. "You need a closer look," Abby says. She moves to put on her coat; Peter helps.

It has not snowed for nearly a week. The stratified flow of coming and going storms has tattered the customary Utah inversion. It is clear and painfully cold, as Utah can be in January at night without clouds. Abby walks between Karmine and Peter, allowing her children to guide her by the elbows. When they reach the car, Peter produces a key and unlocks the passenger door.

"Look at them," Abby exclaims. She taps angrily on the side window. "Don't they have any respect for other people's property?"

"Mother," Karmine says. She opens the door. She is trying not to plead. "There is no one in the car. There are no middle-eastern women sitting anywhere in this car."

Abby stares at her daughter. Then she turns and stares at the Arabs. "What are you doing in my car?" she demands. "This is America. Don't you know you can't just sit in other people's cars?"

"Look," Karmine insists. She slides into the front seat.

"What is she doing?" Abby asks Peter. "Is she crazy? She's sitting on her lap."

"Karmine," Peter says. He gives Karmine his hand and helps her from the car. "Maybe I should give it a try?"

"Well, somebody needs to do something," Abby says.

Peter bends so the Arab women can see his determined, scolding face. "I think you need to leave now," he says. "You've been here long enough."

"Are they going anywhere?" Karmine asks.

Abby slaps at her daughter's hand. "Does it look like they're going anywhere?"

"Maybe they don't understand English," Peter suggests. He clears his throat and begins speaking broken Danish. Karmine is horrified and on the verge of hysterical laughter. Peter, who has spoken little Danish since his Mormon mission, begins gesturing wildly, perhaps to compensate for his limited vocabulary. He steps away from the car and points at the street. He shakes his finger. He offers his hand, a pantomime, twice enacted, in which he helps the invisible women from the car. He stands up and looks cautiously at Abby.

"Just drag them out of there," Abby declares.

"Mom," Karmine pleads. She shakes her head. Peter puts his hands in his pockets.

"Why did you even come to me?" Abby turns and shuffles back toward the house. Karmine tries to take her elbow, but Abby won't have it. Peter shuts and locks the car door, then follows silently, a step or two behind Karmine and Abby.

"They're going to have to pee," Abby says. "What am I going to do when they want to use my toilet?"

After the diagnosis, Karmine calls Harlan and tells him that their mother's kidneys have failed. Too old for transplant, too much damage everywhere else. Bad breath, vomiting, hallucinations, edema. Her bones hurt and her lungs are filling with water. Harlan wants to know if he should come yet.

"We probably have a few months," Karmine says. "But you can come if you want."

Harlan thinks they should start looking for a nursing home. Abby has enough money, and if not, Harlan will cover the rest. Karmine and Peter have sacrificed enough already. *Sacrifice*, Karmine thinks as she listens to her brother, the engineer, drafting their mother's final days. And here's the thing about Karmine's sacrifice: The investment, the expense, has made it impossible to pull up and back out. Though there may be nothing left to gain, there is far too much to lose. Karmine does not explain this to her brother, but she knows she will never put her mother in a nursing home. Abby, and Karmine, too, for that matter, are confused enough as it is.

"Keep me posted," Harlan says.

Sure, Karmine thinks, I'll fax you a memo on Mondays.

Since receiving the diagnosis, there is something of an "I told you so" in Abby's disposition. She cannot be convinced that her kidneys have not failed due to lymphoma. Nor can she be convinced that her hallucinations are not reality. She is rather content to have proof of her dying, and much too content, as far as Karmine is concerned, to be dying. The doctors have given her medication. An obligatory though meager attempt at a cure to go with a most sincere effort to secure her comfort. And though Karmine cannot deny her mother's failings, she is struck by Abby's lucidity, even in the midst of the old woman's great confusion, and by her wellness as she becomes increasingly ill.

"You're going to have to start reading faster," Abby tells Karmine. "At the rate we're both going, I'm liable to die before I get a chance to kill myself."

"It's a sin to kill yourself," Karmine says.

Abby laughs and touches her breast. "This is a sin."

Karmine agrees, though she has little use for sin—Abby's, Peter's, her own. She knows she is supposed to believe in the hand of God, and the danger of sin, and the blessing of trial. Fate, however, has assumed an increasing appeal. It is satisfying, for example, to nod at fate when considering the circumstances that make it convenient, a relief even, for Karmine to spend the nights away from Peter, with Abby. To attribute the same to God only angers Karmine. After so many years of attending church, of spending her time and money and energy to affirm her commitment to a religious society, she is surprised at how little her faith draws her now, at how little she wants anything to do with it. Karmine's non-Mormon parent is dying, her husband has been sleeping with a man, and Karmine can find no contingency plan in the church's version of God's scheme. That the Mormons may throw Peter out does not concern Karmine. Karmine suspects she would not pay much attention even if they suddenly threw her out. It startles her that she can so easily accept this failing after so many years of trying. There is simply neither time nor energy to waste on that which cannot help her.

For two weeks, Karmine stays with Abby, leaving only for short periods of time when she becomes desperate enough to allow Peter or Timothy to take a shift.

"Maybe we need to hire a nurse's aide," Peter suggests. "Someone to watch her during the day, so you can have a break."

Karmine has not been sleeping well. She has not been feeling well. She will not let Peter take her place for much longer than an hour, two at the most, even on the weekends. She is afraid Abby, whose increasingly vigorous campaign to enlist Karmine's help in dying, will turn to Peter

instead. It is strange to Karmine that after twenty-five years of marriage she does not know what Peter will do if Abby asks. Peter's suggestion, a nurse's aide, offers a wisdom and a compromise Karmine thinks she can accept. There have been moments of desperation and anger so compelling that Karmine has been forced to flee, leaving Abby alone, though only for minutes, while Karmine has walked, run, driven around the block.

"How would you feel if we hired a nurse to spend some time with you during the day?" Karmine asks Abby.

Abby has taken to sitting by the kitchen window, where she can watch the Arab women. In her favorite chair (Peter and Timothy moved the chair at Abby's request), she sits and watches and waits for them to need her bathroom. Peter has offered to drive them away, to park the car elsewhere, but Abby is far too interested in these exotic women who can sit for weeks without food or water or toilet.

"That would depend," Abby says, "on whether I could find someone more willing to help me than you seem to be."

Karmine is too tired to hide the anger. "You might. Or you might find someone who thinks you should be locked away in a nursing home for your own protection."

"You wouldn't do that?" Abby whispers.

"No," Karmine says. She begins to cry. "I will never put you in a nursing home."

"I don't want a nurse's aide," Abby says. She turns back to the window. "I don't want anyone else."

Karmine goes for a walk around the block.

Peter visits daily, bringing groceries and books, videos. On occasion, Karmine allows him to touch her.

When Timothy can stay with Abby, Peter takes Karmine places—to dinner, to movies, for long drives. Karmine is worried about Timothy, about his eating and his school work and his emotional well-being. But Peter is reassuring: The past weeks, though difficult, have been good for Peter and Timothy. Lots of time together, lots of learning.

"Sometimes there are good things, too," Peter tells Karmine.

It is becoming easier for Karmine to acknowledge, with favor, Peter's efforts. He is solicitous without presumption. Committed, consistent. He has canceled his freelance work to be more available to Karmine and Timothy and Abby. And less available to anyone else. Peter's face seems older to Karmine, worried and strained, and she is inclined, in her own need, to allow him to derive whatever he can from the comfort she accepts from him.

"Mom's seeing something new these days," she tells him.

Peter, as usual, is interested.

"Hippies in the back yard having a party," Karmine says. "They've rigged lights to the house. Last night, it was non-stop drinking and screwing and frolicking in the snow until dawn."

"Wow," Peter says. He's impressed. And amused, which, for reasons Karmine can't explain, pleases her.

"That's not all," Karmine continues. "There was music, very loud music. Mom was frantic the cops were going to come."

"It's not possible to have a party without loud music," Peter says.

"Henry Mancini," Karmine says. "Judy Garland. Frank Sinatra. Nat King Cole."

"Hippie music." Peter grins.

"This morning, after they gave up and left, she wanted to go out and take a look. When we got out there, she says, 'Tricky bastards.'"

"Tricky bastards?" Peter whistles. He loves it when Abby curses.

"What do you mean?" I ask her.

Peter takes Karmine's hand; she does not stop him.

"She says, 'No footprints,'" Karmine continues. "'You're right,' I say. I'm a little surprised she doesn't see footprints. I figure maybe the medication has started working. Then she tells me that the last two hippies to leave this morning spread a long rope between them and pulled it across the yard, under the snow. They re-fluffed the snow."

"Tricky bastards," Peter says with admiration.

Karmine nods her head. "Now she's in a panic about the electric bill. All those lights."

"Well," Peter says. "Tell her if the bill goes up, we'll pay the difference."

Patiently, Peter is waiting. Karmine knows he will wait, without asking, without pressing, without knowing, forever if necessary. This is the quality in Peter that Karmine, of late, values most, and distrusts the most as well, for it is but more of the same patience and silence and determination that has lead them through the past twenty-five years. It is a gift, Karmine thinks, to be able to embrace uncertainty, as Peter has. Certainty—Karmine's own certainty, for example, in Peter's regret, in his good intentions, her certainty that her mother's death is quickly approaching—is difficult enough to embrace.

"You've been wonderful with my mother," Karmine says.

"I love your mother."

"I know." Karmine nods her head. "But thank you anyway."

Peter is silent for a moment. "She's going to die soon, Karmine. She's getting bad quickly now. Everything's going to stop all of a sudden, whether we're ready for it to stop or not."

"I know, Peter," Karmine says.

Peter looks at Karmine. "Some day, maybe, you'll forgive me?" He

seems very sad, suddenly. Karmine sees him soaking in the bathtub, lights out, weeping.

"Forgiveness isn't the problem," Karmine says. "I forgave you a long time ago."

When Harlan calls, he talks to Abby first. He doesn't mention a nursing home to his mother, but when Karmine takes the phone, he is agitated. Karmine pictures him on the other end, frothing into the receiver.

"This is getting out of control," he tells Karmine. "She told me the hippies just 'hang it out and pee in the snow.'"

"This is better than it seems, Harlan," Karmine says. "At least they're not asking to use the bathroom."

"Shit!" Harlan says. "Admit it, Karmine: It's time for a nursing home. This is just too much for you guys to take care of."

"We're doing fine, Harlan."

Harlan pauses on the other end. "Look," he says. He is trying to be calm. "I think I need to insist, Honey. I know you're doing everything you can, but when it comes right down to it, I'm less worried about you than I am Mom."

"I know what you're worried about." Karmine looks at Abby. The kitchen light is off, and the old woman is sitting next to the window; she is watching the hippies drink and dance and screw on her snow. Peter sits beside the old woman, watching with equal intensity. "Mother is dying, Harlan, and I can think of a hell of a lot of ways to make the dying more miserable. I haven't come up with too many ways to make it less miserable."

"All right," Harlan sighs. "Maybe I can get away the end of next week. I guess this isn't something we can decide over the phone, anyway."

"It'll be nice to see you," Karmine says.

She lights the candle in the potpourri dish while Harlan restates his position one last time before saying goodbye. Without returning the phone to its cradle, she leans on the counter, over the fragrance. The small ceramic pot is barely warm, but she can already smell the cinnamon. The potpourri is a gift from Peter. Karmine admires the design and the efficiency—that a single candle under a miniature pot can relieve at least one of the senses from the by-products of deterioration. Karmine watches the flame in the tiny stove, the patterns it plays upon the surrounding tile, and thinks that Harlan would be offended most of all by the odor.

Karmine joins Abby and Peter by the window. It has begun to snow, large flakes, untroubled by wind, falling evenly through the glow of the carport light.

"Harlan says he may come the end of next week."

Abby points out the window. "Those clothes they don't wear. It's amazing those people don't get sick."

"Maybe they're related to that one society," Karmine says. "Those people who cut away the ice in frozen lakes and go swimming."

"I can think of better things to do," Abby grunts, pulling herself from the chair. "Like sleeping. It's past my bedtime."

Together, Karmine and Peter put Abby to bed. Karmine unrolls the foam-rubber mattress, makes the bed beside the heat vent. Abby still insists on the living room floor, though the getting down and the getting up have become too much. On the couch, Karmine spreads a sheet and lays a folded blanket across the arm rest. A symptom of her failing kidneys, Abby seldom needs to use the bathroom, but she will wake up, nonetheless, to check on the hippies and to cover her sleeping husband with a blanket.

"Would you like me to turn up the thermostat?" Karmine asks. She covers her mother with a quilt. Abby's eyes are already closed, and she doesn't hear Karmine's offer.

Karmine waves Peter from the room, then lingers for a moment watching her mother breathe. This watching—it seems a remarkable need, an instinct. Countless parents standing every night over sleeping children, watching them breathe. Countless children standing every night over sleeping parents, watching them breathe. Sometimes, standing over *her* sleeping children, Karmine has whispered secrets, voiced the impossible for the simple necessity of forming the words in the presence of another human being. It is her diary, of sorts, scribbled deeply, beyond access, somewhere inside her children's minds. Unconsciously, her children know things about their mother, and Karmine is satisfied to believe that her secrets have forever changed her offspring, and their offspring, even if but slightly.

"Momma," Karmine whispers. "I think I know what I'm going to do."

In the hallway, Peter is waiting, and Karmine allows him to touch her. He touches Karmine's hair first, and then her face. When he kisses Karmine, she moves closer. Peter is weeping, but Karmine takes his hand, anyway, and leads him to the bedroom.

It is her childhood bedroom, and, Abby, in Karmine's absence, has covered the walls with photographs of Karmine and Harlan, Karmine's family, Harlan's family. Karmine kisses Peter, and begins to remove his clothes. Peter does not help, but makes himself available like a young child being undressed for a bath. There is a sequence, an order of operations, and Karmine moves deliberately.

When Karmine, too, is finally undressed, she lies back and closes her eyes. With her eyes closed, she can concentrate on Peter's movements; they are small and refined and accurate. She can hear Peter above her, sobbing silently but for an occasional hitching of breath. She runs her fingers down

his ribs, to the swell of his hips. Karmine loves Peter, and she is sorry for him. But, for once, she has the benefit of prescience, and she knows, for all his efforts and all of her own, that this particular desperation is inevitable . . . inconsequential . . . temporary.

"You're going to be fine, Peter," she says. "You're going to be much better than you think."

Peter laughs, apologetically, more sob than laugh. He puts his head down, chin to chest, and his hair brushes Karmine's forehead. He moves on, the steady, familiar motion of their twenty-five-years together. The motion, Karmine thinks, of water, the Strong One, with the power to wash away earth, extinguish fires, ignore the wind. Strong like water. But weak like water, too, flowing always undirected, down the paths of least resistance.

Afterwards, Karmine caresses Peter, waiting. She holds him until he climbs from the bed.

"I'm sorry," he says. He picks his clothing from the floor. "I've got to get hold of myself." He stops and rubs his face, then he bends and kisses Karmine. "I'll come early tomorrow and shovel. I think it's going to snow hard." He leaves quickly; Karmine hears him pull the back door closed behind him.

Alone, Karmine listens to the popping, the settling of an old house under the accumulations of a hard winter. The furnace ignites, and Karmine hears this too, a rumbling, comforting sound that warms even before the air escapes the vents. As a child she would stand barefoot on the floor vents, the air burning the arches of her feet, filling her nightgown with warmth. It was always a temptation, when the heat clicked off, to turn up the thermostat and ignite the furnace again.

Karmine gets up. She takes a blanket from the bed and wraps herself in it. The vents have stopped blowing, so she pauses in the hall to turn up the thermostat. She waits for the furnace to rumble, then switches on the kitchen light. From the refrigerator, she takes the milk, fills a glass, returns both the carton and the glass to the refrigerator. She has been thinking about this for some time: She knows which medications will most immediately, most efficiently do the job. She removes the lids and dumps the pills in a salad bowl, the reds with the blues with the greens with the whites. Changing her mind, she shifts the pills to a candy dish. Abby has a sense of humor: She will enjoy emptying a candy dish much more than a salad bowl. It will be a short wait, Karmine knows, so she turns off the light and sits in Abby's chair by the window. She smiles and shakes her head. She cannot help but imagine how strange all those hippies frolicking naked in the snow must seem to the two Arab women.

Prisoner of Ideals

Prisoner for Polygamy: The Memoirs and Letters of Ruder Clawson at the Utah Territorial Penitentiary, 1884-87. Edited by Stan Larson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

Reviewed by K. C. Benedict, Associate Librarian at College of Eastern Utah/San Juan Campus and a writer living in Blanding, Utah.

PRISONER FOR POLYGAMY IS NOT SIMPLY another volume in the vast collection of diaries, histories, autobiographies, and biographies of Mormon polygamists. Rather it is a slice of life, a document describing the immediate consequences of living the principle.

From its inception, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints boasted they would give up property, family, and life for the restored gospel, including polygamy. The 935 men incarcerated for living the principle between 1884 and 1895 made good on this claim. *Prisoner for Polygamy: The Memoirs and Letters of Ruder Clawson at the Utah Territorial Penitentiary, 1884-1887*, is the story of one of these men, the story of his ideals and integrity. Ruder Clawson's memoir is based on the journals he kept while an inmate in the Utah penitentiary.

Stan Larson's volume includes Clawson's memoir; love letters to his plural wife, Lydia; appendices containing Clawson's 1884 prison journal; and lists of Mormon polygamists imprisoned in the Utah penitentiary and of Clawson's family. It also includes a bib-

liography of various diaries, journals, and autobiographies of Mormon polygamists held in the Utah prison.

Ruder Clawson was the son of polygamist Hiram B. Clawson and his second wife Margaret Jay Judd. He was a prominent member of the LDS church serving as missionary, stake president, mission president, apostle, president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and counselor in the First Presidency. Clawson married Florence Ann Dinwoody in August 1882. Seven months later, he married Lydia Spencer at the Salt Lake Endowment House. By early 1884 polygamists were being prosecuted under the Edmunds Act.

On 24 April 1884 a grand jury indicted Clawson for polygamy and unlawful cohabitation. When Clawson came to trial in October 1884, the jury could not agree on a verdict and Judge Charles S. Zane declared a mistrial. Later that night federal deputies located Lydia Clawson and served her with a subpoena. Lydia refused to testify at Clawson's retrial and was put in custody for contempt of court. Clawson begged Lydia to testify so she would not have to remain in prison.

After Lydia's testimony the jury found Clawson guilty. Clawson was sentenced to three and one-half years and a fine of \$500 for polygamy and six months and \$300 for unlawful cohabitation to be served consecutively. Clawson was the first Mormon convicted and imprisoned for violation of the Edmunds Act.

Clawson's memoir describes the details of prison life including an initiation ceremony, food, inadequate hygiene facilities, and the nuisance of bedbugs. Prison life was routine and monotonous. Inmates had plenty of spare time. Some read books, some tried their hand at writing and publishing poetry, played baseball, football, boxing, quoits, lacrosse, croquet, marbles, chess, checkers, dominoes, and cards. Others tried their hand at various crafts, including: making hair bridles, riding whips, gilded picture frames, ornamental wood boxes, flower carvings, ship models, canes, mats, fans, women's chains, and pincushions. Clawson who attended school at the University of Deseret worked for several months outside the prison wall tutoring the warden's two children.

After serving three years, one month, and ten days of his sentence, Clawson was pardoned by U.S. president Grover Cleveland. As a reward for defending the principle, Clawson received his second anointing and was appointed president of the Box Elder Stake. Clawson entered into a post-Manifesto union with Pearl Udall in 1904.

The Clawson memoir lacks the literary merit of Annie Clark Tanner's autobiography, *A Mormon Mother*. The memoir never achieves the quality of compelling storytelling found in Tanner's book. Characters in Clawson's

memoir are not fully developed. We do not see Clawson, the hero of the story, grow as the years pass. We are not shown what Clawson learned about his fellowman while in prison or how he changed as a result of his prison experience.

The memoir was written during an era of religious zealotry. The tone of this document, like the journals on which it was based, is formal and full of religious posturing. Clawson's rhetoric is stuffy and humorless. While the memoir is a testimony to Clawson's integrity, it also confirms his racist attitudes and class consciousness. Clawson's letters to his plural wife, Lydia, on the other hand, are intimate, playful, sensual, and endearing. They are compelling because Clawson writes for an audience he knows—Lydia.

Clawson's memoir and letters provide valuable insights into prison life. The book is an important volume in the history of Mormon polygamy. This is the story of a man committed to the principle of plural marriage: a man who lived it, suffered for it, and continued to live it. The book reminds the reader that the time "cohabits" spent in prison was more than a curious footnote in the history of Mormon polygamy. The memoir brings to life the prisoner's daily routine, it dramatizes his contentions, humiliation, and suffering at the Utah penitentiary.

Easy-to-Read: A Consumer's Report

Lynn Matthews Anderson. *The Easy-to-Read Book of Mormon: Based on the Work Translated by Joseph Smith, Jr.* Pitts-

burgh, PA: privately published, 1993. Includes Joseph Smith's story, testimony of the three and eight witnesses,

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memoir are not fully developed. We do not see Clawson, the hero of the story, grow as the years pass. We are not shown what Clawson learned about his fellowman while in prison or how he changed as a result of his prison experience.

The memoir was written during an era of religious zealotry. The tone of this document, like the journals on which it was based, is formal and full of religious posturing. Clawson's rhetoric is stuffy and humorless. While the memoir is a testimony to Clawson's integrity, it also confirms his racist attitudes and class consciousness. Clawson's letters to his plural wife, Lydia, on the other hand, are intimate, playful, sensual, and endearing. They are compelling because Clawson writes for an audience he knows—Lydia.

Clawson's memoir and letters provide valuable insights into prison life. The book is an important volume in the history of Mormon polygamy. This is the story of a man committed to the principle of plural marriage: a man who lived it, suffered for it, and continued to live it. The book reminds the reader that the time "cohabs" spent in prison was more than a curious footnote in the history of Mormon polygamy. The memoir brings to life the prisoner's daily routine, it dramatizes his contentions, humiliation, and suffering at the Utah penitentiary.

Easy-to-Read: A Consumer's Report

Lynn Matthews Anderson. *The Easy-to-Read Book of Mormon: Based on the Work Translated by Joseph Smith, Jr.* Pitts-

burgh, PA: privately published, 1993. Includes Joseph Smith's story, testimony of the three and eight witnesses,

and "Words to Know."

Reviewed by Christian N. K. Anderson (no relation to Lynn), age thirteen and an independent Book of Mormon reader since age ten, organist for priesthood meetings in Whittier Ward, Salt Lake City.

THE *EASY-TO-READ BOOK OF MORMON* is a paraphrase of the authorized version of the Book of Mormon, created by Lynn Matthews Anderson of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, "in simple modern English . . . to help people know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world." She wrote it originally for her three daughters, but it would help anybody who is just learning to read or learning to read English of whatever age.

One of the things Lynn does is to "include women in all the places where it seems right to include them." She says that the Book of Mormon often says only "brethren" or "brothers" and talks only about me, but that this change is important because "God wants all of us to think about and to live by the good things we can learn from the Book of Mormon." I think that's only fair.

I compared a doctrinal passage and an action passage to see what kind of changes had been made. The first passage is where Alma compares faith to a seed:

Alma 32:28-33

Authorized Version

Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now, if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell

within your breasts; and when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves—It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me.

Now behold, would not this increase your faith? I say unto you, Yea; nevertheless it hath not grown up to a perfect knowledge.

But behold, as the seed swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow, then you must needs say that the seed is good; for behold it swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow. And now behold, will not this strengthen your faith? Yea, it will strengthen your faith: for ye will say I know that this is a good seed; for behold it sprouteth and beginneth to grow.

And now, behold, are ye sure that this is a good seed? I say unto you, Yea; for every seed bringeth forth unto its own likeness.

Therefore, if a seed groweth it is good, but if it groweth not, behold it is not good, therefore it is cast away.

And now, behold, because ye have tried the experiment, and planted the seed, and it swelleth and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow, ye must needs know that the seed is good.

Easy-to-Read Version

Now, the gospel is like a seed. If you make room in your heart for a seed to be planted, and if you do not throw it away by not believing or by fighting against the Spirit of the Lord, it will begin to grow, if it is a good or true seed. And when you feel it begin to grow in your heart, you will say to yourself, "This must be a good seed," or "this gospel is good, because it is beginning to make my soul grow. Yes, it is beginning to help me understand, and it feels good to me."

Wouldn't that make your faith grow? I tell you, Yes. But it still has not

become a perfect knowledge.

But as the good seed gets bigger and sprouts and grows, then you must say the seed is good, because it is getting bigger, and it is sprouting and growing. Won't this make your faith stronger? Yes, it will make your faith stronger, because you will say, "I know this is a good seed, because it has sprouted and begun to grow.

Then are you sure it is a good seed? I tell you, Yes, because every seed grows into whatever living thing it came from.

So if a seed grows, it is good. But if it does not grow, it is not good, and it is thrown away.

You have begun the test, and planted the seed, and it has gotten bigger and sprouted and begun to grow, so you know the seed is good.

The authorized version is not particularly unclear, but it seemed to repeat itself a lot, and I had to think twice to figure out what "unto its own likeness" meant. The ETR version makes that part very clear. It also helps to use "has" instead of "hath" and "you" instead of "ye," and to drop the "yea's" and the "-eths" off verbs. Now none of those words are particularly hard to understand. Still, if you were young or struggling with English, you'd be learning so many new words anyway that it would be a real break not to have to learn any more.

I liked the fact that the ETR version has quotation marks where Alma is saying what he thinks the audience would be saying as they ask themselves questions and give answers about this seed. Since Alma is giving a sort of dialogue here—himself on one side and the seed-grower on the other side—I can see that it might confuse an early reader about who's talking.

And the final difference is tone of voice. Alma in both versions sounds

very serious and sincere, but in the authorized version he also sounds kind of stern and strict, really laying down the law ("I say unto you, Yea . . ."). I can see him shaking a finger at the listening people and maybe even yelling a bit. In the ETR version, he sounds more kindly and concerned. He sounds like the teacher who asks a question, waits for the student to answer, and then repeats the answer back to him or her, maybe adding a little more information. I never thought about that before because we usually read the scriptures out loud as a family. I hear them in my voice or the voice of my parents; but when I stopped to think what *Alma's* voice sounded like, if I were reading it on my own, I could see that the Authorized Version might not sound quite so friendly.

The other thing I did to this passage was to run a "fog analysis" on it. The fog index comes out as a grade level. The formula is: $(SP + PS) \times .4 = \text{fog index (grade level)}$. SP means sentence pattern, or average words per sentence. PS means polysyllables, or number of words with three or more syllables. The fog index for the authorized version of the passage above is a 14.7, meaning that it's about right for a college sophomore or junior. The fog index for the ETR version is 8.

The second passage I compared is Nephi killing Laban:

1 Nephi 4:6-13, 18

Authorized Version

And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do.

Nevertheless I went forth, and as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine.

And when I came to him I found that it was Laban.

And I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof; and the hilt thereof was of pure gold, and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine, and I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; but I said in my heart: Never at any time have I shed the blood of man. And I shrunk and would that I might not slay him.

And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. Yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord; and he also had taken away our property.

And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands;

Behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief. . . .

Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword.

Easy-to-Read Version

The Spirit led me, since I did not know ahead of time what I should do.

As I got closer to Laban's house, I saw a man who had fallen down from drinking too much wine.

When I got closer to him, I saw it was Laban.

I saw his sword and took it out of its sheath. Its handle was pure gold, very well made, and the blade was made from the best steel.

Then the Spirit told me to kill Laban, but I said in my heart: "I have never killed any person." I did not

want to kill him.

But the Spirit said to me again: "The Lord has given you this way to defeat him." I knew Laban had tried to kill me. I knew he would not do what the Lord commanded, and that he had taken our money.

The Spirit said to me again: "Kill him. The Lord has given you this chance."

"The Lord sometimes kills evil people for good reasons. It is better for one person to die than for a whole nation not to believe in God. . . .

So I obeyed the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair, and cut off his head with his own sword.

The fog indices for these passages are 11.7 (authorized) and 5.8 (ETR). Now, I'm not quite sure what "constrained" means. But I know what "restrained" means. So it sounds almost as if Nephi wasn't free to make a decision about whether to kill Laban or not. I like it that Lynn says "told," because that means the Spirit is giving Nephi information, not just ordering him to do it. Nephi doesn't want to (naturally), but he doesn't argue with the Spirit either. Instead, he tries to understand why the Spirit might be giving him these instructions. That's why he thinks of three good reasons for killing Laban. I also like the fact that the ETR version explains that "the Lord sometimes kills evil people" because you don't have to be very old to realize that the Lord doesn't always kill evil people. In fact, it's usually the evil people killing others. The ETR version is less confusing, then, because it doesn't say something that sounds unrealistic. All of the "thereofs" in the authorized version are a little annoying, since you can leave them out without changing the meaning at all.

But I still like the authorized version better for the action. "Slay" and

“smote” are great words—kind of romantic and powerful. “Dwindle and perish” are terrific words, too. Besides that, the ETR version just stops with not believing in God, rather than explaining what happens as a result. I like the elaborate language, the code words, the old-fashioned flavor of the authorized version. It makes it seem more solemn, more important, and more holy. Being impressed by the language of the scriptures isn’t as important as understanding what they say. The best combination, of course, is to do both; and I think the ETR can help get people ready for the authorized version.

I know that the First Presidency has made a statement discouraging modern-English versions of the Book of Mormon (*Church News*, 20 Feb. 1993), but I honestly don’t see what they’re upset about. After all, the church itself puts out those comic-book type illustrated stories of the scriptures, which are obviously for very young children. They’re *really* boring. They don’t even have any dialogue to make them interesting. And I sat through *lots* of cartoon versions of Book of Mormon stories in Primary. Obviously, nobody thought they were going to wreck my testimony.

I think that anything that helps make the Book of Mormon familiar, important, and understandable for kids and other beginning readers is all to the

good and will ultimately lead them to the book itself. It sounds to me as if the general authorities think the real Book of Mormon is so boring that no one will ever read it if they have any alternative.

My folks buy me comic-book versions of Shakespeare and I’ve been in three Shakespeare plays put on by my fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade classes using easy-to-read, paraphrased scripts. Nobody ever tried to tell me that I “knew” Shakespeare as a result and wouldn’t want or need to read (or see) the real plays. I haven’t started reading Shakespeare yet; but when I do see movies of the real plays, I’m much more interested because I understand the plot, who the characters are, and don’t have to struggle so much to understand the language. (By the way, we use a modern language version of the Bible for family scripture study, too.)

I think the most efficacious methodology is a smorgasbord. Keep numerous versions around the house. Let the kids experiment with all of them and gravitate to the ones they want. After all, if the scriptures are one of the main mechanisms by which the Holy Ghost communicates to us, then we should facilitate numerous opportunities for that to happen.

And the fog index for that paragraph is 10.3.

Women’s Rights

James R. Baker. *Women’s Rights in Old Testament Times*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992.

Reviewed by Alan C. Tull, Th.D.,

Rector of St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Provo, Utah, and Canon Theologian to the Bishop of Utah.

THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN ARE A CON-

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THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN ARE A CON-

tested issue in religious communities which look to the Hebrew Bible, known as the Old Testament among Christians. A serious matter for these communities—Jewish, Christian, and Islamic—is how the Hebrew Bible understands the rights of women. Among Jews and Christians both defenders and opponents claim that the patriarchy of the book rightly or wrongly has promoted the diminishing of women's rights and roles in society.

In this discussion, the relationship of the Old Testament's understanding of the rights of women to that of its contemporary cultures is a very relevant issue. Some would argue that patriarchy is not a characteristic of the basic faith of the Bible but rather has been acquired during the history of Israel as it was lived among the cultures of the ancient Near East.

The author of *Women's Rights in Old Testament Times*, James R. Baker, is a lawyer and approaches these issues through a careful knowledge of the legal codes of the ancient Near East. Twelve such "ancient legal documents" are identified, ranging in time from the Code of Ur-Nammu, ca. 2200 B.C., to "Jewish Law," ca. A.D. 200-600. The next latter code is the Neo-Babylonian Laws of ca. 600 B.C.

Citing the authority of G. R. Driver and J. C. Miles, Baker asserts that "the law throughout the Fertile Crescent was for most practical purposes universal and the legal principles underlying the various codes were basically the same" (2). Having said this, the author gives a brief resume of the sources, background, and some characteristics of each of the legal documents which he uses.

A variety of Old Testament stories involving women are retold. Most of the stories are the Genesis accounts of the patriarchs of Israel, although the story of

Ruth and of several of the women associated with King David are also presented. Discussion of these stories enables the reader to see that each involves a context of legal practices, mostly involving the position of women in marriage and families. Various marriage arrangements are distinguished, such as metronymic, polygynous, and levirate; various aspects of the stories can be better understood through knowledge of these distinctions. The roles given to the women of the stories were often at least partially determined by the legal understanding of those roles in the communities of the ancient Near East. No stories of women outside the Old Testament are considered.

The texts which Baker uses represent both a variety of time periods as well as literary types. There is, however, no discussion of a methodology for analyzing such historical texts and literary types. Rather Baker seems to rely on retelling the story in the style of a contemporary storyteller who is free to add assumptions about motive, character, etc., and to use other material to fill in blanks. For example, details about the Genesis account of Jacob and Rachel are filled in from Josephus who wrote in the Common Era.

While Baker cites many scholars on a number of points, there is no awareness of a considerable body of scholarship having to do with the nature of the biblical texts themselves. Baker notes that "most modern scholars adhere to the documentary hypothesis of Julius Wellhausen" (12). It is difficult, however, to reconcile this statement with "the Hebrew Bible was written by scribes who lived at or near the times they were describing, whatever the historicity of any particular story" (ix). Moreover, there seems to be an assumption that all of the material is of the same

literary type, whether it be the patriarchal stories of the Pentateuch, the later historical material regarding David, or the much later story of Ruth told within the conflicts of the post-exilic period. One does not need to accept the great body of biblical scholarship, but, one would think, any treatment of biblical texts should at least be aware of it.

There are a number of women in the pages of the Old Testament, and it would be difficult to consider them all. Nevertheless, Baker gives no reason for his selections. Is it that all of the women considered are dealt with in relation to men or to matrimonial matters? One wonders why such women as Miriam (Exodus 15) or Deborah the prophetess (Judges 5) who are much more stand-alone figures were not also considered. One might also ask about the woman in the poems which make up the Song of

Songs.

While the belief is expressed regarding the basic agreement of the various ancient codes, there is no discussion of the understanding of the rights of women in those codes. This would have been singularly useful, and the writer seems well prepared to have done so. Similarly, however, there is no real analytic discussion of those rights in the Old Testament. Rather the reader is given a kind of a commentary from the codes on some of the Old Testament material.

Stories in the Old Testament about women are given useful development in terms of their representation of the legal codes of the ancient Near East. This fact makes the book interesting and in some ways valuable. Nevertheless, the absence of any clear methodology for considering historical texts mitigates its usefulness for the serious student.

Ireland

–For Peter

Brent Pace

When did I find the music
of another open-window autumn?
I've left more vodka empties near
the warehouse dumpster.
I've touched girls' faces
in somnambulistic lives
and dried my face and hands
on brown institution paper towels.

I breathe near your
hand-knit sweater.
I've smelled the world
but am sure to forget the
odor of some wools.
I've slept a summer and dreamed
an anuretic folktale. I've held
my breath to bend and kiss
my mother the day her mother died.

I've boxed up weeping foundation
rocks from Bergerac when I heard you
were dying of the virus on your island,
let more books be ruined in another of
my father's basement floods.

I found my soul crouched
in a scrub oak grove and
weighed it in the market of
Notre Dame de Grace.

I've spoken to the shadows of
my closet and let them bless and
break the bread of another
midnight stereo mass. I've
almost let them bleed me
on an altar of cotton. I've waded
the currents of an empty
canyon stream at noon
in gym shoes and shorts.

Dry grass, dry grass, dry grass.
I touch my ribs through sweatshirt
pockets. I remember my writing
of blue-womb safety that ended
when I crossed the Dordogne, myself
walking closest to the water. Ahead,
dead palm fronds scratched against
each other in the wind along the bank.

CONTRIBUTORS

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BERTRAND C. BARROIS lives in Virginia and is interested in isms of all sorts.

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ROBERT HODGSON VAN WAGONER received first prize in the 35th Annual Utah Original Writing Competition. He has published in *The Best of Writers at Work*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Metaphor*, *Modern Short Stories*, *Rough Draft*, and *Sunstone*, where he twice won the Brookie and D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest. He lives in Ogden, Utah, with his wife and two sons.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Brad Teare was born in Moscow, Idaho, in 1956, grew up in Manhattan, Kansas, and currently resides in Providence, Utah. He studied fine art at the University of Idaho in 1976 and 1980. After a mission to Argentina, he transferred to Utah State University to study illustration from 1980 to 1983. In 1989 he moved to New York City to pursue a career in illustration. The first six months there, he worked primarily with the *New York Times* and United Features Syndicate. After a year of editorial work, he received an assignment for a series of books by James Michener. This assignment was shortly followed by another for a series of books by Ann Tyler. He has since done over seventy-five covers for such mainstream authors as Gail Godwin and Clarisa Estes,

In addition to illustration assignments, he has had exhibitions of his work at the Muse Theater and Parsons School of Design (both in New York City) as well as exhibits throughout Utah.

Now living in Cache Valley, Teare continues to work for New York publishing firms while pursuing personal projects. (He is currently working on wood engravings for a letterpress edition of the allegory of the tame and wild olive trees from the Book of Mormon.)

Says the artist: "Relief printing is an art form that seeks simplicity and resists pretension. This is partly a matter of scale, partly a function of the physical act of gouging out the block, and the resulting beautifully imperfect lines. It is difficult (and for me, pointless) to strive for the facile elegance achievable in other media. Printing, especially lino-cut and wood-cut, forces an abstraction onto the artist's concepts, pushing the images from the world of surfaces into the world of the symbolic.

"Though my prints are representational, the real subjects are the emotions I felt when I composed and cut each block. Representation is a vehicle for the viewer to find the deeper meaning behind the image."

ART

Front Cover: "Man," 1992, wood-cut, 6" x 6"

Back Cover: "Woman and Child," 1993, lino-cut, 5.5" x 5.5"

p. 90: "Kremlin," 1993, lino-cut, 6" x 9"

p. 105: "Book of Moses," 1993, wood-cut, 9" x 4"

p. 108: "Handcart," 1993, wood engraving, 6" x 8"

p. 128: "Elephant Goddess," 1991, wood engraving, 5.5" x 7"

p. 152: "Zeus," 1992, lino-cut, 3.5" x 5"

p. 169: "Ox Team," 1993, wood engraving, 9" x 7"

p. 170: "Faust," 1991, lino-cut, 3.5" x 5"

p. 191: "The Hunter," 1990, wood engraving, 7" x 6"

p. 194: "The White Snake," 1990, lino-cut, 4.5" x 6.5"

p. 238: "Magnolia," 1989, wood engraving, 3.5" x 4.5"

p. 252: "Non-disclosure," 1989, scratchboard, 7.5" x 4"

DIALOGUE

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