

Letters to the Editor

an important precedent

In the discussion following Lester Bush's enlightening study on the enigmatic origin of the Church's denial of the priesthood to Blacks, no one, it seems, seriously considered the possibility of a change in Church policy. Debate on this issue always seems to center on the inspiration or lack of inspiration which led to this dilemma. It seems that those who consider the doctrine to have its origins in man's prejudice don't anticipate a policy change because of a dogmatic Church membership, which membership, in turn, believes there can be no change in policy because it would signify that God is not the same today and yesterday or because it would imply that our revelation is fallible.

By contrast with the early days of the Restoration the membership at large relies upon precedent and clings to tradition almost with xenophobia. There is an important precedent, for those who seek precedents, on Church policy change with regard to racial separation, which gives me hope that, as we have revelation, we may soon see a resolution of this question.

The conflict within our latter-day Church is not unlike a factiousness which threatened the primitive Church. The Jewish tradition of discrimination against non-Jews, to which even Christ adhered, was in conflict with the last mandate which Christ gave his apostles: to teach all nations. Chapters ten and eleven of Acts record the revelation which reversed Church policy regarding the gentiles. After the vision Peter concluded:

Ye know that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. (10:28) . . . Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (10:34, 35) . . . Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift (the gift of the Holy Ghost) as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? (11:17)

Most interesting is the reaction of the brethren who, in an attitude of criticism, called Peter to account for having baptized gentiles:

When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying,

Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. (11:18)

While I have no gnostic insight into God's designs I believe it possible that a change in Church policy may occur regardless of our discussions of the validity of the present policy. Moreover, such a change would not, in my opinion, cast doubt on the actuality of latter-day revelation, but would confirm it.

D. Marc Haws

science and religion

Congratulations on such an excellent issue [Science and Religion]. Although it didn't answer all my questions on the subject it did stimulate my thinking in some new directions, and I'm always grateful whenever that happens.

I especially enjoyed the interviews with Henry Eyring and the three anonymous scientists. You provide a valuable service by publishing honest, candid dialogues such as these. I look forward to reading the other interviews you promise to publish.

Ann Croft
Ogden, Utah

Your Science and Religion issue is one of the best issues of any magazine I have ever read. Having edited a few magazines myself, I think you deserve to suspend your humility for a moment and take some downright egotistical satisfaction in your accomplishment, all the more so in that "Science and Religion," outstanding as it is among magazines in general, is but a pinnacle in the lofty *Dialogue* range.

Now to a matter of substance in Science and Mormonism. Your contributors ably combined to persuade me that Mormonism is better constituted than most other revealed faiths to avoid conflict with scientific findings. Reading Duane E. Jeffrey on the issue of evolution, in fact, I was mystified as to why resistance should have cropped up among some prominent Mormons. But could the attack on evolution be a case of displacement? Could the real source of frustration be the scientifically accepted view of the archaeology of the Americas?

Maybe some day you will find contributors who will face this issue. I would be fascinated to read what Sterling M. McMurrin, for example, thinks would happen to the

doxic structure of Mormonism as a whole if Joseph Smith's archaeology were not taken literally. I would also like to see an assessment by some respected archaeologist of how strongly his discipline's evidence challenges the account given by Joseph Smith.

The results of such studies might not all be comforting, but many Mormons have to deal with this issue from time to time whether they like it or not, and they would surely be helped by having some solid information on the subject.

James Martin
New York City

We are currently contemplating a special issue on the objective evidence for the Book of Mormon. It will attempt to make a case for the Book of Mormon based on archaeological, anthropological, linguistic and cultural evidence.—Ed.

I wish to thank you for publishing the interview with Henry Eyring. I have long been an admirer of Dr. Eyring and have always appreciated his ability to reconcile his professional and spiritual lives.

I was especially pleased to have a first hand report of his statement on *Dialogue* to the Church magazine committee. I had heard the anecdote earlier, but it was nice to get it straight from the source. It is interesting to speculate the extent to which *Dialogue* has had an influence on the Church magazines. (The *New Era* recently contained a brief discussion on homosexuality—that couldn't have been possible I don't believe without *Dialogue's* pioneering effort.) I'm sure no one would officially admit to such an influence, but I am equally sure that there has been one. If nothing else *Dialogue* has demonstrated the value of having an open and honest publication.

John D. Moyle
Salt Lake City

Please no more interviews with persons who "must" remain anonymous. If they have something to say, let them say it "openly and honestly" and sign it.

The interview with Henry Eyring was delightful.

Richard Moore
Reno, Nevada

It was interesting to read the dialogues on science and religion in your last issue. I was, however, disturbed by the fact that three of the interviews were anonymous. I regret this because some scientists are more thoughtful and perceptive than others. Under the cloak

of anonymity how is the reader to know whether the scientists you selected were simply hacks or first-rate scholars? My greater regret was that such anonymity was probably necessary in order to get candor. It is too bad that the Mormon Church does not encourage loyal opposition.

O. Boyd Mathias
Callison College
University of the Pacific
Stockton, California

The interviews came to us from Professor Parker and Mr. Miller as anonymous. The anonymity was requested by the individuals being interviewed.—Ed.

The Science/Religion issue was excellent—and coming from a more or less professional critic of the merger I hope that is taken as a compliment. The introduction by Farmer was intriguing with its suggestion of future topics—indeed, the whole issue sparked thoughts about related matters in the field. The opening article by Haglund was balanced par excellence. On seeing the cover I was afraid the usual unhealthy laziness and sterile and inhuman close-mindedness would prevail in the usual orthodox liberal intellectual way—but this was totally untrue. One could only wish for more of the same. There was, however, still the "over educated" moderation about the issue that doesn't allow a great deal of the healthy radicalism that helps us view the central issues with clarity by defining the limits. Nibley, perhaps, is the greatest example of the "relevant scholar" and one who is not smug about science of any kind—indeed, he understands that in unorthodoxy is light. Just two brief comments on specifics:

Ethics is often slighted when discussing science, yet to me this is a major issue. Most of the objections to "scientism" are ethical and for those interested in science not to consider ethics as really a central area of conflict in the discussion of science and religion is to ignore the real fire.

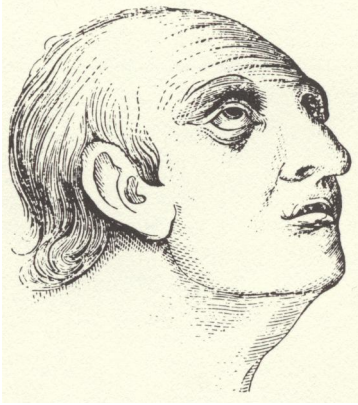
The population problem relative to food is solvable, primarily with guidance from the scriptures: elimination of non-food crops and adoption of a non-meat diet. India, for example, is cited as a country whose food problem is unsolvable, when actually, it feeds most of its peanut crop (a complete protein as revealed by recent research) to animals and exports high-protein seed meal to other countries. Many other things could be said relative to this topic but this should spark some thinking.

Finally, I would highly recommend a good dose of the critical literature on science, specifically that of C. S. Lewis, Andrew Weil's *The Natural Mind*, and Theodore Roszak's

The Making of a Counter-Culture and *Where the Wasteland Ends*. These books, like *Dialogue*, are only necessary intellectual exercises while we choose to remain in "civilization." But as many young people have discovered, such games are no longer needed to sustain the inner life when one returns to a natural way of life.

Scott S. Smith
Los Angeles

Laurel T. Ulrich
Durham, New Hampshire



is dialogue sexist?

The following letter, addressed to the Editor, was received recently from Laurel T. Ulrich, co-editor of the special women's issue of *Dialogue* and a member of *Dialogue's* Board of Editors.

Dear Bob:

I sat down today with a stack of *Dialogues* and did a little counting. Perhaps you'd like to know what I discovered. Excluding the famous pink issue (the special women's issue) only seven of the 158 full-length articles and essays published in the last eight years were by women. Three out of 12 short stories, 15 out of 67 poems or groups of poems were written by women, a somewhat more respectable showing.

Yet only 24 of 140 book reviews had female authors. Many of these were of the "short note" variety, and 16 were on specifically "feminine" topics—children's books, Rodney Turner's theology, etc. Thus Cherry Silver, despite a Ph.D. from Harvard, appeared in the literature issue only as a reviewer of the Relief Society anthology.

Equally revealing were the art credits. Women were listed in only eight of the 30 issues.

Even more disturbing, the ratio seems to have remained remarkably constant. Nor does

the distribution of personnel seem to have changed. It may even have gotten worse. Of the 62 names on the inside cover of the first issue, 22 were female. In the most recent issue, there are 11 out of 46.

I'm sure you would like to change this as much as I. Where shall we begin?

Robert Rees responds

Dear Laurel:

I've always been a little suspicious of statistics; your letter makes me even more so. Statistics seldom tell the truth and they never tell the whole truth. For example, you point out that there are fewer women on the *Dialogue* staff now (11 out of 46) than in the beginning (22 out of 62). What your figures don't reveal is that of those original 22, all but three held minor positions (editorial assistants, publication assistants, etc.). Even though *Dialogue's* staffing pattern has changed, we can make a comparison between the top staffs then and now. In the beginning, only Frances Menlove held a significant decision-making position and there were only two women out of 22 members of the Board of Editors. Now three of the five associate editors are women and the Editorial Board is almost one-third women. Within the next month at least one woman will be added to the Executive Committee. Thus, women are more involved in the operation of *Dialogue* than ever before.

Also, by eliminating the women's issue (which had only three male contributors) you distort the figures considerably. A total of 29 women were published in that issue.

What is more significant about the women's issue is that all my attempts to get you and Claudia as editors of that issue to be more outspoken for women's rights in the Church were unsuccessful. Frankly, I am still somewhat disappointed that the issue was not bolder and more far reaching in its attempts to speak to the serious problems of sexism within Mormonism. Your approach and tone may have been more practical and realistic, but personally I would have liked a little more boldness.

That is, by the way, the same objection I have to the first issue of *Exponent II*—it seems to be trying so hard not to offend that it comes off as pretty bland. Incidentally, I'll gladly compare *Dialogue's* gender statistics with those of *Exponent II*, which doesn't have one male on its staff and didn't have one male contributor to its first issue. (Perhaps you will argue that conscious sexism is preferable to what you might consider unconscious sexism.)

I honestly believe that the Letters to the

Editor and Notes and Comments sections of *Dialogue* contain the most significant discussion of women's rights of any publication among the Mormons. That ought to be more important than the number of women we have published.

Were you to examine *Dialogue's* correspondence files you would find numerous invitations to women asking them to submit something to our pages. Also, I have made a number of personal invitations to women. So what we are talking about here, I think, is something far more serious than one journal's failure to give equal space to women. Until the past few years there have been very few women doing research and writing on the kinds of subjects *Dialogue* concerns itself with, including women's rights. This is due in the main, I believe, to the fact that our culture has tenaciously held to outmoded ideas of women's roles and domain, including the pervasive idea that women are not to speak out on matters of doctrine and substance but only on matters of homemaking and child rearing. That more women are rejecting these concepts is a hopeful sign.

I personally feel that the problem of women's rights in the Church is one of the most significant problems facing Mormonism today. As editor I have tried to give space to an open and intelligent discussion of this problem. As I said in my letter to you of October 28, 1971: "It seems very clear to me that women are treated as second-class citizens in the Church today and I am interested in exploring both the reasons why this is so and what can be done to change it." But your statistics do show that for whatever reasons women aren't contributing to *Dialogue* as we hoped they would. Therefore, I am taking the following affirmative action steps:

1. I am asking you to be an Associate Editor of *Dialogue* with the essential responsibility of securing more feminine voices;
2. I am sending a letter to the *Dialogue* staff asking their efforts in recruiting women contributors;
3. I will redouble my efforts to get women to write for *Dialogue*. If you or any of *Dialogue's* or *Exponent II's* readers know of women who have something significant to say I would be pleased to know of them.

I have no doubt but that with this concerted effort we can remedy the statistical imbalance you note in your letter. What is more significant, however, is that we may play some part in helping women to achieve the equal status the Restored Gospel of Christ promises them.

exponent one, exponent two

Thank you for calling our attention to the publication of *Exponent II*. The sisters of Boston are to be congratulated for their imag-

ination and courage in publishing a journal for Mormon women. I found the entire contents fascinating (a word I don't feel comfortable using anymore—thanks to Helen Andelin) and have shared my copy with many friends (including a few non-threatened males). Mormon Women have made a beginning and it's exhilarating. Right on sisters!

Susan Smith Maddox
Burbank, California

I was interested in your announcement of the publication of *Exponent II*. Quite by coincidence a friend sent a copy just as I had finished reading a number of early issues of the original *Exponent* for an article I am preparing on the women's movement in nineteenth century Utah. What a contrast! *Exponent II* is timid and tentative where its namesake is forthright and assertive. The difference is due to the fact that nineteenth century Mormon women didn't question either their rights or their independence (both of which were hard earned) and contemporary Mormon women seem uncertain of both. The history that spans these two publications has to be among the most intriguing in the annals of women's studies.

Cynthia Crowell
San Francisco, California

eve and adam's parenthetical aside

In my reading of late I have noticed that when writers and scholars want to go right on ignoring women's rights, but can't afford to appear imperceptive, they will do what Brothers Parker and Miller did in their introduction to "Dialogues on Science and Religion." In praising the people they interviewed, they dispose of women in a parenthetical aside: "(unfortunately, none were women)."

You bet that's unfortunate! And inexcusable! They claim to have interviewed "several well-established LDS academicians located at various institutions of higher education in the United States." Couldn't they rake up even one woman? They say they tried to get a "cross section of possible areas." Tried, but failed.

Please, brothers, get busy and interview some women. If you don't know any, I could probably arrange an introduction.

Mary L. Bradford
Arlington, Virginia

See the interview with Juanita Brooks in this issue.—Ed.

faith, hope and . . .

On receiving your new subscription rate schedule I was struck with the fear that at \$20 a year there may be too many readers fall away to allow this fine journal to continue publication. Whatever the situation with others, *Dialogue* has not outlived its usefulness to me and I am happy to send my \$20 in faith and hope that *Dialogue* will continue to exist as a vital influence in my life.

Milo Hendricks
Salt Lake City

dialogue in south africa

It was delightful and stimulating to receive the most recent issue of *Dialogue*. I am grateful for the chance to find in its pages an opportunity to expand my awareness and challenge my notions of the nature of my faith and my dedication to the gospel. In line with my (albeit poorly embodied) commitment to this conscientious self-examination and growth, I wish to purchase a copy of each back issue. I hope these are still available since it takes a long time for an issue to make the trip I made a few months ago to share my love of the Lord and His for me with my South African brothers and sisters.

I am sorry to hear that your (our) financial situation is such that it is, but I guess it gives me a good opportunity to live the law of sacrifice. As long as I can take care of my basic needs I hope to give whatever else I have to support worthwhile institutions and projects, especially those which help me understand and develop my faith and sensitivity as *Dialogue* does.

If there is any service I can perform for you or any of your associates in my current location, I would be anxious to do it. You would probably be surprised by the thinking of the South African members (and non-members) on the race problem in the Church. It could be revealing in terms of seeing our "practice" through the eyes of a society with a sense of morality similar to that in which the practice was developed.

Elder Kim McCall
South African Mission
Johannesburg

war and peace

In the compass of a few pages Douglas Thayer ("The Clinic") captures the horror and insanity of the Viet-Nam war more effectively than all the news reports, articles and books I have read on the subject. Thayer poignantly portrays the nightmarish evil that haunts Steve's vision as well as the hypocrisy

and provincialism that prevent him from comprehending that evil. It is artistically as well as morally appropriate that the story ends ambiguously.

Clay Green
Chicago, Illinois

israel, israel . . .

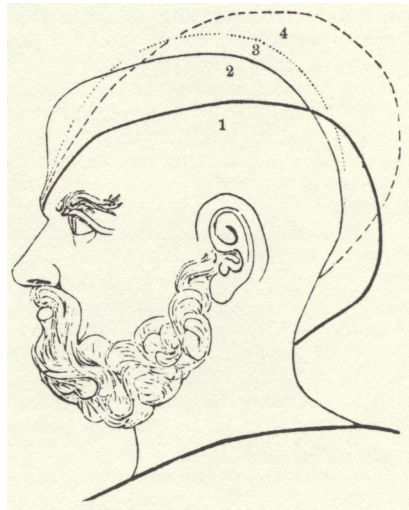
Please tell all my friends that I have migrated to Israel and that I invite them to come to this beautiful country. Here prophecy is being fulfilled. Indeed Israel itself is fulfillment of prophecy. Every Latter-Day Saint who comes over helps to fulfill Ezekiel, Chapter 37. Read the entire chapter carefully. It is a unified prophecy, full of awesome and beautiful things, some that have already come about, and most still to be—through the foundations are being laid. The Book of Mormon is being translated into Hebrew; we are compiling an LDS Hebrew hymnbook; the Joseph Smith Story is being printed in the national tongue; and the Mount of Olives will soon have a plaque with Orson Hyde's prayer in both languages.

You can come and be a part of this.

Shalom,

Benjamin Urrutia
Ulpán
Kibbutz 'Ein Ha-Shophet

P.S.: For inquiries about the Jerusalem Branch, write David Galbraith, Box 19604, Jerusalem, Israel.



onward christian soldiers

During our Army career (my husband is a Regular Army officer), we have been stationed in various branches and wards in various

countries and states. Usually these tours are spiritually uplifting, learning experiences. On occasion, though, we have a tour that finds our testimonies stagnating.

During these difficult times, *Dialogue* has proven to be invaluable to us. Not only does it reassure us that the Church in general is running smoothly and stably, but the articles in *Dialogue* have kept us on our spiritual toes, making us think and sharpening our minds. We are eternally grateful.

Please know that all your efforts are needed and appreciated. I honestly don't know if I'd have made it these past two years without you.

Barbara (Mrs. C. K.) Jackson
Ft. Bragg, North Carolina

hair

While sitting in Priesthood today I noticed that the hair styles of the missionaries were starkly different from those of everyone else, including the newly baptized members, other members of the quorum, the quorum presidency (who wore moustaches), and even some visiting Councilmen (full hair in the back, sideburns). The missionaries, of course, were clean shaven, sideburns above the middle of the ear when even existent, hair high cropped in the back. The fact is that this enforced grooming style is wholly out of date and there is no realistic reason to continue the practice of the previous generation. It is just

as secular to copy the dress and grooming pattern of conservative businessmen as that of younger people (within limits in both directions, of course). Furthermore, most everyone knows someone who doesn't have the same grooming style but who is just as good as we think we are. Thus, stereotypes have long been broken, and for the un-Christian die-hards who insist on judging others, and influencing others to judge, by outward appearance, I say let them wallow in their opinions until they get some light. To encourage judgment, as we do with artificial dress standards for missionaries and Church campuses, clearly goes against gospel ideas on both freedom and judging others. And I doubt that there is any benefit in trying to keep sideburns and hair in the back ridiculously high cropped. Of course moderation is needed. I'll bet that BYU wouldn't get any fewer donations and the Church wouldn't win any fewer converts if they became realistic about today's dress and hair standards. In fact, I believe that a trial run would reveal that we have been hindering our image and work too long: we have actually been driving young people away from the Church by projecting a totally out of date image that suggests prejudice and materialism, and by harrasing those individuals who deem it their right to let the God-planted strands go beyond the middle of the ear!

Scott S. Smith
Los Angeles

True dialogue is the conversation of minds . . .
to raise the relevant questions and to give reasons which will stand up under further question is to engage in dialogue. Without such dialogue, justice fails, freedom withers, peace is broken, and even public order collapses. Dialogue, therefore, is not a mere ornament of a democracy but a matter of life and death.

STRINGFELLOW BARR
