

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

sad reading

Mary Bradford's (XIV:2) interview with Sonia Johnson is a valuable service, but it made very sad reading, looking in, as it were, on the self-destruction of so talented a person as Sonia. It was like watching a person treading precariously along a precipice, losing her balance and plunging to destruction.

From within the fold, Sonia's was a powerful and influential voice for women's rights. Working from within it was in her power to instigate improvements in the way the Church treats women, and especially in the way Mormon men see and treat women. As a bitter apostate she has stripped herself of nearly all of that influence.

It is clear to anyone who has scratched beneath the surface of the Sonia matter that it was Sonia who took herself outside the Church. It was Sonia who placed herself in jeopardy and then practically pleaded with the brethren to excommunicate her. (This is *not* to say that mistakes were not made on both sides, or that Sonia was fairly treated once she placed her membership on the line. Indeed, it would appear that there were improprieties in the conduct of church disciplinary action against her. But we are naive if we believe for a moment that the General Authorities are going to overturn actions of church courts on grounds that technical errors were made by local officials, as do the criminal courts.)

Sonia's case would seem to be an almost classic representation of apostasy. A person begins with a complaint, even a justified complaint, and lets the pursuit of it completely unbalance them. They lose their equilibrium and soon are finding fault where fault does not lie. At some point pride runs away with reason. It is painful to admit—even to one's self—that one has been wrong, so one begins to lay the blame at the feet of others, turning from one apostasy to another, adding apostasy to apostasy.

Just how complete that apostasy has become is evident to those who follow Sonia in the press. Sonia's apostasy and excommunication are a dual tragedy. It is a personal tragedy for the individual who

commits spiritual suicide. But when that person has such great potential for leadership within the Church—even in an indirect, unofficial way—it is a tragedy for the Church to lose that person's influence.

Her excommunication and continued leadership in "Mormons for ERA" cannot help but hurt the women's cause within the Church. She has become so radical and vehement in her attacks on the presiding brethren that it makes it difficult, if not impossible, for active Latter-day Saints to be members of that organization.

I feel cheated.

Terrence L. Day
Pullman, Washington

I send this hesitantly.

As a subscriber since your inception I have always received inspiration and strength from your publication. The last issue, the sounding board for apostates, left me with an empty, sad feeling. I recently gave two gift subscriptions, and after the last issue I sensed the same feeling I get when we invite friends to Church and the talks are inappropriate and the children misbehave.

Michael L. O'Brien, D.D.S.
Omro, Wisconsin

perspectives

Having just polished off the Summer 1981 issue, cover to cover, and as a charter subscriber, I am compelled to respond with a hearty thanks for continuing to give Mormon readers "perspective." Like sand to the oyster, you are helping the pearl grow. You are very much a necessity.

As an excommunicated Mormon (eleven years now), a former bishop, high councilor and earnest champion of the cause, I found myself relating strongly—at some moments with great pain and at others with a strong sense of understanding—to nearly every word, beginning with Margaret Munk's lead-off letter to the editor, "Time for Arts," and ending with Karl Keller's perceptive and delight-

ful mastication of Sondrup's *Arts and Inspiration: Mormon Perspectives*. These "bookends" to the issue seemed personally appropriate. As an artist I struggle with the issues (on a day-to-day basis) which surround the making of art. During my twenty adult years in the Church I never satisfactorily came to grips with the dividing of my allegiances, which were basic and very deep, between dedication to the religious structure with its pressures and obedience to my own talents. In many ways the term "Mormon artist" is indeed a contradiction. Art will always come out of the "now," never from what's "out there" in the millennia, and dealing with it on that basis (with the total energy and commitment necessary) was impossible when I was intimately engaged in the "program." And it never occurred to me, let alone any of the brethren, to give this artist some time to breathe, to be anxiously engaged in doing art. That, of course, is due to the Church's long-standing misconception of the role of the artist.

The two searching interviews (Sonia Johnson and Fawn Brodie) pushed another of my buttons which relates to having been on both sides of the fence—in and out of fellowship with the Saints and on both sides of the ecclesiastical desk (bishop/ward members). I breathed with Sonia as she became trapped between two causes—her love of the Church versus the emergence of her feminist sensibilities. Speaking out (rebellious) while trying at first to maintain her status as a Latter-day Saint eventually put her on a tight rope which in the Church you must either back off or fall off. The question is, of course, could she in conscience have done it any other way? And sadly, I understood, were I her bishop I could not have done his chore differently either. Yet I applaud Sonia in my heart because there is something in me which wants Mormon women to wake up to the realities of the world, and that includes an understanding of how men, as well, (especially those over forty-five) have been handicapped by playing out their equally stereotyped roles, both in and out of the Church.

I also salute Fawn Brodie who is still a fact of life despite the years Mormon historians have been methodically putting down her book while the Saints have

cried "evil" and convinced themselves it will all go away. Again, the sand in the oyster, perhaps made even more abrasive by Brodie's gender. Uncle David O., however, needn't have been embarrassed (if he was), or even saddened. Becoming educated or becoming a scholar, all a part of the glory of God, is not the most unpraiseworthy of enterprises, and Fawn Brodie just might be an important leavener in the scheme of things.

The article by Stephen Stathis was a pleasant update for me, integrating Mormon views—increasingly publicized—with current events, reaffirming (both negatively and positively) that not much has changed in the Kingdom. As an outsider/once insider, my overview has understandably expanded along with my tolerance of activities not Mormon. While it was a beautiful experience to be in the "family," to know the joys of service and of testimony (personal testimony may be lost but is never forgotten), it has also been worthwhile observing from the outside and, by contrast, coming to feel the personal pain, depression, loss and the otherwise full spectrum of feelings and experiences that so forcefully contribute to personal growth. Mistakes (sins) are great teachers, and since no person is without them, they can eventually be turned into healers. In my view there are many Mormons who could benefit from excommunication—I remember them; the haughty, the soft-spoken-self-righteous, the quiet bigots, the judgers, the piously devious—for they do not fully know who they are, what they are supposed to become or what living on this earth is all about.

Which brings me to Bush's treatise on excommunication. Funny how statistics are useful, how they open new vistas. The tenfold overall increase in excommunications since 1913 (from 1 in 6400 to 1 in 640) was a shocker to me. I had assumed that as an ex-Mormon I was a rare bird, a needle in a haystack. In our humiliation, our hurt, or anger, we Ex's quietly withdraw and are absorbed into society ("the world"). But it is interesting, and comforting, to know that some of the ex-brethren and sisters are abroad in the land, perhaps feeling, as I do, a loss of connection, of belonging. Yet we must

also ask, why this pronounced increase? What is going wrong in Zion? Is it simply a manifestation of the Church's tremendous growth? If not, what is happening to the gospel's holding power? In a modern world, Mormons, Jack Mormons, ex-Mormons and non-Mormons may all wonder together.

Robert Perine
Encinitas, Calif.

I appreciate the interview with Sonia Johnson by Mary Bradford in the Summer 1981 *Dialogue*. To champion the cause of women's rights to their American freedoms is a frustrating challenge! When children have lived in a home where father's rights are the only consideration, and men of authority are to be regarded as infallible and superior, I understand the feelings of rebellion. Why do men assume that if women are given their freedom of choice, they will choose to do evil? I am grateful to learn of Sonia's concern for the impoverished conditions to which some women are subjected.

Thanks also for Kathryn M. Daynes' letter to the editor, for clarifying equal rights from women's rights: "The emphasis of equal rights is to eliminate distinctions between men and women. The focus of women's rights is to eliminate discrimination against women while acknowledging women's special needs."

I, too, am concerned with the philosophy that if women were given the priesthood, that would mean the demise of the priesthood. If the priesthood is the power of God delegated to Man, created in His image, male and female, to act in His name for the benefit of humanity, men and women contributing their energy, talents and righteous desires to this cause, why should that mean the demise of the priesthood? When men or women presume that priesthood is authority to dictate what others believe and do, they are misinformed! I had to learn this to restore my faith and respect for patriarchs, matriarchs and their abilities to be channels of love from God through the power of his Spirit.

Rhoda Thurston
Hyde Park, Utah

I read my first *Dialogue* today—the summer 1981 edition dealing with the Sonia Johnson/ERA issues. I am disappointed in the way you chose to handle it. A true dialogue could perhaps have occurred with coverage of both Sonia Johnson's and the much-maligned Beverly Campbell's (a "frustrated feminist"? oh, come on) opinions. By deciding to represent only "Sonia's side" *Dialogue* has done its readers and its reputation a disservice.

I am a Mormon mother of three preschool children and even enjoy "baking bread," apparently a thoroughly despised occupation in Ms. Johnson's eyes. What ineffable snobbery! When Ms. Johnson attempts to belittle the role of motherhood, she is spouting sexist nonsense, promoting the view of success defined in terms of overt power, profession and money. If women are to be truly "liberated," we must be willing to "march to the beat of a different drummer" and measure success in terms of eternal truths, not as dictated by the "mothers of the women's movement" (Steinem, Abzug, Smeal) cited by Ms. Johnson.

Equality does not mean sameness. That is how women can believe in equality and the patriarchal order at the same time. Men and women share many ideals—achieving a Christ-like character, for example—but have legitimate differences as well. An unwillingness to admit these differences is one of the major weaknesses of the women's movement. Trying to mold women into little imitation men is the result, when all yardsticks for achievement are defined in terms of traditionally male fields of endeavor and is intellectual dishonesty of the first order.

Sonia Johnson is the tool of those who know they cannot promote ERA on its merits and have stooped to the exploitation of a poor woman who has thrown away her religious heritage for a mess of pottage.

As Rex E. Lee, United States Solicitor General and author of *A Lawyer Looks at the Equal Rights Amendment*, has noted, most discussions of ERA have produced

"more heat than light." *Dialogue's* contribution to the subject has once again upped the temperature without a corresponding increase of illumination.

Ann W. Peralta
Fayetteville, Arizona

Editor's note: See *Dialogue*, Spring XIV:1 and this issue, page 101.

There once was a gal named Sonia/Who felt oppressed by the men of Mormonia./ Said she with great zest, my rights they've suppressed./ And now she's living alonia.

Glenn Webster
Gilbert, Arizona

This is a fan letter

I thought your summer issue of *Dialogue* was superb. Especially your piece on Sonia and the update by Stathis.

Keep up the good work.
Peter Bart
Beverly Hills, California

classy malediction

It was such a joy to read that classy excommunication malediction of Spinoza in Lester E. Bush's article. I liked the ceremony too—the extinguishing of candles, one by one, during the reading of the curse. Why can't our Church come up with an impressive excommunication ceremony?

A few years ago I was quite impressed with our Elders Quorum Instructor's response to heretical remarks made by me. Bringing his right arm to the square, he said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the holy priesthood invested in me, I rebuke you." I regret now that I disparaged the majesty of his rebuke by telling him that he had just used the Lord's name in vain. He rushed from the room, all upset, kicking over a chair as he departed. Members of the quorum hastened to comfort me, assuring me that he really didn't mean it. Poor man. A few months later he was excommunicated from the Church, after confessing a sexual transgression to the Saints assembled. But I think he was rebaptized soon after. He was an asset to

the Church—a great champion of distinctive spiritual positions held dear in the LDS enclaves of California; moreover, he was, without doubt, the finest softball player in our ward.

Rustin Kaufman, Jr.
Woodside, California

a correction to the history

Thank you for publishing the interview of Fawn Brodie. As Fawn's sister I am very proud of her. I would appreciate your making one correction, however. The biographical information in the latter part of the first paragraph refers *not* to our grandfather, but to our father, Thomas Evans McKay. We were celebrating what would have been his one-hundredth birthday in the summer of 1975, and he was one of eight children.

Thank you for your publication—we really enjoy it.

Barbara M. Smith
Provo, Utah

memories of brodie

I enjoyed Sterling M. McMurrin's eloquent tribute to Fawn McKay Brodie (XIV:1) and the personal oral history interview (XIV:2). I would like to relate my experience at the memorial services held for Professor Brodie at UCLA on January 17, 1981.

Seven speakers reflected upon Fawn Brodie's role as a wife and mother, neighbor and community activist, writer and teacher. Among her friends and colleagues who spoke were UCLA professors of history Hans Rogger, Peter Lowenberg and Stanley Wolpert; psychohistorian Elizabeth Marvick, neighbors Polly Plesset and Lamont Johnson, and psychoanalyst Maimon Leavitt. (A transcript of these services is available at the University of Utah Special Collections Library.)

With their stories and personal impressions of Fawn, the speakers provided a glimpse of the person behind the author we have met in print. They spoke of Fawn as a caring mother and grandmother who nurtured her three children when they were young, then treated them as peers when they grew up. Her home was full of flowers and books and things that she and her husband, Bernard, had

made for each other—he was also a writer and professor (of political science). Fawn was an accomplished cook; her family was said to be her principal occupation.

Although she enjoyed recognition for her books and lectures, Fawn was not above attending to details. She devoted herself to her students, helping them to revise their papers and to get published. She worked hard and wasted no time, either in small talk or useless motion.

She was involved with the historical persons about whom she wrote; her children said that she often dreamed about Jefferson.

Fawn was sensitive to the condition of women and Blacks, two groups she spoke of as having comparable status in the Utah community and Church of her youth. She particularly disliked deception and bore public witness to the truth as she saw it, whether by writing letters to the Los Angeles Times or by presenting herself as a heretic to her community when, in her book, *No Man Knows My History*, she characterized the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith as merely reflecting the views of his times.

She was active in community affairs and staunchly committed to her neighborhood. Her neighbor, film producer Lamont Johnson, related an incident in which Fawn led a defense of “their hill” in the Pacific Palisades of West Los Angeles against commercial exploitation. A group of developers had confronted the neighborhood with plans to build condominiums, parking lots and “similar horrors” just below their Pacific Palisades homes. After the neighbors heard a specious pitch about the benefits of tennis courts and swimming pools for everyone, “Fawn snapped her head to one side and said, ‘Oh, you are a living deceit, sir! I write you down for a scoundrel!’ ”

Here Johnson perceived the archaic invective of Fawn’s biographical subjects, African explorer and poet Richard Burton and Thomas Jefferson. Although the neighbors defeated that development, Johnson saw just a bit of irony that in its place now stands a Mormon church, a development which came on somewhat later.

George D. Smith, Jr.
San Francisco, Calif.

people, not programs

In reference to Martha Bradley’s “The Cloning of Mormon Architecture” (XIV:1), I wish I knew who Martha Bradley had talked to for her to say that members of the LDS Church are dissatisfied with their buildings. How many of them were there, and what was the source of their discontent? My own sense of it as a missionary in Brazil was that a few members resent extraneous Americanism in the Church and some nonmembers were confused by the physical appearance of our chapels. Certainly if the gospel is to save souls, not statistics, our buildings should serve people, not programs.

I also wish that Bradley had said something about climate response. Thank heaven for energy shortages that will force our buildings to once again respond to heat, cold, wind, light and all those other wonderful rhythms and forces of nature that our buildings used to dance with. (By the way, when is there going to be a *Dialogue* dedicated to environmentalism and the gospel?)

One more wish: that Bradley would have developed some of the doctrinal implications of the existing standard plans. For example: 1) Our casual architectural treatment of our worship spaces (entrance sequence, finishes, connection to cultural hall, absence of daylighting of stained glass, etc.) seems to imply or result from a casual attitude toward Deity. 2) The canonization of the standard plan symbolizing an extensive and very rigid formula for piety rather than a few fundamental absolutes (temple recommend interview) with lots of room for personality.

Jeff Jarvis
Eugene, Oregon

forgotten sda’s

In *Dialogue*, XIV:1, page 92, Mr. Stathis has quoted a statement from Kenneth L. Woodward of *Newsweek* magazine. This statement is not at all accurate. For example, the Seventh-day Adventist church which began in 1863 in the United States is currently working in 190 countries, while the LDS Church is working in only 83. At the end of 1980 the world-wide membership of the SDA church was 3,480,518, with 80% outside of North

America. The LDS membership was 4,638,000. The LDS church began thirty-three years before the SDA church, and thus the larger membership of the two! The annual growth rates for these two churches are rather close.

Unfortunately there is a tendency on the part of some LDSs and SDAs to think that their respective faiths are almost totally unique and vastly superior to others. Each group appears to be very uninformed about the other. Someone needs to do a serious comparative study of these two nineteenth-century American religious faiths. I would be very happy to be a resource-person on Seventh-day Adventism if someone should ever decide to do such a study.

You might be interested in knowing that, as a Seventh-day Adventist, I have a deep interest in Mormon history and theology. I belong to the Mormon History Association, receive *Ensign* at home, read *Dialogue*, *Sunstone* and *BYU Studies* at the library where I work. I also subscribe to *Utah Historical Quarterly*, have a large personal library on Mormoniana and have travelled the Mormon Trail back to Nauvoo, Far West, Adam-Ondi-Ahman and Liberty jail. Mormon history is fascinating to say the least.

I am also deeply interested and involved in the history and theology of my own Seventh-day Adventist church.

Gary W. Shearer
Loma Linda, Calif.

card pro and con

Sandy Straubhaar's review of Orson Scott Card's *A Planet Called Treason* (XIV:1) has the unique distinction, in my own opinion, of being more sexually suggestive and explicit than the book she reviewed. And other than some diatribes I used to read in *Mother Jones*, it is the most sexist review I've yet seen in Mormondom. Her review is neither edifying nor constructively critical, but downright slanderous of Card in a couple of places. Obviously Ms. Straubhaar is not a typical *Dialogue* reader with a breadth of learning and a depth of insight and appreciation, for she is merely taking a feminist swipe at male readers (of *Dialogue* and Card) with her shallow opinions which are constructed

only on her own personal taste, not of open-minded critical judgment.

I've read *Treason* twice, have written a review myself of his works and have even talked to the author about them. For what it's worth, here is my opinion of the work: it is highly edifying not only because of the insights Card has always been known for, but because *Treason* is a science fiction satire on our society. Sandy's beef about breasts is a case in point, for I interpreted Card's use of breasts in the story as a Swiftian satire on modern society's excessive love affair with female breasts and the use of them for everything but (almost) one of the chief purposes for which they were created: nursing babies. But considering the insecure, cry-baby attitudes of ERA feminists today who already have more talent than they use (creative) and more freedom than they intelligently know what to do with (except to heckle the men who have abused and neglected them), I should have expected that such a review was long overdue—with Orson Scott Card the scapegoat.

Gary P. Gillum
Payson, Utah

The review in *Dialogue* (XIV, 1) of Orson Scott Card's third science fiction novel, *A Planet Called Treason*, asserts that the author is a misogynist. It is true that women do not fare well in Card's novels; neither do men. His science fiction worlds are as unpleasant as our own. Occasionally he creates a character who rises a little above the others, but all of the characters are flawed, as we are. The reviewer's main objection seems to be that Lanik is unhappy about the growth of breasts and ovaries on and in his body. What? Should he be pleased? Given the premises of the story, his reaction is completely reasonable. It is hardly a "... revulsion... to women's bodies."

I believe that the reviewer's comments are largely irrelevant to an evaluation of the book as well as inaccurate. The problem seems to be that Card did not write the book the way that she wanted him to write it. That is hardly justification for what amounts to a personal attack on the moral character of the author.

A longer review in *Sunstone* (VI, 4) suffers from many of the same problems. Card's women are all terrible, except for the ones who aren't! One wonders if the reviewers noted that the men, who are equally stereotyped, are as bad if not worse? Neither review mentions that all three major female characters in *Songmaster* are heroines who establish themselves as effective leaders. Perhaps misogyny, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

The *Sunstone* review also takes Card to task for the violence in his novels. I defy anyone to show that his novels are any more violent than our real world. Consider the Iranian revolution, Idi Amin's Uganda, Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia or the bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima. Card shows violence in such detail that the reader can experience it. Is it better to have a nice, clean novel where planets are vaporized at long distance (as in *Star Wars* and various *Star Trek* stories) or to show violence for the horrible but common thing that it is? Card is not guilty of glamorizing violence as are many other science fiction writers.

Card writes science fiction for money, the major motivation of any commercial writer. His success attests to his skill at gauging and writing for the science fiction market. He also wrote articles for the *Ensign* for money, since he was an editorial employee of that magazine. His job was, and is, to turn out copy of a particular kind. Commercial writing is formula writing and cannot be didactic. The non-commercial writings of an author are more likely to reflect the author's values and character. I suggest that Card's prolific noncommercial writing, primarily poetry and drama, demonstrates his commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the value of human souls, both female and male. These two irresponsible reviews have done him a great disservice.

James L. Farmer
Provo, Utah

Physical transformations of various types have been a recurring theme in fictive literature for some time: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Woolf's *Orlando*, Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, and Heinlein's *I Will Fear No*

Evil, to name but a few. O.S. Card's fantasy novel *A Planet Called Treason* is thus, on one hand, but another installment in a long tradition, and there are doubtless many who will take no offense at what he has written. The proverbial other hand, however, tells us that another view is a possibility.

S. Straubhaar, in her recent review of Card's novel, has presented such a view. From a feminist perspective, even one self-effacingly called "fledgling," Lanik Mueller's opinions of women's physical and mental endowments, as presented by Card, can be nothing but offensive. Although I find feminist literary criticism as suspect as any other "-ist," Straubhaar's point that Card's novel could lead to further public stereotyping of a Mormon attitude toward women is well taken. Perhaps because I did not sense the same type of personal attack as Straubhaar, I found later parts of the novel, particularly sections on time relativity and illusionistic mystery to be enjoyable and several of the word plays to be mildly amusing, but the first chapter, with its extraordinary sense of revulsion at the female body, kept lingering at the back of my mind.

Card, of course, needs no one's approbation to continue his literary career. He might, however, find greater success if he can avoid antagonizing half of his potential audience. He can take some satisfaction in knowing that he will get some of my money, since I bought a copy of his book because of the review in *Dialogue*. At the bookseller's, however, I asked the clerk, "From a review I've read, this book seems to be pretty bad—will you buy it back if I don't like it?" She replied, "It's just fantasy; nobody takes it seriously. If you really don't like it, take it to a book exchange and trade it." In spite of the parts I did enjoy, I could not help but take certain aspects of the novel seriously, and *A Planet Called Treason* is off to be traded. I simply cannot condone Card's attitude and will not keep his book on my shelf.

Steven A. DeHart
St. Paul, Minnesota

I commend Sandy Straubhaar for her forthrightness in reviewing Scott Card's *Planet Called Treason* (XIV, 1).

As a bookseller and addict of the printed page I am disturbed by the direction of contemporary science fiction writing. Its heavy reliance on sexual themes, physical violence and, more particularly, the juxtaposition of these two elements is a distressing departure from sci fi's traditional emphasis. It has heretofore not only given readers mind-stretching fiction suggesting unimagined possibilities but, far more significantly, has provided spiritual metaphor. The new wave of science fiction writers seems generally to forget (or ignore) this latter aspect of their tradition; if this view predominates, the genre will cease to provide us with insight and inspiration and will serve only as a pale reflection of our own society couched in some bizarrely appointed setting—and that in slick formulaic prose which has little of the richness of theme or style to be found in fine writing.

With specific reference to Card, I am offended by the values exemplified in his writing and directly articulated in his self-serving and relativist literary rationale. (See "A Mormon Writer Looks at the Problem of Evil in Fiction," a lecture given by Card March 13, 1980, at BYU during the sesquicentennial observance.) In neither case do I find much evidence of the Gospel ideals we presumably share. This is disappointing not only because I would hope to see those values better represented literarily but because science fiction seems to me to be a particularly apt medium for deft fictional highlighting of absolutes.

I find I am equally embarrassed by Card's reception among Latter-day Saints, which provides a good example of an unfortunate mindset prevalent among American Mormons. The fact that Card's work falls not only squarely but intentionally within the framework of current sci-fi writing has apparently done nothing to dim his reception among the faithful. The Church still labors under the burden of insecurity assumed during years of persecution and social/intellectual deprecation. Working from this position, church members seem generally to feel

that any of us who gain a measure of success or recognition in the world deserve our automatic adulation and respect. The example of prominent LDS role models and our official church response to them tend to teach that compromise is acceptable so long as it produces success which can be put to financial or propagandistic advantage.

Reacting against our own insecurity, we have worked hard to assimilate into mainstream society—with obvious success. In doing so we have adopted the values of the world along with its lifestyle. Indeed, many of us have apparently decided with Card that "There is no universal standard for judging the worth of a piece of fiction."

Dick Butler
Menlo Park, Calif.

why not joseph smith and thomas paine?

Gary Gillum, in his review of my book, *Mormon Answer to Skepticism* (Vol. XIII, 3), does not fault Joseph Smith for rationally critiquing the theology of the existing churches of his time and ignoring their piety, but he faults my study for doing it. He charges that I've misapplied Mormon scripture references and am guilty of reading into the texts what isn't there (eisegesis), but cites no examples nor shows what points of my study are vitiated by these alleged indiscretions.

Gillum doesn't believe thirty years a long enough time for Paine's book to have been a "burning issue," although I detail how its themes rapidly spread and that the Smith family had the book and knew its argumentation. Deism was still an issue in Painesville, Ohio, in 1831, enough so that when new Mormon convert Sidney Rigdon tried to convert his congregation to his new faith, they rebutted him with arguments "which he himself formerly urged against deists" (*Painesville Telegraph*, Feb. 15, 1831).

Clayton Publishing House is not a vanity press, but would the argumentation have less relevance if it were? Gillum's right, though, about the typographical errors. The most unfortunate typo is on p. 91, bottom line, where it places Smith's Liberty Jail sojourn in 1828 rather than 1838. Daniel Bachman has

twice cited this to dismiss the force of the argument, even though the statement's footnote, no. 103, p. 98, has the correct date.

The one substantial critique of historical method that Gillum offers is that "Hullinger's entire scenario is built on circumstantial evidence." Exactly! Mormon faith is also an hypothesis based upon circumstantial evidence and other constructs are possible.

The Mormon prophet himself has confirmed my "circumstantial scenario" concerning the Harris-Anthon consultation, about which I challenge the familiar Mormon story and trace it back through five phases to the reconstructed event.

First, the RLDS transcript was not what Anthon had seen according to his letter to E. D. Howe. Now his description is vindicated, and it helped establish the original transcript's authenticity.

Second, Smith's personal statement that Anthon could not read the transcript in accord with Isaiah 29:11-12 confirms my findings, matches his later statements and raises questions about his adding many other elements in the 1838 version.

Third, Smith's comment surely confirms my finding that Anthon did not write a report to the Palmyrans authenticating the transcript, the language and Smith's ability to translate. Rather, it boosts Joseph Knight, Sr.'s recall that Anthon "rote a very good piece to Joseph and said if he would send the original he would translate it."

Fourth, Smith's holographic comment strengthens my contention that he used the Isaiah text as a blueprint to follow and read into (eisegesis) the biblical text his presentation in the Book of Mormon.

Finally, the original Anthon transcript and Smith's comment make the 1838 official version of the Harris-Anthon consultation prime evidence that, even if Martin Harris told the story so familiar to all who know Mormonism, Smith at least blessed it and changed his own version. That raises the question of his intentions—a point I cover in my "circumstantial scenario."

Would these points "unwittingly" reaffirm for Gillum why the Church of Christ was established? If so, I await another hypothesis to account for them.

I do not expect that my study will prove to be a detriment to any Mormon's faith, for I do heed Dr. Bushman's warning in his *Dialogue* roundtable with Wesley Walters:

...spiritual experience is the most compelling data. . . . Were a case made against the Book of Mormon. . . integrity would compel Mormons to hold onto their beliefs.

As to historical claims, however, it may bring a little more caution and a shift in the apologetic approach in future appraisals of Mormon origins.

Robert N. Hullinger
Cincinnati, Ohio

ED. NOTE: *This was sent to Dialogue in response to a request to Mr. Hullinger to shorten a longer critique of the Gillum review.*

gillum responds

The greatest folly in the reviewing of books lies in the fact that paper and pen are no substitute for mind and heart in knowing the author (or reviewer) and his intentions. This results in what to me and other Mormon scholars was a very fair and charitable review of Hullinger's book contrasted to William D. Russell's estimation that my review was merely a cheap putdown, or D. James Croft's insinuation (*Sunstone* vol. 6, #2, p. 16) in "Book of Mormon Wordprints Re-examined" from reading the same review that my faith in Mormonism is based on Book of Mormon wordprint studies! But lest I sound exonerated from any fault, may I hastily add that there were certain things I would gladly have altered in the Hullinger review because I understood his motives and heart after a delightful conversation with him on the phone and a warm exchange of letters.

Both Hullinger's and Russell's criticisms of my review were based on their expectations of a review in *Dialogue* being of a scholarly, expressionistic nature, instead of my apologist's impressionistic stature. I make no apologies for my perspective, although I can readily see how it clashes with those scholars who lean towards humanistic approaches in explaining away Mormonism. I will even

admit to a little sloppy thinking in the review, caused not only by deadlines but by my tendency to leave out examples. (For example, Russell is correct in saying that I did not supply examples of Hullinger's lifting Book of Mormon passages out of context—if he is thinking in literary or semantic contexts. My perspective, however, was cultural, and I regret not qualifying myself.) Both Russell and Hullinger served to remind me, not without a little pain, that it is impossible to please everyone. And I commend to them, myself and all others who would undertake the unpleasant task of reviewing a book, the reading of Jan Shipp's "Writing About Modern Mormonism" in the March 1979 *Sunstone*.

Meanwhile, I can only apologize for my "both-sides-of-the-fence" perspective, although I will never forsake it. It is best expressed by echoing the words of Spencer W. Kimball, quoted by Robert D. Hales in the October 1981 General Conference: "If you could see what I have seen. . ." My perspective remains thus: We *can* see. We *can* know. We *can* understand.

Gary P. Gillum
Payson, Utah

unturnd stones

I commend *Dialogue* for giving me hours of intellectual and spiritual stimulation while publishing masterful essays on some of Mormonism's more sensitive subjects. The poignant topics of blacks and the priesthood, Mormonism and evolution, capital punishment and the Young-Pratt controversies, just to name a few, have surely added much depth and insight to church-related literature. I have appreciated this spirit of open inquiry very much.

Yet, even with all of *Dialogue's* noteworthy efforts, several stones seem to remain unturnd. This is natural and is to be expected in a progressive system of truth-seeking, as Mormon theology appears to be (see Isaiah 28:9–10; D&C 128:21, etc.). One issue in particular that concerns me is how two prophets can unmistakably contradict each other while each is allegedly speaking the word of the Lord. True, prophets are not infallible and

are only prophets when "acting as such" (DHC 5:265); nevertheless, in several instances, what was the word of the Lord through His prophet in the past is now heresy, "speculation," or merely the prophet's opinion. Three examples demonstrate what I mean.

1) Does God know *all* things—that is, is he omniscient, thus fully comprehending every speck of truth in the universe? Or will he continue to learn new verities as long as eternity endures? As Bergera so ably brought to our attention recently, the Prophet Brigham Young adamantly held that the omniscience of God "was a fals doctrin & not true that there never will be a time to all eternity when all the God[s] of Eternity will cease advancing in power knowledge. . .for if this was the case eternity would cease to be. . ." (*Dialogue*, Vol. XIII, 2, pp. 12–13; original spelling and punctuation). Another source finds Young declaring that he *never* expected to see the time when he would stop learning, then adding, "Now do not lariat the God that I serve and say that he can not [sic] learn any more; I do not believe in such a character" (*Deseret News*, June 18, 1873, p. 309; italics added. See also *JD* 1:349–353; 3:202–203, etc.).

Some 100 years later in 1971, however, another prophet, Joseph Fielding Smith, testified to exactly the opposite: ". . . I know. . .that God is omnipotent and omniscient; that he has *all* power and wisdom; and that his perfections consist in the possession of *all knowledge*, faith or power. . .and for that matter, the fullness of all godly attributes" (cited in J.M. Heslop and Dell R. Van Orden, *Joseph Fielding Smith: A Prophet Among the People*, p. 68; italics added. See also pages 59 and 69).

Both men were speaking in their capacities as president of the Church and yet, their doctrines were diametrically opposed.

2) How was Adam created? Brigham Young rigidly affirmed that God "created man, as we create our children; for there is no other process of creation in heaven or on earth" (*JD* 11:122). Similarly, he made it clear that Adam "was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made upon any other principle" (*JD* 3:319; see also *JD* 6:31; 9:283; and 4:218). In the *Deseret News*, December 27, 1913,

section 3, page 7, President Joseph F. Smith is quoted as saying that "Adam. . . was. . . born of woman into this world, the same as Jesus, and you and I."

Today's prophet, however, apparently does not agree, for he says: "The Creators breathed into their [Adam and Eve] nostrils the breath of life and man and woman became living souls. We don't know exactly how their coming into this world happened, and when we're able to understand it the Lord will tell us" (Spencer W. Kimball cited in the *Ensign*, March, 1976, p. 72; italics added). The qualifier *exactly* could be tricky, but the implications are clear, nevertheless.

Again, we have another face-off. Brigham Young says that Adam was born of woman into this world, and in fact, announces that he himself is a descendant of God in "both spirit *and* body" (JD 6:31; italics added). President Kimball, the living prophet, says we don't know. Through whom is the Lord speaking, anyway?

3) Is Adam our God and the Father of our spirits? Brigham Young, as many *Dialogue* readers are well aware, championed the affirmative. In a June 8, 1873, sermon, printed twice—once in the *Deseret News* on June 14, 1873, and again in the weekly edition four days later—he boldly asserted that Adam is our God, the father of our spirits, was an exalted being before coming to this earth—and that God revealed all of this to him! Brigham Young taught the Adam-God doctrine for over twenty years (see JD 1:50–51; General Conference address, October 8, 1854, Church Archives).

But today's prophet declares exactly the opposite: "We denounce that theory [the Adam-God theory] and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this. . . false doctrine" (*Church News*, October 9, 1976). An interesting sidelight is Bruce R. McConkie's remarks at BYU on June 1, 1980, regarding the seven deadly heresies of Mormonism. Though not the president of the Church, he was nevertheless quick to clarify the fact that the Adam-God doctrine was a heresy kept alive by the devil, and that anyone who believes it, in light of the temple endowment and the Book of Moses, "does not

deserve to be saved" ("The Seven Deadly Heresies." BYU, June 1, 1980, taped account).

The list does not stop here, by any means. We have Brigham Young declaring that the penalty for a white of the "chosen seed" marrying and "mixing his blood" with a black person "*under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so*" (JD 10:110; italics added). Yet, today, the law of God, which Brigham said could never be changed, definitely has been altered (Provo, Utah *Daily Herald*, August 23, 1981). For that matter, Brigham Young testified that blacks could "*never*" hold the priesthood "until the last ones of the residue of Adam's posterity are brought up to that favourable position" (JD 7:291). He made it clear that this would be *after* the resurrection (JD 2:143).

While it delights me to no end to see the "curse" removed and some of the early church teachings repudiated, still, more thorough explanations of the contradictions are needed. Though these issues are not new ones, the resolutions offered certainly have room for improvement.

Assurances to the effect that "the early brethren were merely walking with the best light they had," or "it doesn't matter one bit what was said by former prophets which contradicts the current one" appear weak, if not totally unacceptable. This kind of an explanation opens the door to all types of problems. For example, will today's truths spoken by the living prophet who can never lead us astray (Heber J. Grant, cited in *Ensign*, October, 1972, p. 7.) one day become tomorrow's heresies? If so, which ones? This certainly does not fit Paul's words that "the foundation of God standeth sure" (II Timothy 2:19).

As a consequence, I think it would be timely if *Dialogue* would publish some in-depth material on resolving conflicts such as those I have just mentioned. I am sure we would all have something to gain by it.

Loren Franck
Provo, Utah

ED. NOTE: See our next issue, Spring 1982.

second anointings

Ken Earl is incorrect in his assumption that second anointings have disappeared from current temple ceremonies. I personally know of one couple who received them from David O. McKay and two couples who have received them from Spencer Kimball. I assume there are many more. These people were counseled to talk about their experience with no one and to record in their journals only that they had received their second anointings. I couldn't get any more information from them.

Apparently the second anointings are the fulfillment of the promise given at the beginning of the endowment that if you are worthy you will be called up and anointed a King and a Priest or a Queen and a Priestess rather than "only to become such." I have heard that, many years ago, stake presidents had recommend forms for second anointings, but that now only the Twelve recommend worthy couples. If the Prophet is the only man (and I understand he is) who can perform this ceremony it would have to be limited to relatively few church members from the lack of his available time alone. Though probably relatively few church members are fully worthy of that ultimate anointing, and probably few of them come in contact with the Apostles.

Carrel H. Sheldon
Arlington, Massachusetts

pats. . .

I not only rejoice but also click my heels and clap my hands every time *Dialogue* appears in my mailbox. I appreciate your fine efforts. When my children are launched I am coming back to be your envelope stuffer—I could even be persuaded to make your beds!

Tammy J. Nichols
Redding, Calif.

Enclosed is my check for *Dialogue* for yet another year. You will see I continue to pay the going rate rather than the student rate, for which I could have qualified for the past six years. My conscience would

prick too painfully to do that, since I think you are fools to sell such a fine product so cheaply!

Lou Ann Stoker Dickson
Tempe, Arizona

ED. NOTE: *We are finally giving in. After ten years our rates were raised from \$20.00 to \$25.00 and \$10.00 to \$12.00. Thanks for staying with us!*

. . .and pans

I originally started receiving *Dialogue* as a gift subscription from a family member. Thus far I haven't read a single issue that hasn't left me somewhat agitated.

Admittedly, a few of the articles and poetry in *Dialogue* are sensitive and enlightening, but the general overtones are, from a Mormon point of view, negative and critical.

The fictional story "Another Angel" that appeared in the Summer 1981 issue was disgusting! Not only was the content offensive, it led to no apparent conclusion.

Dialogue—"a journal of Mormon thought" would have you believe its opinions are shared by so-called Mormon "thinkers" of our society. Judging from some of the letters to the editors, and from some of the articles that appear, it is this reader's opinion that *Dialogue* is written mainly by, and is most appealing to frustrated Mormons who haven't the courage to apostatize, nor the inner strength of character it takes to gain a personal testimony of the truth of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ and its living prophets!

Sharon Stephenson
Clarksburg, Md.

hang in there

With each issue of *Dialogue* I fight the urge to write and tell you how timely and meaningful the articles are to me. Lately it's been my only source of depth in the Church. But volume XIII (Winter 1980) with its article on art touched very close to home. I feel obligated to let you know how much I enjoyed it.

I am a senior studying music composition at Utah State University. This major is very difficult. Not only the study but having to put up with the social stigma against artists in general. Yet this choice involved a lot of serious reflection and eternal goals.

After showing my first popsy arrangement of "I Am a Child of God" to my advisor (who is Mormon and who tactfully woke me up), I've been fighting the homogenization of Mormon art. Until now it seemed I was alone and losing the battle.

My only regret is that the people who really needed to read that article probably spent the money on another clone of *Saturday's Warrior*.

If you ever stopped publishing I would give up the fight and apply for work at the Osmonds' studio.

Fearing I might miss a future issue, I've enclosed a check that should cover a two-year subscription.

David Michael Cottle
Logan, Utah

double call for literary papers

Two deadlines are coming up fast for sessions of the Association for Mormon Letters. The third annual East Coast session is tentatively planned for the first weekend in May in Boston. Paper proposals should be to Chad Wright, program chairman, at 1800 Jefferson Parkway, #301, Charlottesville, VA 22903, by April 1.

April 1 is also the deadline for paper proposals for an adjunct session of AML at the Modern Language Association's 1982 annual meeting set for December in Los Angeles. MLA members are invited to send proposals to Eugene England, English Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

Both programs will welcome proposals that critique Mormon literature's current trends, probe historical influences,

analyze literary aspects of the scriptures, or deal with other elements of Mormonism's literature.

food for poland

Trustee and founder, Eugene England announces the organization of *Food for Poland*. Michael Novak is chairman of the board with Isaac Singer, Bruno Bettelheim, Norman Cousins, George Romney, Sargent Shriver and Elizabeth Moynahan as members of the board. Other trustees are Ronald Okey and Marcia Jolley.

A tax-exempt foundation, *Food for Poland* is concentrating on transporting milk for the children of Poland. One dollar provides milk for one child for one week; ten dollars provides milk for ten children. Please send contributions to P.O. Box 7280, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602.