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## Letters to the Editor

### *A Nice House to Visit*

Volume 15, no. 1 was excellent. I especially liked the continuing discussion of the Roberts/Smith/Talmage debate over evolution and pre-Adamites.

A special touch in this issue was Jan Shipps's "An Inside-Outsider in Zion." As a non-Mormon with an eager interest in Mormon history and doctrine, I found her description of almost "stumbling upon" Mormonism and its magnetic attraction analogous to my own experience. But what I most identified with was her frequent experience of Mormons who could not understand how she could have studied so much about their religion and yet had not been baptized.

The only explanation I have for Mormons who ask this question is in the form of a rather plain analogy: Sometimes when I am invited to another person's home, I feel very comfortable with the warm hospitality, the surroundings, and may even be interested in the contents of the house, the bookshelves, what is on the wall, the history of the house, how it was built, and so on. Nevertheless, it might not be a house I would want to live in. I think this is the same with Jan Shipps's or my interest in Mormonism—it is a very interesting "house" with a long and interesting history, and it is very comfortable and enjoyable to visit and be welcomed in; but neither of us has any intention of moving in, because we already have comfortable homes which fit our particular needs.

I hope that in future issues you will ask other non-Mormons (awful term!) to express some of their impressions of their experiences with Mormons. I hope that any others will be as eloquent as Jan Shipps.

William P. Collins  
Haifa, Israel

### *Stirrings from Mormon in Motion*

On general principle I do not approve of authors who reply to critics who review their books. As a sometime reviewer, I respect the necessity of the reviewer for the greatest freedom. In the case of the review of my book, *Mormon in Motion* by William G. Hartley in the Spring 1982 issue of *DIALOGUE*, I am doubly hesitant because of the overall quality of the review and because I do not wish to appear unappreciative or insensible of the many compliments given me by the reviewer. On the other hand, I feel that I owe it to all the readers of *Mormon in Motion* to clear up several misapprehensions left by the review and trust that the readers of *DIALOGUE* will see my remarks in the broad context I have outlined.

One of the shortcomings with which I am charged by the reviewer is that I did not refer to the French Mission Manuscript History in the LDS Archives, "including such items not mentioned in *Mormon in Motion* as the fact that James was an ex-policeman. . . ." First of all, the value of the Manuscript History diminishes when one recognizes that for the years concerned, 1851–1854, it has been put together mostly of snippets from the journal of Curtis E. Bolton, interspersed with a few letters and news clippings. The fact is, of course, that I wrote that section of *Mormon in Motion* with Bolton's complete journal at my elbow and with a great deal more ample collection of news references and letters than are offered by the Manuscript History. The result is that there is in *Mormon in Motion* a more complete and accurate picture of the French Mission for the years that James H. Hart was there than in any other source.

The charge that I did not mention that James H. Hart was "an ex-policeman" is inexplicable; the fact is mentioned twice in

*Mormon in Motion*. Furthermore, the implication of “ex-policeman” is incorrect. On p. xvi of the Introduction, the second page of the book, is this statement: “When the Chartist uprisings took place, he [JHH] was recruited into the special constabulary raised in London to deal with them.” On pp. 38–39 is an elaboration that I inserted from a piece of writing JHH published in the *Idaho Statesman*, later copied in the *Deseret Evening News* for 23 December 1876: “During the Chartist riots in London, Louis Napoleon served in the Metropolitan Police Force with myself, in defense of Constitutional Monarchy.” Another source quoted immediately following the above states that 150,000 special constables were enrolled during that period of crisis. A careful check of London Metropolitan Police files reveals that the name of JHH is not on the lists. The 150,000 special constables recruited at the time of the Chartist riots were never considered full-fledged policemen; JHH’s term of service was restricted to a few days during the riots and threats of riot; and therefore to let stand a reference to him as “an ex-policeman” is a thoroughgoing misrepresentation of the facts which could have been avoided by even a hasty perusal of the book.

The “ex-policemen” bit has another serious angle to it also, since it suggests that the reviewer paid little attention to evaluating the source. The reference comes from a long letter inserted in the French Mission Manuscript History. The letter was written by Eugene A. Henriod in 1914, eight years after the death of JHH and over sixty years after the events being described in the letter. Henriod says at the beginning of the letter that he is writing “from recollection only, as my diary of early incidents was lost soon after coming to Utah.” Henriod and JHH were close friends in the French Mission, and undoubtedly the latter said something about his constabulary service that stuck in his friend’s mind. But the great lapse of time and Henriod’s warning that he was writing “from recollection only” should have alerted the historian to the

necessity of relying on the careful analysis found in *Mormon in Motion* rather than taking an inaccurate reminiscence at face value.

Two other defects are charged to my failure to refer to the French Mission Manuscript History. The first is that I did not record that a fellow missionary talked to Victor Hugo. This seems too frivolous to need comment. The second is that there is no reference to the fact that “the mission presidency including James issued a lengthy letter to French saints which summarized mission history for 1853 — the period skipped by James’ diary.” Two points of comment on this: the first is that the letter referred to is made up largely of self-congratulation and general admonition and does not have the historical worth to justify the space it would take to reproduce it — and boredom was not the author’s intention. Secondly, though actual diary entries for 1853 are scarce in JHH’s diary, the information in his biography is by no means sparse but is integrated with his life story.

This leads me to my conclusion. I am sympathetic with and understand a historian’s impatience, if not frustration, at not finding in a book the things he is avid about: a bibliography, “a solid summary of the French mission,” footnotes that look scholarly in place of interpolated references intended to make the going easier for the average reader, and nicely tabulated lists of immigrants and their places of origin. Were I a historian, I should also lament that the book “disappoints a little.” I can only offer as a defense that *Mormon in Motion* should not be read for what it is not; it is not a history of the French Mission, it is not a history of the immigration policies and practices of the Church, and it is not a history of how Church wards and stakes functioned in pioneer Idaho. It is a biography of a man who became remarkable to me in the process of discovering him — as full and complete as I could make it on the basis of accessible facts and without resort to that kind of fiction known as psychological reconstruction.

Edward L. Hart  
Provo, Utah

*Father's Testimony*

I received the Spring 1982 DIALOGUE yesterday, and read with great interest the history of the Adam-God Doctrine by David John Buerger.

I was born November 1915 so this doctrine has been part of the mainstream of my life. I had a father who studied scriptures and shared them with his family. I was his youngest living child and did much writing for him of his compilations of references in support of this concept — Michael, Jehovah, and Eloheim, representing the Father, Son, and Spirit.

For me, it is unthinkable to depart from or forsake so many evidences of eternal truth which these references contain.

In addition to my father's testimony, I have found many Christian evidences — before Mormonism, of the Eloheim (in Hebrew) being the divine Spirit that directed the work of Creation. Jehovah is the Redeemer and Beloved Son Jesus Christ. The Ancient of Days is the Father and God of the human family!

In an age when leaders are exempt from making mistakes, I believe it is important to rely on the evidence of truth, more than what a few leaders approve, because their denouncements do not give intelligent answers to anyone's positive questions. As members of the Church we are required to sit and listen, and respond with undoubting and unquestioning trust in *whoever* is chosen to lead us. With no voice and no choice, is this being true to one's self? I do not believe it is!

Rhoda Thurston  
Hyde Park, Utah

*Pro-Choice House of Cards*

Though I am a bit tardy in doing so I must make some reply to the paeon to pro-choice on abortion offered in your women's issue by Judith Rasmussen Dushku. I begin by presuming that rational thought is the only acceptable basis for civilized communication on any issue. Deny this and we

deny the very thing that separates man from the animals and makes human choice possible at all. Animals emote and feel; human beings reason and can thus put their "feelings" under scrutiny. If we do not agree with this then there is nothing to discuss because discussion is impossible. But then no one has any obligation to take seriously or even listen to a voice that refuses the demands of coherent rational thought.

Pushed by rational thought, however, the pro-choice position proves itself as slighter than a house of cards very rapidly. Take any of the tearful situations which Mrs. Dushku says she heard at the conference. For example, suppose a fetus/child with some sort of mental handicap. Does Mrs. Dushku suppose that the parents of a five-year-old child are free to decide to kill it if it has handicaps? That is preposterous and she knows it. Why kill the fetus then? Because you can't see it? I cannot believe anyone would really make such a claim. You can go down the list of her cases for yourself. In every one the proposition that the parents should be permitted to kill a living human being to relieve their own burdens is morally ridiculous. This is especially true as a matter of law and public policy, which the pro-choice position pretends to be. We make choices as a society about who counts and who doesn't. And we do not let parents, teachers, or caretakers decide these matters for themselves. The analogy to slavery in the South fits nicely at this point. Either the slave was a human being in legal and policy terms or he/she wasn't. If the slave was a human being, then the beliefs or feelings of the white southerners were irrelevant and impermissible as the basis of acceptable law, regardless of how religiously based those beliefs appeared to be.

The nub of the question is thus not feelings of choice but the fetus. Is it or isn't it a human being? I cannot answer that question here. But at this point the cogency of the pro-choice position evaporates. If the fetus is a human being, then the mother has no right to choose to kill it regardless

of her personal beliefs or feelings. But if the fetus is not a human being for purposes of law and policy, as the Supreme Court maintains, then it would seem to be a high point of moral irresponsibility to inflict an existence of squalor and deprivation on such a being. If it is not a human being then abortion is no more than another form of contraception; and just as we would charge a poor unwed mother with being irresponsible for not practicing adequate contraception so we should charge her with being irresponsible for not aborting her pregnancy. All of this, of course, presupposes that we believe that the fetus is not a human being.

The pro-choice position is nothing but a massive obfuscation of the central issues involved. Once looked at rationally it falls apart rapidly. Hopefully Mrs. Dushku has not mired herself in this nonsensical position and is ready to move to a consideration of the real issues at stake.

Richard Sherlock  
Memphis, Tennessee

### *Third Wave Feminists*

If Laurel Ulrich wants to propose her "old house at 380 Dedham Street in Newton" for "historic recognition," I wish her well. Women do not celebrate themselves enough. I am in favor of all the plaques, monuments, and medals we can muster.

But let us be fair while we celebrate. For her inscription, Ulrich proposes these words: "Here, in this ordinary-looking, gambrel-roofed house, the second genera-

tion of Mormon feminists was born." Let us pass by for the moment the question of whether, in 1970, there might just possibly have been *other* groups of Mormon women, meeting elsewhere than in Laurel Ulrich's house, to discuss the meaning of the women's movement for Mormons. Let us instead simply give one reminder. The *second* generation of Mormon feminists were born in the early years of the century. These were the women that, among other things, got us the vote. These women worked, fought, crusaded, and endured in the cause for more than fifty years before the gathering in Newton took place. Great Mormon women carried the banner for half a century without wearying. Some precious few of them still march in the front ranks despite their advanced years. In the smallish community of Provo alone, certain names are legend: Algie Ballif, Thelma Weight, Helen Stark, Fern and Anna Taylor—these and other women whose perseverance, courage, devotion, and wisdom inspire those of us in the *third* wave of Mormon feminism.

No, Laurel. The second generation of Mormon feminism was not born in your Newton home. Not even the third generation. But what happened in your home *was* important, as were the awakenings going on all over the Church at that time and since, quietly and unnoticed. You are right to celebrate the event. May we all have many more such occasions to commemorate as the years pass.

Elouise M. Bell  
Orem, Utah

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### ANNOUNCING — The Annual New Messenger & Advocate Writing Awards

*Beginning 15 March, New Messenger & Advocate research grants of up to \$100 each, funded by anonymous donors, will be awarded to research proposals dealing with contemporary issues. Proposals will be accepted or rejected within thirty days of submission until the deadline, 15 August 1983. A \$200 award will also be given to the best unpublished manuscript on any current issue. Exclusively Mormon topics are discouraged but a Mormon point of view or the inclusion of Mormonism in a wider evaluation is acceptable. Manuscripts longer than 5500 words are discouraged. Articles should conform to the standards of news feature or magazine journalism without lengthy documentation. The entries must be typed, double-spaced originals. They will not be returned. Any number of entries may be submitted. Submissions must include a separate cover sheet listing the author's name, permanent mailing address, title of entry, and certification that the submission is original, unpublished, and not entered in another competition or submitted for publication. Research proposals and entries should be sent to New Messenger & Advocate Awards, Kevin G. Barnhurst, Keene State College, 229 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431.*