

LETTERS

Depressed Women

"Depression in Mormon Women" by Bluhm, Spendlove, and West (Summer 1986, pp. 150-55) referred to our article, "Conflict Secondary to Overt Paradoxes in Belief Systems — The Mormon Woman Example" (Rodney W. Burgoyne and Robert H. Burgoyne, *Journal of Operational Psychiatry* 8, no. 2 [1977]: 39-44). They indicated that we had said that Mormon women were especially susceptible to depression, which we did not say. Their article also listed in the bibliography the KSL-TV production of "Three Faces of Depression: The Woman." As one of the authors, Rodney was asked in that production if he thought that Mormon women were more depressed than other women. His answer was no. We certainly did not "scapegoat" the Mormon church.

Bluhm *et al.* very nicely showed that LDS women are no more depressed than non-LDS women. However, they also showed that LDS women are no *less* depressed. The Church teaches "men are that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25). This is a reason that some Mormon women *are* more depressed!

Robert H. Burgoyne
Salt Lake City, Utah

Growing Up With DIALOGUE

What I *love* about DIALOGUE is the love that permeates its pages. I so appreciate the feelings of warmth and striving to empathize and communicate with its readership which each generation of editors has exhibited.

At the ripe old age of thirty-three, I'm sure I seem too young to have grown up

with twenty years of DIALOGUE, but thanks to inquiring parents, I am, in a sense, a charter member.

While DIALOGUE is now standard issue in my own home as well, I haven't always kept up with it in the intervening years of migratory maturity. However, whenever I have sat myself down with an issue at any time in these twenty years, my expectations were never deflated. Invariably I have been impressed with the general quality of the articles (including the letters to the editor, which often qualify as my husband's favorite entry in any particular issue), the range of topics treated, and the calibre of the writing.

More important than any of this, however, is that I always find something waiting just for me. As recently as in the Spring 1987 anniversary volume, I was touched and inspired by Dian Saderup's personal essay, "Turning." If I were to single out all the articles which have helped me in establishing personal goals, articulating philosophies and initiating commitments, this would become a very long tribute indeed.

The freedom to explore a variety of viewpoints in the reasonably tranquil environment which DIALOGUE consistently offers is very much appreciated.

As I survey my twenty years' relationship, I am struck anew by the remarkable cohesiveness and integrity which DIALOGUE has maintained. The feeling of finding a refuge for my reflections remains as strong today as it was so many years ago when I first began an idle browse through the new journal occupying a prominent position in my childhood home.

Am I being too upbeat? I think not! Your hours of earnest labor and all-

encompassing sense of dedication are reflected in every issue. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to say thanks for a job we find well done.

Kimberlee Staking
Upper Darby, Pennsylvania

Pots

Robert L. Marshall's painting, *Pots Series #4* on the back of the navy-blue Spring 1987 issue took my breath away. It was so lovely.

R. Iverson
Brigham City, Utah

New Kind of Mormon

About two years ago, after several years of violent mental upheaval, I recovered my composure and decided to remain in the fold. On 25 January 1987, I entered the thirtieth year of my conversion. Shortly after baptism, I had started reading Hugh Nibley's *Era* articles and books to strengthen my testimony. Then I attended BYU and tried to absorb what I could by attending religious courses, lectures, and symposia while I pursued an M.A. in linguistics. During these two years in Provo I discovered *DIALOGUE* and obtained a copy of Duane Jeffrey's "Seers, Savants, and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface." I enrolled in the classes of Hugh Nibley, S. Kent Brown, Wilfred Griggs, and Thomas McKay and attended lectures by Arthur Henry King, Truman G. Madsen, Robert J. Mathews, and Leonard J. Arrington. Tony Hutchinson and Avraham Gileadi were my contemporary graduate students.

I returned to Japan satisfied with my advancement of knowledge in the pursuit of truth. Naturally I was a liberal by then. In a few years, I began to subscribe to *DIALOGUE*. It seemed to me that the journal plunged into a radically critical and sceptical period as did *Sunstone*. I classified myself as a Liahona by Richard D.

Poll's definition and moved into the fourth group of Anthony A. Hutchinson's division of LDS scholars (Spring 1982), those who take a critical hermeneutic stand in their approach to the Bible. Some knowledge of the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch and the form criticism of the Gospels were already a part of my understanding of scripture.

And so it became very difficult for me to accept the Book of Mormon literally. Particularly troublesome were very minute descriptions of future events, the presence of Americanisms, quotations from second Isaiah, and parallels with Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. I had no difficulty in understanding and identifying with papers that raised questions about the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Especially I felt an echo in my heart as I read William D. Russell's articles, "A Further Inquiry into the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 7, no. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1982, pp. 20-27) and "History and the Mormon Scriptures," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983, pp. 53-63). In like manner, through reading and reasoning, I came to doubt the truthfulness of the First Vision.

Then I read a serious personal essay by Kent L. Walgren, "Some Sentimental Thoughts on Leaving the Fold," *DIALOGUE* 13 (Winter 1980). I struggled with a succession of articles on B. H. Roberts's "Book of Mormon Difficulties." The "Interview With Sterling M. McMurrin" (Spring 1984) was a finishing blow. I suffered deeply, was desperately disappointed, and felt betrayed. My countenance became gloomy, and my heart felt very heavy for quite a while. On the other hand, I felt released from all the questions, free of every misty feeling. I even felt I reached a higher plane. And the crisis of the upset and shock subsided.

After contemplation, I decided to remain in the fold, retaining the good elements of a positive life-style and sense of values. Thus a new kind of Mormon was born in Japan.

What kind of role can and should I play in Japan? And what role do I expect DIALOGUE to play? I certainly would like to continue my life as an investigator after truth and, at the same time, be of some help for those who will follow a similar course. And as for DIALOGUE, I expect it to be what its name states and remain a source of precious information and thoughts which will help readers such as I restructure the philosophy of life and make us mentally and intellectually rich.

Jiro Numano
Kudamatsu, Japan

Empathy, Not Confusion

I am grateful for the help Jan Stout's essay on homosexuality (Summer 1987) gives us in understanding better the causes of sexual difference and thus possibly increasing our openness and empathy. But I find a serious problem with his argument, one that I fear will only increase moral and spiritual confusion, for homosexuals and for all of us.

Stout reviews the evidence that has been developed in the last ten years that homosexuality and other conditions "once thought to be entirely psychological in origin" are "profoundly influenced by genes and neurochemistry" (p. 30). The evidence, though as yet inconclusive, is quite strong, and it seems to me probably true that a large proportion, if not all, of those attracted to their own sex do not "choose" that attraction and therefore are not morally responsible for their condition. The problem with Stout's argument is that he moves beyond this insight to a logical breakdown that is morally confusing: "Many people, in and out of the Church, seem to want homosexuals held fully accountable for their sexual feelings and behavior. Yet, if conscious choice is not involved, can we legitimately invoke the charge of sin?" (p. 37). Sexual *feelings* may not be consciously chosen, but sexual *behavior* can be, and when sexual behavior

of *any* kind violates understood commandments or natural laws, then it surely is sin — and inevitably destructive.

Unfortunately, many of us in our society, including many Mormons, have failed to distinguish between homosexual feelings and homosexual activity, condemning both as sinful — sometimes in ways that are ignorant, intolerant, certainly unChristian. But many homosexuals, and many therapists, like Stout, who obviously feel great empathy for the suffering of homosexuals, have reacted in ways that merely compound the same confusion: They suggest that since the feelings are not sinful then neither is related sexual expression. I think both positions are wrong and that the scriptures and modern prophets are right when they make no judgment of homosexual feeling but condemn clearly *any* erotic activity outside of heterosexual marriage, including specifically *all* homosexual intercourse (see Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:22–28; 1 Cor. 6:9; 2 Ne. 13:9).

It seems to me that the proper model for Mormons is to hold firmly to the laws of married fidelity, which suggest that a heterosexual bipolar union of a man and a woman is what makes possible not only the creation of mortal bodies on earth but also is necessary for the creation of spirit children and new universes, "a continuation of the seeds forever" in the fullest expression of self and relationship possible — what we call godhood. Mormons should make no judgments about homosexual feelings, unless of course such feeling are merely adopted or surrendered to as a form of cultural or psychological confusion or a form of self-love. But the overwhelming evidence of the scriptures and modern revelation (and, I think, common sense) is that though perhaps 10 percent of men and a lesser number of women are affected by the genetic and embryonic forces that produce homosexuality, it is not an eternal condition or a viable alternative to celestial heterosexual marriage as the supreme basis for divine self-fulfillment and creativity.

What then are we to say to homosexuals, who, as Stout points out, are asking, "Why did God make me this way?" and are facing the peculiar distress that they are commanded "to reject the behavior as well as the feelings and fantasies that invade the consciousness of sexual awareness" (p. 39). I think we should say about the same things we have to say to many, perhaps all the rest of us human beings, who also ask, "Why did God make me this way?"

The longer I live the more I'm convinced that every human being has at least one cross to bear that he did not "choose," and though some, perhaps most, such crosses are not as difficult to bear as homosexuality, some are *more* difficult: Because of accidents, physical appearance, or handicaps many more than 10 percent of humans in our culture are unable to enjoy normal sexual expression and marriage and have to settle for a life devoid of sexual intimacy, even affection. Are *they* to be excused from any "charge of sin" if they pursue sexual expression in forbidden or destructive ways, say with prostitutes? Even many who are able to marry are afflicted with frigidity, impotence, excessive sexual desire, accidents, disease, or other conditions which make compatible sexual relations impossible. Are *they* to be freed from the moral responsibility, sealed by solemn temple covenants, to endure in fidelity to their companions simply because nature has "played a trick" on them, as some homosexuals are arguing for themselves? I think not. That kind of moral confusion would just as reasonably condone genetically or developmentally caused violence (such as in Klinefelter's syndrome) or psychologically caused sexual abuse and would logically lead finally to pure determinism, probably the most destructive idea ever to afflict mortal beings.

I know this sounds like hard doctrine, and I only feel brave enough to preach it because I have not only seen people endure crosses at least as difficult as the challenge to live as a chaste homosexual but

I am enduring some of my own crosses which I think are at least comparable. I, too, would sometimes like to be exempted, because I did not choose my afflictions, from the general moral laws God has clearly and consistently taught as the basis for healthy eternal existence. But that kind of thinking only ends up making my cross harder to bear, because it is simply rationalization.

Mormonism is unique in claiming that we all *chose*, with some knowledge of what we faced, to come into a world where genuine choices could be made, despite natural restrictions, and thus moral growth could occur. We did this even though we knew that the freedom from God's control necessary for such purposeful development would also result in many conditions and "accidents" according to natural law that would result in genuine crosses for all of us to bear. But Mormonism is also unique in promising that all such crosses will be removed as we leave mortality and that our final judgment and eternal progression will be free from their effects. For instance, we will all be provided, in that long period of continued probation after death when we are no longer limited by the genetic, developmental, and psychological burdens of mortality, a time and way to work out a one-to-one heterosexual relationship that is the basis for godhood and to be judged only according to our response to opportunities there that are the same for all of us.

We in the Church must learn better how to understand and fully accept homosexuals as fellow mortals with crosses like our own. Essays like Stout's can help heterosexuals improve in Christian empathy and response and can perhaps help homosexuals increase in self-respect and thus better endure the prejudice and fear that their particular cross engenders. But to encourage homosexuals in any way to think that the range of expression of feeling acceptable to the Lord includes extramarital erotic activity or homosexual marriage is to do them a disservice and to

undermine the courage that they, like all of us, must have in order to bear their cross and make the best they can of it here in morality, within the moral laws clearly set forth by God and his prophets.

Eugene England
Provo, Utah

EDITOR'S NOTE: R. Jan Stout's response will appear in the next issue.

Caring Enough to Risk

I have my first issue of *DIALOGUE* before me and have just finished reading my first article, "The Veil," by Mary Bradford (Spring 1987).

Thank you for offering answers to a very difficult problem in my family. I am the eldest of four living sisters. Our parents celebrated their fiftieth anniversary last August. Mother was sickly as a child and an invalid by her late teens. She was told to never marry. When she did finally marry in her mid twenties, doctors warned her never to have children. Two and a half years later she dealt with that monumental decision.

Mother has always been a cure-yourself person, consulting medical doctors only a few times in her life. Her cure-alls and home remedies have resulted in much teasing and sometimes hard words from her children. Her sometimes unthinkable and dangerous remedies have worried us all. Over the last twenty years our father has moved from criticism to alliance. As children, we have really been concerned for their lives and were so thankful when President Kimball went to medical doctors for treatment, thinking this would encourage Mom and Dad to see specialists. It made no difference.

Your article has helped me see my role differently. I no longer need to be the one to change my parents. Their decisions and choices are the result of experiences that happened long before I was born. I, too, do not need to probe looking for reasons and answers. It is enough to know that

we were born, cared for, loved, and raised by parents who did their best. My burden has been self-inflicted, and I no longer need to carry it. I will not dread and fear the future with my parents. I am sure that when they are gone, I will not suffer the guilt that my past behavior would surely have caused me.

Thank you for sharing and caring enough to risk.

Sonia Peterson Aycok
Ephraim, Utah

Southern Mormon History

Recent research has led me to some interesting Mormon history in the deep South, as well as to a lot of people interested in the subject, both Mormon and non-Mormon.

Anyone interested in forming an infant Southern Mormon History Association to exchange ideas, research efforts, and tall tales, please contact me. I'm not promising any instant meetings or mailings, but I would like to gather a mailing list for future use.

Ken Driggs
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Problems Solved

I have read and reread several times "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source" by Blake T. Ostler (Spring 1987). Each time its ideas thrill me.

The "Isaiah" problem was tentatively solved for me when I found a passage in the Book of Mormon where two groups of people met and one group did not have all the scriptures that the other had. The latter group then copied the missing passages from the former. Unfortunately, I can't remember where in the book I found this. Most of my problems with the Book of Mormon are usually solved over a period of time. Sometimes a long time. But that is where faith comes in.

Thanks again to Brother Ostler and *DIALOGUE* for the essay.

Richard F. Mittleman
Downey, California

Thank-you, All

A kaleidoscope of memories rushed over me as I read Eugene England's essay on the founding of *DIALOGUE* in the Spring 1987 issue. Safely stored in me are so many faces, moments, and lessons learned from my association with *DIALOGUE*. I owe a debt to all the founding editors, and from the vantage point of twenty years, it has become impossible to separate my ongoing loyalty to the journal from the love I have developed for some of these people and the qualities that led them to found *DIALOGUE*.

I stumbled on my first issue of *DIALOGUE* in the Honors Program Office at BYU. I read it and liked it. At the time, I was oblivious to the strange juxtaposition of honors director Robert K. Thomas with his assistant, Richard D. Poll. Years later, however, I would muse over the combination and wonder just how *DIALOGUE* came to be sold in that office, the only place on campus at that time. I soon developed two lasting traditions: I always renewed my subscription — and I always scanned the index for that England fellow's name. I had no idea he was one of the editors; I just loved his writing.

After graduation I took a job in Redondo Beach, California, and in the spring of 1968, I volunteered my help to the congressional campaign of Kent Lloyd, a member of *DIALOGUE*'s Board of Editors. This resulted, some months later, in my being asked to do fund raising for *DIALOGUE*. Meanwhile, a short trip to Palo Alto had changed my life. I loved that town. Three weeks into a one-week visit I flew home, filled my VW with all my earthly goods, and moved to the Bay Area. Soon I was a member of the Stanford student ward and, somewhere in all that, I

met Eugene England. I never knew him extremely well. He was a very busy teacher and family man. I was a student, and our paths crossed. He taught the best Book of Mormon class I've ever attended, listening so well to students that he could tell them they were wrong without provoking rebellion. But even with his excellent teaching and strong testimony, I doubt that he could have continued to teach without the loyalty of the new institute director, Joseph Muran.

Storm clouds were building in Gene's life. He had spoken against the war in Viet Nam before it was the fashion, and he had lent his support to an LDS student who wished to claim conscientious objector status. In some places this made him unpopular. When his connection with that "heretical" journal was added to this, the attempts to stifle him grew. I particularly remember the peaceful response of the Englands, especially Charlotte. She became, for me, a role model for peace.

The Englands also introduced me to the Zenger family, fellow *DIALOGUE* supporters. I found a place to live in their home and was present when the newly selected editors, led by Robert Rees, came from Los Angeles to present a plan to save the journal financially. I was so inspired I gave money to the cause! Having done so, I was soon commissioned to encourage others to do the same.

My favorite experience as a fundraiser involved Hal Eyring, then my bishop in the Stanford Ward. I explained the current situation and expressed my belief that *DIALOGUE* was worth saving. He took out his checkbook and suggested an amount. I suggested double that, smiled, and added, "If I can, you can." There was a definite pause and a quizzical look, but he wrote the check.

Not long after this the L. A. group asked me if I would do a similar fundraising effort in Provo and Salt Lake. They also asked me to hand carry the proof copy for advertising the issue on blacks and the priesthood to the *BYU Daily Universe*. To

cut expenses, a friend from Stanford drove me to Utah and loaned me his car for the work. I lived with several DIALOGUE supporters while working in Utah and found a helpful network of friends of DIALOGUE.

DIALOGUE was finally being sold in the BYU bookstore, and each new edition was advertised in the *Universe*. However, I believe the editors were concerned about renewed resistance, and they were right. When I arrived at the *Universe* offices the editor said he was very unhappy to have to tell me that they could no longer carry our advertising. This was by order of Robert K. Thomas, who was now BYU's Academic Vice-President. I persisted long enough to obtain a private meeting with Dr. Thomas. Our meeting was not long. Dr. Thomas spoke of his friendship and admiration for Gene and of his reservations about DIALOGUE. I asked him if he had read the new issue, with Lester Bush's article on blacks and Mormonism and responses to it. He said that he had. I asked him if he thought it was accurate. He acknowledged that he had found no inaccuracies. I asked him if there was any material which, though accurate, he had found to be presented in a biased or inflammatory manner. He said that there was not.

So, I then asked him why he would not allow us to advertise this issue in the *Universe*. He stated that he felt it would be unsettling to the students and, on the whole, better for them not to see it. He was calm and pleasant and not about to change his mind. I was calm and pleasant, and I thoroughly disagreed with his conclusion. I still do. But this seemed a decision he had the right to make, and I could see no use in arguing. That was an important moment for me. As I left his office, feeling no anger, I knew that there was room for both of us in the Church and that I was finally learning the ways of peace. That issue of DIALOGUE was still sold in the

bookstore but was moved to an obscure shelf in the back.

After that I returned to Palo Alto. Rumors continued to circulate, casting doubt on the Englands' testimonies and predicting (sometimes even reporting!) their apostasy. I took some small pleasure in quietly asking certain people if the news had reached them that Gene was currently teaching at St. Olaf College where he had been called to serve as Branch President and Charlotte as District Relief Society President. During this difficult period, I never saw Gene or Charlotte do or say anything that was not in the best tradition of dialogue and peace. And this, of course, is why they are inseparably linked with the journal in my heart and mind.

Eventually, I married that student who loaned me his car. Gene and Charlotte, on a summer visit to Palo Alto, spoke at our wedding. We now live in Colorado where my husband teaches physics, and I teach the gospel doctrine class. More than once I have used DIALOGUE in my lessons and have often recommended it to others. But I have come to understand that what was important to me wasn't so much the articles I read in DIALOGUE as my knowledge that they could be published. I also have learned that the true "friends of DIALOGUE" are not found exclusively on the list of subscribers but also among all people who have a spirit of peace and openness and who value the agency of all people — and that some who claim to support the journal have harmed it with their hostility to those who do not.

Many people gave much to the birth, growth, and life of DIALOGUE. I know that Gene and Charlotte were not alone in their sacrifice and that the journal's achievements have come because it began and continued in the hearts of peaceful people. Thank you, Charlotte. Thank you, Gene. Thank you, all.

Donna Witter Fairbank
Fort Collins, Colorado