

*Gnosticism Revisited*

May I offer a contrasting view to Bertrand Barrois's engaging essay, "Gnosticism Reformed," which appeared in the spring 1994 issue. I believe it is misleading to call Mormonism reformed Gnosticism. It never was predominantly Gnostic, and on the pivotal issue of the nature and significance of matter, it ended up antithetical to dualism, which is at the heart of ancient Gnosis. Although modern forms of Gnosticism have tended to be monistic, this is not the basis for comparison in Barrois's treatment. Further, his vilification of early Gnostics is simplistic and ill-founded.

Mormonism, clearly, embodies traits and teachings of Gnosis—some of them major, including a few not mentioned directly: the generation of fresh scripture and new mythology, the doctrine that humans share in the divine nature, the accessibility of direct revelation to all believers, and, arguably, the conception that evil stems from a break within the godhead. Most salient among features noted by Barrois is the preoccupation with knowledge itself—in Mormonism the impossibility of being saved in ignorance and the revelation that intelligence, light, and truth are the very glory of God. This preoccupation in Mormonism is not limited to, nor even centered principally upon, "secret knowledge" as in the temple endowment, nor was this the main thrust of knowledge in Gnosis. "Acquaintance," as some now translate the word *gnosis*, bespeaks a mystical approach to Deity central to Gnosticism and powerfully suggested in Mormonism. In Gnosticism acquaintance is the growing intuition of one's own true and divine character. On this

point the two are close indeed.

The article begs some questions, such as whether there really can be a true Christian orthodoxy. Mormonism by virtue of its existence says no. Barrois, judging both Gnosticism and Mormonism by "orthodox" standards, says yes, backing himself from Pauline sources. St. Paul, however, long mustered by apologists of orthodoxy inveighing against heretics, held many more Gnostic positions than Barrois acknowledges. Orthodoxy defined itself partly by marginalizing and hereticating Gnosis, a process detrimental to both sides. The range of Christian beliefs was narrowed through exaggeration of differences. Addressing Mormons and Mormonism, as Barrois does, as though they were part of the Christian establishment, on the one hand, while elsewhere distinguishing them from Christians and making them at the same time reformist Gnostics is no tribute, incidentally, to the Gnostic revival in Mormonism, such as it is. Christian Gnostics thought themselves Christian, as do Mormons: yet another similarity.

Mormonism, however, despite the similarities, is a separate syncretic development, sharing with Gnosis, to be sure, the very disposition to syncretize, from which the Christian establishment, with notable exceptions, has shrunk. Leaving aside the issue of where the seeming Gnostic elements in Mormonism came from, what we can say is that they mostly belong to a later phase than the Book of Mormon and the initial evangelical impulse. It is perhaps more accurate to say that Mormonism as originally constituted was soon altered by Gnostic ideas; that it was gradually modified, enriched, and complicated by teachings

arguably Gnostic in content if not in origin; and is, therefore, really Mormonism Reformed. If Mormonism is Gnosticism reformed, the reform movement came first, the Gnosticism later. The Gnostic branch was grafted onto a trunk of evangelical Christianity, already much reformed.

In fairness, Barrois is talking about the net result, not the chronology. Even so, the notion of Mormonism and Gnosticism reformed would have to mean that Mormonism is an improvement upon Gnosis, a valid position only if we allow the sweeping denigration and dismissal of Gnosis based on Barrois's tacit criteria, i.e., his pro-orthodox, moralistic, pragmatic, and crypto-sectarian biases. Many students of Gnosis—such as Robert Haardt, G. R. S. Mead, Steven Runciman, or R. McL. Wilson—take a more favorable, or at least more objective, view of the Gnostic phenomenon, as do some of Barrois's own sources, Elaine Pagels and Kurt Rudolph. Works published by the Theosophical Society, including a lucid introduction by Kenneth Rexroth, take a still more sympathetic approach, as do commentaries by Karl G. Jung. Dismissing early Gnostics by means of patristic polemics and caricatures in the face of these reassessments and new primary sources provided by the Nag Hammadi *cache* leaves the Gnostic orientation undervalued as well as unrefuted. Gnosticism and Mormonism alike must be judged on their merits as well as on their defects. If Gnosticism was a body of thought worth keeping and reforming, it should be described as such and its adherents accorded due respect. Then it must be established that Mormonism is, in the key areas, an improvement over it. This, without the

aforesaid biases, cannot be done. Gnosticism was successful on its own terms, which Mormonism denies in crucial areas, thus nullifying major aspects of the Gnostic ethos. (See below.) This is subversion and revolution rather than reform. On some points Mormonism could as readily be termed Gnosticism Deformed. (See below.)

One of the great differences between Gnosticism and Mormonism is evident in the shared doctrine of continuing revelation, which provided the means of authentication for extra-biblical teachings. If divine inspiration did not cease with the Hebrew-generated "deposit of faith," it is easier to accept Gnostic or Mormon beliefs. However, it was an aim of Christian Gnostics, and of their original scriptures, to liberate the gospel from "the Jewish envelope in which they had received it . . ." (Wilson, 68). Mormonism, on the other hand, is partly an attempt to put it snugly back into that envelope. This difference is bigger than Barrois seems to think (p. 250, para. 3), and does it spell reform? The mock-biblical, authoritarian tone of much Mormon writing has been noted.

Still, the greatest, most irreconcilable difference between Gnosticism and Mormonism centers on the problem of matter—the vast gulf between Joseph Smith's monistic materialism and Gnostic dualism, according to which, matter is the makings of the counterfeit world in which, according to Gnostics, we all are stuck. Smith's late revision and denial of the matter-spirit duality through the materializing of spirit (for Barrois a positive moment—p. 250, top) flies in the face of even moderate Christian dualism, let alone the radical opposition of light

and darkness, good and evil, etc., with which ancient Gnosticism is always identified. Barrois is aware of this (p. 244, lines 1, 2) but fails to make the due inference. The problem is exacerbated in the doctrine, believed by many Mormons, that God is an exalted man, which may well be an oriental, Gnostic idea misapprehended by a Westerner, with resultant garbled teaching. This could be the Gnostic conception of the *anthropos* in disguise—the image of God in man. Smith's version, however, seems to qualify the Deity by reference to the animal species of man, rather than qualifying us as a nature emanated from God's presence and essence. Not everyone would agree on the importance of this strange role reversal; but if it was not a major errant blow in the forging of Mormon doctrine, it at least divorced Mormonism from one of the cardinal identifying characteristics of ancient Gnosticism; thus it becomes impossible to draw the most fundamental parallel between them. Mormonism in this respect is neither a reformed version of Gnosticism nor of Christian orthodoxy. It is radically different and original. The antipodal relationship of Gnosticism to Mormonism on this point is borne out in Mormon breeding tendencies, as well as in the eschatological, teleological, and soteriological valuation of the family, *versus* the Gnostic reluctance to get offspring at all. Awareness of the divine will to give us bodies justifies our sometimes unreflecting biological colonizing habits, as spirits wait to get clay tabernacles without which the rise to deification is interdicted. This is antithetical to the ancient Gnostic view of material existence as a limiting, demonically manipulated, yet temporary trap. Some Gnostic synonyms for

the human body are "dark enclosure," "portable grave," and "resident brigand" *versus* the Mormon commonplace that "the body is a temple." Inferring the nature of God from a mortal state, as in the King Follett Discourse, would, to a Gnostic, represent what fifth-century "pseudo-Dionysius" regarded as being "stuck in the fictional appearances." Surely it remains possible for Mormons as individuals to disavow radical materialism and anthropomorphism and to see Smith's late teachings as the exercises in mythologizing that they were. But the question remains: In what important sense can Mormon materialism be said to constitute reform *vis-à-vis* Gnostic dualism? It is its negation.

I disagree with the dismissal of Gnostic soteriology (p. 242, para. 2). Salvation theory stems from the sense of cosmic, ontological loss, which for Gnostics, believing themselves confined to "the realm of fate" and to "the confusion," must be as great as anyone's, if not worse. Salvation through enlightenment and wisdom is still a species of salvation whether or not the orthodox find it adequate, and is appropriate to the mythological and conceptual Gnostic orientation. Dualism demands a spiritual not a material redemption and is unreformable in this regard as well. Docetism is consistent with Gnostic principles, though not all Gnostics were docetists. The literal incarnation is less consistent, but some Gnostics, including Valentinus, still believed it. Barrois unaccountably links docetism to "nihilism," dismissing it out of hand (p. 245, para. 2). Bardesanes, probably author of the "lovely hymn" referred to by Barrois, was a docetist. In Mormonism, one reflects, we have the literal incarnation and resurrection, the physical basis

for godhood, but not the hymn, since, from Barrois's perspective, we have reformed away the basis for it—i.e., radical dualism—even though I am quite sure that, given the opportunity, the membership at large would be Gnostic enough to canonize it. It escapes me how Barrois can deny the relationship of salvation to moral effort in Gnosis (p. 242, para. 4). Righteousness for Gnosticism is wisdom rooted in reflection, which keeps one radically aware of the transitoriness and the dangers of this life, its material powers, and its pleasures. Gnosticism does question and deny the absolute linkage of spiritual enlightenment to ethics. It is true that the worst is "... to be called ignorant" (Meyer, 44), not committing fleshly misdeeds. This stress on reasoning power and divine light, including the innate spiritual spark in us, as seen in the *Dialogue of the Savior* (see Emmel) and elsewhere, yields a positive rather than a negative morality; and that is still morality. Barrois seems preoccupied with Gnostic "lifestyle" but can quote no impartial, trustworthy contemporary reports of the same, raising the old problem that for centuries Gnostics were known only through the writings of their enemies. If some Gnostics "wallowed" (242), as claimed in hostile sources dutifully relayed by agents of orthodoxy, that disqualifies Gnostic soteriology about as much as the Spanish Inquisition disqualifies Mormon zeal. The condemnation of Gnosticism based on the behavior of some adherents is nothing but *argumentum ad hominem* and does not discredit the ideology.

Finally, may I add some implications of the foregoing, with a few more words of support for poor, beleaguered Gnosticism. Following a

century of totalitarianism and of unprecedented environmental contamination related to over-empowerment of the human species as well as over-population of the globe, one could well lament the institutional demise of true Gnosis. This religious ideology might give pause to an age which glorifies financial success and material living standards fattened at the expense of spiritual fulfillment, in a world to which Mormons are ever more successfully adapted. We do well to heed the adage that "in religion nothing fails like success." Barrois's valuation of religions based on how positive, optimistic, or practical they may be is a worldly one. If the purpose of religion is to make people happy and well adjusted in this "vale of tears," religionists are of all persons most miserable. Then picking a church is like picking a new car, and the Buddhist metaphor, "vehicle," becomes doubly apposite. If it's nice, we like it; it's good. Gnosticism—Barrois seems to inform us—is not a nice religion. It gives people a bad attitude about major aspects of this life. Moreover, it petered out, leaving only the legacy of its thought. Fully reempowered, he might add, it would discourage exponential population growth. Moreover, exalting the noetic faculty above obedience and conformity, it would deprive governments of taxpayers and enforcers, corporations of consumers, and armies of cannon fodder—very noxious to the *status quo*, including Mormonism. Mormonism, however, is a nice, increasingly productive religion—productive of people with a shot at a better life here and beyond. Mormons are typically meliorists, but Gnostics found the world irremediably worldly. For the latter, God's kingdom is not of this world

nor will it ever be. From the Gnostic perspective, if the whole world were to convert, and the Presiding Bishop received a 110FP form for each and every inhabitant, that would only make us the world's largest aggregation of omnivorous bipeds, since the obsession with numerosity could never deliver a single soul from its carnal prison and might, in the Gnostic view, have the opposite effect.

Nevertheless, the position that early Gnosticism was "decaying on its own" is oversimplified. Did it not sway Augustine of Hippo? Is Gnostic staying power really discredited if Barrois admits that the sects collapsed in the fourth century "under pressure from the mainstream church, by then legally established"? (249) Had not the orthodoxy tailored itself for its new role as state religion, pre-destined to elbow aside and stamp out competing ideologies for a thousand years and more? Barrois ignores questions of this sort while imputing dysfunctionality to Gnostics and implicitly praising "enduring universal religions" (251). Manichaeism did thrive for 1,000 years from the Atlantic to the Pacific (see Klimkeit, Hans-Joachim, *Gnosis on the Silk Road* [New York: Harper, 1993]), presumably in "far-flung pockets" dismissed by Barrois on page 249; and was eradicated as a social movement in Western Europe, where it was still gaining momentum in the thirteenth century, only by the military power of the Papacy and the Capetian monarchy, and by the watchdog monastic orders of orthodoxy with their dreaded Inquisition (see Runciman, *The Mediaeval Manichee*); this despite the reluctance of the "elect," the "perfecti," and the earlier encratites to reproduce. The Manichee, like Joseph Smith, taught

the wisdom of seeking truth among other religions, which led to interfaith mergers, weakening the institutional but not necessarily the spiritual influence of Gnosticism: again, it was successful on its own terms, which often meant going to the grave without issue. Apparently it received a warmer welcome in the Buddhist East than in the Barbarian West.

It is, after all, hopeless to look for all truth in one place, let alone for a rectified Gnosticism in the cradle of pragmatism. Despite my objections, however, Mr. Barrois reveals, from a fresh angle, the value of Gnosis in the study of Mormonism and of its founder. In a remark that might apply to Joseph Smith as well as to the rest of us, Coleridge said, "Until you understand an author's ignorance, presume yourself ignorant of his understanding."

Benson Whittle  
Fairview, Utah

### *The Sum of His Creation*

Larry L. St. Clair and Clayton C. Newberry have given us a tightly written and thoughtful critique of environmental issues in a Mormon context in the summer 1995 issue. However, I am a bit mystified by their conclusion. In the second to the last paragraph they state, "But Zion will not, cannot, be established with our present lifestyles of consumption, . . ." Then in the last paragraph they assert, "On the other hand, Zion will not be moved and will be a place of spiritual and temporal splendor in perpetuity." What circumstance will bring about this Zion condition of temporal splendor?

When I have attempted to broach the topic of a righteous stewardship for all of God's creations, I often encounter apathy on the subject or maybe some concern about what pollution will do to property values. However, the most consistent theme I hear from church members is a fatalistic view. Many seem to feel that since we are in the end time, with the promised destructions imminent, we need not concern ourselves with preserving the environment. Environmental degradation is simply one sign of the coming millennium and God will recreate Eden when he has finished cleansing the earth of the wicked—which, I conclude, does not include tithe payers no matter what they may have done to the earth. St. Clair and Newberry seem to propose a similar position. They assert that Zion cannot be established with our current arrogant attitudes about our world, but then they conclude that somehow Zion will come into being as a place of spiritual and temporal splendor in perpetuity.

I don't believe that Christ will return to an earthly kingdom risen from the ashes of his cleansing—a kingdom he recreates in the image of Eden. I believe that Christ will return when his children have earned the right of his presence—including reverencing the sum of his creation. St. Clair and Newberry challenge Mormons to embrace environmental reverence and then let us off the hook by offering what sounds like a simple millennial solution to the consequences of the arrogance we have demonstrated about our environmental stewardship.

Doug Ward  
Longmont, Colorado

### *Hope for Reconciliation*

Marybeth Raynes, in her review of *Born that Way?* (Summer 1995), argues convincingly that the book's blind emphasis on the surety that sexual orientation can be changed is simplistic and damaging. As a gay man, I agree with her completely. Setting up expectations that have little or no possibility of being realized and then blaming an individual for his or her lack of faith is a cruel, guilt-producing, and unchristian process. I spent many confusing and frustrating years hoping and praying that God would make me "normal." It took me a long time to realize that God made me the way I am, and that my real lack of faith was in refusing to accept myself that way. In this respect I agree with Raynes's belief that the book is but a gentle propaganda for the church's official policy on homosexuality.

I am troubled by one conclusion that Raynes draws. She wrote: "I see nowhere in the church whereby an acceptable integration of the sexual and spiritual sides of [homosexuals] can occur. All the options are excruciatingly difficult and result in choosing one side or the other." I continue to hope that this is not the case. I am not yet ready to give up on the church. I am homosexual because, I believe, I was born that way. I am also a Mormon—and I was born that way. I am not yet willing to accept Raynes's claim that being gay is incompatible with being LDS. Even while many gay Mormons find fulfillment only after leaving the church, and while the church would have me continue to live a lonely and sterile life in celibacy, I must continue to search for a way to reconcile my sex-

ual orientation with my spiritual and moral heritage.

Tom Mathews  
Orem, Utah

### *A Missing Reference*

In the spring 1995 issue Stephen E. Thompson devoted a lengthy footnote (157n67) to an attempted refutation of ideas published by me. Unfortunately, nowhere in the article did Thompson give a full reference to my article in question. Therefore, it would be impossible for any interested reader to go to this article and examine it in the original form. I include herewith the full reference:

John M. Lundquist, "Was Abraham at Ebla? A Cultural Background of the Book of Abraham," in *Studies in Scripture: Volume Two: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985), 225-37.

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### *The Bible and Pro-Mormon Bias*

I read with interest the review of Philip Barlow's book, *Mormons and the Bible*, on pages 164-66 of your summer 1995 issue. In that review Scott Kenney compares two views on Barlow's book. He quotes *BYU Studies* as saying that it was written from a non-Mormon bias and then quotes the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary as saying that it has pro-Mormon bias and as such cannot be

taken as a serious look at the Bible because it "gives the Mormon church a sense of legitimacy and credibility it does not deserve."

I noted that the entry in Mr. Kenney's review gave no reference to the author of the review in the *Southwestern Journal*. Since I am that person, I want you to know that I stand behind what I wrote. The very idea that the Bible needed revision without any reference to the ancient manuscripts and texts and can be called a translation is a pro-Mormon bias. A rendering of the Bible without any regard to the ancient manuscripts is not the definition of a translation. In fact, it could only be called a translation in a Mormon context and thus a pro-Mormon bias.

On page 50 of Barlow's book he tells of 3,410 changes to the Bible which he ascribes to revelation. This is not a translation, and in fact in many places the Joseph Smith Translation actually changes the meaning of the most ancient and authoritative text of the Bible. If this is described as acceptable, it is a pro-Mormon bias.

Mr. Kenney concludes his review with the statement that Barlow's book "has all the markings of a Mormon classic." This indicates, at least to me, that he agrees.

Michael Reynolds  
Atlanta, Georgia

### *Not a Scholarly Work*

I have read with great interest the letter on "Mormons and Templars" by Mr. David B. Timmins of Bucharest, Romania, which appeared in the winter 1995 issue.

Unlike Mr. Timmins, I am not sur-

prised by Michael Homer's failure to cite *The Temple and the Lodge* in his fall 1994 *Dialogue* article on Freemasonry and Mormonism. *The Temple and the Lodge* (whose principal author is Michael Baigent not "Baignet") is an entertaining book but definitely not a scholarly work. The book is a collection of wild occult myths, and the alleged secret continuation of the Knights Templars into Freemasonry is not the wildest one. The connection between Knights Templars and Freemasonry was first argued in the eighteenth century in Germany and led to the great number of "Templar" degrees still found in modern Freemasonry. No academic scholar of the Templars of the Middle Ages (not to mention academic scholars of Freemasonry) has taken the legend seriously. Documents confirming it and often quoted by occult authors as found during the French Revolution have long since been proven to be early-nineteenth-century forgeries. To quote just one example, Regine Pernoud—perhaps the leading expert on Knights Templars in France—recently wrote that the theory of a secret continuation of the Order of the Temple into Freemasonry is "totally insane" and tied to "uniformly foolish" claims and legends (*Les Templiers* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1988], 11).

Books like *The Temple and the Lodge* legitimately belong to a literature we all may find entertaining if we do not take it too seriously. Of course, Baigent's works on Dead Sea Scrolls belong to the same category and should not be confused with academic literature on the subject (for a debunking of popular and journalistic claims about the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Otto Betz and Rainer Riesner, *Jesus, Kumran and the Vatican: Clarifications* [New

York: Crossroad, 1994]; both authors are professors at the University of Tübingen). Discussing Baigent's theories within the frame of a scholarly study would have been, in my opinion, highly inappropriate and detrimental to the highly respected scholarly standards of *Dialogue*.

Massimo Introvigne  
Torino, Italy

### *A. C. Lambert and Sam Taylor*

I am writing to rebut the article "The Golden Dream and the Nightmare: The Closet Crusade of A. C. Lambert," which appeared in the fall 1995 issue. I am Carlyle Ballif Lambert, second child and second son of Asael Carlyle Lambert and Florence Smith Ballif Lambert. I was stunned when I read the article by Samuel Taylor about my father. Taylor's effort to make public A. C. Lambert's research and writing into Mormon history, doctrine, and dogma is a type of eulogy to a great scholar and his fifty-five years of work in his avocation. *But the central theme of Samuel Taylor's article is false. Asael C. Lambert never aspired to be the president of Brigham Young University.* Scholarship in such an article as this requires the writer to support his claims with other than his own memories and recollections from one estranged child, yet Taylor bases his claims on these alone and uses no references; as a result, the article does not qualify as scholarship and is erroneous on several points.

Sam invokes the quest for truth in the article yet makes false statements and embellishes or oversimplifies other stories from his memory about my father and mother. Supposedly



this was a revelation of my father's "secret dream." Sam uses this article as a forum for his memories about several stages of his life. His nostalgic remembrances, which occupy nearly a third of the copy, have no place in the article. His disheveled tale of experiences with my parents leaves the reader thinking that A. C. and Florence were of low moral stature and terribly ambitious, neither of which is true. In so doing, he actually trivializes both my father's and my mother's real life struggles and some of the disappointments of A. C.'s professional life which were heartbreaking. Taylor's judgement and memory seem impaired.

Despite a very complex relationship, I was my father's close confidant for forty-five years, and as much as it was possible to know a keen intellect's mind, I knew his. He did say on occasion that he was interested in becoming a college or university president. But he was very alarmed by and unhappy with the non-academic tenor set by the Board of Trustees and others at BYU in those days. *A. C., a force for academic excellence at BYU, never mentioned any desire to become president of BYU.*

Taylor's story about my father's "golden dream" of eventually wearing the mantle of the presidency at BYU is fabricated. A moment of reflection would lead one to conclude that a professor at BYU researching and writing about Mormonism from the perspective of a religious skeptic certainly had no "golden dream." In fact, it is a bit funny. There was no gold to be had at BYU. The only gold A. C. ever received was his salary at Los Angeles State College; after joining Los Angeles State College, A. C. told me that for the first time in his career

he finally had enough money to meet his current living expenses. Furthermore, a qualified academic employed by BYU who found academic research stifling at BYU, especially one who questioned the origins of Mormon doctrine, would be out of his mind to contemplate the presidency of BYU.

A. C.'s abilities were well-known to at least two of BYU presidents: Franklin S. Harris and Howard McDonald. They became mentors for A. C.; both recognized not only his potential as an academic scholar, but also as a superb administrator. A. C. was noted for having the ability to fulfill many varied responsibilities as a member of the faculty, academic dean, and other administrative roles over the years. He also was asked to participate on many LDS church committees because of his organizing, thinking, and writing skills.

It is true that A. C. was occasionally marginalized by some at BYU, primarily because his well-known abilities posed a threat to less educated and less accomplished colleagues. Today BYU has a large number of capable, widely-known and -published scholars. During my father's tenure at BYU, much of the faculty was "home grown" and few had a national presence. He also did not "rise" because he was outspoken and at times undiplomatic about the general "apologetic" climate at BYU about the LDS church and the institution's abuse of individuals. He disdained those who he thought made unthinking and insupportable "apologies" for inaccurate representations of LDS church history and for the incongruous behavior of some church officials. He considered this "institutional lying" dishonest.

As the 1950s began, A. C. could

have stayed on at BYU, but Florence was dead and he had determined he could not live with the anti-academic climate and resulting restraints at BYU. He needed to escape the dead-endedness, and he believed that staying at BYU would be harmful for himself, BYU, and the LDS church. A. C. Lambert resigned from BYU in 1952 of his own volition. (In a previous article by Sam Taylor published in the fall 1993 issue of *Dialogue* ["The Ordeal of Lowry Nelson and the Mis-Spoken Word"], Taylor asserted that there was a secret group of faculty who were becoming disenchanted with Mormonism. In this article he mentioned A. C. Lambert along with several other outstanding professors and wrote that my father had been forced to resign because of his secret work. Taylor was wrong about this as well. I wrote to Sam at that time and informed him of his factual error and requested that he check with me if he wanted to do further writing about my father.)

At the time of A. C.'s decision to leave BYU in 1952, I was the only one, other than his second wife and President Howard McDonald, who knew. (McDonald had been president of BYU but had recently resigned to accept the presidency of Los Angeles State College.) This decision to resign was one of the best decisions in A. C.'s life. McDonald asked A. C. to come to Los Angeles State College. A. C. accepted and there he became instantly free from what he believed to be a frustrating, non-academic attitude which existed in many departments except the exact sciences at BYU. He was appointed Executive Dean and Dean of College of that institution and was placed in charge of the \$27 million building and relocation effort. His

career at Los Angeles State was impressive. From there he went on to the last stage of his career as a highly sought after consultant to public higher education.

Taylor writes another piece of misinformation. He claims that A. C. was assigned by Ernest L. Wilkinson (president of BYU, 1951-71) to recruit returned LDS missionaries on the eastern coast to attend BYU. A. C. resigned from BYU as Wilkinson took the office of president. He never worked as a regular employee of BYU under Wilkinson, but he did return twice to Provo as a consultant to President Wilkinson. My files show considerable correspondence between them concerning administrative problems at BYU.

During his retirement my father was approached by both the University of Utah and the University of Chicago with a request to house all or part of his scholarly writings. A. C. *made his own arrangements for transfer of some of his published and unpublished scholarly works (on Mormonism) to those libraries in the early 1970s, long before his death.* All of his works have been in the Western Americana Division of the University of Utah Library since 1970, where he restricted the use of his unpublished books concerning Mormonism until after his death. I was responsible for removing them from restriction, which I did at the request of Dr. Everett Cooley shortly after my father's death in 1983 at the age of 91.

Where did Sam Taylor get the idea for his story about my father's "golden dream and the nightmare"? My sister Ruth's desire to become a novelist had prompted her to seek advice from Sam. Through her correspondence with Sam Taylor, she apparently asserted herself as being

knowledgeable about our father's professional career, which she was not. In fact, she left Provo and made the East and South her home and was essentially estranged from our father since about the age of twenty-three. Taylor's reliance on my sister Ruth's assertions does not reflect the collective memory or thinking of me and my living siblings, Barbara and Jim (John, Edith, and Ruth are deceased). Ruth isn't here for us to speak with, but I know she would be shocked and hurt to see the inaccurate picture Sam gives about our mother.

The story of the life of my mother, Florence Smith Ballif Lambert, is of poverty—then called genteel poverty—and sacrifice to ensure her husband's education and her children's well-being. Taylor could have used the word "crusade" if he had described Florence Lambert's courageous effort to help her husband achieve an outstanding academic record and a Ph.D. from Stanford University. This endeavor began in 1924 and included years of living alone in near poverty with the children; surviving the plague on her family of scarlet fever which killed her youngest son at the age of five; and enduring the heartbreak of the discrimination from Stanford University, which blackballed A. C., one of their most outstanding students, because he was a Mormon.

Because of his BYU professorship and because he was a Mormon, A. C. was not offered a faculty appointment at Stanford. My mother learned of this at the reception at Stanford for Ph.D. recipients. It was a gala affair. My sister Edith really dressed Mother up. She was most beautiful in a gorgeous new gown. At the reception, about half way through or near the end,

mother was talking to one of the top men in the educational administration faculty. Abruptly in the conversation he told her that Dad would not be offered a position on the Stanford faculty because he was a professor "at that Mormon school," or words to that effect. (This fact undoubtedly influenced other university administrations considering and interviewing A. C. for their presidencies.)

My mother staggered under the blow. It was unthinkable to all of us. She and her young family were shabbily dressed and often hungry while she and A. C. made continual sacrifices to get the Ph.D. degree. Mother was stunned and heartbroken as were all of us children. Dad was in shock and in disbelief at such an unprofessional act. He could not believe that the Stanford educational administration department could be so callous as to treat a man, teaching some of their most important classes, so unfairly.

Our mother, no cry baby, broke down and cried for a week. She, as well as all of us children, did not want to return to Provo and to BYU. We knew that our financial circumstances were unlikely to change much there and that other options and opportunities would be more limited as a result. In addition, we all loved living and working in the Palo Alto community—the people were so inclusive, accepting, and friendly.

An important fact that kept all of us going through those poverty-stricken years was the very real promise of some financial stability and a faculty appointment at Stanford. All the sacrifice and high academic achievement (which universities are all about) was made meaningless in terms of improving the family circumstances which had been an important

goal. Upon our return to Provo in the fall of 1934, Franklin S. Harris informed A. C. that he would receive a \$50 per year raise!

Throughout this extremely difficult life our mother was noted for her charity towards family, friends, neighbors, and strangers, and for her sense of humor. She had a beautiful singing voice and sang often with her brothers, Ariel Smith Ballif and George Smith Ballif. Her sense of humor, her charity, and her positive disposition saved us. Unfortunately it didn't save her. Her health and her heart were broken for many years up until her death at the young age of fifty-two. (The story in Sam's article about my parents stopping to visit at his home in Redwood City is untrue. Mother never returned to California after leaving Stanford to come back to Provo in 1934. My mother's death occurred in 1947 long before A. C. ever left BYU and moved to California. This is another example of Sam Taylor's mistaken memory.) At one time Taylor knew of all of this but elected to make a great woman look like a honky, pulp fiction writer!

My father had to leave the family in Rexburg, Idaho, in 1924, while he went to BYU in order to pursue his bachelor's and master's degrees. My mother, left with four little children, worked in a seed pea and pea canning establishment near Rexburg. She learned to do ladies' hair, and she performed other miscellaneous jobs which paid a few cents per hour. She also composed poetry for her own development and expression. This was the period of her life when she attempted, because of her writing skills and the need for income, to write a "sob story" for a pulp magazine, *True Confessions*, I believe it was. The infer-

ence by Taylor that she supplemented the family income by achieving success as a formula writer for pulp magazines is entirely untrue. She realized a negligible sum after several rewrites on the one story. This was in 1924 and she never attempted another. These efforts had no negative effect on A. C. and BYU. The family was reunited in Provo in 1926 where our mother gave birth to one of the largest set of twins ever recorded that we know of—Barbara and John weighed 10+ lbs. each!

A. C. accomplished academic levels rarely achieved in the Stanford education administration department. He also achieved highly in economics. He taught upper division and graduate courses at Stanford while struggling to finish his Ph.D. After only six months as a graduate student in the non-required logic seminar, he was asked by the chairman to take over as chairman. He cherished this recognition above all of his other academic achievements. His research for his Ph.D. dissertation was on school finance, taxation, and transportation and laid down the argument for how public school systems could finance consolidation of many schools and transport the students. His dissertation was condensed as a monograph, *School Transportation*, and was published by the Stanford University Press, a rare honor in those days. (A. C. was well-known over the intermountain states as a stimulating extemporaneous speaker. He was very successful as an extemporaneous debater at BYU from 1924-26.)

The truth about my father's professional life is that he was a consummate scholar and master teacher whose research and teaching impacted thousands in this country for

good. His classes were well received at Stanford and at BYU. His research and thesis writing courses impacted hundreds of graduate students seeking master's and Ph.D. degrees. None of his students ever forgot him. The most common comments over the years have been, "A. C. Lambert was the best teacher I ever had"; "He made me think!"; "I never worked so hard in my life as I did in his class (or having him as the chair of my master's or doctoral committee)"; "I will never forget him." A. C.'s insistence on scholarship in his classes caused him to be unpopular with some students, primarily those in education and other non-scientific disciplines, who discovered that their testimony-bearing would not be the path to good grades in his courses. A minor few disliked him intensely because he simply refused sloppy work and was unforgiving on the matters of plagiarism and other forms of cheating. A. C.'s reputation as a "hard" teacher caused some social suffering for his family, especially for his children who were enrolled at BYU.

A. C.'s unpublished manuscripts from his research into "Mormonism" are an enigma for the family. Why would such a confident, well-known, and widely-published scholar elect to leave these manuscripts unpublished? I, along with my wife and family, believe it was a combination of things. A. C. has many grandchildren, some of whom were being raised in the LDS church. He may have thought, in an act of concern for his posterity, that there would be negative consequences for them if he published these works. Ruth apparently claimed in one of her letters to Sam that A. C. admitted he did not have the "moral fortitude" to publish the

works. My wife, Carol Bement Lambert, remembers a possible explanation for Ruth's claim. She recollects that A. C. stated at one time his deep admiration for the Mormon pioneers and the forbearers who endured the great tribulations and transitions and, as he said, "gave their all for the gospel." He stated that he didn't want to do anything that would insult the memories of these forbearers; he seemed to have a genuine concern for them and did not want to upset their descendants. Had the LDS church known about A. C.'s writings, or if A. C. had published them, there is no doubt that he would have been forced to resign from BYU and excommunicated from the church. Our family has no record of an excommunication of A. C. Lambert by the LDS church.

The truth about A. C. Lambert's personal life is that it was a paradox in light of his professional achievements and it became a tragedy. The good part was that he demanded excellence in all we did and most of his children were very good students, winning scholarships and research awards, etc. We had to work extremely hard under an exacting standard, whether in school or at home. But our father never learned how to live in loving relationships with his wife, children, and the extended family circle. He was a difficult man. One by one he alienated his children, except for me. I had a complex relationship with him; yet I became my father's confidant and hunting and fishing partner. Despite his poor treatment of my wife, she rendered great service to my father over the years because of her charitable heart and in the early years because of her deep love for and devotion to my mother. We maintained our relationship with him because we

hoped to achieve some kind of family solidarity, but we were unsuccessful in drawing him or my siblings back together, although my wife and I maintained close ties with him and with them, though separately.

Despite a rather personal and friendly relationship with Samuel and Gay Taylor over many, many years, beginning in my adolescence, Sam did not contact me for verification of his assertions about my father's professional aspirations. He did not give me the opportunity for editorial review. Either of these courtesies would have been commensurate with the nature of the friendship, the level of my knowledge about my father's personal and professional life and feelings, and with the procedures of a biographical scholar.

Samuel Taylor professes friendship with A. C. Lambert, but this is compromised by Taylor's article. The breach is that he not only betrays confidences, I am certain, but also that in some cases he simply does not tell the truth or provide an accurate picture. The way he portrays our mother, a wonderful wife and mother, who sacrificed so much for her family and her husband's profession, is a most unfriendly act. Sam reduces her life to one dimension to suit his purpose (a common approach males of his era take with women, particularly patriarchal males, two of my daughters point out).

I am disappointed that *Dialogue* would publish an article so poorly written, unreferenced, and based on a false premise. *Dialogue* readers, I am certain, trust that anything *Dialogue* editors print must certainly meet the rigor they are famous for and to which they lay claim. I am also dismayed that the editors of *Dialogue* are not concerned by Taylor's invasion of the privacy of A. C. and Florence Lambert's surviving children.

If it is in the mind of someone, sometime, to do a biography of A. C. Lambert, my family would welcome a "warts and all" presentation . . . the good, the bad and the ugly, so long as it is the truth that evidence supports. The article by Samuel Taylor does not tell the truth and therefore harms scholarship and A. C. Lambert's family. That this article should be Taylor's parting thoughts to his longtime friend, my father A. C. Lambert, is sad to me.

Carlyle B. Lambert  
Provo, Utah

### *Taylor Responds*

I was a close friend of A. C. Lambert. I wrote the article with love for his memory. I stand by every single word of my article.

Samuel W. Taylor  
Redwood City, California