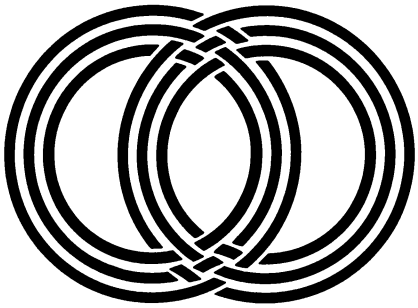
DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



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is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought and with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or of the editors.

DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT, Vol. 22, No. 3, Fall 1989

CONTENTS

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DIALOGUE welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, selections for Notes and Comments, letters to the editor, and art. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* including double-spacing all block quotations and notes. Use the author-date citation style as described in the thirteenth edition. An IBM-PC compatible floppy diskette may also be submitted with the manuscript, using WordPerfect or other ASCII format software. Send submissions to DIALOGUE, University Station — UMC 7805, Logan, Utah 84322-7805. Artists wishing consideration of their artwork should send inquiries to the Art Editor at the same address.

IN THIS ISSUE

This issue marks a new period in DIALOGUE's history. After careful consideration, editors Ross and Kay Peterson have moved the journal's business office to the campus of Utah State University in Logan, Utah, their home. (See the bottom of p. 3 in this issue for the new address and phone number.) We appreciate the many people in Salt Lake City who have contributed to the success of DIALOGUE during its years in Salt Lake City.

The Fall issue contains a variety of creative articles and essays. DonLu Thayer analyzes the effect of our competitive natures on our individual spirituality and our relationships with each other. In a thoughtful essay, Eugene England discusses some new ways to authenticate the Book of Mormon text as holy scripture.

Following these essays, three political articles examine Mormon political behavior and belief. Karen Coates studies the impact of Evan Mecham's aborted Arizona gubernatorial career on the Mormon community. Alleen Nilsen follows with a summation of the folklore and humor that evolved from Mecham's candidacy, governorship, and impeachment. (Our numerous attempts to solicit an opposing view were unsuccessful.) Richard Van Wagoner and Steven Clark's essay on the constitutional views of contemporary Latter-day Saint leaders completes the political discussion of Mormons and American politics.

In a refreshing yet disturbing personal essay, Ehab Abunuwara suggests a new perspective for the Church's traditional view of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Dian Saderup's "Obviously Arthur" is a delightful personal account of special relationships as is William Cottam's "A Little Love Story."

"From the Pulpit" we offer Edwin B. Firmage's sermon "Reconciliation," delivered at Salt Lake City's Cathedral of the Madeline. Both the content and context of this controversial sermon should be of interest. Joan Shaw's "Grief," a short story about responding to senseless tragedy, concludes this issue.

The 1989 DIALOGUE Writing Award winners will be announced in the Winter issue. From this point on, the awards will be published in the Winter issue and will be selected from among the works published in DIALOGUE during the preceding twelve months.

LETTERS

Reactions to Lyman's Reaction

Obviously E. Leo Lyman is unhappy with my reaction to his book, *Political Deliverance*, and with my criticism of his reviewers (DIALOGUE, Summer 1988). He leaves the impression I was entirely negative, whereas I actually praised his research of the legislative and political records. I challenged only his conclusion in the book that "the practice of plural marriage among the Latter-day Saints was the foremost obstacle to admission of Utah as a state" (p. 2). I conceded that polygamy was an important factor in the delay.

"Self-deception" and "negligence" were Lyman's words, not mine (Winter 1988, p. 9). Nor did I imply "gullibility" on the part of the reviewers. My only purpose was to suggest that polygamy was not the primary cause for the delay in Utah statehood. This idea is not "the Jensen thesis." I did not originate it; I only accept it.

Lyman would have readers ignore or downplay a central fact of Mormon life during the first four decades in Utah. What he neglects or fails to understand, as do most Latter-day Saints these days, is the idea of the kingdom of God that permeated all levels of the Church during those years. For example, Brigham Young said, "It may be asked what I mean by the Kingdom of God. The Church of Jesus Christ has been established for many years now and the Kingdom of God has got to be established, even that kingdom which will circumscribe all the kingdoms of the world. It will yet give laws to every nation that exists upon the earth. This is the kingdom that Daniel, the prophet saw should be set up in the last days" (*Journal of Discourses*, [Liverpool and London: LDS Booksellers, 1855–86, p. 275]; *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927, pp. 197–98]). This kingdom is what Mormons believed they were building, and their fervor led to economic exclusivity and domination as well as to political control.

How does Lyman explain the intensity of the struggle against economic and political domination that led non-Mormon businessmen and merchants — not just mine owners — to form the Liberal Party, which for years opposed the Peoples Party? Obviously the political struggle was not primarily to fight polygamy. My curiosity is aroused when Mormons now sing the hymn "High on the Mountain Top," having little understanding of its inescapable message, particularly in the last verse.

I mentioned the Godbeite incident in my letter (p. 10) only to illustrate that some Mormons, though a minority, were unhappy with the economy that isolated them from the national mainstream.

If, as Lyman says, I supplied no evidence and he found none in his research to support the thesis I accept, then he must have closed his eyes to the vast references which support it. The works of Klaus J. Hansen and Gustave O. Larson, which he cites in his book but rejects (p. 2), contain ample evidence. And how does he dispose of the statements by Fred T. Dubois and Senator George F. Edmunds, mentioned in my letter (p. 10), the latter reported by George Q. Cannon? Lyman must certainly be aware of the *Salt Lake Tribune* and its opposition to the Church in those days.

A very conservative friend and I discussed Larson's *Americanization of Utah.*

My friend said, "I think it one of the best books about what happened in Utah." I agreed, but we disagreed about the desirability of the outcome. He thought the "Americanization" was good. I thought it unfortunate, even if circumstances demanded it. As an economic historian, I would have liked the Mormon experiment to run longer before it was displaced.

Perhaps a note or two about myself will shed light on my position. By the time the stock market crashed in 1929 while I was on a mission in South Carolina, I had already observed firsthand the evils of poverty and oppression among sharecroppers and cotton mill workers. Living with such people, as missionaries did in those days, affected me. Seeing the ravages of pellagra, I naively determined to study medicine upon my return to try to help. Eye problems, however, kept me from doing laboratory microscopic work, and I had to give up my study of medicine. But I soon realized that the cause of pellagra was not medical but economic. The people were simply too poor to buy nourishing food.

Although I have written several books during my professional career, I have neither researched nor written about Church history. But I have been an avid reader on the subject since my graduate years studying economics at the University of California at Berkeley and through nine years of teaching at the University of Colorado and forty-plus years at Cornell. At Cornell I found an excellent collection of books on Mormonism, dating from the time when Andrew Dickson White, president of Cornell, served as a government envoy to Russia and was embarrassed when Leo Tolstoy asked him questions about Mormonism that he could not answer. When White returned, he established a collection that has been maintained and augmented ever since. I have made good use of that library, particularly during my retirement. I have become a consumer of Church history and am always happy to see new books come forth, including, of course, Lyman's. My advice is to read it, but read everything else on the topic too.

Vernon H. Jensen
Ithaca, New York

From London to Kaysville

I appreciate Lee Copeland's revealing article (DIALOGUE, Autumn 1988) about past and present racial prejudices in the LDS church. Many members of the "international Church" are unaware of these attitudes and find it difficult to believe racial biases still cloud the vision of many Church members and leaders. The Hyde Park Stake in London is a unique product of the international mission of the LDS church and a good example of how the existing cultural bias in more provincial areas of the Church can be transcended.

During my service as mission president in the stake, it was commonplace for convert baptisms in a given month to represent over twenty different nations. In 1986–87 about one thousand converts were baptized into the stake, only 30 percent of whom were British. The British converts were also from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Four of the seven bishops in the stake have interracial marriages and lead wards as multiracial as any in the Church. Most of these bishops and the members of their wards are unaware of statements by Church authorities against interracial marriage. In my experience, discussing the earlier Church views of racial segregation with these Saints usually only yields negative results. Perhaps this is why Church authorities appear to sidestep the issue.

Recently I accompanied a group of young people to the London Temple; the majority of the group were of black African descent. These young people served as proxies for deceased individuals from nations an apostle once said would never ("not at all," p. 90) receive such vicarious ordinances, let alone administer them. Like Copeland, I use this example not to erode confidence in Church leadership, but to illustrate how vulnerable we all are to

vision-limiting prejudices of any kind. Recent policy changes in the Church affecting blacks, women, and single adults are encouraging, especially in light of the Lord's words to Joseph Smith, "I am not well pleased with many things. . . . But . . . I, the Lord, will contend with Zion, and plead with her strong ones, and chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me. For she shall not be removed out of her place" (D&C 90:35–37).

I appreciate the warning voice of DIALOGUE, which helps me recognize and challenge the cultural biases and prejudices that limit my ability to obey the first and second great commandments.

R. A. Harris
London, England

No Fair-minded Discussion

Although John Quiring's title advertises his essay as a "Critical Appreciation [of Mormon Christianity] by a Christian Pluralist" (DIALOGUE, Fall 1988), the article itself is framed and motivated by analysis of his own "fair-minded decision about whether or not to join the Church" (p. 151). In this regard his discussion is fundamentally unsound and its tone often presumptuous and condescending.

Comparative analysis by a perceptive, critical observer looking into an organization from the outside can be valuable. It is not always easy to see the strengths and weaknesses of a group with which one has close ties. Moreover, others do not always see the Church in the same positive light that we see ourselves, and it is good to be aware of their criticisms: some of them are valid. I wonder, however, if Quiring's decision has been "fair-minded," for while he seems to be aware of all the supposed problems associated with the Church and its doctrine, he shows little awareness of its true strengths and its great power to change people's lives. Indeed, he would have us discard those strengths and gut the Church of all those things that make it unique in order to make it more homogenous with Protestantism. While he is aware of seeming scriptural contradictions and recondite points of doctrine, belief, and practice that are ultimately of little or no importance, he seems to know nothing about those features which any Primary child can identify as basic to the restored gospel and essential to any "fair-minded" decision about joining: faith, repentance, baptism, and the Holy Ghost.

For all his study of religion, Quiring seems to have no awareness (certainly no first-hand awareness) of the actual conversion experience, the process that convinces converts (to any religion) to abandon old ways and undergo spiritual reorientation. He seems to think that his study alone qualifies him to judge us. There is nothing, however, in his discussion about humility, about a broken heart and contrite spirit; nothing about earnest inquiry through fasting and prayer; there is no struggle of the soul, no wrestle before the Lord like we see in the conversion experience of Enos or even of John Henry Newman; there is nothing of that sincere inquiry of the people who on the day of Pentecost responded to the missionary effort of the apostles by saying: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Certainly there is no response to the challenge given by Peter to "repent and be baptized."

Moreover, he is convinced that effective preaching requires training in the ministry, for he sees our "dreary and lackluster" worship as deficient in the kind of pomp and entertainment he obviously prefers. He is "left with a sunken feeling" by our "sacrament meeting 'talks' . . . delivered by laypersons" and would rather have his relationship with God mediated through a professionally drafted "sermon and pastoral prayer" (p. 155).

Despite his assertion that he was "prepared to treat it with respect" (p. 152), Quiring reduced our sacred text, the Book of Mormon, to the "status of edifying, amateur fiction" and recognizes none of its complexity and power. For him, "the book's narrative material [is] flat, monotonous, imitative of the King James version

of the Bible, and lacking in vitality in contrast to the Bible itself." In short, the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants are "of contestable quality, novelty, origin, historicity, and theology" (p. 155), and "not sufficiently fresh to be taken as new revelations but are derivative" (p. 154). Of course this opinion is itself derivative from 150 years of Protestant criticism of the book. For him, true canonization and validity of a religion's scripture comes through publication (in translation!) as a Penguin Classic (p. 154).

Thank goodness, however, John Quiring has hope for us! He offers us a list of steps to reduce our "pious overestimations," but I'm afraid that when we do that we will no longer belong to the Church of Jesus Christ, but rather to the church of John Quiring. If the Church were perfect, either in the time of Christ or now, the Savior would have had no need to say to Peter, "When thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren." Despite his claim to "Christian pluralism," Quiring reveals in the bibliolotry and his anxieties about grace a conventional Protestant bias against the LDS church.

Ultimately, the term "Christian pluralist," as Quiring uses it, seems to be nothing more than a euphemism for someone who can't make up his or her mind about which church to join. If his real purpose is to find out which church is true so he can join it, his epistemology (his instrument for inquiry and discovery) is utterly inadequate to the task. Joseph Smith went into the grove with an ontological question, but he emerged with a radical epistemology which repudiated the silencing of God required by traditional Christianity and reasserted the primacy of revelation. Quiring isn't even asking the right questions.

Those who join the Church can usually point to a numinous experience, essentially irrational, inexplicable, and ineffable. It is this kind of personal revelation and testimony which keeps new members in the Church despite the problems. Surely as a student of religion, Quiring should know something of the ineffable, but his academic training seems to have inculcated in him a predisposition to look on the various faiths of the world as a kind of inexplicable mass hysteria which intelligent and educated people soon grow beyond. In short, as comparative religion the essay is interesting, sometimes even provocative, but as a "fair-minded" discussion of the conversion experience it is a fraud.

Fred Pinnegar
Tucson, Arizona

The Real Story?

In his essay on historiography (Fall 1988), Marvin Hill writes, "Nibley addressed the problem created by the discovery by University of Utah Professor Aziz Atiya of Egyptian papyri which once belonged to Joseph Smith" (p. 118).

After a silence of more than twenty years, I think I had better set the record straight: While acting as an editor of DIALOGUE in 1968, I was sitting in the Stanford office talking on the telephone with Klaus Baer, a leading Egyptologist from the University of Chicago, when he let it slip that the Joseph Smith papyri were still in existence (and therefore had not burned up in the Chicago fire as most of us thought). He would tell me no more (probably because he had promised his friend Hugh Nibley that he wouldn't).

I called Wallace Turner of the *New York Times*, who had written a book on Mormons, and set him on the trail. Three days later he called me to report that he had located the papyri in the basement of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, whereupon I called Mr. Fischer, museum director of the Metropolitan, to let him know that we knew where they were. Fischer told me that because *we* knew, the whole Mormon world would know shortly, and that he was faced with a security problem. A day or two later he told me that he had decided that the scrolls could best be kept from harm if the LDS church owned them. When the sale later transpired, the Church issued a press release saying that Professor Attiya had dis-

covered the scrolls while looking for something else in the basement of the Metropolitan. I phoned Attiya to tell him I didn't believe the story, since I knew about the scrolls before he "discovered" them. He became quite nervous and would say only that he was fond of the Church and its people and stood ready to help them in any way he could.

This information should allow someone to research the *real* story of the "discovery," if the trail is not now too cold.

Joseph Jeppson
Woodside, California

A Disappointing Analysis

After reading Lavina Fielding Anderson's article, "A Voice From the Past: The Benson Instructions for Parents" (DIALOGUE, Winter 1988), I came to three conclusions:

1. Mormon women live in chronic emotional pain and weep and complain a lot.
2. Mormon men are unaccountably self-assured and don't weep and complain a lot.
3. Prophets should read more statistics before making speeches and never use the word "laundry" without defining it.

I am skeptical of accounts that portray women as emotional buzz saws while men calmly display common sense and appropriate problem-solving skills. Nor am I impelled by secondhand tales heralding all this feminine pain, guilt, anger, and breast-beating. None of this reflects the women I know.

Anderson's tiresome analysis, in which she literally quibbles over pronouns, dissipates her argument. For example, I find no hidden significance in President Benson's incidental use of "her children" (p. 111), instead of "their children," when his meaning is clear. Occasionally, she simply sinks into silliness, such as when she predicts economic failure if we lose the female tax base through lemming-like adherence to President Benson's counsel.

I am equally unqualified to predict that even a short-term withdrawal of working women would act as a massive strike and ultimately do more for economic parity than have decades of women's advocates. This would, of course, put President Benson in the ironic position of making the work force more desirable and rewarding for women, thus earning him plaudits from feminists worldwide. . . . But I, too, digress.

Anderson's topic is important, but she has diminished the issue with a nitpicking, self-indulgent approach. I am disappointed that DIALOGUE would publish any article, no matter how well intentioned, justifying a premise relying on "emotions out of all proportion" and made with "no effort to collect opinions randomly and representatively" (p. 104).

Juliann Reynolds
Alta Loma, California

A New Gospel Message

In her review of *Seventh Son* (DIALOGUE, Winter 1988), Sandra Straubhaar mentioned her disappointment that Orson Scott Card had not used more explicitly Mormon themes in his previous writings.

In fact, gospel themes dominate every Card work. Moreover, Card's world view is obviously not a "generic brand" of Christianity, but strongly and uniquely Mormon. What other author dares to create Christ archetypes with a tragic streak of violence, saviors who must sometimes destroy for righteousness' sake; or Lucifers who want the right thing for the wrong reasons and will go to any means to get it; sheltered missionaries who "sing their songs" to the world but are inevitably altered — for the better — by the realities they find there; or very human madonnas who are unashamed of their sexuality and only precariously in control of it? Whether or not we want to admit it, these are all distinctive elements of Mormon theology, and Card weaves them masterfully into his tales.

But *Seventh Son* goes a step further, asking questions even Mormons are afraid to tackle. In her review, Straubhaar dwells too much on the white salamander image, which after all is old news by now. She completely overlooks Card's frightening proposition that Satan may be merely a pawn of a more evil force, the "Unmaker" or the "Master of Entropy." And surely it is no accident that the Unmaker uses water as his chief means of destruction when water is such a prevalent symbol in both ancient and modern scripture.

The LDS community should particularly recognize that *Seventh Son* is not simply a vehicle for Card's cute ideas. It presents some daring challenges to both "normal" Christianity and "normal" Mormonism. I submit that Card, in his own way, is preparing us for a very different (dare I say mystical?) gospel message than the one with which we are now comfortable. "He that hath ears to hear. . ."

Dynette Ivie Reynolds
Pullman, Washington

The Problem with Deconstruction

I would like first to commend Dorice Williams Elliott's deconstruction (Spring 1989) of President Hinckley's women's meeting talk. It describes and illustrates a complicated theory clearly and concisely. More important, it exposes very real, though unwitting, assertions of male power over women in President Hinckley's talk.

The article leaves me feeling a little hopeless, however. Elliott's final sentence reads, "But real progress will have been made only when the men in positions of power are also able to escape the confines of their patriarchal discourse and the modes of thinking about women which it forces on all of us." How is this to happen? What would the end product look like if it did? The problem I have with deconstruction is that it is not so good at giving us solutions for the problems it reveals.

The thought patterns of the Mormon patriarchy had not transcended binary opposition in 1978 when black men were given the priesthood. Was that event not "real progress"? Deconstruction helps us see the world of discourse around us with greater subtlety and accuracy. But, progress on the issues it illuminates is possible without the revolution in logic that it demands as a solution. And in fact, that progress may be more real, if less complete, than anything deconstruction can suggest. When the image of complete progress, of an interaction between men and women not based on the inevitable power struggle of binary opposition, is as elusive as it is, we must celebrate encouraging talks like President Hinckley's fully. True, we must be mindful of the residual sexism in every advance women make in the Church. But we must not diminish, in the name of a theoretical, potentially impossible liberation, the real-world ground we have gained.

Helen F. Maxson
Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE ASSOCIATION OF MORMON LETTERS CALL FOR PAPERS

The Association of Mormon Letters will hold its annual symposium at Westminster College in Salt Lake City on Saturday, 27 January 1990. The association invites submissions of papers on any aspect of Mormon literature to be presented at the symposium. Please send proposals by *1 November 1989* to: William A. Wilson, Department of English, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

ANNOUNCING THE

1990 DIALOGUE Writing Awards

DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT announces over $2,000 in awards to encourage new writing in Mormon studies and letters. First-place awards of $300 for articles, essays, and fiction and $100 for poetry will be made, with the number and amount of other prizes awarded at the discretion of the judges.

Manuscripts accepted for publication in the 1990 issues will be considered for the awards, provided they have not previously been published nor are being considered for publication elsewhere. *Manuscripts must be received before 1 March 1990 to be considered for the 1990 awards.*

DIALOGUE welcomes the submission of creative writing and articles and essays dealing with aspects of history, theology, sociology, scriptural study, anthropology, law, literary criticism, and philosophy as they relate to the Mormon experience.

Manuscripts must be typed and double-spaced throughout, including block quotations and notes, and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*'s author-date citation style. A summary style sheet is available upon request from the address below. One original and two photocopies of each manuscript must be submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope. In general, manuscripts should not exceed forty double-spaced pages, including notes. DIALOGUE reserves the right to edit manuscripts in its usual fashion in preparation for publication.

All manuscripts will be judged on the basis of their contribution to their field, clarity and felicity of expression, and responsible, innovative thought. Judges will be selected by the DIALOGUE Editorial Staff from its board of editors, staff, and other qualified persons. Winners will be announced in the Winter 1990 issue.

THE LOWELL L. BENNION ESSAY PRIZE

A separate $350 prize to honor Lowell L. Bennion will be awarded to the outstanding essay concerning the expression of Christian values and gospel principles in thought and action. Essays considered for this prize will be judged on their expression of Christian beliefs and values, insights on their application, exploration of the challenges of Christian living, and gracefulness of style.

Essays considered for this award should be submitted following the guidelines listed above.

MARGARET RAMPTON MUNK POETRY AWARD

DIALOGUE is pleased to announce an endowment for our annual poetry award in the name of Margaret Rampton Munk. We apreciate the creative achievements of Meg Munk and the support of her family and friends in creating this endowment.

Send entries to: Dialogue Editorial Office, University Station—UMC 7800, Logan, UT 84322-7800.

Top Kingdom: The Mormon Race for the Celestial Gates

Donlu DeWitt Thayer

IT WAS A SATURDAY, BUT IT WAS SOMEONE'S BIRTHDAY, and so against my better judgment I went shopping with several of my children at Price Savers in Provo, Utah. The parking lot was crowded, almost full, but we were lucky enough to arrive just as a car was pulling out of a place right across from the front door. I waited a few seconds while the car backed out and then began to pull my van into the space. Suddenly, a small car shot around from behind me, cut across my path and into the space. I stared at the driver in disbelief; she grinned and waved a clenched fist at me while her three children in the back seat cheered. A little thing, I suppose. Just one good Mormon housewife beating out another good Mormon housewife in the battle of life. But it was distressing to me, and to my children, that they should care so much for their victory and so little for us.

There is more to this story, though. For I have to admit that I did not just drive away in sorrow to find another spot. I honked my horn as I passed her. I muttered something about drivers in this state deserving everything my California roommates ever said about them. I silently hoped that when we finally got parked, my foe would still be in sight and I could catch her and say something really nasty to her. But they were inside by the time we could walk from the other end of the lot back to their spot (*our* spot). I wanted to kick her tires. I hoped I would recognize her if I saw her in the store.

Fortunately, I didn't see her again. And, thinking about it later, I was sorry that another person's actions in such a little thing should have provoked such animosity in me. I was sorry for what she did, but even more sorry for how I reacted to it, and for the effects of the whole thing on my children. It is tedious sometimes living under the watchful eyes of impressionable children. I do stupid things. My behavior teaches my children who I am and shows

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DONLU THAYER is a house and garden wife (prefers the garden), who lives with her husband, Douglas, and their six children in Provo, Utah. She is a writer, editor, Primary chorister, and aspiring musician. *An earlier version of this paper was delivered at Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, 19 August 1988.*

them, to the extent that they trust me, how they should be. I want my children to know peace and love in their lives. I worry when my peace departs and my love fails, because I want my influence to counteract, in some respects, other influences in my children's lives, influences of "parking lot," school, neighborhood, scouts, sports, television, movies, and the Church. Yes, the Church, the one that is as true as the gospel, the one I have lived in (and loved) all my life.

The sacrament-meeting speaker was a bright-eyed, well-dressed, happy, articulate woman whose whole life is service to the Church. "I was reading in the Book of Mormon," she said, "and it suddenly came to me what life is all about. Life is a battle, and only those who win the battle will reap the reward. Only those who win will make it to the celestial kingdom to live with our Father in Heaven forever."

"Make it to the celestial kingdom." How many times have I heard that phrase, untroubled? And how is it that it troubles me so much now? Several weeks later I heard another speaker over the same pulpit compare our quest for celestial glory to the quest of the Olympic athletes in Seoul. "Not that there is only one winner in our race," he said. "In *our* race, we can all be winners. We're all striving to do our personal best, and we can emulate these great athletes in their own quests for glory." (Unfortunately, his most important example was a man who the next day left the games in disgrace when it was discovered that he had used drugs to help fuel his personal quest for glory. Of course, the commentators said, he was a poor sport. This was the failure of a man, they said, not of a system.)

Examples, heroes. We want them, need them. At a recent ward conference, a stake youth leader told about her hero: Donald Trump. "And do you know why?" she asked an amazed congregation (I *hope* that most of them were amazed). "Because, of all the *selfish* ways he could have used his money, he chose to beautify New York City." I hear that he has even consented to "look into" the problem of the New York homeless.

At least the brother whose sermon was geared to getting us off to a goal-setting start in the new year picked a hero from the Bible. When, after five or six examples from sports, this brother brought up the boy David, the story of David and Goliath, my hope rose. (David, I thought, strengthened by the Lord, fighting the Lord's battle, in His name.) But as the speaker began to explicate the text, my hopes failed. He used I Samuel 17:25–26 to explain that in his contest with Goliath, essentially an athletic contest, David's objective was the reward, specifically, the part of the reward involving the king's daughter. "Remember this," the speaker said. "When David went out to meet Goliath, he wasn't looking at Goliath. He had his eye on the princess." This was an example he recommended to us all.

I found all of these sermons to be not merely uninspiring, but wrong, dangerous, even blasphemous. They seemed to me to represent and promote a view of the world that I am trying to overcome in myself, a view that is inimical to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They seemed to represent a competitive, goal-oriented, self-focusing mindset that is alien to the way of light and truth

Jesus embodies and calls us to follow. I worry that here in Zion all is not well, that individually and as a people we tend to accept uncritically the notion that we can frame and see our own best goals clearly, that we must pursue our own goals regardless of the consequences for others, that our own success justifies any means we may need to use to "get there," indeed, that our own worth can be established at the expense of others.

It's a tricky problem. Is writing what I am writing here a competitive activity? Do these well-intentioned people I have used as examples merit my mockery? Is the anger and frustration I feel during sermons such as theirs really righteous indignation that truth is not heard? Or is it sour grapes that "their kind" keep the pulpit, while folks like me languish in "fringe publications"? I don't always know. It is difficult to keep the heart pure.

"What do you have to do to get to the top kingdom?" our son asks, coming home from Primary. I can tell right away how his Primary teacher sees the world. I hesitate to tell him that I am not much concerned with such questions these days, because I remember well the days when such questions concerned me very much. So I try to respond.

"The celestial kingdom is the dwelling place of gods," I tell him. "To live in celestial glory, we must become celestial beings, gods ourselves. We have to learn to love as God loves . . . ."

"Yea, well, what d'you have to *do* to *make* it?"

I don't blame him for talking this way; this language of striving is the language of his culture, a culture that sees the good life in terms of goals reached, conquests made, prizes and victories won. I don't *want* my son to see life this way, though. I think such a worldview will hurt him and will cause him to hurt others.

I know what his Primary teacher would say if I were to tell him this. He would say, "What's the matter with you? Don't you want this kid to succeed in life?"

Not exactly, I would have to say. What I want is for him to find joy in this life and in the eternal world to come. And I don't think that he will find joy in goal-oriented striving for victory; I don't think that he will find joy in competing with others in vain attempts to establish his own worth. I think he will only find joy when love is the motive for all his actions. And how will he learn love? By being loved, I think, and by being taught correct principles and then being trusted to learn and live according to them.

I worry about the prevalence of the view of human nature that allows us to raise children by luring them, bribing them, manipulating them, threatening them, rewarding them into good behavior (and therefore, it is supposed, into righteousness). "I know," said a very competent elementary school teacher when I said this to her. "I'd like them to be good for nothing, too." Perhaps it is unfortunate, she told me, but what you *have* to do to get kids moving is promise them a reward. Better yet, invite them to a contest and induce them to be winners. Competition is "goal-oriented striving *par excellence*" (Kohn 1986, 82).

The trouble is, in serious competition winning isn't everything (as the famous coach has said); it is the only thing. For a truly competitive person,

victory is the single goal that provides the most important motive for action in relationship to others. All sorts of means are justified in reaching this goal. Generally speaking, these are not the means to change, progress, learning, growth; they are merely the means to winning.

Most people will concede that competitiveness *can* be bad if it gets out of hand, if it gets *ruthless*. But this wouldn't stop most people from valuing competition itself or from helping their children develop competitive attitudes. This reminds me of the view the French have towards wine. And certainly it is true that all French children who drink wine with their meals do not grow up to be alcoholics. I will also concede that I know several American adults who seem to be essentially free of competitiveness. Perhaps competition is only bad for people like me, who have a predisposition to becoming *fiercely* competitive.

"Ah, wake up and smell the bacon, lady," my son's Primary teacher (who considers "fiercely competitive" a compliment) might say if I were to go on like this. His response would anger me. He would be wrong. I would be right. I would want to argue with him and win my point. I know how to win arguments. In high school debate we practiced winning arguments even if we didn't believe what we were saying. This was supposed to be fun, and our victories would bring academic glory to the school. I could win, but I didn't like doing it when my heart wasn't in it. I know that I could win the argument with my son's teacher, too. But, deep down, I know that this would not change the man's heart. I know, too, that the momentary triumph I would feel at arguing him into the ground would soon turn bitter. I would feel ashamed and want to apologize. How could this be, since I am *right*? But I know it would happen.

I wonder sometimes if Mormons, believing in the true and living God and a real live devil, are not particularly vulnerable to the dangers of a competitive mindset. Perhaps certain of our beliefs help us rationalize this mindset and keep us from seeing the need to change. When I think about my own competitiveness, about its effects on me, I know *I* need to change. I think of all the pain competing has brought me — emptiness of victory, agony of defeat. Competing never brought me anything I really wanted, never brought peace or love. Why didn't I just reject my culture's sanctions of competition as the way to get everything worth having? Haven't I always believed that although it is in our natures to be "enemies" to God, to "seek our own," to kick against the pricks, to exercise unrighteous dominion, we *can* yield to the enticings of the spirit of God and in this yielding find the truth that frees us to be friends of God? Then why am I still competing?

Trying to find some answers to this question is a matter of urgency for me. As my children grow up and learn to assert their own wills, find themselves, protect themselves, advance themselves, it is likely that they will find, as I have, that yielding to God and to others in love can become more and more difficult, until there is real pain, real struggle, something to conquer, before the yielding comes. Competing has hurt me, has stopped me, has damned me, and I want to teach something else to my children. Yet, for reasons that I have not always clearly understood, I have felt that I must compete, even with myself,

in order just to "maintain," let alone move forward. And what I do, my children learn.

It is easy to rationalize the competitive "instinct." Competition "feels natural," and it *works*. It's a hard world, isn't it? We need to make our way, not only for our own sakes, but for the sakes of others who depend on us. We work hard, and we want to get as much as we can for our efforts. We do what works, to get things done. So when at the end of a busy day we want the kids in bed, we stage a race to the bedroom and love best the one who wins.

Thus we plant in others the seeds once sown in us. Life is a race. The race is to the swift. Be a winner. Nobody loves a loser. Who can be first? Who can be best?

Or how about, Who can be the most reverent? Can we be blamed, though, for *whatever* we can come up with to keep children occupied in church? One of the more interesting challenges presented by the consolidated schedule is Primary Sharing Time. There are all those children, together, in the Lord's house on the Sabbath day. Afraid that the children will not respond, will not be good, we make plans. We motivate singing by dividing the children up to see which group can sing best. We have scripture chases, play gospel-concept Concentration, Book of Mormon Double Jeopardy, First Vision Baseball, Church History Tic-Tac-Toe. Having worked so hard to provide these activities, we are dismayed when the kids, wanting to win the games we have set for them, end up shouting at each other, and we berate them for failing to be reverent in Heavenly Father's house.

One particular Primary Sharing Time I remember to my own chagrin. During a Book of Mormon characters identification competition, my son was belittled by an angry teammate for failing to distinguish Ammon from Alma. "Better study up on your Book of Mormon," this kid snorted at my son. Better study up on your manners, you little twerp, I muttered in my mind. It isn't my son's fault; I'm too busy teaching him not to behave the way you're behaving to make sure he knows every character in the Book of Mormon.

But, of course, I felt guilty. Perhaps I *should* have bought those illustrated scripture redactions. Then my son would have known who was who and wouldn't have been embarrassed like that — and I would have been thought of as the kind of good mother the angry teammate's mother is. (Of course, now they have those cartoons, so that children can learn in the manner to which they are most accustomed to distinguish Ammon from Alma, Laman from Laban, Nehor from Korihor, Korihor from Skeletor, Helaman from He-man.)

When I stopped being sarcastic and really thought about this incident, I was ashamed of myself. My son wasn't nearly as embarrassed or upset as I was. In my embarrassment, born of my competitiveness, I had forgotten who I was, who my son was, and who my neighbor was. It had all become an internal battle of abstractions, yet another attempt to fill my personal emptiness by vanquishing the foe. In my struggle that day to deal with my resentment of a child who had belittled my son, I thought I learned something important. When I was able to sacrifice my competitiveness momentarily, to

learn what the experience had to teach, a whole category of resentments washed away, and I was still intact. I didn't need to stand on anyone else's head (that's what the resentments were enabling me to do) to keep my own head in fresh air.

A few months later, though, in the parking lot at Price Savers, I found that I hadn't really learned anything yet. My sense of well-being, of worth, my source of peace, were still focused outside myself. The competitive heart is a heart that has not yet learned to act on its own; it is not a *true* heart, independent in its own sphere, so to speak. Competing to establish worth by superior performance never works in the long run, because it denies reality. The God we emulate is not the Great I Do, but the Great I Am, a self-existent being, beyond compare. "These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all" (Abraham 3:19). This is not an invitation to a race. It is a description of what is. It is for us to be still and know this reality.

Yet, our acceptance must not be resignation. We must not deny what there is in us to *become*. The rigidly stratified (and in some measure secure) society my English forbears left for the challenges of the Utah desert was not the kingdom of God. But was it less remote from God's kingdom than was what has blossomed in this place?

What do we mean when we declare ourselves to be "successful"? Getting right down to it, what is the purpose and effect of declaring ourselves "the fastest growing church in the world," "the best stake in the Church," "the top baptizing district in the mission," "the number-one co-ed volleyball team in the region," "first place in the roadshow competition," "the winner of the Eliza R. Snow poetry contest," or the recipient of the DIALOGUE or *Sunstone* prize for the best short story?

But contests are created to give a meaning and focus for activity, to get people to do something that they might not otherwise do. How people respond to a contest is up to them — whether they compete for fun, for a sense of meeting a challenge, testing, improving themselves, whether they hope to gain the attention of those who appreciate good literature or good music or the beauty of fine athletic performance, or to please those who get vicarious thrills out of watching competition. If a competitor competes out of a personal need to establish his or her own worth by defeating someone else, this is not the fault of the contest, is it? But perhaps it is. In pondering the recent "steroid scandals," some people have begun to wonder about the responsibility of the system itself in a competitor's fall from virtue.

It might be well for those who would be saints of God to consider what they mean by offering to establish or find worth in the victories of one human being over another in what would otherwise be benign activities. "Every contest," says Alfie Kohn, "is the creation of a desired and scarce status" (1986, 74). We set up contests to find winners, but almost always there will be many times more losers than winners. And if we take the contest model as our model for reality, we will always see the wrong reality. Competitiveness arises from

a false economy of scarcity. This is not the economy of God. "I am come," Jesus said, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). "I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh; For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know" (D&C 1:34–35). God is not protecting his status at the top. He wants us all to come where he is.

Competitiveness can both manifest and perpetuate emptiness. Like anxious children, afraid that at any moment the love we need might fail, we reach, we strive, we stride. And, as if there weren't already enough emptiness, we work hard to create more of it by making a contest of everything from teethbrushing to temple attendance. From parking to parenthood.

But, isn't this to be expected in a fundamentally paradoxical universe? Don't we believe that there must needs be opposition in all things and that we must always strive to overcome opposition? Joy is defined against pain, perhaps even derived from it. The fight with sin is real. It will be long and must go on.

Here, I think, is the particular danger for Latter-day Saints who have learned this doctrine. For even in the struggle to conquer evil in ourselves and in the universe, we must take care. There is danger in attempting to force creation to serve our own needs. There is arrogance, for example, in *creating* pain, as we can do in creating and submitting to structures for competition. And there is arrogance and willfulness in seeking to vanquish another to destroy our own pain or prevent our own pain, as we almost always do when we compete. In the competitive heart is the tendency to regard the inevitable polarities of existence as opportunities for conquest and self-advancement. Competitiveness seeks to establish truth at one pole, rather than receiving the truth that comes from negotiating paradoxes, from "proving contraries." We understand that without an opposition in all things, the work of God would be for nothing (there would *be* nothing), but we must take care not to see an *opponent* in all things and therefore deny the work of God. The work and glory of God are to bring to pass immortality and eternal life for others. The work of God in the universe, then, is the work of creation, of bringing new life out of relationship. All other work is vain, empty.

"It is vain," said Joseph Smith, "for persons to fancy themselves that they are heirs" of eternal life unless they are willing to "offer their all in sacrifice." The "sacrifice of all earthly things" is necessary to develop living faith, and it is "through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life" (in Lundwall n.d., 58). Lyndon Cook has suggested that the mature views of Joseph Smith concerning such a sacrifice are represented in the covenants and ordinances of the temple endowment: "By living faithful to all of his temple covenants the steward would, in the resurrection, inherit the highest degree of God's glory" (1985, 92).

Latter-day Saints who are endowed in the temple, then, covenant to consecrate (that is, dedicate to holy purposes) all that we have and are (all that is ours, after all, only by the grace of God) to the work of God on the earth. In this way, in our capacity and willingness to sacrifice to bring others into life, we find eternal life ourselves. In promising to do God's work, we promise, in

effect, to love as God loves. From this promise comes the *motive* for all that we do, else we are nothing. For no other success can compensate for failure to love.

Popular psychiatrist Scott Peck defines evil "most simply as the use of political power to destroy others for the purpose of defending or preserving the integrity of one's sick self" (1981, 241). Perhaps this definition could help warn us against our tendency to use power to diminish others for the purpose of preserving (or exalting) ourselves. In such an action we separate ourselves from one another. Those of us who have made covenants to bring wholeness to the world by our sacrifice of all earthly things, break the body of Christ as we separate ourselves from one another. This is not a holy breaking, a sacramental one, but an unholy one, a desecration.

Jesus Christ came, God on earth, to lay down his body for us and be lifted up for us. And his body, whole, is the metaphor for the unity in love of God's children on earth, those people who are his, who are like him. In the Book of Mormon we read in Fourth Nephi how members of the Church, after personal instruction by the risen Lord, made Zion, the community of health, wholeness, holiness. For two hundred years they lived together with "no contentions and disputations among them." They dealt justly with one another and had all things in common; "therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they all were made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift" (4 Ne. 2–3).

In discussions of this passage among Latter-day Saints, I have sometimes heard it said that yes, that was then, and perhaps will be again, but this is now. For now, the poor are always with us (probably, I have heard say, because they weren't completely valiant in the pre-existence), but the righteous prosper. The Book of Mormon tells us so. We who prosper (and are therefore righteous) bless the Church (and the poor) because we pay a lot of tithing, and we provide "the real leadership" for the Church and can attract other "quality" people to the Church. There is some question, of course, as to whether we should pay tithing on the net or on the gross. . . .

It is difficult for people living in a materialistic, secular culture to understand the requirements of a covenant to sacrifice all earthly things to make the world holy. We are grateful to have the requirements for good standing in the Church spelled out so that we can check them off on our list of accomplishments and go away justified. "One of the least noticed features of competition — and, specifically of its product-orientation — is the emphasis on quantification . . . reducing things to what can be counted and measured" (Kohn 1986, 85). We pay tithes and offerings, keep the rules, and fill Church assignments, and in this way we determine how well we are doing in the race for the celestial gates.

For many Mormons, the ultimate assignment is temple work, and in a secular culture it is quite natural that the temple would be seen not so much as a holy place from which holiness moves into the world (of both living and dead) as a place to fill (and report) quotas (ever more efficiently). It is natural that eternal life would be seen not as the state of seeking forever the good of others, found by sacrificing all earthly things, but as one of the rewards for making it to the top, to the celestial kingdom, a place beyond an ultimate goal

line, an achievement reached by striving for and attaining excellence no matter what the cost to others.

Of course, the "excellence" of individuals reflects on the group, on the Mormon team, and so we like to talk about it. The individual thus becomes a product, a statistic, an example of how all is well in Zion, yea, how Zion prospers. This fondness of ours for pointing out how Zion does indeed prosper, and how we are, after all, a "not-so-peculiar" people, is a manifestation of what I call MODDS, the Mormon Dancing Dog Syndrome: Look, look! A successful Mormon businessman (scientist, lawyer, doctor, chief). Look! A great Mormon athlete, scholar, musician! Look! Look! A Mormon beauty queen! You, too, can be a queen — diet, exercise, get the right clothes in the right colors (dress for success), shave your armpits and your legs of course, and voila! a beauty queen. Or else a sister missionary.

I refer in this last jibe to the now-defunct MTC "charm school," which once sought to render sisters from all over the world more presentable as they presented the gospel message. The charm school has, I am happy to say, been given up. And now BYU has given up its queen contest! Unfortunately, however, there is now a more comprehensive contest in its place. It is too bad, I think, that BYU can't do away with contests for "best person" altogether.

I wonder why we chase after the world the way we do, why we try so hard to attract the world to our version of itself. (It is not enough for BYU to be "the Lord's university"; it must also try to become "the Harvard of the West.") Perhaps we still feel the need to compromise with the world in order to keep our influence (or accreditation) in it. Perhaps we believe that the urgency and importance of our message justifies any means we might use in spreading it. Isn't Church public relations, for example, just a way of letting our light shine so that others, seeing it, will know and glorify our Father in Heaven? I wonder, though, what our behavior actually reveals about the gods we worship. And sometimes I worry that our behavior reveals our doubts about the power of the gospel itself to change hearts (or hold our own hearts).

Even saying all of this, I don't mean to suggest that the Church is full of bad or stupid people. I think some of us are misguided, however, unaware of the real meaning and effects of, the real fault in, what we do. If we knew better, we would do better. But what keeps us from knowing better? Partly, it is our conviction that we are *right*, whatever we do. In the stake where I live, top stake in the Church as some see it, we are *very* right. Right church, right country, right politics (right wing), right jobs. How could we ever be wrong about anything? But hey, you can have it, too. Just join the Mormon Club, and you will prosper, as the Lord has promised.

David Ehrenfeld, in the introduction to his book *The Arrogance of Humanism*, says that the "snare of stewardship is that the steward may forget that he is not a king" (1981, x). I think that many Mormons would miss the warning. Perhaps they would like the title of Ehrenfeld's book, though. Yes, humanists are arrogant. And we thank thee, Lord, that we are not as the humanists are. The Book of Mormon is full of warnings about arrogance, about pride. Yes, pride is bad. Arrogance is bad. We *know* this.

Of course, I am here to say that we don't know it very well. The particular arrogance of Mormons, rationalized by our view of God and God's true church, is a commonplace theme among our critics, who can easily misunderstand our beliefs and intentions. What is more troubling to me is the pride, the arrogance, the competitiveness that keep us from true community *within* the Church. For, as most of us surely know, there can be a great deal of private pain behind the Happy Mormon Image.

My friend who thinks life is a battle is happy (we are all enlisted, joyfully, joyfully, marching to our home). But some of us watching her happiness are not happy. Trying to measure up to the image, afraid that we will appear less than perfect to others, we are sometimes lonely. Although our lives are tied up in the Church, we measure and judge ourselves and others, and imagine they are measuring and judging us, and so we feel divided from one another. If we look to the institutional Church itself to strengthen us in holiness, we are sometimes disappointed. We are intimidated and depressed by Relief Society lessons. We wonder at the "showcase families" whose children excel in every way when our own lives are full of trouble and pain. It is difficult to find comfort from or feel kinship with a splendid example of righteous living.

Perhaps we are merely looking for a place to worship in peace, and we find something else. "I expected it to be a holy experience," our daughter said, returning from her first time being baptized for the dead. "But it was hard to feel holy with a locker key pinned to me and a big computer at the font. It was hard to feel that I was really in the house of the Lord." I had to admit that locker keys in the temple had once bothered me, too, and the computers had bothered me more recently. "All the better to count you with, my dear," I wanted to say to my daughter, but I didn't. "The world will always come in," I said instead, "even in the holiest places on this earth. *You* will have to keep it out."

And so I try to tell myself, if I am uncomfortable or unhappy in sacrament meeting or Relief Society it could be because I am striving with what I hear instead of receiving it. If the Spirit tells me that what I hear is truly misguided, I can reject it. If what I hear is a true call to repentance, I can repent. Repentance means this: turning again to God, understanding again (and again) how to do the work of God in the world with a pure heart, sacrificing all earthly things, even my competitiveness and my loneliness, in my attempts to make connection with others. This is how I will find confidence that I do not, in the words of Joseph Smith, "seek the face of God in vain."

I heard in stake conference that the face of God is the face of a coach, or of a horse trainer. Our job, the speaker (himself a much-honored athletic coach) said, is to learn to hear the voice of the coach (or the bell of the horse trainer) and to respond instantly, precisely, regardless of how desire or personal judgment might tempt us to do otherwise. This is how we become champions, how we win the race and reach our eternal goal in the top kingdom. I rejected this metaphor, perhaps more out of personal distaste than inspiration, for I did it with a very critical heart indeed. It put me in mind of the rich young man of the New Testament. He was a champion, a real super-striver. He had everything, and was a good person too, having kept the commandments of God

(the ones on his checklist anyway) from his youth. I wonder what he wanted from Jesus. The Super Checklist, the Ultimate Good defined? Whatever he wanted, it wasn't what he got.

"Good master," the young man said, letting it be known that he recognized the right side. "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus told him that only God was good. (Don't be a hypocrite, young man; you are not calling me good because your recognize me, but only because you want something; eternal life is not something you "have." It is something you become, by losing yourself.) And the young man went away sorrowing, for he had great possessions. The perfect youth had grown into a perfect example, a product-oriented man with a lot to lose. He would not lose it and so could not find himself.

The entire Matthew 19–20 lesson in which this story is set rejects competitiveness. It begins with the discourse on marriage (the union of necessary opposites), then the blessing of the little children whom the disciples rebuked, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. But how is it that we learn to be childlike after we have grown? (I think some of us were never childlike in the first place.) As though anticipating the question, the gospel writer next shows us the good boy grown up, with so many earthly things possessing him that he will not submit to his Father. Then come the disciples, who have done what the rich young man will not, who have forsaken all to follow Jesus. Now they want to know what they will get for what they've done. Patient, Jesus tells them of their place in his kingdom. And then he repeats his message to the rich young man: Forsake everything for my sake, and you have eternal life. But if you are doing this for the reward, beware. Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

As a reforming competer, I will admit that I have sometimes wanted to skip quickly over what comes next — the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (so unfair, isn't it?) — and move on to an easier part, to snickering at the presumption, the blatant competitiveness of the mother of Zebedee's children. But this part isn't really easier. To answer their mother, Jesus asks James and John: Can you do what I do? Can you take into yourselves, receive, what I receive? The kingdom is not a trophy. It is the abode of those for whom my Father has prepared it. The holy ones. Ten of the disciples are indignant at what they think they have heard (that James and John have beat them out). But dominion in the kingdom is not like dominion on earth. Many are called, but few are chosen, because their hearts are so set on the things of this world that they forget that the power of God is love, and all else is vain. "Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last." (See also D&C 121:34–40.)

Isn't that interesting? What a paradox, eh? Well, we want to be first, so we'd better get on with being last. Let's get out there and serve, sacrifice for the kingdom, lay down our lives, bear our testimonies about how humble we feel for being privileged to serve the Saints of God (among such great people as our companions in service — of course, we're not great, but the others doing what we're doing are great).

The trouble is, of course, that we cannot become humble by paying attention to (quantifying and being proud of) our efforts at humility. True humility is found only in the self-forgetfulness of a self-existent being. Losing ourselves in the sacrifice of all earthly things is not a means to an end. In the economy of God, there are no "ends" in this sense; there are only "means." We are not made mortal in order to see how much we can get in the game of life; we are here in the process of entering into the way of life. Jesus gave himself, our loving friend, so that he could show us the way of life. We learn to walk in the Way as we live out the story of our own lives in relationship to others.

I have a friend who, perhaps because of the way she was treated as a child, never feels that she can measure up. "I guess I'll never make it to the celestial kingdom," she says. "I'm a nobody in the Church; I'm just not the kind of person the Lord wants." I happen to know that this woman works very hard at her Church callings, which are always the invisible kinds of callings. She also spends a great deal of time in service to others, doing things she likes to do and is good at. None of this counts, though, because much of it "isn't what the Church asks." She keeps comparing herself to others whose callings bring them into prominence. Seeing life as a contest, she has decided herself a loser. Much of the time she is angry, defensive, bitter.

The trouble with product orientation is that you can fail just by comparing your list with another list. It will be difficult for my friend to sacrifice her worldly notions about success in the Church and learn to believe in the goodness of her own heart. She learned at such an early age to believe that life was on every front a race, a battle, and she was a loser.

How, I wonder, would things be different for her if she had learned a different view of life, a view, for instance, that a young friend of mine learns from his mother. Once when he was a deacon, he came home from a priesthood meeting and told his mother that he didn't think he was doing enough for Heavenly Father's church. His mother told him something like this: "Every time you tie your little brother's shoes or feed him his breakfast or help him put on his shirt or tell him a story, you are doing something for Heavenly Father's church."

Many Latter-day Saints, however, believe that "Heavenly Father's church" is the LDS institution, pure and simple. Such people, if they are in positions of leadership, tend to castigate those who fail to "support the programs" and tend to see the programs themselves rather narrowly. But unrighteous dominion lurks in this misundersanding of the purpose of the programs — unrighteous dominion and a lot of just plain foolishness. I could mention, for instance, the Young Women's lesson on hairstyling my daughter chose to miss, thereby coming to be accused of failing to support her leaders (a few such misses can label a child "inactive"). Or I could mention the water outing the youth of our ward enjoyed. In a post-activity evaluation meeting, the outing, considered a great success by all who attended, was called by the youth leaders "a failure in terms of its goals" because it did not "activate" even one inactive youth.

Even in the face of obvious weaknesses in the institution, failure of programs or changes, it seems difficult for some committed people (perhaps because their commitment costs them so much?) to remember that although the Church *is* as true as the gospel, its programs and people are not infallible. I want to meet the man, a stake president from Mexico City, who told a friend of mine, "I wish you Americans would stop trying to export your bureaucratic neurosis and just let us live the gospel."

American bureaucracy arises in a culture that values competitiveness as essential in maintaining the rivalry that gets and keeps us moving, accomplishing. "Enemies," says critic Anne Strick, "is what our legal system is all about" (in Kohn 1986, 162). Add to the list our political system, our education system, as well as our most popular leisure activities. In fact, Kohn observes that

> participation in sports amounts to a kind of apprenticeship for life in contemporary America. . . . Sport does not simply build character. . . . It builds exactly the kind of character that is most useful for the social system. . . . Athletes are quite deliberately led to accept the value and naturalness of an adversarial relationship in place of . . . collective effort. If he is in a team sport, the athlete comes to see cooperation only as a means to victory, to see hostility and even aggression as legitimate, to accept conformity and authoritarianism. (1986, 85)

Michael Novak is a great baseball fan and a "staunch defender of competition"; he, nevertheless, has observed that "our sports are lively with the sense of evil, [providing] an almost deliberate exercise in pushing the psyche to cheat and take advantake, to be ruthless, cruel, deceitful, vengeful, and aggressive" (in Kohn 1986, 163).

I do not want to deny the value of all sports or criticize the interests, pleasures, and accomplishments of all athletes, coaches, and fans. (We in the "academic world" certainly are not free of the sort of evil Novak describes.) But since sports are so popular among Latter-day Saints, and since they find so much place in our pulpit and classroom rhetoric, I think that we might be wary. If it is true that "the way to the board room is through the locker room," and if what Novak says about the values of the locker room is true, perhaps a Latter-day Saint might be wary of the values of corporate America. As we seek to spread the gospel throughout the world, I think we must take very great care not to spread the American competitive sickness along with it.

Driving past Cougar Stadium and the BYU baseball field one day, I saw on the slogan board in front of a nearby motel something that I suppose was meant to amuse parents of graduating BYU students: "The only good thing about being imperfect is the joy it brings to others." We see the sickness, don't we, and we try to laugh it off. It is sick, unhealthy, unholy, sinful to derive pleasure from the pain of others. And we don't have to do it. I don't mean to suggest that we stop improving ourselves, stop building character by challenging our minds and bodies, stop playing, stop having fun. But I want to suggest, as Kohn does, that true play, true accomplishment, true improvement are not competitive activities, are not concerned with quantification and victory, are process-oriented rather than product-oriented. Like the seven-year-old athlete who was asked how fast he had run and replied, 'As fast as I could,'

the process-oriented individual gladly gives up precision — particularly precision in the service of determining who is best — in exchange for pure enjoyment. He who plays does not ask the score. In fact, there is no score kept (Kohn 1986, 86).

In the Hindu parable of the wishing tree, the children have only to wish, and they get what they want. Of course, with that wish comes its opposite, because that is how the world is. Candy and stomachaches, toys and boredom. The children grow up wishing; soon they are wishing for the four things every grown-up wants, so the story goes — sex, fame, power, and money. They get all these things, and with them their opposites. They grow old. They are discouraged with the way things are. Some of them say the world is a terrible place, and that's all there is to it. Some others say it would have been all right, if they had just made the right wishes. A third group just want to die; they wish for it, and they do die, but then, of course, they are reborn to start all over again.

But this isn't the end of the story. One of the children is a crippled boy who gets trampled in the rush to the tree and crawls off into a hut to wait for his turn at wishing. He grows old along with the rest, watching what happens to them and waiting. At last, in one dazzling, illuminating spectacle he sees the whole thing, and he marvels at the spectacle of the universe. At that moment, he feels a rush of compassion for his companions under the tree, and in that rush of compassion, he forgets to wish. He forgets to wish, and the tree can't touch him. He is free (Lal 1981, 102–5).

He forgets to wish, to "seek his own," and he is free. Competitiveness is self-seeking; ultimately, it is arrogant; it strives to assert a personal unworkable will, to conquer what cannot be conquered. This is bondage.

In the story of Jehovah and Lucifer, Jehovah submits his own will to the will of his Father, the embodiment of self-existent Good, while Lucifer attempts to assert his own reality in place of the Good. Ironically, his plan is to eliminate all opposition (all competition) and guarantee that everyone meets the goal and ends up in the right place. But this is impossible. "I will send the first," God says. Although there are opposing ideas, there is no contest. Still, Lucifer, competing, has lost, and he must strive to destroy his loss. "Competition seeks to prove superiority, even if it doesn't exist" (Kohn 1986, 77). Lucifer wants to be best; Jehovah desires what will work. Jehovah is truth; Lucifer is error, and his refusal to repent, to turn his face to God, results in his fall forever from the path to eternal life. There was no joy in heaven at this "victory": the hosts of heaven wept at the fall of the bright one. But he who wanted the glory for himself now seeks to make all humans miserable like unto himself.

Unlike Alfie Kohn, whose book *No Contest: The Case Against Competition* has given me so much useful material for this paper, I believe in the reality of this fallen personality. Evil is not eliminated by merely defining it out of existence. We do not compete, as Kohn suggests, merely because we have grown up in a competitive society. I believe that we have voluntarily "fallen" into a world of limited time and space, that we have taken upon ourselves

estrangement from God to live in an economy of scarcity, where the survival of one creature can mean the extinction of another. We are, therefore, in our fallen natures inevitably self-serving beings. But I also believe that this very aspect of our natures contains that which enables us to become otherwise, indeed, that which enables us to comprehend and accept the abundance of God's love and thereby to become as God is. For, in our opportunity and ability to yield a "self" that *wants* to choose itself, to yield this self to a higher will, we exercise a freedom of will that teaches us truth. This truth, in turn, increases our freedom. And thus, in choosing truth eternally, we progress eternally.

So, in decrying competitiveness (distinguished from Kohn's decrying all competition), I do not mean to deny the value of struggle to conquer sin and evil. I mean, primarily, to deplore the attitude of heart that finds and rejoices in its own worth at the expense of, in the defeat of others, an attitude I call "secular." The secular being can kill animals for sport and can see war as a game. One whose attitude or view of life is "sacred," however, takes life only out of necessity, kills animals with gratitude for their sacrifice, and sees war as a tragic consequence of sin. (Isn't there something a little strange in our singing "We are all enlisted till the conflict is o'er. Happy are we!")

And, in spite of what some of our forebears left us believing, I do not think that all struggle, all striving, all difficulty, all hard work, all self-denial are the works of righteousness, and are sacred. Lucifer's plan would have demanded a great deal of effort and probably an immense bureaucracy filled with dedicated competers. The expansive American bureaucracy deplored by the wise stake president was built by energetic people, trained in the power of rivalry.

Early in life, the American child begins to learn about this rivalry and about a certain hypocrisy that goes with it. For the American child must compete without seeming to be competitive (see Seely, Sim, and Loosely 1956, 229). He must be a good sport, a good loser. This trick, "a matter of rearranging our face and affecting an attitude" (Kohn 1986, 117), is taught in our schools and on our athletic fields. Good sportsmanship is an attempt to mitigate the evils of competition with the good of cooperation.

In school, we encourage cooperation in moralistic maxims, says Kohn, but we actually focus on developing competitive behaviors (Vance and Richmond 1975, 118). We excuse such perverse pedagogy by explaining that children need to learn to compete — to win and to lose and to do it gracefully — in order to get along in life. This actually means for most children that they will spend a lot of time losing. And this, we hope, will prepare them for the rude shocks of life. The truth is that it is *acceptance* in the early years that best allows us to deal with rejection later. It is an initial sense of security that gives us strength to face adversity, and this security "is precisely what competition inhibits" (Kohn 1986, 119, 123).

But what about those "realities of the world"? Don't we owe it to our children to train them to succeed in the secular culture in which they find themselves? Doesn't that mean that we have to motivate them? It is necessary, isn't it, to provide extrinsic incentives or rewards, or nobody would do any-

thing they ought to do. Appealing to a child's "natural competitive instincts" is just good behavior management.

First of all, as Kohn takes pains to show, from a purely practical point of view, the only extrinsic motivator that really works is a sense of accountability to others (1986, 61). It is cooperation, not competition, that really gets things done, really helps us "succeed," and makes us feel good too. Without charity, without love, the gospel teaches, we are nothing. No other motivation has any eternal worth. No end justifies the wrong means. Love is the only thing that *works*.

The way of love, as Joseph Smith said, is to teach correct principles and then let people govern themselves. Of course, children and other ignorant people are not always to be trusted to understand the principles necessary to govern themselves properly. And so we, parents and other leaders, feeling accountable, see our continued governing as necessary so that our charges might learn, from experiences they are persuaded to have, what the correct principles are. In our attempts to govern, we speak of awards, rewards, goals, achievement, and winning as though heedless of how these words fall upon the ears and hearts of people trained to compete. Thus, in our anxious striving to get people to do right, we can hide from ourselves and others both our inadequacy as teachers and our lack of faith in those we teach. Moreover, in our anxiety to make the voice of truth heard over the din of the surrounding culture, we *compete* with the influence of the culture, and in so setting ourselves at one "pole," we close ourselves off from information we might need, and we risk unrighteous dominion, which violates the covenant of stewardship we have made.

I do believe that most of us do not intend, with our admonitions for striving, to teach that anyone should stand on anyone else's head to get higher. I even believe that most of us don't really mean in our own competing to hurt others. When we realize that there is a real *person* who might suffer at our victory, we usually feel bad about it. But rather than trying to find another way, rather than giving up the competition, we try to mitigate the effects of what we do and so make ourselves feel better. We work at denying our real feelings of loss so that we can be good sports. And we work at denying the personal reality of our foes, turning them into abstractions — numbers or ideas. As Ronald Reagan, while he was governor of California, reportedly advised a college football team, "You can feel a clean hatred for your opponent. It is a clean hatred since it's only symbolic in a jersey" (Kohn 1986, 84). Turning people into symbols so that we can hate them and therefore vanquish them is, of course, how we wage war, how we get ordinary people to kill other people.

We live in a world full of conflict and paradox. But if we have a competitive worldview, we are in danger of perceiving the paradoxes incorrectly or misconstruing them. We can, for example, perceive polarity where it doesn't exist, seeing ourselves in competition with something we are actually part of. We can also think of polarity in the wrong way. In his essay "Why the Church Is as True as the Gospel," Eugene England explains beautifully the Mormon view of the fundamentally paradoxical nature of the universe. But even so

generous a Christian as Gene can make the errors I fear so much: "Throughout history the most important and productive ideas have been paradoxical, that is, in useful opposition to each other: the energizing force in all art has been conflict and opposition; the basis for success in all economic, political, and other social development has been competition and dialogue" (England 1986, 3).

If success is based on competition, it seems to me that a Christian would have to question the value of this "success" and wonder about its costs. (I sometimes wonder what true spiritual progress the world has known anyway.) And it seems to me that true dialogue ends when competition enters it.

"Think of our government based on checks and balances and our two-party political system. . . . Think of Romanticism versus Classicism . . . , reason versus emotion, freedom versus order, individual integrity versus community responsibility, men versus women . . . , justice versus mercy" (England 1986, 3). Here, it seems to me, are polarities both misconceived and misconstrued. The "useful opposite" of order, for example, is not freedom but chaos. Individual integrity is the *basis* for community responsibility, not its opposite. There is no real justice in the absence of mercy.

But my most important argument with this passsage is its use of "versus," a word denoting competitive struggle, to make relationship between the "useful opposites" Gene lists. I believe, as Margaret Toscano has explained, that it is important to distinguish "necesssary" opposites from "rival" opposites (1985, 8). Rival opposition is the opposition of good versus evil. Necessary opposition is the "opposition" of female and male, of the electron and the nucleus, or of the nuclear members themselves, a relationship that holds the universe in order, that keeps the atom from collapsing, that says, "There is something, and not nothing." This kind of opposition calls for conjunction, harmony, and balance to bring forth truth. As long as the relationship between the sexes, for instance, is seen in any sense as a "war," we will not be able to yield ourselves to learning what there is to learn from the otherness of sexuality.

We do not find eternal life by waging war against each other. We do not find truth by attempting to conquer paradox. We can only break ourselves in the attempt. And this is not just metaphorical language. In concluding his book *Taking the Quantum Leap*, physicist Fred Alan Wolf suggests that understanding quantum mechanics can help us to understand ourselves and make the world a safer, more enjoyable place to live. "Perhaps if people saw that there was no way to break the uncertainty principle, wars would stop. Certainly, if people became aware that a power over another human being was impossible because of quantum physics, the world would be a different place for all of us" (1981, 249). Wolf suggests that we might see God's will exercised in the world of the quantum wave function. This world is "a world of paradox and utter confusion for human, limited intelligence. . . . Yet there is an explicit order to the paradox" (pp. 249–50).

> But we, who exist in the world of matter, can only disrupt that perfection of paradox by attempting to observe the pattern . . . . We cannot make total order of our observa-

> tions. . . . Thus we become helpless, feel inadequate, and long for the order we are helpless to create in the universe. All we can do is go along with it.
>
> On the other hand, we are free to choose. . . . But we cannot predict the results of our choices. We can choose, but we cannot know if our choices will be successful.
>
> The alternative to this uncertain world is a certain world. [This is the world Lucifer wanted to make and get glory for.] In such a world, particles would follow well-determined paths with exact locations at each and every point. But this alternative is known to be unworkable. The tiny electron inside of every atom would have to radiate each and every instant in such a determined world. It would lose all of its energy and quickly fall into the nucleus. All atoms would disappear. All electromagnetic energy would vanish. All nervous systems would cease their activity. All life would stop. For life as we know it can only exist through the blessing of uncertainty, and security is a myth.
>
> Yet security is there. We feel its presence. It is the longing for the perfection of universal order that we all feel. (Wolf 1981, 250)

We cannot fill our longing for the perfection of universal order in a race to qualify for the top. We cannot fill *any* longing, cannot fill ourselves at all by paying attention to ourselves. What we can do, by the grace of God, is transform our longing to be saved, to be received, into a willingness to receive, and thereby to comprehend the truths of the paradoxical reality in which we exist.

Ancient Christianity sometimes created pictures of the righteous laughing in derision at the sinners burning in hell. But the vision of Lehi tells the truth. The derisive laughter comes from the sinners in the great and spacious building, mocking those who, holding steadfast of the word of God, move towards life in the love of God. And it is this vision of the world that I want my children to learn. It is a sacred, mature, Christian view of life. It is a view that is in harmony with the reality of the universe. It is not a view that prevails in American culture; it is not a view always evident in members of the American Mormon Church.

But that does not mean that my children, as American Mormons, cannot learn this way of seeing life. I believe with all my heart that the truths my children need to know are found in the teachings of Jesus Christ that I have learned as a Latter-day Saint. But I also know that I can't expect my children to learn all truth in the certainties of the platitudes they will hear so often over the pulpit. Nor will they find all truth in the narrow security of the Checklist for Perfection. Certainly they will not find all truth in their secular education or in the systems and syllogisms of science and letters. That is to say, truth in its entirety does not reside in the paternalism, striving, or logic of what is sometimes called a "masculine" worldview.

There is an alternative worldview, however, that has traditionally been called "feminine." This view emphasizes a commitment to relationship, "an other-regarding posture that places special emphasis on the connections between people" (Kohn 1986, 176). This is the worldview I would like to help my children, the boys as well as the girls, learn. I believe that this view is compatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this view, "the moral problem arises from conflicting responsibilities rather than competing rights and requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract" (Gilligan 1982, 19).

One way of explaining what happens to our understanding of truth as we grow up and meet the complexities of life is to say we learn that truth is relative; we learn to speak of "situational ethics" and so call ourselves mature. Perhaps it is better, for those of us who believe in the reality of Go(o)d and (D)evil, to explain that truth is *contextual.* We can understand, then, that it is a context, a story, such as the parable of the wishing tree, the story of Job, or the parables of Jesus, that invites us into the particular challenges of a mature, "feminine" way of knowing. As Herbert Schneidau has explained,

> The great New Testament parables — I would instance particularly the laborers in the vineyard . . . and others like it — are those that make it clear that common truths do not answer the real problems, indeed, that the real problems are so hard we can barely understand or frame them, let alone answer them. Parables are a form of literature whose very existence is itself a parable, a parable about the immense labors of soul-searching and mind-searching needed for understanding. "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" (John 6:60) so many hearers have said. (1981, 36)

But we can hear hard things. We can hear the parable of the laborers after all, putting aside for a moment our "masculine" notions of justice and entitlement in order to receive the "feminine" message of the mercy and love of God for us all.

And so, receiving this truth, we can change. We can begin to create in ourselves new hearts and new minds. We help others to change by avoiding creating or participating in battles, races, contests. We can resist creating scarcity in the world, for ourselves, our children, our students, our friends, our constituents, our peers, our employees, our congregations, our readers. We can find a more abundant life. At first, we don't see how we can do this. It is difficult to have faith in a way of being we have not known. If we had the faith, we could change our hearts, we could sacrifice all earthly things, even our competitiveness. But how can we find such faith without the strength and understanding that come from having made the sacrifice? We are caught. How can we change?

The way out of this paradox is to accept it, receive it, experiment upon it. I try my way. You try yours. We will not always agree. We are different. Even living in the same church, professing the same core beliefs, we are different. But if we are to be exalted, we must, by the grace of God, become one, must find communion, must find moments when love brings Zion, when love discloses the kingdom of God among us.

For the real story of the universe is not who gets which for what — top kingdom, middle kingdom, bottom kingdom. The story of life and creation is glory of the sun, the glory of the moon, and the glory of the stars. Let us play in the universe, says heart that is true. Let us, undivided from one another, go on to glory.

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Why Nephi Killed Laban: Reflections on the Truth of the Book of Mormon

Eugene England

UNTIL RECENTLY, ATTEMPTS TO VINDICATE THE CENTRAL CLAIM of the Book of Mormon — that it is a divinely inspired book based on the history of an ancient culture — have focused mainly on external evidences. Such attempts have examined parallels in the geographies, cultures, and literatures of the Middle East and Ancient America (especially parallels to knowledge that has become available only since Joseph Smith's time). These parallels are used to prove the Book of Mormon is consistent with ancient knowledge and forms which Joseph Smith could have known only through an ancient manuscript and revelation. This essay takes a different approach, based essentially on internal evidence provided by the book itself. I build my argument on work by Mormon scholars such as John Welch, Noel Reynolds, and Bruce Jorgensen but use techniques developed by non-Mormon literary critics Northrop Frye and René Girard in their work on the Bible.

Frye, by analyzing the Bible's unique typological literary structure and its kinds and quality of language, and Girard, by examining its uniquely revealing and healing response to divine and human violence, have each concluded that the Bible not only has literary qualities superior to those in all other books but is also divine. I concur with Frye and Girard — except in their claim of the Bible's uniqueness. One other book, the Book of Mormon, attains similar qualities of form and content and thus stands as a second witness not only for Christ, but for the Logos, the redeemed and redeeming Word.

A glass-walled classroom extends behind the BYU Study Abroad Center in Baden, Austria, near Vienna. On a windy spring afternoon in 1985, my wife Charlotte and I, with a few students, sat there watching apple blossoms and forsythia toss and lean over the fence from a neighbor's yard. Still weary

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from a late night arrival by train, we were helping to provide a respectable audience for a missionary "concert" we had just heard about at lunch. Only a few members from the local branch had been able to get transportation, and our small group included some investigators, some elders, and the mission president. We weren't expecting much.

Elder Kevin Kenner, tall and a bit awkward in his double-breasted pinstripe suit, announced that Cynthia Lang, a recent convert, would play Mozart's "Violin Sonata." Then he unbuttoned his coat, sat down at the piano bench, and placed his large hands on the Center's brightly polished black Yamaha. With a serious, generous face and strong body that moved with her bowing, Cynthia began to develop Mozart's strange, delightful patterns with that rare skill in a violinist that convinces you that the instrument is under full control — and we realized we were in for an unusual hour. When Cynthia had finished, Elder Kenner continued with some Gershwin and then announced that Lun Liang, a young man we later learned had just begun to investigate Mormonism, would perform on a Chinese violin. We lost all sense of duty, even of self, in the presence of continual grace — from Kreisler to Rachmaninoff, back to the Chinese violin, and on to more Kreisler and some Chopin for encores.

How strange the connection of these three superficially dissimilar people — a young missionary from San Diego, a woman of Eastern Europe's great tradition, studying with Professor Ernst Kuchel, and a shy Oriental, playing his delicate, two-stringed instrument with its drum-like sounding box. Though they divided the world in thirds by their geographical and cultural differences, they became absolutely united in one of the strongest human obsessions, making and listening to organized, patterned sounds.

Five days before that concert we had witnessed an equally strong human obsession, as we raptly listened to Malcolm Miller "read" the windows at Chartres Cathedral. For nearly thirty years he had been learning to read the "book," actually the library, miraculously preserved in the stained glass of one — and only one — of the medieval cathedrals and now available to a nearly uncomprehending modern world. His one-hour lecture could only open the first few pages of the first book there at Chartres, but what a fascinating, strange, yet satisfying vision unfolded. He read the third window from the right along the north wall of the transept — the story of Joseph, projecting him as a "type," a pattern for the future Christ. Then he read the three great western windows, quite recently cleaned, whose brilliance and clarity suggests how the whole cathedral looked inside when it was young (and might again when funds for cleaning the other 170 windows can be found). The central window on the west gives the greatest story in human history: God becoming like us in order to save us. On the right is the pattern of preparation for that event, Christ's descent through the loins of Jesse, and on the left are the details of Christ's life and death after the incarnation.

We went to the nave to read the great rose windows, the north one part of the pattern of Old Testament preparations, the south one, focused on Mary, continuing the story of patterns in Christ's life that corresponded to the typological preparations. Everywhere I felt the obsession with order, pattern, types,

and parallels, prophecies, and fulfillments in literal but meaningfully similar structures: the "soldiers" coming before Christ — the Old Testament prophets who foretold him — marshaled on the north; Christ and his "soldiers" that followed him, the martyrs and confessors, along the south; the four major prophets of the Old Testament with the New Testament evangelists literally standing on their shoulders; the Garden of Eden as Old Salem, the "lost peace," to be completed in the New Jerusalem; and, giving a shock of recognition to careful readers of the Book of Mormon, a deep green cross for Christ, based on the medieval legend that the tree he was hung upon was made from Eden's Tree of Life.

The Book of Mormon? Yes, because that most typologically structured book — the only one that uses biblical patterns with even greater intensity and consistency and ultimate significance than the Bible — has as its central pattern what Bruce Jorgensen has called "The Dark Way to the Tree," an archetypal journey to a tree which is multiple in form. With that image the Book of Mormon unites, to create greater understanding and power, four patterns of the human pilgrimage: (1) Adam and Eve as Everyman and Everywoman finding their dark but necessary way to the Tree of Life through partaking of the Tree of Knowledge. (2) Christ providing the essential means for all men and women from Adam and Eve onward to make that dark journey, by personally taking his life's journey and ending upon a tree — death on a cross that makes possible eternal life. (3) Lehi's dream establishing the pattern into our subconscious through the powerful, patterning drama of the journey through darkness to the tree that represents God's love through Christ (I Ne. 8 and 11). This dream begins the Book of Mormon narrative and, as Jorgensen has shown, becomes the type for its main stories, such as the conversions of Enos and Alma the Younger, as well as its overall structure, which invites us all to participate in an individual journey of salvation, even as God is leading the whole earth (and human history) through such a journey in order to make our own journeys possible (1979, 218–30). (4) Alma giving universal intellectual power to the pattern with his explication, uniquely appropriate for modern, science-oriented skeptics, that the central crux of the pilgrimage — how to know the truth and act upon it — is best symbolized as planting a seed, growing a tree, and partaking of the fruit (Alma 32:28–43).

What Wallace Stevens called the "rage for order" is what preoccupies us most characteristically in all human ages. For a thousand years the precisely measured, lifted, and hanging stone circle of Stonehenge engaged a large community of ancient Britons in enormous physical effort — and effective political organization to sustain that effort — which was clearly aimed at making sense of their world. Now modern particle physics exacts increasing billions of dollars to build huge circular superconducting accelerators that might unlock the basic pattern — the numbers at the root of matter and energy — that will reveal something of the ultimate nature, and essential oppositions, of physical reality, of what Lehi called "things to be acted upon" (2 Ne. 2:13).

But mere pattern is not enough. It is not fully clear whether music is cencentral to human experience because it demonstrates to us again and again that patterns can be discovered in our fundamental environment of sound and time, or whether human beings need to create patterns against the prevailing chaos and simply find satisfaction in doing so, however ephemeral those patterns may seem. But in either case, it remains true that music does not fully satisfy us. Wallace Stevens said that we have poetry because without it we do not have enough, but (as his own work, in its increasingly nihilistic though nostalgic despair, demonstrates) *with* it we still do not have enough. Like the builders of Stonehenge, we continue to yearn not only for pattern, but for meaningful, saving patterns, involving what Lehi called "things to act" — living agents, mortals and gods.

In Austria we asked Elder Kenner, after his last encore, whether he had enough time to practice. He said the mission president had encouraged him to take what time he needed, but that he most often, without regret, let his central work of teaching the gospel take priority. We saw Sister Lang the next day as she led the singing at her LDS ward in Vienna, expressing her new faith with a more comprehensive joy, I believe, than when she played her violin for us. And Lun Liang, if he accepts the gospel of Christ, will find its patterns, what Joseph Smith called "the ancient order of things," more satisfying, I also believe, than the music he brings with him from China or that he is finding in Vienna.

Patterns obsess us because they emphasize what is most fundamental in the universe, what is repeated, necessary, irresistible, final. But there is a deepest pattern, the source and goal of all our searching for pattern, what Northrop Frye in his book of the same title calls "The Great Code." It is the great scriptural pattern which, beyond what the universe is and has been, also images for us what life can be at its most satisfying, fulfilling, and enduring. That is the pattern Frye finds uniquely in the Bible. He traces the way that pattern has ultimately shaped our mythology, our metaphoric patterns, and our rhetoric itself — in a word, *all* our literature, not just that which directly alludes to the Bible. I believe that Frye's most important claims for the Bible can also be demonstrated for the Book of Mormon.

Actually, the Book of Mormon seems to me even more amenable than the Bible to Frye's analysis. It is clearly patterned by a single mind, that of Mormon, and the resulting unity is remarkably similar to the patterns only now being explicated in the Bible by critics such as Frye. I believe that, given adequate attention by sympathetic critics, the Book of Mormon will provide an even deeper, more intellectually consistent, and powerful witness than the Bible for the Logos — both for Jesus Christ as our divine and only Savior and also for the Word, for language imbued with divine power.

Frye has long been intrigued by the Bible's unusual potential for "polysemous" interpretation, that is, for being understood and having enormous influence not only at the literal, historical level but even more so at various metaphorical levels. He has examined particularly the typological level, which

connects events and people throughout history in a cohesive pattern of images and imitations of the process of salvation through Christ. He has also pointed to the success of medieval and subsequent commentators with the "moral" and "anagogical" levels of interpretation (at the moral level each passage is understood as teaching us, in addition to the literal story, how to imitate Christ's life in the practical world, at the anagogical level how to see our lives in the context of life in eternity with him).

Frye has finally concluded, and sets out in *The Great Code* to demonstrate, that "polysemous meaning is a feature of all deeply serious writing, and the Bible is the model for serious writing" (1982, 221). He argues that the biblical achievement with language is unique and its influence so powerful on all other uses of language that it alone has guaranteed the very possibility of retaining polysemous meaning in our modern culture, despite powerful influences to the contrary.

Such claims, of course, imply a particular history of language, which Frye provides. First he makes a crucial distinction, not provided in the single English word "language," between the sound patterns that make up a language, which of course cannot be adequately translated, and the essential sense or force or dramatic patterns of the language, which can. This latter is the French *langage*, as opposed to *langue*. *Langage* is "a sequence of modes of more or less translatable structures in words, cutting across the variety of *langues* employed, affected and conditioned but not wholly determined by them" (1982, 5). This is a valuable distinction; it turns us from exclusive attention to the formal elements of literature, such as sound patterns, multiple meanings, prose rhythms, concision, texture, and puns, that have preoccupied much literary criticism in this century. Such preoccupation has diverted us from other, perhaps weightier, matters, such as the patterns of sin and salvation. In the process we have been kept from full appreciation of the literary merit of the Bible — and almost *any* appreciation of the literary merit of the Book of Mormon. The prose of the book his been criticized as dull, flat, even awkward (overuse of clumsy phrases like "And it came to pass"), and the extraordinary beauty of its concepts has been neglected (the remarkable philosophical sophistication of 2 Nephi 2 and Alma 32, the uniquely full and moving understanding of the atonement in Mosiah 3–5 and Alma 7, 34, and 42). Thus we have focused on *langue* (which might have been extraordinarily beautiful in the original but which, except for chiasmus — which we are learning to appreciate more fully — is untranslatable), rather than Frye's *langage*, the meanings that survive translation.

According to Frye, the Bible is unique in its consistent power to preserve and to recreate in each new reader the reality of metaphorical language and typological patterns, because of the force with which it brings those two elements of *langage* into the modern world. It does this because, surprisingly, it is myth and metaphor that answer the question: What is the "literal" meaning of the Bible? Frye also argues that the Bible invokes "a historical presence 'behind' [its language], as [French literary critic Jacques] Derrida would say, and that the background presence gradually shifts to a foreground, the re-

creation of that reality in the reader's mind" (p. xx). That historical reality is, of course, the typological keystone, Christ's involvement with the world, and it is a reality that I think Frye senses, though he never quite admits, is uniquely saving.

Frye is essentially right about the nature and importance of the Bible's contribution, by sustaining into the modern world the power of metaphorical language, to *all* our literature. He is certainly wrong in his claim for the uniqueness of the Bible (p. 80). For there is one other book that preserves the full power of metaphorical language, typological structure, and Christ-centered moral and eschatological meaning for our secular, literalistic world. There is a second witness to Christ not only as the Savior of each individual and all the world but to him as the Logos, the Word. It witnesses that Christ is the one who used language, both as God and as a man, in ways that provide the most important clues to our nature and potential as his children, and it reminds us we are inheritors of that same crucial gift of language. That second witness is the Book of Mormon.

Bruce Jorgensen has already cut a deep swath into the rich harvest of typological interpretation awaiting us in the Book of Mormon. In "The Dark Way to the Tree," he has demonstrated the book's potential with definitive examples and a persuasive overall typological reading and at the same time has developed a theory of the value of such a reading. The following passage summarizes much that I have said and suggests the quality of Jorgensen's contributions:

> For [the Book of Mormon prophets], typing or figuring or likening, guided by revelation, is simply the one way to make sense of the universe, time, and all the dimensions of individual and communal human experience. [Their work] may suggest a theology of the Word, which in turn might suggest a philosophy of history and of language.
>
> History may well be . . . a sequence without story. Yet to write history is to compose it . . . , to *figure* it, to order it by concept and metaphor. The minds that made the Book of Mormon clearly believed that this was not only possible but essential, even crucial, if humanity was to continue. Further, those minds believed that the master-figures [in the typology] were both immanent and transcendent: that God could and would reveal them to human minds, and that once received, [they] would be seen (and could be used) to order all experience. . . . Likening, then, . . . might be seen as the root-act of language itself, logically prior to the utterance of any word even if temporally simultaneous with it . . . . The dynamics of the Word in the Book of Mormon entail a view of language deeply at variance with the post-modernist view that we dwell amid infinitely self-referential and nontranscendent signs. . . . The Book of Mormon seems . . . to say that signs point beyond themselves not finally to other signs but ultimately toward God. Our trouble . . . is to read them. (1979, 222–29)

Besides Jorgensen, Richard Rust and George Tate (in Lambert 1979, 230–46, 247–55) have made important contributions to typological analysis of the Book of Mormon. Stephen Sondrup (1981) and Noel Reynolds (1982) have built on John Welch's discovery of the use of the Hebraic poetic pattern, chiasmus, in the Book of Mormon. What is needed is for one of these perceptive analysts to explore the relation between chiasmus and typology. Chiasmus is the small-scale use of repetition, with inversion, of words, concepts, and

other language units, focused on a central turning point (such as abc-cba); typology, however, is the large-scale repetition of events, persons, images, etc., all focused on the central event of Christ's mortal life. Both these formal devices seem to have developed as natural expressions of a way of thinking and experiencing that we need to understand and recover in order to approach the formal beauty and powerful message of the Book of Mormon and how the two are integrated.

I hope that both scholars and ordinary readers will follow Jorgensen's lead into typological analysis and will also explore the Book of Mormon text more fully on the basis of other leads by Frye. One of the most intriguing avenues, I think, might be an examination, using the Book of Mormon, of some of the cruxes and problems Frye finds in his analysis of the Bible. Because the Book of Mormon is more unified and has had fewer problems of transmission and translation, it might provide better answers to some questions than the Bible.

In addition, I am convinced from my own study and teaching that a typological focus on the Book of Mormon can help us to understand the Bible itself in new ways. Such analysis and reflection will help us to see, much better than we do now, I believe, that both books provide, in their unique *langage*, the most powerful way to do the most important thing words can do — that is, in the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob's words, to "persuade all men not to rebel against God, . . . but that all men would believe in Christ, and view his death, and suffer his cross and bear the shame of the world" (Jacob 1:8). That possibility for language, as a direct access to the meaning and the experience of Christ's atoning sacrifice, brings us directly to René Girard.

Frye's work on the Bible has provided us with new insights to help us appreciate the formal elements of the Book of Mormon, its metaphorical language and typological structure that are of a force and quality that rival the Bible. Girard, another brilliant modern literary critic, has given us new theoretical tools by which we can explore the unique power of the Christ-centered content of the Book of Mormon, which is comparable, even in some ways superior, to that of the Bible. Girard did not begin with the Bible, but his work in anthropology led him to see the close similarities between various mythologies and the Bible record that have led modern scholars and many others into a dogmatic religious relativism — but also helped him see crucial differences that powerfully "make manifest the uniqueness and truthfulness of biblical perspective" (1984, 8).

In *Violence and the Sacred* and *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, Girard first presented convincing evidence, from his thorough study of anthropology, classical mythology and literature, and modern writers like Shakespeare and Dostoevski, that a mechanism we all recognize from common experience is indeed the central mechanism of human conflict. We are motivated largely by desire. Like most human activity and feeling, desire tends to be imitative: that is, we often desire the things others desire, especially the things desired by those we admire, our models, largely because they desire them. Such desires, focused on the same objects, inevitably lead to envy, rivalry, to blaming others

and scapegoating them even as we imitate them, and to various forms of cruelty and violence.

Girard has demonstrated with numerous examples from mythology and literature that all societies learn to survive this terrible process of imitative desire and violence, which tends to spread like a plague as people naturally respond to hurt by hurting others and to opposition to their desires with revenge. Groups of people, sensing the threat of expanding imitative violence, choose a scapegoat on which to focus blame and violence rather than acknowledging that imitative desire and revenge are the true sources of difficulty. Masking the scapegoating process in ritual and rationalization, even using their religious and literary forms to do so, people rationalize and justify violence against the innocent scapegoats.

In Girard's most recent book, *Things Hidden from the Foundation of the World* (1987), he argues that there is one effective alternative to the plague of imitative desire and violence that destroys both individuals and nations, despite their elaborate mechanisms for controlling the mechanism through scapegoating and then hiding it through self-deception and ritual. Imitative desire and violence always break out in new cycles until they are faced and overcome, and Girard argues that the ideas and power necessary to do that are found uniquely in the central Judeo-Christian theology and ethics recorded in the Bible and epitomized in the life and death of Christ. He reads Hebrew history as a progressive effort to reveal the violence mechanism and renounce its basis in scapegoating by taking the side of the victim. He finds in Christ's clear and persistent identification of the violence mechanism and his clear refusal to participate in it or to allow others to conscript him into it the final victory over violence and thus the potential redemption of all humans and all human history.

Christ's unique answer is to renounce inauthentic desire and to eliminate the category of enemy — thus removing rivalry, blame, jealousy, revenge, scapegoating. For Girard, the Bible is our greatest and truest book because it refuses to participate in the suppression of violence through scapegoating. Instead it reveals the innocence of the scapegoat victims and offers examples, notably in the stories of Joseph in Egypt and Christ, of how permanently to stop the cycle of imitative and self-perpetuating violence by totally refusing to participate in it. The Bible, particularly in the Gospels, offers Christ's forgiveness and unconditional love in imitation of Christ as the only solutions to violence.

A growing body of impressive evidence demonstrates the power of Girard's ideas to stimulate new thinking about the great myths, classic literature, and the scriptures. For instance, a reading of *Oedipus* by Sandor Goodhart offers good internal evidence that Sophocles does not, as most have assumed, simply agree with the traditional Oedipus myth's obscuration of the mechanism by which scapegoats are selected and unjustly victimized. Rather, Sophocles provides powerful hints that the Theban community conspires, and gets Oedipus himself to submit, in a kind of ritual sacrifice — scapegoating a man who had in fact not been guilty of parricide (Goodhart 1978).

Gordon Thomasson has done a detailed reading of the Genesis account of Joseph and his brothers, building on Girard's insights, that reveals in even more detail the processes of scapegoating and mimetic violence there; he relates that story to the version of Joseph's story recalled in the Book of Mormon and to the striking parallel there between the stories of Joseph and of Nephi and *his* brothers. Thomasson traces the ways commentaries on the Joseph story from ancient rabbinic to post-holocaust times display "an amazing willingness to explain away or modify crucial details" so that Joseph "becomes less admirable, less of a threat to our own consciences, and consequently a more justifiable victim." In particular, the commentaries "neuter the Joseph story as it might apply to us, and undermine the significance of his refusing to retaliate against his truly guilty brothers" (1984, 17).

In much current Mormon commentary (including, I fear, some of my own teaching), I note a similar tendency to see Nephi, like Joseph, as a favored son who somewhat insensitively and self-righteously intrudes upon his brothers' feelings. I have often heard people say of Nephi, as they do of Joseph, "With a younger brother like that, no wonder the older ones got mad." We thus conspire in the process Girard has so brilliantly illuminated as common in most mythology and much literature — justifying victimization and even the violence of the older brothers and clouding the ethical issues of sacrificial violence versus self-sacrificing reconciliation. Girard's perspective thus can help us better appreciate Nephi's remarkable efforts to stay out of the cycle of rivalry, reciprocal violence, and victimization with his brothers. But Girard can also perhaps help us penetrate one of the most troubling cruxes in Nephi's account, the killing of Laban.

Thomasson reminds us of the interesting parallels between events in 1 Nephi and details of the scapegoat tradition from Leviticus 16. Girard claims that the Leviticus account is a *product* of the violence mechanism operating in Hebrew society as well as a religious ritual. Part of that ethically questionable Hebrew tradition was the choosing of *two* scapegoats, by lot, one to be sent away and one to be killed. Precisely as predicted by the age-old violence mechanism Girard describes, Lehi and his family are made scapegoats for Jerusalem's troubles, which Lehi has prophetically warned them about. Rather than face those troubles and repent, the community focuses its growing anger on Lehi, "even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain" (1 Ne. 1:20), forcing Lehi, who has been warned by the Lord, to take his family and flee for their lives. When Lehi's sons return for the brass plates, Laman, chosen by lot to approach Laban, the plates' keeper, is scapegoated by Laban in classic Girardian terms (that is, accused of a crime, robbery, to justify Laban in his envious desire to obtain his treasure), and is cast out and nearly killed. But then Laban himself is made into a scapegoat, and the punishment of death he had decreed for Laman is meted to him by Nephi.

The problem with this otherwise merely interesting parallel to the Leviticus tradition of two scapegoats lies in the justification offered for killing Laban,

"It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief" (1 Ne. 4:13) — a classic statement of the scapegoating rationale. Girard claims that the rationale is the foundation of human violence and is absolutely repudiated by Christ — a repudiation Girard argues is the chief evidence that the Gospels and Christ are divine (1987, 141–79). But Nephi tells us that that rationale is here expressed by the Spirit of the Lord — and he claims that Spirit also makes the ethically troubling claim that God not only uses his divine ends to justify violence by God but also as the rationale for a demand that his children also use violent means: "The Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes" (1 Ne. 4:13).

Girard goes to great lengths to show that the Old Testament passages seeming to implicate God himself in violence are records of a people gradually working their way beyond an understanding of God that all other cultures retained: Though "in the Old Testament we never arrive at a conception of the deity that is entirely foreign to violence," in the later prophetic books, Gerard claims, God is "increasingly divested of the violence characteristic of primitive deities" (1987, 157). Girard's analysis is persuasive, focused on a close look at the "suffering servant" passages of Isaiah, where we humans are clearly identified as the ones who wrongly ascribe responsibility for violence to God (Isa. 53:4). Girard also examines explicit rejections of violence of any kind (even God's "righteous" vengeance) that emerge in the Old Testament: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. 33:10). Such rejections become completely clear in the Gospels, where Christ explicitly describes the change from Old Testament patience with violence to absolute New Testament nonviolence: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good" (Matt. 5:43–44).

Girard does not ignore the few passages in the New Testament that seem to contradict this demand by Christ, such as the cleansing of the temple and Christ's claim that he came not to send peace but a sword (Matt. 10:34). As with the similarly troubling passages in the Old Testament, he deals with each in detail, persuasively showing that each can be seen best as descriptive of what was then still a violence-prone culture (rather than an expression of what Christ himself wants) or as a reading we impose from our own still violence-prone culture. In a few cases Girard claims a passage must simply be rejected as inconsistent with Christ's overwhelmingly central and oft-repeated nonviolence.

It is important to recognize that Nephi, recounting the killing of Laban many years after it happened, quotes the Spirit as using almost exactly the same words as the Jewish priest Caiaphas used in an ends-justifies-means argument to condemn Christ, "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). John, the recording evangelist, shows the dramatic shift from the Old Testament to the Gospel perspective when he writes that Caiaphas thus accurately, though un-

knowingly, "prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation" and also for all "the children of God" — not be sacrificed or scapegoated in the usual manner. This raises the interesting but rather troubling image of Laban as a type for Christ, since the deaths of both figures are described as bringing the salvation of whole nations: Laban's death made possible the obtaining of the brass plates, the literal "word" that brought salvation to the Nephites, and Christ's death fulfilled his full mission as Logos, the "Word" that saves all peoples, including the Jews.

But even more troubling is the evidence, not only from the Bible but in the Book of Mormon itself, that Nephi's account directly contradicts the full revelation of God's nature as the One revealed in Christ who utterly rejects violence — and who demands we do the same. Fred Essig and Dan Fuller have written an exhaustive but inconclusive study of the legal status, in the religious and moral code of the Israelites, of Nephi's rationalizations for killing the unconscious, drunk Laban with his own sword. They remind us, "Few passages of the Book of Mormon have inspired more criticism. . . . Many point to this episode as evidence against the Book of Mormon being an inspired document" (1982, 1). Though they clearly wish to counter that criticism, they finally admit, "Until we more thoroughly understand the role of Deity in the daily affairs of ancient Israel and how that role was perceived by the Israelites, we may neither condemn nor extol the acts of Nephi" (p. 25). It is very difficult to wait for such understanding, which may be completely beyond scholarship, when this passage from the Book of Mormon is used by anti-Mormons to attack the book and by investigators to reject it. Some Mormons themselves continue to use the passage to justify troubling, violent rhetoric and even violent action — by assuming that the Spirit does indeed teach that the end justifies the means. (The fundamentalist Laffertys even used the passage in court to defend their "inspired" slaying of their sister-in-law and her baby.) For those of us troubled by such rhetoric and actions, no other passage has seemed more contradictory to New Testament, as well as other Book of Mormon, teachings about the impartiality and absolute goodness of the Lord — and about the central role the rejection of violence plays in Christ's mission.

This is not the place for a full analysis of the Laban story, but I offer some reflections, based on Girard's insights, to illustrate how his work can help us approach the Book of Mormon: First, is it possible that Nephi's decision — or at least his rationalization — was simply wrong? This very young man, already a victim of scapegoating and life-threatening violence by his own brothers, knew of Laban's murderous scapegoating of Laman. He had now found Laban temporarily vulnerable but still a threat to himself and his goals, which he was convinced were divinely inspired. He may have very naturally been tempted toward revenge. Thirty years of reflection may have genuinely convinced him that the Lord would have directed him to kill Laban to obtain the plates in this extreme circumstance — and thus make possible the preservation of his people, which he had witnessed. The text lends some support to this possibility: Nephi is still, much later, troubled by the experience and its moral meaning. His account contains a remarkable combination of unsparing

completeness and honesty with what seems like rationalization, even obsessive focusing on what might be unnecessary but psychologically revealing details (see 1 Nephi 4, especially verses 9, where Nephi notices the sword before anything else and examines its hilt and blade in detail, and 18, where, after lengthy rationalization, he confesses, in what seem to be unneeded specifics, "[I] took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword."). Clearly he had gone over the experience very often and with some ambivalence.

I also find some indication that throughout his life Nephi continued to be deeply troubled by something that may have been — or included — this killing of Laban: In his remarkable psalm of self-reflection, in 2 Nephi 4, Nephi asks, in obvious continuing pain, "Why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?" (v. 27). There is no evidence that he was that angry with Laman and Lemuel or even the Lamanites as a whole; he may well have been angry enough with Laban to kill him and then feel continuing remorse, which lead to eventual self-justification. On the other hand, the psalm speaks of his enemies quaking, which seems to refer to Laman and Lemuel quaking before him in 1 Nephi 17. And Jack Welch has pointed out to me that the very details Nephi is careful to include, though to us they seem strangely irrelevant — such as that he entered the city not knowing where he would go and his insistence that the Lord delivered Laban into his hand — are the details that would establish that the killing was not premeditated and thus not murder (these conditions are stated in Exodus 21:13–14 and Numbers 35:22).

A reading that sees Nephi as making a mistake certainly challenges our conventional ideas. We think that a prophet of God, even before he is called, should be above such self-delusion and that the word of God is somehow above revealing such human mistakes. We tend to assume unconsciously that the Book of Mormon tells us only what is best to do rather than revealing what actually was done. We do this despite the book's own warning in its introduction that "if there are faults they are the mistakes of men." However, an interpretation such as I have postulated actually increases my conviction that the account has a psychological richness and sophistication, particularly given Girard's insights, that is extremely hard to imagine Joseph Smith — or anyone else — concocting. Even a reading that blames Nephi provides interesting and unusual evidence that the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be, an account of real experiences by a real person from the Israelite world.

There is another possible reading of this event that I believe is the best. But, though it avoids the problems I have just reviewed, it raises what I find to be even more profoundly troubling questions, questions that Girard has also been troubled by in his work with the Bible and has clearly not yet resolved. What if God truly did command Nephi to slay Laban, but not for the very questionable reasons most often offered by Latter-day Saints — reasons that God himself has denied often in other scriptures? What if it was an Abrahamic test, like the command to Abraham to kill Isaac? What if it was designed to

push Nephi to the limits of the paradox of obedience and integrity and to teach him and all readers of the Book of Mormon something very troubling but still very true about the universe and the natural requirements of establishing a saving relationship with God? What if it is to teach us that genuine faith ultimately requires us to go beyond the rationally moral — even as it has been defined by God, when God himself requires it directly of us?

This is the position taken by Jeffrey R. Holland in his devotional address to the BYU student body, 17 January 1989, "The Will of the Father in All Things." He suggests that the story of Nephi killing Laban is given so prominently and in such personal detail at the very beginning of the Book of Mormon to force all readers to deal with it and to focus "on the absolutely fundamental gospel issue of obedience and submission to the communicated will of the Lord. If Nephi cannot yield to this terribly painful command, if he cannot bring himself to obey, then it is entirely probable that he can never succeed *or* survive in the tasks that lie just ahead" (p. 6). I think Holland is right, but most of us need a little more help with the question, Why does God test our obedience, not only by asking us to give up our inferior desires and habits and holdings, not even by demanding at most our lives, but by asking us to turn directly against our greatest *values*, the very commands *he* has given us?

Here is the paradox: Nephi is asked by God to directly violate Christ's demand that we reject all violence, even against those who "deserve" it, and never again try to justify our violence by projecting it onto God ("If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. . . . But love your enemies, and do good. . . . and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" [Luke 6:33–35]).

Girard recognizes, and seems to anguish over it, that much of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, describes a natural order in human affairs with which God seems to have to compromise in order to ultimately change it. Perhaps we can come to Girard's aid a bit here. The evidence of Joseph Smith's inspired revision of the Bible, and the clear statement in Doctrine and Covenants 1:24 that God's revelations are given to prophets "in their weakness, after the manner of their language" (which must include their world view), indicate that the Bible and the Book of Mormon are at least partly limited to the perspectives of the writers, not simply to that of God himself. It is natural that those writers, though prophets, would perceive reciprocal violence and scapegoating with some of the limitations Girard has documented as occurring in all mythology and literature, as well as all cultures.

Girardian analysis of Shakespeare has helped us see how the great dramatist pushes the scapegoat mechanism to tragic extremes — not to accept it but to reveal it more fully and make us abhor it. Thus Shakespeare becomes a kind of therapist, creating fictive dramas that imitate and thus reveal the mechanisms of violence and the ways we try to hide them. Shakespeare's plays also demonstrate how such therapy may be achieved through dramatic shock—even the telling of half-truths, used by such healing figures as Prospero and Cordelia.

Could it be that God, having similarly to deal with the limitations placed upon him by human agency, could create a dramatic fiction for Nephi, as both a test and a therapy, that reveals to him *in extremis* — and also to us — that he too can become a scapegoater capable of imitative violence? Or could it be (and this is what, finally, I believe myself) that, as Holland and others have suggested, God was both teaching and helping Nephi to develop, through this Abrahamic test, into a servant and leader who could be obedient — but that God was also teaching Nephi (and us) the costs and limits of such obedience? Transgression of God's commandments against violence is only excusable in the extreme case of certain knowledge that God is commanding the transgression and even then will properly exact a toll of reluctance and anguish in the true servant of God.

Certainly the experience with Laban taught Nephi something he never forgot, as is evidenced, perhaps, by his psalm of repentance — and is certainly shown in his harrowing, complex memory of the event many years later. The experience, it seems, profoundly changed him. Soon afterwards he had the privilege to be the first among the Nephites to receive full vision of the life and mission of the still far-future Christ and to understand his Atonement, symbolized in the tree of Lehi's dream ("It is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men" [1 Ne. 11:22]). Based on that understanding, he later states unequivocally the true nature of God as revealed in Christ, the absolute opponent of all imitative desire, all violence, all scapegoating, in a way that seems to directly contradict his own earlier report of what an angel had told him about God:

> The Lord God hath commanded that men should not murder; that they should not lie . . . that they should not envy; that they should not have malice; that they should not contend one with another . . . and that they should do none of these things; for whoso doeth them shall perish. For none of these iniquities come of the Lord; for he doeth that which is good among the children of men . . . and all are alike unto God. (1 Ne. 26:32–33)

While we were in London four years ago, just before the trip to Chartres and Vienna, we saw, at the National Theatre, a version (based on the York cycle) of the medieval "Mystery Plays." These are the cycles of connected dramatic stories, generally taken from the Bible, that were performed annually at the feast of Corpus Christi (the main celebration of Christ's Atonement), each segment performed by one of the town's guilds of workers. Much like the great cathedral windows, the plays taught the scriptural story of salvation to a mainly illiterate populace. In addition, much like our restored temple endowment ceremony, they served remarkably well to involve actors and audience in a reconfirming understanding of their own literal place in the ongoing divine drama, in patterns of grace that would save each of them, as well as Adam, Noah, Mary and Joseph, and Peter, James, and John.

The somewhat modernized script enacted by sympathetic and skilled actors in this production involved us in a surprisingly moving reconfirmation of our own faith in and understanding of salvation through Christ. One of the most

powerful scenes was the sacrifice of Isaac, prolonged by an imagined dialogue between the son on the altar and his father with the knife, that stretched out our pain, shared with them, at this potential violence by God upon his own children and upon his own teachings. This, of course, heightened both our relief at God's saving intervention and our awareness of the medieval authors' genius (which has been confirmed by the work of Frye and Girard) in cutting immediately from this scene to the annunciation of the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ. The significance and force of this connection is intensified in the text by Abraham's cry as he sees Isaac's increasing anguish and knows he must now act, "Jesu, on me thou have pity/That I have most in mind." This anguish is echoed in God's words, after his intervention, to Abraham:

> Like thine Isaac, my loved lad
> Shall do full heartily his Father's will,
> But *not* be spared strokes sore and sad,
> But done to death upon a hill. (Harrison 1985, 48)

In the London production, the effect was heightened even more when a group of actors representing the butchers' guild, traditionally assigned to play the sacrifice of Isaac, came forward. In a complex, ritual dance of controlled violence at the completion of the sacrifice, they ended by interweaving their long sword-like butcher knives into a Star of David and carried it up to the balcony where it became the star of annunciation of Christ's birth.

The typology is certainly clear and has been recognized by many, but the connections between God's apparent endorsements of violence and the violent victimization of his own son, which saves us, have not been very adequately explored. I think the Book of Mormon can help here, mainly because it provides the basis for an understanding of the At-one-ment of Christ that can complement but go beyond Girard's fruitful ideas. The Book of Mormon provides as yet unexplored hints, suggesting connections between such things as Nephi's killing of Laban and his remarkable visions soon after of Christ as the "condescension of God" (the one who does not look down in judgment upon us from a physical and moral distance but who literally descends with us into mortal pain and suffering and sickness [2 Ne. 11:26]). Many subsequent Book of Mormon scriptures explore that idea that God accomplishes the Atonement by transcending the paradox of justice and mercy, using the same image of condescension, of descending *with* us: He is the "Lord Omnipotent" who gives us the law and will ultimately judge us, but he is also the suffering servant who "will come down from heaven . . . and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay" (Mosiah 3:5) and thus will learn how to save us by literally taking upon himself our "pains and sicknesses" and "infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy" (Alma 7:11–12).

The Book of Mormon is quite consistent, I believe, with Girard's very helpful focus on the Atonement as achieved through love rather than through traditional sacrifice, through reconciliation rather than payment. It makes much clearer than the (perhaps truncated) New Testament account that the center of Christ's At-one-ment was in the Garden of Gethsemane, not on the

cross. As King Benjamin teaches and the Doctrine and Covenants powerfully reconfirms in Christ's own words, it was there, when Christ momentarily shrank from what he knew was necessary and then fully joined all humankind as he experienced the worst sense of alienation and pain we can know — in fact, descended below all and the worst of our experience in order to raise us to accept our acceptance by him — it was there that "[blood] came from every pore, so great [was] his anguish for . . . his people" (Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:18).

Perhaps most startling is the unique Book of Mormon testament that many people, such as King Benjamin's audience, who lived many years before Christ, were able to experience the Atonement fully, were saved and completely changed into new creatures, long before the Atonement actually occurred in history. According to this witness, the Atonement was not a sacrificial event that saved people from that moment on but an expression of unconditional love from God that freed them to repent and become like God simply by knowing about it, by hearing the word, whether expressed before Christ lived or after.

In addition the Book of Mormon gives perhaps the most direct affirmation in scripture of Girard's claim that Christ's Atonement put an end to all claims for the legitimacy of sacrifice and scapegoating:

> [Christ's atonement will not be] a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice. [But] then shall there be, or it is expedient there should be, a stop to the shedding of blood; then shall the law of Moses be fulfilled. . . . And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. (Alma 34:10–15)

Besides confirming some of Girard's insights, the Book of Mormon also can help us go beyond Girardian analysis to see the proper role of justice, of punishment, even of God's own participation in processes that involve or threaten violence. Amulek's discourse on the Atonement in Alma 34 and Alma's in Alma 42 make much clearer than anything available to Girard in the Bible the crucial role of justice in God's plan for our redemption. The Bible's well-known accounts of what seems like divinely directed or justified violence and its tendency, especially in the Old Testament, to obscure the violence mechanism Girard identifies, may result from imperfect attempts to express the principle of God's justice. The Book of Mormon more clearly shows why God must use justice to establish conscience in us before his forgiving love, which ends the cycle of violence, can effectively operate.

For instance, Alma teaches his son Corianton that God affixed laws and punishments, "which brought remorse of conscience unto man"; if he had not done so, "Men would not be afraid to sin . . . [and] the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God" (Alma 42:18, 20, 22). He also teaches Corianton that such a necessary condition places man "in the grasp of justice," and it is therefore necessary that "God himself [atone] for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands

of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also" (Alma 42:14–15).

A major problem for many of his readers is Girard's explanation of how original violence lies at the foundation of society and religion and then how that original violence is continually obscured over time, even in God-directed biblical cultures. The Book of Mormon may be able to help us understand how the constraints of human nature and agency require God, in working out a possible plan of salvation for us, to cooperate in — or at least allow — that natural obscuring process. Perhaps it is only in such a way, in which the processes of quid-pro-quo justice and thus imitative violence work with full force for a while, that our consciences can be adequately formed by justice. Then, as the Book of Mormon uniquely explains, such demands of justice in our own minds can be appeased by the plan of God's mercy (Alma 42:15). Thus our consciences, which remain too self-critical to accept Christ's forgiveness and acceptance of us, can be overpowered by the bowels of his mercy (Alma 34:15). Our difficulty with the apparently contradictory scriptures may be a matter of understanding how God's justice and his mercy work together to bring us to self-knowledge and guilt, but also to self-acceptance and repentance.

In addition to all this, the Book of Mormon provides the only example I can find anywhere of a group actually practicing Girard's implied unique solution to imitative violence — and with the predicted results. The people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, a group of Lamanites converted to the Christian gospel, whose ancestors had continually used the Nephites as scapegoats for their own troubles, make a covenant with God "that rather than shed the blood of their brethren they would give up their own lives" (Alma 24:18). In keeping with that covenant, they ritually bury their weapons. When attacked by vengeful Lamanites, they respond with astonishing and effective courage but in a way directly contrary to the universal pattern of reciprocal violence Girard has revealed: They "would not flee from the sword, neither would they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but . . . would lie down and perish, and praised God even in the very act of perishing under the sword" (Alma 24:23).

When the Lamanites see this, the reverse pattern, what Girard calls the "benign reciprocity of love," takes over: "There were many whose hearts had swollen in them for those of their brethren who had fallen," and they too "threw down their weapons, and they would not take them again" (Alma 24:24–25). According to Mormon, the recording prophet, over a thousand were killed, but they were saved in the kingdom of God — and more than that were converted. Most important, the violence was stopped in a way that actually ended it, rather than setting up continuing cycles of revenge — as the winning of battles, no matter how justified, always does. Speaking from the perspective of 400 years later in Nephite history, Mormon draws a pointed lesson for his modern-day readers:

> Thus we see that, when these Lamanites were brought to believe and to know the truth, they were firm, and would suffer even unto death rather than commit sin. . . . They had rather sacrifice their lives than even to take the life of an enemy; and they

> have buried their weapons of war deep in the earth, because of their love towards their brethren. And now behold I say unto you, has there been so great love in all the land? Behold, I say unto you, Nay, there has not, even among the Nephites. (Alma 24:19; 26:32–33)

It would be hard to imagine a better complement to Girard's analysis of the end of the Joseph story. In that episode Judah is being tested by Joseph, who has had a cup placed in Benjamin's sack and threatens to keep him in Egypt and let the others go. But Judah, archetypal head of the Jews, the race most made a scapegoat in our world — and the race which produced Jesus — this Judah, in an exact reversal of what had occurred when Joseph was originally scapegoated by his brothers, now offers to take Benjamin's place, to sacrifice self rather than make another a scapegoat. He thus moves Joseph to tears and to the forgiveness that ends the cycle of violence and reconciles him with his brothers. As Girard writes, "This dedication of Judah stands in symmetrical opposition to the original deed of collective violence which it cancels out and reveals" (1984, 15). In exactly the same way, the dedication of the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi stands in symmetrical opposition to the original deeds of collective violence by Laman and Lemuel and their descendants, which produced the ongoing spiral of reciprocal scapegoating central to the Book of Mormon narrative.

But I find in the Book of Mormon an even more powerful support for and also extension of Girard's work. The central question still remains how to cope with the desire leading to envy and rivalry that sets in motion all the problems that produce violence and our consciences' demands for reciprocal justice. For Christians, including Girard, the question is how Christ's Atonement makes it possible for us to stop the cycle even before it starts — or at least to make repentance and forgiveness possible so it can end.

The Book of Mormon provides the best answer. King Benjamin teaches precisely how the redemptive process works and can be maintained. First he proclaims the essential and primary reality of the Atonement, by which Christ extends unconditional love to us, even in our sins. Consistent with Amulek and Alma, he teaches that we can be moved by Christ's unconditional love to overcome the demands within ourselves, placed there by our God-given consciences, to punish ourselves and others. This breaking the bands of justice, he claims, enables us to accept Christ's mercy and forgiveness and become new creatures. Intensely moved by learning of Christ's love, the group of Nephites actually go through that saving process and begin to rejoice that they are indeed changed, that they "have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2).

King Benjamin also reveals the only way to maintain change, to retain "a remission of your sins from day to day" (Mosiah 4:26). The key is humility, the abdication of imitative desire through recognizing that we are "all beggars" (Mosiah 4:19). Just as God does not reject us for our sins, does not refuse to love us or to extend his healing grace and continual blessings because we sin, so we must respond to those who beg help from us though they do not

"deserve" it. We must never judge their desires or condition; we must never think that "the man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore . . . his punishments are just" (Mosiah 4:17). If we do so we "have great cause to repent," and if we fail to repent we "have no interest in the kingdom of God." Instead, we are to constantly recognize our own weaknesses and our own position of dependence on God, judging no one else but engaging constantly in specific acts of sacrificial love, "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants" (Mosiah 4:26).

The point the Book of Mormon makes much more clearly than I find made in the Bible is this: to continue experiencing the Atonement with Christ after we have received his grace, we must extend it to others. Christ makes us into new creatures, into persons strong enough not to act contrary to what we know — that is, not to sin — if we will merely accept Christ's merciful, undeserved love; he gives us power to repent, the "means" by which we can "have faith unto repentance" (Alma 34:15). But if we then continue judging others, we will unconsciously judge ourselves. We must constantly give mercy to be able to accept it. We must never exact revenge, even in the name of perfect justice. We must not take vengeance, even upon ourselves, the sinners whom we know, from the inside, most certainly deserve it.

These two passages from the Book of Mormon, the account of the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi and King Benjamin's address, provide a basis for meeting one of the main criticisms made of Girard's work. Even those who find that his hypotheses fit the available facts better than any others are troubled that despite the claim that his work can help us cope with violence in our lives and in relations between nations, neither he nor his disciples have offered concrete, practical steps toward the goal (North 1985, 10). Active, self-sacrificing love, even of our enemies, and nonjudgmental, merciful feeding of the hungry are seldom recommended and even less seldom practiced in our world. The Book of Mormon provides powerful evidence, in theory and example, that they could work — in fact are essential for our salvation.

What do these reflections on some exciting recent literary criticism — and a reconsideration of Nephi's killing of Laban — suggest about the truth and value of the Book of Mormon? That none of us can dismiss it. No one has mastered or explained or exhausted it. It not only stands up to the most sophisticated modern thought about literature, but it continues to challenge our most sophisticated ethical, theological, and political concepts. I am encouraged by my study so far to find that what Frye and Girard have claimed for the Bible can also be claimed, point by point and often more clearly and usefully, for the Book of Mormon. But more important, their insights deepen my understanding and appreciation of a book I already believe is both as historically true and as spiritually valuable as the Bible. As I approach difficult parts of the book, such as the Laban story, with these new tools, I find the book responding with truth and richness.

Girard has focused on content, Frye on form. Girard has taught us a new ethic to look for at the heart of the Logos, mercy over justice; Frye has taught us a new way to get to that heart, pattern over reason. The Book of Mormon, if we will work to find it so, is a restored second witness to both the ethic and the pattern, to Christ as redeemer and to Christ as the Logos.

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Christ and the Constitution: Toward a Mormon Jurisprudence

Stephen C. Clark and Richard A. Van Wagoner

IN 1987 AMERICANS CELEBRATED the 200th anniversary of the United States Constitution. Topics previously confined to legal and philosophical journals became the subject of more common discourse. Nowhere was this development more evident than in sermons from the Mormon pulpit. The Mormon celebration of the anniversary of the Constitution was led by a prophet whose ministry has hailed the divinity of constitutional government in America. In a series of speeches and publications, President Ezra Taft Benson offered his view of the proper role of government under the Constitution, a view which purports to use gospel principles as an interpretive theory. He called upon the Saints to prepare for an impending constitutional crisis.

Accepting President Benson's injunction to read and ponder the Constitution and abide by its precepts, in this article we explore the application of gospel principles to constitutional interpretation. We believe the Constitution provides a liberating means of self-government which, like its religious counterpart, encourages progression through transcending limiting contexts. We reject the notion that it is a rigid, doctrinal ediface, forever projecting predetermined rules of human association. Although our view of the Constitution differs from that of President Benson in certain fundamental respects, by exploring these ideas, we hope to contribute to the dialogue that President Benson began toward a Mormon jurisprudence.

Who are we, and how should we live? These questions are not only at the core of philosophy, ethics, and religion, but also at the core of law. In a society such as ours that aspires to balance order and freedom through established processes, law both institutionalizes and facilitates changes in the way we view

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ourselves and others and the way we choose to live. However, these questions generally do not arise — at least, as such — in modern legal discourse, or "jurisprudence." Rather, we tend to distinguish between legal discourse and the more open-ended discourse that characterizes philosophy, ethics, and religion.[1]

If the model of legal reasoning is one of rigid deduction from neutral, determinate rules through objectively ascertainable facts to *a fortiori* conclusions, then distinguishing between jurisprudence and other forms of philosophical and religious discourse may seem natural.[2] But ever since the so-called Legal Realists revealed the discretion inherent in every deductive step and showed that legal reasoning is an infinitely more complex process than the deductive model would suggest, the distinction between law and other types of dialogue has appeared less clear.[3] Indeed, much jurisprudential debate now centers not on whether such a distinction exists, but on whether the distinction should even be indulged.[4]

The erosion of the distinction has had its greatest impact in the area of constitutional law. The Constitution purports to be the "supreme law of the land"; any law that contravenes the Constitution must fall — even if such a law has been duly enacted by elected representatives through fair democratic processes. The problem is that the answer to the question of whether a law contravenes the Constitution is not always readily apparent. In many of its most important provisions, the Constitution speaks in broad terms that do not incontrovertibly determine outcomes given a context of facts. In other words, although the Constitution means what it says, it does not always say what it means.[5]

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[1] Indeed, according to *Black's Law Dictionary*, " 'jurisprudence' is the *science* of law, namely, that science which has for its function to ascertain the principles on which legal rules are based, so as not only to classify those rules in their proper order, and show the relation in which they stand to one another, but also to settle the manner in which new or doubtful cases should be brought under the appropriate rules" (emphasis added).

[2] For example, Hans Kelsen proposed a deductive, value-free model:

> The Pure Theory of Law is a theory of the positive law. As a theory it is exclusively concerned with the accurate definition of its subject-matter. It endeavors to answer the question, What is the law? but not the question, What ought it to be? It is a science and not a politics of law. . . . Legal theory thus becomes a structural analysis, as exact as possible, of the positive law, an analysis free of all ethical or political judgments of value. (1934, 477, 498)

[3] Felix S. Cohen observed that "in the orthodox juristic tradition there is some sort of boundary between the realm of law and the realm of morality or ethics," but he argued that the boundary is artificial at best — that law "is just as much a part of the domain of morality as any other phase of human custom and conduct" (Cohen 1931, 201, 220). He urged his contemporaries to "shift the focus of [their] vision from a stage where social and professional prejudices wear the terrible armor of Pure Reason to an arena where human hopes and expectations wrestle naked for supremacy" (1931, 217).

[4] Picking up, in a sense, where the Legal Realists left off, a new school of jurisprudence called Critical Legal Studies not only asserts as fact but openly embraces the notion that law is indistinguishable from moral/social/political/religious dialogue. See Unger (1975, 1983) and Singer (1984). For a good survey of the Critical Legal Studies movement from both inside and out, see "Critical Legal Studies Symposium" (1984).

[5] Thus H. L. A. Hart, a preeminent legal scholar, recognized that in "every legal system a large and important field is left open for the exercise of discretion by courts and other

Ever since Chief Justice John Marshall in *Marbury v. Madison* established the principle of judicial review in 1803, the United States Supreme Court has served as final arbiter of whether a law contravenes the Constitution. Thus, it ultimately rests on nine non-elected judges to limit the majority's power to govern — often in areas that involve the ultimate questions of human existence. This creates a powerful tension in a society fundamentally based on principles of representative democracy. That tension is greatly heightened if judges are perceived to be roaming at will over the legal landscape, relying only on their own moral views (or, according to one colorful but apocryphal saying of the Legal Realists, on "what they had for breakfast") for interpretive guidance.

The challenge of modern constitutional jurisprudence has been to come up with a neutral, objective interpretive model to channel judicial discretion. Judges and legal scholars have taken a variety of approaches in developing such an interpretive model. Some suggest that courts should look only to the language or structure of the Constitution. For example, Robert Bork, a former federal judge whose nomination to the United States Supreme Court was rejected by the Senate, maintains that "courts must accept any value choice the legislature makes unless it clearly runs contrary to a choice made in the framing of the Constitution" (Bork 1971, 10–11), and whether such a choice was made "must be fairly derived by standard modes of legal interpretation from the text, structure, and history of the Constitution" (*Dronenburg v. Zech* [741 F. 2d 1388, 1396 n. 5 (1984)]). John Hart Ely, another adherent of this school of thought, argues that, by the framers' design, the Constitution is largely concerned with ensuring the fairness of the democratic process, so that a court reviewing majority action "can appropriately concern itself only with questions of participation" (Ely 1980, 181).

Others suggest that courts must (at least in some cases) and properly can look beyond the language and structure of the Constitution. Thus members of the "law and economics" school look to principles of allocative efficiency to supply a neutral standard to guide judicial discretion (Posner 1977, 1981). And proponents of what might be called "law and morality" attempt to discover the fundamental rights inherent in an open, orderly society by looking to history, precedent, and changes in society and its values (Ackerman 1980; Dworkin 1977, 1985, 1986; Rawls 1971).

In a booklet published and distributed in 1986 for the recent bicentennial of the Constitution, President Ezra Taft Benson added his voice to this ongoing debate, offering in concise form his "jurisprudence" — his personal view of the appropriate backdrop to the interpretation of the Constitution.[6] Not surpris-

officials in rendering initially vague standards determinate, in resolving the uncertainties of statutes, or in developing and qualifying rules only broadly communicated by authoritative precedents" (1961, 132).

[6] *The Constitution: A Heavenly Banner* contains the following disclaimer: "The author wishes to make clear that this is not a Church publication, and the opinions and views expressed by him in this publication are those for which he alone is responsible."

The views in this booklet are not new to President Benson or his ministry. A comparison of the 1986 booklet with his 1974 book, *God, Family, Country: Our Three Great*

ingly, he looks to the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to Latter-day Saint belief, the Constitution is inspired — a literal as well as a political miracle — and President Benson consequently believes that it ought to be interpreted in light of the inspired principles of the gospel.

We are intrigued by President Benson's thesis; it suggests the possibility that legal principles are and perhaps ought to be based ultimately on moral and ethical principles, that law is but another form of dialogue about the ultimate questions of human existence. However, we must confess that we are troubled by his development of that thesis. In our view, President Benson's jurisprudence is driven not by gospel principles, or even by any necessary or uncontroversial interpretation of the Constitution. Instead, it is driven chiefly by the principle of laissez-faire economics and thus misses the rich opportunities for insight and transformation his thesis suggests.

President Benson's professional career and religious ministry have centered on what he calls "our three great loyalties": God, family, and country. As articulated in *The Constitution: A Heavenly Banner*, President Benson's jurisprudence purports to be informed by "basic, eternal principles." The first principle is agency. In the primordial council in heaven, the "central issue" was whether the children of God would have "untrammeled agency" or be "forced to be obedient." Satan stood for forced obedience and was cast out. He continues to "foster the same plan" on earth, primarily "through the power of earthly governments" (Benson 1986, 2–3).

The second principle is based on part of the "Declaration of Belief regarding Governments and Laws," canonized as Section 134 of the Doctrine and Covenants. President Benson quotes from verses 1, 2, and 5, stressing that the function and proper role of government is "to secure the rights and freedoms of individual citizens," including the "free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life" (pp. 4–5). Third, God is the source of basic human rights; therefore, government cannot rightfully infringe upon those rights (pp. 5–6). Fourth, the people are superior to the governments they form; government's "only source of authority and power is from the people who have created it" (p. 7). Finally, governmental powers are limited to those properly belonging "to each and every person in the absence of and prior to the establishment of any organized form of government. . . . The proper function of government, then, is limited to those spheres of activity within which the individual citizen has the right to act" (pp. 7–9).

Because President Benson uses this final principle to support his conclusion as to the proper role of government, buttressing it by quoting the Alabama constitution, we include his elaboration of it:

> In a primitive state, there is no doubt that every individual would be justified in using force, if necessary, for defense against physical harm, against theft of the fruits

Loyalties, published when he was president of the Quorum of the Twelve, reveals that most of the booklet's contents were taken without significant change from the "Country" section of the 1974 book (pp. 275–400). This section develops notions of "true Americanism" and "Christian constitutionalism" that are related to the theory of constitutional interpretation expressed in the 1986 booklet. The 1974 book contains a more complete exposition of President Benson's ideas.

> of his labor, and against enslavement by another. . . . By deriving its just powers from the governed, government becomes primarily a mechanism for defense against bodily harm, theft, and involuntary servitude. It cannot claim the power to redistribute money or property nor to force reluctant citizens to perform acts of charity against their will. . . . No individual possesses the power to take another's wealth or to force others to do good, so no government has the right to such things either. . . . "The sole object and only legitimate end of government is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and when the government assumes other functions it is usurpation and oppression." (Benson 1986, 9–10)

President Benson then examines the "major provisions" of the Constitution that he considers "crucial to the preservation of our freedom" (1986, 18). First, sovereignty lies in the people themselves. "The Founding Fathers," President Benson states, "believed in common law, which holds that true sovereignty rests with the people." Therefore, they recognized that government, in the words of the Declaration of Independence (which he quotes), derives its "just powers from the consent of the governed" (1986, 18–19). Second, to safeguard inalienable or God-given rights, the Constitution separates the powers and responsibilities of government into three branches — executive, legislative, and judicial — and provides checks and balances "to make it difficult for a minority of the people to control government" and "to place restraint on the government itself" (pp. 19–20).

Third, to avoid the tyranny of unrighteous dominion — the tendency of individuals or institutions given a little authority — the Constitution "originally" granted few powers to the federal government. Specifically, President Benson emphasizes (quoting Thomas Jefferson) that the federal government was to be entrusted with " 'the defence of the nation, and its foreign and federal relations,' " leaving to the states such things as civil rights (pp. 20–21). Fourth, the Constitution provides for a representative form of government — delegating powers to elected officials who represent the electorate. As an example, President Benson notes that the Senate originally was to be elected by the state legislatures. He suggests that the intent was "to protect the individual's and the minority's rights to life, liberty, and the fruits of their labors — property" (pp. 21–22). Fifth, the Constitution is an expression of "higher law," God's law, and only a moral and righteous people can acknowledge and apply such preexisting law (p. 23).

According to President Benson, our God-given freedoms, as embodied in eternal gospel principles and the major provisions of the Constitution, have been eroded by "those who do not prize freedom" (p. 25). As an example of this, President Benson claims that, over the last thirty years, the Supreme Court has "usurped" legislative prerogative in areas such as abortion, capital punishment, pornography, school prayer and Bible-reading, criminal rights of appeal, and public demonstrations (pp. 26–27). Consequently, he warns, a crisis of great dimensions looms: "Once fundamental principles are abandoned, the republican form of government established by our noble forefathers cannot long endure" (p. 27). Because they will be the ones who, in the words of Joseph Smith, will "bear the Constitution away from the very verge of destruction" (p. 28), President Benson encourages the Saints to be righteous and

moral, to study the Constitution and abide by its precepts, to become involved in civic affairs, and to make their influence felt (pp. 28–31).

President Benson's jurisprudence is not only based on a rich intellectual and philosophical tradition, which includes the ideas of Adam Smith, John Locke, and Thomas Jefferson, among others, but his position as prophet, seer, and revelator for the Church gives his views authority, particularly since he grounds them in part on gospel principles. We do not doubt President Benson's patriotism, sincerity, and good faith in suggesting an approach to constitutional interpretation, but we do not agree with his conclusions as to the proper role of government, nor can we accept the implication that those conclusions are the only ones acceptable to God or permissible under the Constitution. Indeed, it seems to us that President Benson's conclusions are less consistent with the fundamental principles on which he purports to rely than some other conclusion might be. More alarming, they could be interpreted as providing unintended support for those who appeal to fear rather than trust, to selfishness rather than altruism, to differences rather than similarities, to hatred rather than love.[7]

President Benson posits that government can rightfully possess only those powers individuals have "in the absence of and prior to the establishment of any organized form of government" (p. 8). He then argues that, in a pre-government condition, an individual's rights unquestionably include defense of his person and property; therefore, government can legitimately perform those functions. But since "no individual possesses the power to take another's wealth or to force others to do good" (p. 9), it is emphatically not within government's power to redistribute wealth.

This line of argument is arbitrary at best. It ignores the fact that, in modern society, government must "take another's wealth" and "force others" to provide for the defense of person and property, just as it must do so to provide for the needy. The question, therefore, is whether the power of government can be brought to bear, through taxation, to coerce individuals against their will to contribute either to the national defense or to social programs. That is a question of ends, not of means. In terms of impact on agency and the free exercise of conscience, forcing one to take up a sword is the same as forcing another to give up a loaf of bread.[8]

One might argue that "We the People" agreed in the Constitution that government could provide for the national defense but not redistribute wealth. That argument, however, begs the central question of constitutional jurispru-

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[7] An embarrassing example is former Arizona Governor Evan Mecham's slighting the extraordinary accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King and otherwise needlessly offending gays, Jews, and other minorities.

[8] Our discussion here intentionally says nothing about the relative morality of these coercive actions. In our view, when allocating scarce resources, it is not a close moral question whether to build new and ever more destabilizing weapons systems in the name of "national defense" or whether to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless, educate the illiterate, treat the sick, and otherwise pursue the "general welfare." We find some support for the latter choice in Judeo-Christian principles, as well as in the Book of Mormon, as does Nibley (1988).

dence — how to determine by some neutral, objective means whether something contravenes the Constitution. As in many other cases, the answer is not obvious in the key wording of the Constitution itself (which, curiously, President Benson never quotes in his discussion of its "major provisions"). Article I section 8 of the Constitution provides in part: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States." In the case of *United States v. Butler*, the United States Supreme Court stated:

> Since the foundation of the Nation, sharp differences of opinion have persisted as to the true interpretation of [this clause]. Madison asserted it amounted to no more than a reference to the other powers enumerated in the subsequent clauses of the same section; that, as the United States is a government of limited and enumerated powers, the grant of power to tax and spend for the general national welfare must be confined to the enumerated legislative fields committed to the Congress. In this view the phrase is mere tautology, for taxation and appropriation are or may be necessary incidents of the exercise of any of the enumerated legislative powers. Hamilton, on the other hand, maintained the clause confers a power separate and distinct from those later enumerated, is not restricted in meaning by the grant of them, and Congress consequently has a susbtantive power to tax and to appropriate, limited only by the requirement that it shall be exercised to provide for the general welfare of the United States. (297 U.S. 1 [1930], 65–66)

The Court adopted Hamilton's view but decided the case without discussing the scope of the phrase "the general welfare of the United States" (p. 68). Nevertheless, it requires neither ingenuity nor violence to semantics to argue that the "general welfare" clause can be interpreted as empowering the federal government to lay and collect taxes for the purpose of providing for the needy. The contrary argument — that that particular interpretation of the general welfare clause is not a proper interpretation — cannot be derived solely from the language of the Constitution. Thus President Benson's view that government can tax and spend to provide for defense but not to provide for the needy is not supported solely by the principles on which he purports to rely.

We can find further illustration that some other principle underlies President Benson's view of the proper role of government. President Benson defines certain areas in which government ought to have binding, coercive authority. Indeed, the inability of government to act in these areas because of Supreme Court activism rises to the level of a "constitutional crisis" (Benson 1986, 23–25). President Benson thus urges the reversal of a half-century of Supreme Court decisions that forbid the majority to mandate school prayer and Bible-reading, or to prohibit the distribution, sale, and exhibition of what the majority considers obscene, or to curtail expression that offends their moral sensitivities.

This position, however, is patently inconsistent with the argument that government possesses only those powers that individuals possess in a pregovernment condition. If, as President Benson says, "No individual possesses the power to take another's wealth or to force others to do good" (p. 9), then it would seem that no individual possesses the power to impair another's exercise

of conscience in deciding questions of personal morality and expression — decisions that seem central to the notions of free agency and freedom of conscience.[9] To decide what to do with the fruit of one's labor is no more personal or important to the free exercise of conscience — and indeed seems less central to that important freedom — than to decide what to read, whether and to whom to pray, what to say or not to say, and where and how to say or not to say it.

Again, one might seek guidance in the "major provisions" of the Constitution, but they are indeterminate in many cases. For example, the First Amendment protects the "free exercise" of religion, while at the same time forbidding laws "respecting an establishment of religion." As the Supreme Court has recently discussed in two cases, the important values underlying the free exercise clause and the establishment clause are not easily reconciled in many cases. Similarly, the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments prohibit government from depriving any person of "liberty" without "due process of law." These important provisions, as well as others, have been interpreted to embody a notion of "ordered liberty" (*Palko v. Connecticut*, 302 U.S. 319 [1937]) that seeks to balance the competing values that notion itself represents. The jurisprudence that President Benson attacks thus reflects the Supreme Court's best attempt to balance and harmonize competing values in difficult and novel cases.

In summary, President Benson's jurisprudence purports to be based on gospel and constitutional principles, but those principles alone do not support his conclusions about the proper role of government. What underlying theory then has not been made explicit? To determine what that theory might be, we must look to President Benson's 1974 book, where he more fully explicates the principles that inform his jurisprudence. In it he discusses "the clash between communism and freedom" and defines and denounces "socialistic communism" as "the earthly image of the plan Satan presented in the preexistence" (Benson 1974, 346). The following statements typify President Benson's alarmist views:

> The fight against Godless communism is a very real part of the duty of every man who holds the Priesthood. It is the fight against slavery, immorality, atheism, terrorism, cruelty, barbarism, deceit and the destruction of human life through a kind of tyranny unsurpassed by anything in human history. Here is a struggle against the evil, satanical priestcraft of Lucifer. Truly it can be called "a continuation of the war in heaven." . . . Today the devil as a wolf in a supposedly new suit of sheep's clothing is enticing some men, both in and out of the Church, to parrot his line by advocating planned government-guaranteed security programs at the expense of our liberties. Latter-day Saints should be reminded how and why they voted as they did in heaven. If some have decided to change their votes, they should repent — throw their support on the side of freedom — and cease promoting this subversion. (Benson 1974, 347–48)

[9] In this vein, President Benson significantly omitted verse 4 when he quoted Section 134 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

> We believe that religion is instituted of God; and that men are amenable to him, and to him only, for the exercise of it, unless their religious opinions prompt them to infringe upon the rights and liberties of others; but we do not believe that human law has a right to interfere in prescribing rules of worship to bind the consciences of men, nor dictate forms for public devotion; that the magistrate should restrain crime, but never control conscience; should punish guilt, but never suppress the freedom of the soul.

The "orthodox" jurisprudence thus equates the restored gospel, Americanism, and economic and political conservatism:

> The best way — the American way — is still maximum freedom for the individual guaranteed by a wise government that establishes and enforces the rules of the game. . . . Our way of life is based upon eternal principles. It rests upon a deep spiritual foundation established by inspired instruments of an all-wise Providence. . . .
>
> As American citizens, as citizens of the nations of the free world, we need to rouse ourselves for the problems which confront us as great Christian nations. We must recognize that these fundamental basic principles — moral and spiritual — lay at the very foundation of our past achievements. To continue to enjoy present blessings, we must return to these basic and fundamental principles. Economics and morals are both part of one inseparable body of truth. They must be in harmony. We need to square our actions with these eternal verities. (Benson 1974, 315, 364)

In his chapter, "Survival of the American Way of Life," President Benson discusses what are, in his view, our most cherished, priceless rights, interests, and blessings — those the Constitution was designed to protect — and the clear emphasis again is on things economic:

> The evidence clearly indicates that our most cherished rights and interests are all a part of the American way of life. Can communism, socialism, fascism, or any other coercive system provide these priceless blessings which flow to us as part of our American way of life? The common denominator of all these coercive systems is the curtailment of individual liberty. Surely we will all agree that our Constitution provides the basis for the only *economic* system acceptable to true Americans. (Benson 1974, 311, emphasis added)

Those with different views are unfaithful and unpatriotic:[10] "No true Latter-day Saint and no true American can be a socialist or a communist *or support programs leading in that direction.* These evil philosophies are incompatible with Mormonism, the true gospel of Jesus Christ" (Benson 1974, 353–54, emphasis added). If President Benson has moderated his tone in the recent pamphlet, he has not modified the idea. For example, in exhorting the Saints to be righteous and moral, President Benson states: "To live a higher law means that we will not seek to receive what we have not earned by our own labor" (Benson 1974, 28). This comes close to calling the beggar a sinner.

It seems clear that the underlying theory for President Benson's jurisprudence is laissez-faire economics — the view that government ought not to interfere in economic affairs beyond the minimum necessary to allow free enterprise to operate according to its own laws.[11] In his book, President Benson

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[10] The same equation was used in Washington during the Reagan administration to dismiss as "unpatriotic" those who did not support the policies of the president.

[11] There is some recognition in President Benson's writings that the free exercise of conscience extends beyond decisions about accumulating and disposing of material wealth. For example, freedom of religious expression is important. However, the following statement by "a few [unidentified] American patriots" reveals the limited notions of civil liberties President Benson appears to value most highly: "I am hereby resolved that under no circumstances shall the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights be infringed. *In particular* I am opposed to any attempt on the part of the *federal government* to deny the people their right to bear arms, to worship, and to pray when and where they choose, or to own and control private property" (Benson 1974, 300, emphasis added).

makes certain pragmatic arguments for laissez-faire economics. Maximum economic freedom, he suggests, encourages competition, which in turn stimulates efficient production, which increases the availability of goods and services, which raises most people's standard of living, which makes America great (Benson 1974, 305–15). We do not quarrel here with such pragmatic arguments (although one might be able to do so in light of the increased gulf between the rich and the poor under the Reagan administration). But we do question whether laissez-faire economics ought to be the guiding principle of a Mormon jurisprudence.

The scriptures teach that God's purpose is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). God's plan for accomplishing that purpose empowered his children to gain knowledge and understanding, to progress eternally, and eventually to become as God. Both Satan and Christ recognized the risks of this plan: given unfettered choice, God's children would sometimes choose evil and thereby be lost to God. Satan proposed that humans be saved from the consequences of choosing evil by preventing choice. Thus he thought all would be saved, and the glory would be his. God knew, however, that his plan could succeed only through providing choices. Christ proposed not to prevent choice, but through his atoning sacrifice, to redeem God's children from the consequences of choosing evil. Some would still choose to follow Satan and would thereby be lost to God. But some would choose to accept Christ's sacrifice through repentance and would thereby gain eternal life.

Christ's life and teachings were difficult to understand for those steeped in the religious culture and traditions of the time. He taught them to love their enemies, and by turning the other cheek, to accommodate those who would harm person or property. He taught them not to turn away the beggar, but to give freely because all of us are beggars, dependent upon God for substance. He exposed the evils of idolatry and taught the greatest motivation for good in people's lives. He encouraged purity of heart and mind in the struggle to reach divine potential.

What light do these principles shed on constitutional interpretation? In our view, it is difficult to derive from Christian principles a jurisprudence based on the pursuit of economic gain. Indeed, such a view seems inimical in many ways to a religious tradition that, while acknowledging materialistic tendencies, urges overcoming them. To say that God smiles upon a system that primarily promotes economic gain serves only to justify selfishness and greed. It also precludes efforts to create a system more in line with Judeo-Christian values.

Although this statement acknowledges the Bill of Rights, it does not recognize that these valuable rights (perhaps the least of which is the antiquated "right to bear arms") are also protected against intrusions by state governments under the Fourteenth Amendment. Indeed, President Benson appears to suggest that the Bill of Rights ought to apply only to the federal government, since he emphasizes that it is up to the states to determine and protect civil rights (Benson 1986, 21).

This view of the Fourteenth Amendment implies less than fervent commitment to basic civil rights, including racial justice and equality. Utah jurisprudence has been blemished by *State v. Phillips*, a 1974 Utah Supreme Court decision holding — contrary to decades of thoughtful and sensible precent — that the Bill of Rights does not apply to the states (Firmage 1975). Mormon jurisprudence ought not to perpetuate that mistaken view.

Only when the present system is revealed as utterly contingent — one of many possible answers to who we are and how we should live — can we consider the possibilities for transforming and improving our situation.

Contrary to President Benson's suggestion, the Constitution is broad enough to permit such transforming possibilities. Just as Christ's law transcended the Mosaic law, the Constitution transcended all previous charters of self-government. The most remarkable aspect of the Constitution is that, like the gospel, it transcends even itself. The framers' inspiration was not in prescribing for all successive generations their vision of constitutional self-government, which was necessarily bound by their own experience and imaginations. Nor was it in codifying specific economic or social systems. Rather, the framers' inspiration was in institutionalizing their own revolutionary spirit. They recognized that each generation, in order to work out its own political salvation, would have to decide for itself the important questions of human existence and association.

Perhaps they did not believe or understand that the same agonizing responsibility is essential to the individual's spiritual salvation. Nevertheless, they crafted a constitution that permitted, indeed required, a constant reevaluation of tradition in light of experience. We believe they intentionally (and wisely) used such open-ended phrases as "liberty" and "equal protection," the precise contents of which are not susceptible to facile interpretation, but which permit continuing dialogue about who we are and how we should live.

In a work of extraordinary significance and insight, several social researchers conducted a five-year study of both communities and individuals and concluded that Americans have become trapped and alienated by economic individualism (Bellah et al. 1985). They observe that "we have been embarked on a great effort to increase our freedom, wealth, and power" and that, as a result, we have "committed what to the republican founders of our nation was the cardinal sin: we have put our own good, as individuals, as groups, as a nation, ahead of the common good" (pp. 284–85). We have failed, moreover, what they call the "litmus test that both the biblical and republican traditions give us for assaying the health of a society . . . how it deals with the problem of wealth and poverty":

> The Hebrew prophets took their stand by the *'anawim*, the poor and oppressed, and condemned the rich and powerful who exploited them. The New Testament shows us a Jesus who lived among the *'anawim* of his day and who recognized the difficulty the rich would have in responding to his call. Both testaments make it clear that societies sharply divided between rich and poor are not in accord with the will of God. (p. 285)

Recent experience confirms that our society is failing this test. But a new political administration promises a "kinder, gentler America," perhaps one characterized by less emphasis on selfishness and more emphasis on sensitivity to the needs of our brothers and sisters. We may yet realize that "our common life requires more than an exclusive concern for material accumulation" (Bellah et al. 1985, 295). If we can transcend the notions that God has willed the status quo or that we can return to some idealized and nonexistent past,

perhaps we will be able to transform our persuasions and practices to better conform with our ideals.

The civil rights movement is a concrete example of how individuals and society can be transformed, and of how the Constitution allows such a transformation to take shape. It is also an example of the salutary role an antimajoritarian institution like the Supreme Court can play in the process. The mentality that prevailed at the beginning of the struggle for human dignity and equality is now, for most of us, difficult to imagine:

> [African blacks and their progeny] had for more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order; and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit. He was bought and sold, and treated as an ordinary article of merchandise and traffic, whenever a profit could be made by it. (*Dred Scott v. Sanford*, 19 How. 393, 407 [1857])

This view, ironically, was often justified by references to God and the Bible, as well as to the "framers' intent." It was institutionalized by an interpretation of the Constitution that permitted "separate but equal" facilities for blacks and whites (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 [1896]). But like those noble and courageous forefathers who challenged the oppressive rule of a distant, unsympathetic government, civil rights activists in this century struggled against widespread ignorance and moral blindness to revolutionize a political process that had denied blacks entry and had effectively insulated itself from democratic change. In 1954 the Supreme Court overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine of racial segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education* (347 U.S. 483 [1954]). By recognizing that the "pursuit of happiness" and "liberty and justice for all" are more than rhetoric, the Court shook the foundations of a received tradition and helped raise individual and collective consciousness.

Unfortunately, we as a Church followed, rather than led, that transformation. Only in 1978 did President Spencer W. Kimball extend the priesthood to all worthy males in the Church, thus ending a century and a half of exclusion. As a society and as a church, we would do well to learn from this painful example. When our political and religious practices are incongruent with our ideals, we need to avoid freezing into place similarly contingent, unjustifiable beliefs.[12]

In short, concrete possibilities exist for transforming society. We cannot even begin to see them, however, unless we resist the notion that things must be the way they are. We must open a dialogue about our political, social, and economic beliefs and practices which, like their religious counterparts, too often are encrusted with tradition that makes them appear much more natural and

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[12] For example, perhaps in the light of 2 Nephi 26:33, we should reexamine our beliefs and practices regarding women:

> For none of these iniquities come of the Lord; for he doeth that which is good among the children of men; and he doeth nothing save it be plain unto the children of men; and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.

necessary than they are. We must be willing to challenge that tradition and ultimately to trust our own instincts. Indeed, "if we had the courage to face our deepening political and economic difficulties, we might find that there is more basic agreement than we had imagined. Certainly, the only way to find out is to raise the level of public political discourse so that the fundamental problems are addressed rather than obscured" (Bellah et al. 1985, 287).

The gospel teaches that the salient characteristic of human beings — children of God — is their ability to transcend the limited and limiting contexts in which they find themselves. That is eternal progression. In our view, the dialogue toward a Mormon jurisprudence should seek to embody in political and economic institutions and practices the self-revising and transcendent qualities that characterize us as individuals. The role of constitutional government should be to create and sustain an environment in which God's children are exposed, with all the risks such exposure entails, to their own limitless potential — not only through the exercise of economic agency, but also through the exercise of moral agency, which may ultimately determine whether we are capable of the charity that characterizes the true saints.

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Lindon Cannery, November 12, 1982

Laura Hamblin

These are apples picked by the pure
In heart, end of the harvest apples,
Juice apples — but apples.
And if a worm, or mold or frost
Took three-fourths of an apple
To itself, that still leaves
A quarter of an apple. And the least
Of these will feed the least of us.

What started out with a conveyer bang
Has settled down to a run and rumble.
Hair-hidden handmaids pick
Through pocked and puckered apples.
Apples . . . apples . . . and apples.

Cans drop consistently with a clank
And tinny tick to catch the spray
Of the juice of apples. Sometimes
They miss — I consent to the baptism.
Sprinkled in juice, my faith is made
Whole: One's thirst can never be
Quenched by apples; the acid
From the juice will burn on one's lips.

Through the window I watch a sea gull
And mistake it for a dove. It lights
Upon a pole: A solitary Christ,
Arms spread through November's Lindon,
Asks for water and is given — apples.

Divorce

Laura Hamblin

With the heat at the end of August,
I am glad I sleep alone
And roll over on your side of the bed
Where the sheets are still cool.
I recall a December as I lay
Delicate and shivering,
Awake and naked on my wedding night.

LAURA HAMBLIN received an M.A. in English at Brigham Young University.

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The Holy War Surrounding Evan Mecham

Karen Coates

WHILE I AM NOT A POLITICAL SCIENTIST, SOCIOLOGIST, OR HISTORIAN, I am one of many Arizona Latter-day Saints who will never forget Evan Mecham or the "Holy War" of public opinion that surrounded his governorship and frequently involved the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In 1986 Evan Mecham was approached by Republican friends who asked him to run for governor for the fifth time. Mecham, a sixty-two-year-old father of seven and grandfather of eighteen, former bishop, and conservative politician, thoughtfully considered their request. He consulted his family, and as his friend Shirley Whitlock relates, "They decided to fast and pray about it. After a three-day fast . . . it was confirmed that he should run and that he would win." [1] Confident of the outcome, Evan Mecham entered the campaign.

Mecham ran against two candidates, a Democrat and an Independent. On election night he calmly confided to Whitlock, "I have assurance that I'm going to win." When the ballots were tabulated, it seemed to some that God had worked in a mysterious way to fulfill his promise to Evan Mecham: 61 percent of the voters stayed home in the lowest turnout in forty-four years, and Mecham won the election with only 39 percent of the vote.

President Ezra Taft Benson's appearance on the podium at Mecham's inauguration led some Latter-day Saint supporters to believe that the Church was endorsing the new governor, or that Mecham had a "divine calling" to office. According to an unsubstantiated rumor circulating at that time, President Benson attended the temple with Mecham and "set him apart" to be Arizona's new governor.

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[1] Shirley Whitlock, interview with the author in Mesa, Arizona, 16 May 1988. Unless otherwise stated, subsequent references to Whitlock will refer to this interview.

Governor Mecham soon made national headlines when he rescinded the state holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., contending that the state attorney general's office would sue him if the illegally created holiday were not cancelled. Some critics, however, suspected more sinister motives for his action and blamed two groups linked to Mecham: the political far right for its allegation that King was a communist, and the Church for its history of denying the priesthood to blacks. This reaction foreshadowed the significant role Mormonism would play in the public's perception of Governor Mecham. Many Latter-day Saints now jumped on the Mecham bandwagon, interpreting criticism of him as religious persecution.

Governor Mecham, intentionally or unintentionally, misrepresented Ezra Taft Benson's view of King on one occasion. In an interview televised on KVOA in Tucson on 4 November 1987, Mecham was asked, "Do you agree with the general leadership of the Mormon Church that Martin Luther King, Jr., was a communist, and that the civil rights movement was communist-oriented as well?" Mecham replied that he had never heard Church leaders say that and added, "I know the president of the Mormon Church, Ezra Taft Benson, a man who would *never* say such a thing" (italics added). The Church's enemies used such inaccuracies to convince others that Mecham was cloaking the "real" reason he cancelled the King holiday.[2]

Two months after the holiday was rescinded, new charges of Mormon bigotry appeared. When Mecham said he liked Cleon Skousen's book *The Making of America*, quotations from the book surfaced in the press. One called slave owners "the worst victims of slavery," and two referred to black children as "pickaninnies." [3] Hoping to placate Mecham's critics, the head of Arizona's Office of Affirmative Action later persuaded the governor to attend black church services in the Phoenix area on Sundays after he attended his own ward.[4] Mecham would spend the rest of his term in office trying to prove to blacks that he and his religion were not their enemies. Within months, however, new Mecham remarks would offend new groups of Arizonans.

Mecham criticized reporters, professional entertainers, and rock concert fans. He called one journalist a "non-person," while his supporters were the "good people." He made other remarks that offended Hispanics, Japanese, Jews, and working women. At a banquet held at the University of Utah in September 1987, Mecham said, "This is a great Christian nation for everybody." Later at a Scottsdale synagogue, Mecham repeated this statement declaring, "I said it, and I'll say it again." [5]

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[2] Ezra Taft Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, compiled by Jerreld L. Newquist (Salt Lake City: Parliament Publishers, 1969), p. 310. See Anthony Lobaido, "Cursed: Mecham's Inherent Religious Bias Reveals Truth About King Holiday," Arizona State University *State Press*, 9 November 1987, p. 4.

[3] W. Cleon Skousen, *The Making of America* (Washington, D.C.: The National Center for Constitutional Studies, 1985).

[4] "Mecham Visits Black Churches," *Arizona Republic* (Phoenix), 13 Dec. 1987, p. B1.

[5] "Mecham Presses Corbin Attack," *Mesa Tribune*, 13 Jan. 1988, p. A1; "State Should Pay for Its Waste Reform, Mecham says," *Arizona Daily Star*, 31 May 1987, p. 8B; "Recall Leaders Call Gov 'Incompetent,'" *Arizona Daily Star*, 12 June 1987, p. B2; "'Gazette'

Reporters also baited Governor Mecham with questions about gay rights. He often answered that although he had no agenda for cracking down on homosexuals, he thought their lifestyle was unacceptable. He also protested the existence of Arizona State University's Lesbian and Gay Academic Union and told a radio caller who identified himself as a gay member of the Church, "If you are a member of the same church I am, you have evidently changed your lifestyle, because the church I belong to does not allow homosexuals to participate under any circumstances." [6] Statements like these caught the attention of one notable listener, a wealthy young businessman named Ed Buck. Buck was the creator of the Mecham Watchdog Committee, a group which later became the Mecham Recall Committee and collected the signatures of over 300,000 Arizonans.

In February 1987, a pro-Mecham group called Arizonans for Traditional American Values held a press conference at which their leader, Julian Sanders, exposed Buck's homosexuality and condemned him for his current drug indictment and his arrest for public sexual indecency. The far-right leader later alleged that Buck had "received a year of training 'on a scholarship' by the Communists in Yugoslavia." [7] These allegations fired up the governor's supporters. To Crismon Lewis, publisher of the unofficial Mormon tabloid *The Latter-Day Sentinel*, Buck's homosexuality "confirmed that *that* is Satan's side." [8] To Shirley Whitlock, president of the Arizona Eagle Forum, evidence like this showed "the *character* — or lack of it — of the opposition." The Mechamites, as they became known in the best Book of Mormon tradition, thought allegations against Buck would boost their cause immeasurably and often said the recall was a homosexual movement.

Tables were turned when the *Phoenix Gazette* revealed on 7 July 1987 that the president of the two-thousand member Evan Mecham Fan Club, seventeen-year-old Kip Shippy, had been convicted of child molesting in 1984. Mecham and his camp shrugged off the obvious irony, but Steve Benson, a Mecham critic, concluded, "If you're going to argue that to oppose Governor

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Columnist a 'Non-person,' Governor Says," *Arizona Republic*, 4 March 1987, p. B1; "Mecham Won't Resign Over Loan Probe," *Mesa Tribune*, 25 Oct. 1987, p. B1; "Mecham 'Slap' Irks Hispanics," *Arizona Republic*, 18 July 1987, p. B1; "Japan Remark Causes Stir," *Mesa Tribune*, 13 Jan. 1988, p. A1; "Mecham: 'Working Women Increase Divorce,' " *Arizona Republic*, 29 March 1987, p. B10; "Mecham Runs into Protesters in Utah," *Arizona Republic*, 18 Sept. 1987, p. C6; "Mecham's Christian Remark Irks Jews," *Arizona Republic*, 15 Dec. 1987, p. A2; "Mecham Remarks to Jews Assailed," *Mesa Tribune*, 16 Dec. 1987, p. B1; "Mecham Apologizes for Remarks," *Mesa Tribune*, 18 Dec. 1987, p. A1.

[6] See "Mecham Says Gays Have No Place in Government," *Scottsdale Progress*, 6 Jan. 1987, p. 2; "Reflecting on a Vision for Arizona," *Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson), 29 March 1987, p. C1; "Gay Club Unprotected by Law, Mecham Says," *Arizona Republic*, 2 Aug. 1987, p. B3; "Mecham Assails Gays; Also Targets 1¢ Levy," *Arizona Republic*, 13 Feb. 1987, p. B1.

[7] "Anti-Mecham Flag Bearer Blasted: Conservatives Lambaste Buck," *Mesa Tribune*, 15 March 1987, p. B1; "Would the People of Arizona Vote to Recall the Governor Who Revoked the Martin Luther King Holiday?" *The Fact Finder* (Phoenix), 16 Dec. 1987, p. 2.

[8] Crismon Lewis, interview with the author, Phoenix, Arizona, 19 May 1988. Unless otherwise stated, subsequent references to Lewis will refer to this interview.

Mecham is to support homosexuality, then to support Evan Mecham is to condone heterosexual child molestation." [9]

Church members engaged in their own stirring debate. Publisher Crismon Lewis defended Mecham in a *Latter-Day Sentinel* editorial by saying, "Gay questions have no-win answers: to attack gays is discriminatory, to accept them is immoral." He later conceded to a reader who countered that Church members may reject the homosexual lifestyle but must accept homosexuals as individuals. Another *Sentinel* reader wrote, "When a statewide radio and television audience heard [Evan Mecham] say, 'Ed Buck, we have checked you out; you're not worth a hill of beans,' we winced. . . . No matter who Ed Buck is, a true Christian would never tell him nor anyone he is worthless, a non-person, nonexistent." [10]

After witnessing the Mecham debate that raged for months, political strategist Jim West concluded on a 27 March 1988 radio talk show that Mecham generated either fanatical support or wild disdain. Linda Turley, a Latter-day Saint news anchor for a Phoenix television station, describes the split among Arizonans:

> There were those who took President Benson's presence at Mecham's inauguration as "gospel": a prophet's direction to follow the new governor. . . . There were those who have known Mecham in the Church for years and "can only say good about the man." There were those who believed that a man who received revelation of his governorship must be receiving divine guidance. There were those who approved of his political platform and embraced his theory that he was a victim of the media, the power brokers, the attorney general, and a conspiracy.
>
> On the other shore were those who saw Mecham as incapable of accomplishing his honorable platform, a platform which contained all the right buzz words and causes: war on drugs, the mafia, the racing commission, government corruption, taxes, powermongers, pornography. They saw him as a man who found it difficult to delegate and to trust. Who failed to surround himself with competent people and advisors. Who failed to listen to seasoned and supportive politicians and friends who tried to warn him, early on, to soften his rhetoric and his approach to various controversies. Who failed to practice compromise, even in areas where no real harm would have come to his own agenda. Whose judgment was in question.[11]

These conspiracy theories Turley describes were central to the Mechamite philosophy. Mecham was certain that there was a conspiracy to remove him from office. He identified the conspirators: "The Phoenix Forty [a businessmen's group] . . . the old guard . . . the National Gay Rights Liberation Movement . . . the Democratic Party . . . the Phoenix newspapers . . . the homosexuals . . . the drug people . . . the pornographers . . . the university crowd . . . the 'go along to get along' people." Some Latter-day Saints made stronger

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[9] Steve Benson, interview with the author, Phoenix, Arizona, 26 May 1988. Unless otherwise stated, subsequent references to Benson will refer to this interview.

[10] "Why Such a Controversy Over Gays?" *Latter-Day Sentinel* (Phoenix), 28 Nov. 1987, p. 2; Martha Cluff, letter to *Latter-Day Sentinel* (Phoenix), 19 Dec. 1987, p. 2; Sidney Macombe (pseudonym for Lorenzo Lisonbee), letter to *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 31 Oct. 1987, p. 2.

[11] Linda Turley, letter to the author, 10 June 1988.

accusation. One man wrote the *Latter-Day Sentinel*, "If we examine their motivations, I believe we will find sufficient evidence to label [the Phoenix Forty] a 'secret combination' that we have seen as the cause of the destruction of many ancient peoples, the Nephites among them." [12] Shirley Whitlock agreed. "I don't understand how members of the Church living in this day cannot believe in conspiracies. . . . It's secret combinations of groups that are out to get the governor."

The news media also played an important role. Mecham's dislike for the press was common knowledge, but to it he added the charge that the media was trying to destroy him. The *Arizona Republic* received letters from Mechamites accusing reporters of being in league with the anti-Christ.[13] Some journalists received death threats.

The *Latter-Day Sentinel*, an unofficial voice of the Church in Arizona, enlisted in the media war in April 1987.[14] Hoping to offset the news media's apparent bias, the *Sentinel's* editor and president, Crismon Lewis, abandoned his newspaper's nonpolitical tenet, and a number of pro-Mecham editorials and features soon appeared in the *Sentinel.*

Lewis sometimes appealed to the religious sympathies of his readers. In a 12 December 1987 editorial he wrote, "I'm sure if you were to visit with [Mecham] personally, he would share with you his story of why he decided to run. To the world, it looked like vain ambition. To the many who try to follow promptings in their lives, they knew there was another dimension to the decision. When he was elected, the world called it luck. But thousands knelt in thanks."

The *Sentinel* took on LDS cartoonist Steve Benson. Benson, the political cartoonist for *The Arizona Republic* and a critic of Mecham, was no stranger to attacks from Church members who thought his cartoons sometimes damaged the reputation of the Church and of his grandfather, President Ezra Taft Benson. Crismon Lewis telephoned Steve Benson, hoping to learn his grandfather's opinion of the Mecham situation. In a 14 November 1987 editorial, Lewis then restructured their "free-wheeling" conversation into a question and answer format. Lewis quoted Benson as saying, "I wish I could feel at liberty to repeat what he [President Benson] has said about the governor. I just know grandpa has been watching the situation down here and there's reason to be concerned. . . . I'm not in a position to divulge everything I know because there are people in position (sic) of authority, who wish not to go on record." Benson also cited reasons he wished the governor would resign. Next to this "interview," Lewis reprinted, without permission, Benson's now infamous car-

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[12] "Arizona Governor Evan Mecham: On Trial for Being an Outsider," reprinted with permission from *The American*, 28 March 1988, p. 9; Larry E. Wilkinson, letter to *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 6 Feb. 1988, p. 22.

[13] "Evan the Terrible's Mormon Legions Go on the Attack," *Arizona Republic*, 31 Jan. 1988, p. C4.

[14] The Arizona edition of the *Latter-Day Sentinel* has a circulation of approximately 9,000. If the 200,000 LDS households in Arizona averaged four family members each, then 18 percent of the homes would have been subscribers.

toon showing the Salt Lake Temple with a banner on the end of Moroni's trumpet which read, "Resign, Ev." [15]

The Benson interview triggered a barrage of letters to the editor from enraged readers. In the following weeks three wrote that Benson had "made a mockery out of the temple," that he was "immature, impetuous, insensitive and obnoxious," and that his comments "[smelled] of priestcraft and damnable heresy." [16] The "letters" section soon became a hot spot for debate about Mecham. The *Sentinel* printed the few anti-Mecham letters it received, but the large majority were highly supportive of the governor; some quoted scripture or modern-day prophets to support their points.

On the night of 3 December 1987, Steve Benson and Evan Mecham had a lengthy telephone conversation. Benson reports that at one point Mecham turned to his wife, Flo, and said, "I need to take some time with Steve because I'm really afraid his salvation is in jeopardy." [17] Benson recalls that Mecham made other statements with religious overtones, saying that he obeyed the commandments, that Benson had "fallen off the beam," and "that only [Mecham's] bishop could judge him, and his bishop, he said, was his son." This conversation became public, as did the story that some members of Benson's extended family wanted him uninvited to Thanksgiving dinner.[18] Cleon Skousen, rumor had it, said Benson would have to answer to God because of what he had done to Evan Mecham.

Sadly, the controversy divided families and friends within the Church. Linda Turley said, "It was apparent early on that Evan Mecham's trials and tribulations would harm us all, but few of us were equal to the trauma. . . . In my extended family, which has been close and caring, division took place among certain members. . . . Some of us remain at a distance. As a result, I found my anger against Mecham grew. Unreasonable or not, I hold him responsible for some of the upheaval within the Church and my family." [19] A former bishop, Gary Patten, described disputes within his family in the *Newsweek* article previously cited. Steve Benson's family split over the issue. My husband and I also joined many other LDS families who struggled as we discussed Mecham with each other and with our parents, brothers, and sisters.

Many Latter-day Saints avoided debate, not only inside the Church, but even in the Church parking lots. Some members hid their disappointment in Mecham and bit their tongues. Cheri Allen, who did not vote for Mecham, said that she and her husband "became conspicuously silent about who we voted for, for fear of being labeled heretics!" [20] Other members angered by

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[15] Steve Benson cartoon, published in the *Arizona Republic*, 1 Nov. 1987, p. C4.

[16] *Latter-Day Sentinel* letters: Clara M. England, 19 Dec. 1987, p. 2; Joe Nichols, 28 Nov. 1987, p. 17; and Sanford D. Flake, 12 Dec. 1987, p. 38.

[17] Mecham reportedly admitted to making this statement when he appeared on the Cable News Network program "Crossfire," 1 March 1988.

[18] "Arizona's Holy War: Mecham's Predicament Splits the Mormons," *Newsweek*, 1 Feb. 1988, p. 28; "A Family Gathering Shows Split Over Mecham Goes Deeper Than Politics," *New York Times*, 19 March 1988, late edition, p. 6.

[19] Linda Turley, letter to the author, 10 June 1988.

[20] Cheri Allen, letter to the author, 25 Nov. 1987.

Mecham wrestled with the idea of coming out in public opposition. Would doing so boost the flagging reputation of the Church by showing the world that Mecham and Mormonism were not synonymous, or would it backfire by placing the Church further in the spotlight, airing dirty laundry for everyone to see? Some Church members decided to go public in newspaper and magazine interviews. Their statements were intermingled with others from LDS Mecham supporters and from Church spokesmen who endeavored to distance the Church from the debate. The result was a wide range of Latter-day Saint opinion on Mecham.

The subject of Mecham occasionally came up during fast meetings and other Church gatherings. One woman reportedly spoke in a testimony meeting for half an hour, saying that faithful Latter-day Saints needed to support the governor. Crismon Lewis heard that a ward in Mesa fasted for Mecham during a difficult time. He relates, "I think there were a lot of people fasting. The word was spreading all over, 'fast this weekend.' Like the weekend of the impeachment vote and the weekend of the hearings — there was a lot of fasting going on." An LDS representative in the Arizona House, Mark Killian, said, "I heard that they were having fasts for Ev before the general election and before the primary — that there was this network of fasting going on all over Arizona. . . . When Ev got in deep trouble I heard there were several wards that had fasts for him — and Salt Lake cracked down on them and said, 'You cannot — should not — do that.' " [21] Some Regional Representatives sent letters to be read in Arizona priesthood meetings stating that Mecham was to be a non-issue during Church meetings.[22]

Some supporters apparently used Church contacts to get the word out. One radio talk show host said that his station received calls from members of the Church who maintained "they have been encouraged in church to call the radio talk shows to support Governor Mecham." Members of the Church would call in and admit, "My neighbor said I was supposed to call." LDS bookstores promoted pro-Mecham literature including books, tabloids, and even song cassettes.[23]

Followers spread stories which they believed confirmed Mecham's political innocence: that Mecham regularly attended the temple and was often seen crying in its prayer circles; that he met with President Benson in June and/or August of 1987 and was promised "he would win if he continues doing what's

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[21] Mark Killian, interview with the author, Phoenix, Arizona, 24 May 1988. Unless otherwise stated, subsequent references to Killian refer to this interview.

[22] Marc Denton, interview with the author, Tempe, Arizona; Eduardo Pagán, telephone conversation with the author, 15 Aug. 1988.

[23] KTAR talk show, 2 March 1988, audio tape in author's possession; Steve Western, telephone conversation with the author, 7 June 1988; *Arizona Free Press* (Scottsdale), n.d.; Sammy S. Jenkins, Sr., *Mecham: Arizona's Fighting Governor* (Albuquerque, N.M. All States Publishing, 1988); Evan Mecham, *Come Back America* (Glendale, Ariz.: MP Press, 1982); Ronald J. Bellus, *Mecham: Silence Cannot be Misquoted* (Phoenix: Laurents Printing, 1988).

right"; and that both President Benson and former Arizonan H. Burke Peterson had given blessings to Evan Mecham and his brother Willard.[24]

Some followers said that Mecham's persecution mirrored that experienced by the prophets. Betty Smith of Altamont, Utah, Mecham's hometown, drew a parallel between Mecham and Joseph Smith because Joseph was "ridiculed, persecuted and then murdered because of his beliefs." Mechamite Jim Robson reported that Cleon Skousen had called the governor a "modern-day Isaiah," and Robson added, "Isaiah was beaten, spit on and persecuted as a prophet." [25]

Other followers outdid comparisons to the prophets. The author of *Mecham: Arizona's Fighting Governor* wrote of his impeachment, "One is put in mind of a scene about two thousand years ago. One group said of the man on trial, 'I find no fault in this man.' The other group said, 'Crucify him.' You know the rest of the story." A *Sentinel* reader penned, "The Senate impeachment trial reminds me of an almost identical trial that occurred nearly two thousand years ago. At that time, they also screamed, 'Crucify him, crucify him!' long before a trial." One man made the papers when he interrupted a Phoenix precinct meeting shouting that the Republicans needed to stand by Mecham rather than criticize him. He cried, "The more we can keep our Christ child to ourselves, the more we can protect it from crucifixion." [26]

Threats were made. Before the election, someone put a flier on Church member Steve Western's car at a ward picnic that stated, "If someone votes improperly it is a sin." [27] Western, who later had a recall bumper sticker on his car, was told by another Latter-day Saint, "You'd better wise up or you'll be eternally damned." An LDS woman reported to Mark Killian that her stake president's wife refused to sit next to her and told her that she shouldn't attend Relief Society, because she wouldn't support Mecham. Referring to these instances as a kind of religious blackmail, Mark Killiam observed, "Nobody when I was running for office said, 'You have to support Mark because he's LDS.' Nobody when Stan Turley [an Arizona statesman] ran for office said you have to support him because he was LDS. What's the difference with Ev?"

Members of other churches, particularly those from the Moral Majority, provided much of Mecham's support. Baptist Pastor Wesley Darby warned the Phoenix-area clergy, "Every day we hear the shouts of the Sodomites, the Socialists and the Secret Power Brokers as they attack our Governor. . . . If you don't want to live in Sodom and have a family problem like Lot's, then

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[24] Edna Rae Montierth, telephone conversation with the author, 2 March 1988; Lance Standiford, letter to Ed Pagán, October 1987, copy in author's possession; Mark Killian interview; Steve Benson interview.

[25] "Hometown Will Always Welcome Mecham," *Arizona Republic*, 17 Jan. 1988, p. A1; "Mormons and Mecham: Some Fear His Politics May Harm Their Church," *Arizona Republic*, 6 March 1988, p. C1.

[26] Jenkins, p. 31; Gib Suemnicht, letter to *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 2 April 1988, p. 3; "Key GOP Conservatives Urge Mecham to Resign," *Arizona Republic*, 28 Oct. 1987, p. A1.

[27] "Mormons and Mecham: Some Fear His Politics May Harm Their Church," *Arizona Republic*, 6 March 1988, p. C1.

come out of your closet (of prayer) and onto the battlefield." [28] Editors of the Christian tabloid *Footprints* printed a pro-Mecham issue. Conversely, Mecham's critics put him in the same basket as Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart, Oral Roberts, and Jim Bakker.

Some supporters went to great extremes to express their anger. During the impeachment trials, all of the state's senators and representatives — even Latter-day Saints — received threatening telephone calls and letters from Mecham followers. *Republic and Gazette* editor Pat Murphy wrote, "I cannot recall in the past seeing such a volume of Letters to the Editor that are unusable because of the vicious, vile, obscene, and vulgar language used by authors to condemn Mecham critics and to extol the governor." Recall leader Ilene Gordon reported that recall workers were called "lesbians and AIDS carriers" and added, "If you were active in Recall, your phone rang with death threats all the time." [29] Did Mormons engage in this kind of activity?

In one unfortunate and ironic twist, the target of Mechamite violence was a Latter-day Saint. Fifty-eight-year-old Betty Foster had befriended Ed Buck to show him that not all Church members supported Mecham. One day while standing in a grocery store check-out line, Foster heard a man in front of her call Buck a "big faggot." She asked the man to keep his opinions to himself. An argument ensued, and the man's companion, a middle-aged woman, swung her purse and hit Foster in the head, cutting her face and giving her a black eye.[30]

Some non-Mormons, especially those acquainted with a number of Latter-day Saints, attempted to distance Mecham from his religion by pointing out the wide variety of personalities and opinions within the Latter-day Saint culture. Even some of Mecham's harshest critics said that Mormonism was not to blame for Mecham's weaknesses. The co-chair of Arizona State University's Lesbian and Gay Academic Union, former Latter-day Saint Denise Heap, publicly denounced Mecham but privately defended the Church. She said, "The Mormon people are getting bad press because of Mecham, and they don't deserve it. . . . Mormons generally are not discriminatory towards minorities. They give everyone a chance. And Mecham has drawn together those elements of the Mormon community who, for some reason, feel dispossessed. He's united them and he's making everybody think that that's what all Mormons are." [31]

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[28] "Mormons Aren't the Only Ones Behind Governor Mecham," *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 14 Nov. 1987, p. 33.

[29] "Mormons Forced to Choose Sides over Embattled Governor," *Arizona Daily Star*, 6 March 1988, p. A13; Gloria Anderson, letter to *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 20 Feb. 1988, p. 3; Steve Benson interview; Mark Killian interview; "Wanted: Arizonans Who Won't Tolerate the Politics of Abuse," *Arizona Republic*, 28 Feb. 1988, p. C2. (Joseph Allred, a Church member and military officer who was assigned to study *The Arizona Republic's* editorial pages, reports that the *Republic* alone received 3,473 letters to the editor on the Mecham issue between January 1987 and April 1988); "The Belles of Recall: How an Unlikely Quartet Unseated the Governor of Arizona," *Ms.*, June 1988, p. 44–51.

[30] Betty Foster, telephone conversation with the author, 7 June 1988.

[31] Denise Heap, telephone conversation with the author, 26 June 1988.

After Ed Buck heard Mecham say that gays could not participate in the Church under any circumstances, he telephoned Don LeFevre of the Church's Public Communications Department and asked for a clarification of the Church's position on homosexuality. LeFevre told Buck that gays and excommunicated gays can attend Church meetings.[32] Buck interpreted this as meaning that gays *could* participate in Church activities, and he concluded that Mecham had not accurately stated the Church's position. Because of this, Buck says he actively worked to prevent any Mormon-bashing within the recall movement. He says of Mecham, "You can look back in the Mormon tenets and say, 'This is where Even Mecham came from. But he's an aberration, he's a perversion. He's not pure Mormonism." [33] Some Latter-day Saints felt this viewpoint pitted Mecham against the Church, but the other alternative — direct attacks on the Church by Mecham critics — seemed an even gloomier prospect. Either tactic allowed Mecham's enemies to use his Mormonism against him.

With predictable zeal, the Church's antagonists took advantage of the Mecham excitement to further their own causes. MormonWatch, an anti-Mormon organization based in the Phoenix area, conducted interviews and wrote letters to editors. In one letter they told of the Mormon belief that men can become gods and concluded, "Mecham is playing the game to the hilt. Convinced of a popular mandate, he is carrying his celestial vision for Arizona forward — and damn anyone who gets in the way." Representatives of MormonWatch and another anti-Mormon organization, Concerned Christians, also misrepresented the Church by saying that Mormons had a religious obligation to support the governor and bishops would take action against Mecham critics within their wards.[34]

A former member of the Church, Deborah Laake, created a stir with a forceful editorial for *The New Times*. She wrote, "Mecham began as a Mormon boy and became a Mormon man. There is no other upbringing on earth so perfectly designed to transform someone with weak wits into a monster. . . . I know that the conditioning begins at birth, the conditioning that whispers to Mormon boys that they are chosen and their weirdest ideas are sanctioned by God. . . . For a small-minded man, Mormonism becomes a way of not reflecting on your own actions. That is how Ev Mecham rules." [35]

The Arizona executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, Louis Rhodes, reported that after Mecham's inauguration the ACLU received its first taste of anti-Mormon sentiment in the form of negative letters and phone calls. Tom Leykis, program director for talk radio station KFYI, heard many anti-Mormon comments during his station's call-in programs.[36] On a

[32] Don LeFevre, telephone conversation with the author, 7 June 1988. LeFevre verified the substance of Buck's call to him on 12 Feb. 1987.

[33] Ed Buck, interview with the author, Phoenix, Arizona, 31 May 1988.

[34] Letter from MormonWatch to *New Times* (Phoenix), 2–8 Sept. 1987, p. 2; "Church Debate over Mecham Simmers to Surface," *Phoenix Gazette*, 11 Jan. 1988, p. A9.

[35] "A Former Mormon Looks at Mecham" *New Times*, 12–18 Aug. 1987, p. 10.

[36] "Mecham Furor Prompts Anti-Mormon Sentiment," *Mesa Tribune*, 10 Oct. 1987, p. C1.

typical radio day I heard one caller comment to Crismon Lewis of the *Sentinel*, "I'm concerned about the apparent conflict between the secret oath that Evan Mecham took in the Mormon temple and the oath that he took to serve 'impartially' as governor of Arizona. Evan Mecham's Mormon temple oath consecrated his time, his talents, and everything to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for what they call the building up of Zion — Zion in this case is the Mormon Church." [37] Some callers threatened physical harm to any Arizona Mormons.

Why were these people so distressed about the Church's effect on Mecham? It seemed to them that Mecham used his belief in God and the Church to promote his cause. Was Mecham doing this? Steve Benson heard that at a family picnic attended by many Mormon supporters Mecham said that the people we should hate aren't worth hating and that a just God in heaven will do all the getting even for us that we need. According to Mark Killian, at a stake youth fireside Mecham said that God was on his side and the Devil was the one causing all of his problems. Appearing before nearly two thousand fans crowded into Mesa's Centennial Hall, Mecham said, "Although there is not an established [state] religion, it is important to have God as a co-partner in all governmental acts. . . . God will give us the direction, but we're the ones who have to put the motion power to the drive wheels that push us along. If we listen to His direction, He will tell us the course to steer." At the press conference following his acquittal, the first thing Mecham said was, "First I want to express the gratitude of myself, Florence, and our entire family to the Lord for His answering the hundreds of thousands of prayers offered in our behalf." [38]

Is there a difference between the "civil religion" of Americans such as Abraham Lincoln and that of Mecham? Some would say yes. Referring to Pat Robertson, historian Edwin Gaustad said, "Abraham Lincoln was profoundly religious but never willing to say he spoke for God or that God spoke to him." [39] Steve Benson agreed when he said of Evan Mecham, "On the one hand the governor will declare that he has no problem with the First Presidency making it clear that there is a division between one's personal/political viewpoints and the position that the Church may take — yet on the other hand the former governor is sending these not-too-subtle messages that those who support him, whether in or out of the Church, have God's blessing and approval."

Mecham denied that he dragged the Church into politics. In a brief interview with me he said, "I never involve the Church in politics. The brethren have said to get involved civically; we never do it in the name of the Church. I adhere to that strictly." He felt Latter-day Saints understood that they didn't

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[37] Caller, "Barry," on KTAR Radio call-in program dated 2 March 1988. Tape recording in author's possession.

[38] "Candidate Mecham Takes Campaign to Mesa," *Arizona Republic*, 2 Feb. 1988, final edition p. A2; Evan Mecham, press conference, 17 June 1988. Tape recording in author's possession.

[39] "Robertson's Beliefs Make His Campaign Hard Sale to Many," *Arizona Republic*, 5 March 1988, p. A10.

have to support him. "We [Latter-day Saints] don't get angry with each other if we disagree on political issues or any other issue." Elsewhere he has said, "I've got a right to worship however I want. . . . Now, you can say this is a great Jewish nation all you want. I'll never challenge it. You say what you believe, it's alright with me. You need to allow me that same right." [40]

After the state grand jury indicted Evan Mecham and his brother Willard for perjury, fraud, and filing false campaign documents, Evan said, "Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord. We need not try to get even with anyone in this life. There is a just God in heaven who will mete out eternal justice to us all in the life hereafter." The religious zeal of his supporters was evident that day as they carried signs reading, "Deliver Our Governor from the Wicked— Dear Lord Almighty," and "We support you Governor!! Psalm 68: 'Let *GOD* arise, let his enemies be SCATTERED." Mecham's followers believed that the charges were part of an unconstitutional "railroad job" to remove him from office. Latter-day Saint Mechamites were certain that Mecham's battle was foreseen in Joseph Smith's prophecy that the Constitution of the United States would hang by a thread and that the elders of the Church would labor to save it.[41]

During the legislative impeachment proceedings brought against Mecham, supporters from the Mesa area flooded legislative offices with pro-Mecham letters, many worded exactly the same but signed by different people. According to Democrat Representative Jack Brown, a Latter-day Saint from St. Johns, the governor's supporters repeatedly threatened to remove legislators from office if they voted for impeachment.[42] Marching in protest at the State Capitol, Mechamite families engaged in altercations with their opposition.

The *Latter-Day Sentinel* published what appeared to be a survey of legislators' views on impeachment and asked readers to "refer to the list on this page and call your state representative — many times, if necessary — to express your feelings on how the impeachment hearings are being conducted." Legislators became incensed at the bogus survey; most of them had never been contacted to express their views. Lewis issued a retraction, but his mistake brought notoriety to the *Sentinel.*[43]

During the impeachment trial, Mecham's image was further damaged by his testimony. Representative Mark Killian of Mesa reported that before the

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[40] Evan Mecham, telephone conversation with the author, 17 May 1988; "Evan Mecham: On Trial for Being An Outsider," reprinted with permission from *The American*, 28 March 1988, p. 8.

[41] "Text of Governor's Response to Loan Indictment," *Arizona Republic*, 10 Jan. 1988, p. A6; "All Bow Now to Gov. Ev: Religious Overtones Underlie Mecham's Fight" and accompanying photos, *Mesa Tribune*, 10 Jan. 1988, p. A9; See W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1977), p. 41–43 for references.

[42] "Pro-Mecham Letters Flow into Legislative Offices," *Scottsdale Progress*, 4 Feb. 1988, p. 2; "Did the Mormons Blow It?: How Evan Mecham's Own Supporters May Have Hurt His Cause," *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 11 June 1988, p. 7.

[43] "Mecham Is No Longer the Issue!" *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 23 Jan. 1988, p. 2; "Lawmakers Outraged by Impeachment 'Poll,' " *Arizona Republic*, 28 Jan. 1988, p. A9; "So Whose Button Did We Push?" *Latter-day Sentinel*, 6 Feb. 1988, p. 2.

governor testified in the House, calls to Killian's office were running ninety to one against impeachment. After Mecham took the stand, about half the calls were in favor. Mecham concluded his testimony by accusing Representative Jim Skelly of being a political enemy, citing Skelly's participation in a race-track scam.

When the state house of representatives impeached Governor Mecham by a vote of forty-six to fourteen, all five LDS representatives voted against impeachment. Mark Killian cast one of those votes, but he denounced the governor and defended his friend Jim Skelly in a tearful speech. He said,

> I resent Evan Mecham and everything he stands for. The way I was raised is nothing at all the way I see Mr. Mecham conduct his affairs. . . . He has continually skated along life following the lowest common denominator of social behavior, and that's barely eking by the law. He can best be described by a man I admire greatly — . . . Stan Turley — . . . as being an "ethical pygmy." And his outlandish, rude, classless, John Birch accusations he made against Mr. Skelly today turn my stomach.[44]

After this denunciation, Killian received death threats and was told he should be excommunicated. He told me, "I had a lot of people write me letters and quote me out of Doctrine and Covenants 121 about unrighteous dominion." In a wild accusation against two conservative "family men," the head of a recall bid against Skelly accused representatives Killian and Skelly of being lovers.[45] It seems that cheap shots are acceptable, especially in areas of morality.

Governor Mecham was reproved by another legislator two months later when he was impeached by the state senate. Senator Tony West, who says he prayed about what to say, read Mecham excerpts from *People of the Lie* by M. Scott Peck, saying Mecham was "evil" and showed signs of ambulatory schizophrenia.[46]

After his impeachment, Mecham and his brother Willard still faced criminal trial on felony counts. It was reported that before the trial Evan's lawyers met with the state attorney general and proposed that the charges be dismissed if Evan Mecham left Arizona to go on a mission for the Church. Mecham said he was "flabbergasted" that the meeting took place.[47]

Because of the impending trial, Brigham Young University refused to allow Mecham to speak to its campus Republicans' club. Some BYU alumni who felt that the university was being too harsh with Mecham were outraged. When he spoke at Altamont High School's graduation exercises, a reporter asked him whether standards are lower at Altamont High than at BYU.

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[44] "Killian Transcript," *Mesa Tribune*, 7 Feb. 1988, p. A10. For Stan Turley's 'ethical pygmy' statement, see "Mecham Smeared Barr, Says Head of State Senate," *Arizona Daily Star*, 30 Sept. 1986, p. A9.

[45] "Skelly Assails Mecham Backers' 'Lies,' " *Scottsdale Progress*, 24 Feb. 1988, p. 1.

[46] "Throwing the Book at Mecham," *Arizona Republic*, 7 April 1988, p. D1. See also M. Scott Peck, *People of the Lie* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983).

[47] "Dismissal Deal Allegedly Asked for Mecham," *Arizona Republic*, 14 April 1988, p. A1; "Mecham Denies He'll Leave If State Drops Case," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 15 April 1988, p. A5.

Mecham replied, "I still have my temple recommend. If I had moral problems, I wouldn't still have a temple recommend." [48]

During the criminal trial, lawyers for the defense argued that the Mecham brothers were Mormon men of good background. Attorneys who later analyzed the case agreed that the Mecham lawyers' best move was keeping their clients off of the witness stand.[49] The jury acquitted the Mechams, stating that they had no proof that the Mechams knowingly erred on their campaign reports. On the night of his acquittal, Evan Mecham attended the temple.[50]

Since the acquittal, Arizona is slowly returning to normal. Only time will determine if Mecham has damaged the Church's image. Some Church members attribute the rigid tone of the Church's recent political neutrality statement to the Mecham incident.[51] But have we learned any lessons from Evan Mecham? All of us could benefit from some soul-searching.

Some of Mecham's critics outside the Church are now bitter towards Latter-day Saints. But they should be careful about making blanket judgments. They should ask themselves, "Do I believe all Mormons are unfit for public office? Do I assume they all think and act like Ev? Can I judge my Mormon acquaintances as individuals instead of pigeon-holing them?"

Church members who did not support Mecham believed he was an embarrassment to the Church. They believed the Mechamites were misrepresenting the broad spectrum of political belief within the Church. They believe there is more to being a good politician than being a good Mormon. They do not believe that God calls politicians to do his bidding. Those within the Church who disagreed with Mecham could ask themselves, "Did I bring the Church into the limelight by attacking Mecham as a fellow Latter-day Saint? Did I overreact to accusations that Mecham represents all members of the Church? Did I mistakenly conclude that Mecham and his followers believed I had a religious obligation to support him? Do I deny authoritarian members their place in society and in the Church?"

Mecham's supporters saw his struggles in mythic terms — good versus evil. Some Mechamites felt their actions — even accusations, religious threats, or violence — were justified because they were battling the forces of Satan. They equated right belief with good governorship. They believed that the governor was a good man who was the victim of a conspiracy; it was impossible for them to believe that he was a bad man victimized by his own errors. They could not allow for a gray area in which the governor was the victim both of

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[48] "BYU Speech by Mecham Is Barred," *Arizona Republic*, 19 May 1988, p. A1; "No Need to RSVP; You're Not Invited," *Latter-Day Sentinel*, 28 May 1988, p. 8; "Mecham Goes Home Again to Speak to Class of 1988 at Utah High School," *Arizona Republic*, 28 May 1988, p. A8.

[49] "Defense Strategy, Lack of Evidence Led to Acquittal, Local Lawyers Say," *Phoenix Gazette*, 17 June 1988, p. A13.

[50] A story circulated that at the temple that night, Mecham was greeted by so many well-wishers offering noisy congratulations that temple matrons asked him to leave. However, a temple worker in attendance that night told me this was not true.

[51] Office of the First Presidency, letter on political neutrality, 9 June 1988. Copy in possession of the author.

his own inadequacies and of the people who perceived those inadequacies as injurious to the state. Mechamites relied on the simple faith that God blesses the righteous efforts of his Church. They believed Mecham had divine approval and the Constitution needed saving. Mecham's supporters must ask themselves, "How prepared was this man to assume the tremendous responsibilities he faced? Did I support him just because he was LDS? Have I bound politics and religion more closely than I should have, to the detriment of both? Do I resent the political apathy I perceive in most members of the Church? Why did I believe that supporting the governor was necessary, sometimes to the point of religious blackmail? Did I react to Mecham critics as if they were persecuting me and my beliefs? Have I used Mecham as a device to unite me with my Latter-day Saint friends against an imagined opposition in a misdirected attempt to give the Church greater importance in my life?"

Perhaps the most significant result of the Mecham ordeal was the pitting of Church member against Church member. If the Church is to become unified in Arizona, the search must continue for what B. H. Roberts called "unity in the essentials, tolerance in non-essentials." [52] Our challenge is to find common ground with our sisters and brothers, realizing that the umbrella of the gospel is expansive enough to cover Latter-day Saints of differing political opinions.

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[52] B. H. Roberts, quoted in Truman G. Madsen, "Problems in Universalizing Mormonism: A Response," *Sunstone* 4 (Dec. 1979): 20.

Evan Mecham: Humor in Arizona Politics

Alleen Pace Nilsen

THROUGH THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1987, Arizona residents had a wonderful time laughing about their newly elected governor, Evan Mecham. Monday mornings were brighter because people brought to work new jokes they had heard over the weekend. Children learned jokes at school and brought them home to their parents. Business people used them as icebreakers when they made phone calls, and newcomers to Arizona used them as tall tales to amuse friends and relatives back home.

When Evan Mecham won the gubernatorial election in November 1986, Arizonans already had a few mildly humorous Mecham jokes, like the one-liner about the shame of wasting a $400 toupee on a two-bit head. However, the number and the hostility of the jokes increased in direct proportion to Mecham's political troubles.

His first political crisis came before he was inaugurated. He announced that former Governor Bruce Babbit did not have the legal authority to declare a state holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, and Arizona would therefore not have the scheduled holiday. The opinion was supported by the state attorney general; nevertheless, Mecham was castigated as a villain for "rescinding" the holiday. Cartoonist Steve Benson showed Mecham sitting on Santa's knee "dreaming of a White Christmas" (*Arizona Republic*, 18 December 1986), and the Tribune newspapers carried a Gary Markstein cartoon showing a portrait of King saying, "I have a dream!" juxtaposed with a portrait of a villainous Mecham saying, "Dream on" (*Tempe Daily News Tribune*, 18 January 1987).

ALLEEN PACE NILSEN is assistant vice president for academic affairs at Arizona State University. With her husband, Don L. F. Nilsen, she was co-chair of the WHIM Humor Conferences at ASU from 1981–87. She presented a version of this essay at the Seventh WHIM Humor Conference at Purdue University, 1–4 April 1988.

Jokes about Mecham centered around particular themes, most notably his perceived racism and right-wing attitudes.

> Did you hear that Mecham ordered the U. of A. School of Agriculture to develop chickens with only right wings and all-white meat?

and

> Why did Mecham cancel Easter?
>
> He heard the eggs were going to be colored.

It is interesting that over the months, the same people who were criticizing Mecham for racism began telling racist jokes covered with a thin veneer of anti-Mecham sentiment:

> What are three things you can't give a black?
>
> A black eye, a fat lip, and a Mecham Pontiac!

Mormonism was another popular theme, for example:

> What Will Ev get now that he's stopped working for the Church and started working for the state?
>
> Sundays off and a 10 percent pay raise.

Mormons laughed at this joke because it said something about how much their church expects its members to contribute in both time and tithing. Church members may also have been amused when joke tellers said that the governor was trying to bring the New Orleans Saints professional football team to Phoenix, but that he was going to rename it the Latter-day Saints.

Some liberal Mormons who were embarrassed by Mecham's conservative attitudes tried to distance themselves from him by talking about joining MOM (Mormons Opposed to Mecham) and laughing when their friends asked riddles like:

> What's Mecham's idea of integration?
>
> Eating breakfast with a Baptist.

But few Mormons, either liberal or conservative, laughed at a more hostile joke that came later:

> Why does California have AIDS and Arizona has Mecham?
>
> Because California got first choice!

On the surface, this joke that made the rounds in early spring of 1987 doesn't look as if it has anything to do with Mormons, but many Church members had already heard a different version of it:

> Why does Phoenix have all the blacks and Mesa all the Mormons?
>
> Because Phoenix got first choice!

For the past several years, Arizona State University has sponsored a WHIM (Western Humor and Irony Membership) conference where psychologists, linguists, literary scholars, health workers, and others meet to discuss theories

and examples of humor. In April 1987 more than 600 scholars from the United States and thirty nations gathered in Arizona for the conference, which was co-sponsored by the Workshop Library on World Humor. Because the business of the people was analyzing humor and its uses, I presented a paper on Mecham jokes. It was the first public acknowledgment of the growing body of Mecham humor, and it received considerable publicity, partly because local newspapers had been looking for a way to print some of the jokes their reporters had been hearing.

The most popular joke at the time of the conference was a story about a fire at the governor's house that started in the library and burned both books — one hadn't even been colored in yet. A man from Germany recognized the story as having been told about the mayor of his hometown, and some participants remembered hearing similar jokes about Senator Joe McCarthy in the 1950s and about George Wallace in the 1960s. One riddle,

> What's the difference between George Wallace and Evan Mecham? Well, George Wallace is paralyzed from the waist down . . .

showed that the creators of the jokes had also recognized similarities.

When the conference delegates went home, they took the Mecham jokes with them. An Australian newspaper called me to find the correct spelling of Mecham's name (the *New York Times* was still spelling it *Meacham*); the BBC called the Arizona State University News Bureau for an interview on Mecham jokes; Mark Russell wrote my husband, who chaired the conference, to say that political satirists the world over were facing Arizona and bowing in gratitude for the wealth of new material; and the governor's office called ASU to see if any state funds had been used to support the conference.

Later, an academic discussion of Mecham jokes probably would have gone unnoticed because Mecham humor would soon make it to the big time. Two books of jokes were printed (DMH 1987; Siegel 1987), several national magazines carried articles that included jokes, and both "Sixty Minutes" and "Nightline" did features on the controversial nature of Mecham's governorship.

The theory that I discussed at the conference was one presented at the 1984 WHIM Conference by Robert F. Priest, a psychologist at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point. He spoke about his theory of MICH (Moderate Intergroup Conflict Humor), the conditions under which people will engage in hostile humor. According to his theory, hostile humor occurs only when there is a moderate level of tension between two groups. If there is no tension, the jokes will not seem funny. And if there is open and bitter conflict, then derogatory jokes are not strong enough to satisfy the feelings of hostility. Tellers will feel more frustrated than satisfied.

Priest applied his theory to sexist humor, which has existed for centuries. However, as the women's movement has gained force and hostilities have increased between men and women, many people no longer consider sexist humor to be funny. In certain situations, it is even illegal (1985, 207).

I applied the MICH theory to jokes about Governor Mecham and predicted that Arizonans would not continue to create and enjoy such jokes for

the four years of the governor's term in office. If political tensions decreased, then people would become bored with the jokes; if, on the other hand, tensions increased, the jokes would no longer serve as a satisfactory means of releasing tensions. As it turned out, Priest's theory of Moderate Intergroup Conflict Humor described exactly what happened. As opinion polls showed Arizonans becoming less and less satisfied with their governor's performance, the jokes became more and more hostile (Tolan 1987). By the time of the impeachment hearings for Mecham in March 1988, the matter had become so serious that few people were still laughing.

A statement by Phoenix writers Philip L. Harrison and Dan McGowan illustrates the changed attitudes. In the summer of 1987 Harrison and McGowan had published the first collection of Mecham jokes (DMH 1987), but in April 1988 they explained in the *Metro Phoenix* magazine why they weren't going to put out a second edition:

> . . . the jokesters are becoming acerbic, the jokes full of invective. For example:
>
> Mecham recently opened a housing subdivision called "Mecham Meadows." Grand opening prizes: free wigs for the first 500 adults, handguns for all the kids.

They concluded that the "sense of bemused bewilderment" characterizing the early jokes was gone, and now "the jokes — and Mecham — ain't all that funny anymore" (1988, 106).

At least one joke reflected Mecham's claim that his political troubles came from a hostile press:

> What do Mecham and an untrained puppy have in common?
>
> They both cringe at the sight of a newspaper.

But many of the jokes that circulated orally were too hostile and scatological to print in newspapers or put on public airwaves. They were honest examples of folk humor.

Four Arizona cartoonists — the most notable being Steve Benson, grandson of Ezra Taft Benson — did the best work of their careers about Evan Mecham. So did several columnists. John Kolbe from the *Phoenix Gazette* became famous when Governor Mecham first forbade him to attend press conferences and then on reconsideration said he could attend but that he was a "nonperson" and his questions wouldn't be acknowledged. This inspired dozens of comments and jokes about nonpersons. The following letter to the editor from Richard Lucero was published in the *Arizona Republic* on 14 March 1987: "I was wondering, since Gov. Evan Mecham has declared John Kolbe a non-person, and Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday a non-holiday, could he make me a non-minority?"

Radio disc jockeys and talk-show hosts were also instrumental in establishing an atmosphere in which it was fashionable to make fun of the governor. Right after Mecham's inauguration, a KZZP disc jockey amused his listeners with a funny "Mr. Ev" parody of the theme song from television's show about

the talking horse, Mr. Ed. A month later, he did a parody based on the rock group Dead or Alive's hit song, "What I really need to do is find a brand new lover." The parody went, "What we really need to do is find a brand new governor." On 12 February Toni Stanton started her daily radio show in Tucson by referring to Ev Mecham as "the Fred Astaire of Hoof and Mouth Disease." On 18 March KTAR in Phoenix took advantage of Mecham's complaint that he wasn't getting a fair shake in the public media by inviting people to phone in and say something good about the governor. Some listeners interpreted this as an invitation for humor. The funniest was the man who in a deadpan voice explained that he was a drug addict and was extremely grateful that Mecham was going to provide him with drugs. "How's that?" questioned the surprised host. "Why, haven't you heard his slogan?" responded the caller, "A Drug Free Arizona."

Mecham appointed as his education advisor a retired, conservative dairy farmer, who encouraged the State Education Committee to favor a bill requiring that creationism be taught alongside evolution in public schools. He was widely quoted for saying that teachers have "no business correcting students whose parents teach them the earth is flat" (*Time*, 9 March 1987, p. 42). A KOY disc jockey asked callers to phone in suggestions about what to put in Mecham-look-alike piñatas, which he was supposedly going to sell for nine dollars. One caller suggested that he add a two dollar charity tax to purchase flat globes for schools. That same day, College of Education faculty members at Arizona State University found in their mailboxes fake membership invitations from the Flat Earth Society.

The ease and speed with which such items can be created and photocopied is a factor that earlier politicians have not had to cope with. Anonymously written parodies photocopied and distributed throughout the state pyramid-style included a clever two-page rendition of " 'Twas the night before impeachment and all through the state . . ." and a "Dear Abby" column in which an anguished writer listed more problems than any one person could possibly have and then begged Abby to tell him if he has to confess to his fiancée that he is also related to Ev Mecham.

Bumber stickers sprouted like spring flowers:

> Mecham for EX governor.
> Martin Luther King had a dream. Arizona has a nightmare.
> Don't blame me. I voted for Carolyn.
> We'll all be gay when Mecham's recalled.
> Impecham!
> I'll take a urine test if Mecham will take an IQ test.
> God — Leave Oral and take Ev.
> Don't get mad! Get Evan!

One day after the impeachment vote, "Goodbye Mechey" stickers appeared illustrated with a drawing of Mecham in a Mickey Mouse hat, followed in a

couple of days with "Mofford ROSE to the occasion!" in honor of the new governor, Rose Mofford.

Some of the most hostile jokes about the governor were based on fill-in-the-blank patterns. For example, the name of any unpopular public figure could be written into this riddle:

> What would be the difference if ———— and a skunk were run over on the highway?
>
> There would be skid marks in front of the skunk!

The same pattern was used in this graffito, which appeared over toilet paper holders in restrooms: "Portrait of ————. Wipe to develop."

Philosopher Henri Bergson, in his 1911 essay "Laughter," wrote, "Laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughters, real or imaginary" (1987, 119). When people laughed at the Mecham jokes, they experienced a bonding with the joketellers against the governor. This pleasant feeling of amusement and complicity — even if remembered only on a subconscious level — could have made people more likely to sign recall petitions, which some 350,000 Arizonans did between July and November 1987.

A generous interpretation of the joking is that Arizonans were using it for what Bergson described as a "social corrective" for the "utilitarian aim of general improvement" (1987, 125). Through ridicule, they were trying to teach the governor and like-minded people that certain behaviors and attitudes were inappropriate. A less generous interpretation is that liberal, educated Arizonans, who for years had refrained from telling racist, ethnic, and sexist jokes, were so relieved to have a socially acceptable target for hostile humor — a white, arrogant male in a position of power — that they pulled out all stops and had great fun retooling and retelling old, hostile jokes.

At the 1987 WHIM conference, James Eiseman and Stephen Spangehl, from the Department of Communication at the University of Louisville, discussed "The Role of the Innocent in Television Situation Comedy Series." Their comments relate to ex-governor Mecham in some interesting ways. They talked about television's power to purvey the myths that reflect and influence American thinking and conjectured that sitcoms are so popular because they "present and validate our underlying beliefs in ways that are otherwise rarely articulated or discussed" (1988, 326).

One of these myths centers around the "Innocent" included in nearly every sitcom. The Innocent reinforces our desire to believe in the self-made individual who succeeds without education and our willingness to place enormous trust in those who speak honestly and "from the heart." Eiseman and Spangehl described these Innocents as "naive, simple, ingenuous, unsophisticated, natural, unaffected, guileless, and artless; they exhibit few traces of formal education, speak their minds frankly and openly, and understand what is said to them solely on the literal level" (1988, 326).

This is almost a perfect description of the way many of the Arizonans who chuckled over Mecham jokes viewed their governor. In the first few months of

his term, Mecham served as a real life icon for the kind of gentle fun usually associated with sitcoms. Mecham as a "Utah Mormon" could easily be added to Eiseman and Spangehl's description of the Innocent as outsider: Lisa, the city slicker in *Green Acres*; Radar, the Iowa farm boy in "M*A*S*H"; Woody, the Indiana hick in "Cheers"; Latka, the mechanic in "Taxi"; Mork, the alien in "Mork and Mindy"; and the Clampetts in "The Beverly Hillbillies."

According to Eiseman and Spangehl, a striking characteristic of Innocents is the way they interpret language in only a literal sense, an apt description of Mecham's response to the four-day vignette about his administration that Garry Trudeau drew for his "Doonesbury" strip in September 1987: "It's totally unfactual. There isn't any mirth in it" (*Mesa Tribune*, 1 Sept. 1987).

Two weeks after Mecham was criticized for telling a tourism group that when Japanese hear that Arizona has over 200 golf courses their eyes get round, he was still defending himself by saying that he hadn't insulted anyone because some Japanese, even in their own country, are having plastic surgery to get round eyes (Montini 1988).

This lack of understanding about language change and connotation is also what got him into trouble when he defended the use of the word "pickaninny" in Cleon Skousen's *The Making of America: The Substance and Meaning of the Constitution.* Mecham said that when he was growing up blacks themselves referred to their children as pickaninnies (*The Washington Times*, 27 April 1987, 49). This gave rise to the witticism, "*Pickaninny*: What we did for governor."

Another characteristic of Innocents is that what at first appears to be stupidity becomes in time "a sort of non-linear logic." Even after being made aware of how others perceive a situation, the Innocent "turns the information to a laughable connection surprising to everyone" (Eiseman and Spangehl 1988, 326). In Mecham's case, people seriously debated whether it was stupidity or just his far-right slant that made him see things in such unexpected ways. Nevertheless, a script writer could hardly have come up with better "laughable connections" than Mecham's statement to a Jewish group about America being a great Christian nation, or his denial of bigotry by saying that he has black friends and that he employs black people not because they're black, but because "they are the best people who applied for the cotton-picking job" (Hoggart 1987).

Phoenix was one of the scheduled stops for Pope John Paul's September 1987 visit. When Mecham was asked on his KTAR "Talk with the Governor" radio show what he was going to say to the Pope, he responded, "Golly, I don't know. I don't know whether he speaks English or not." This spawned the last joke that Arizonans truly laughed at:

> Did you hear what the Governor said to the Pope?
> "How's the little woman?"

As long as Arizonans were looking at Mecham as an Innocent, they interpreted his gaffes as they would one of Lucy Ricardo's or at worst, Archie Bunker's. And they clung to the sitcom myth that even though Innocents have

a striking inability to use language as others do, they are competent in their particular occupations. Evan Mecham must be a good businessman just as Howard Borden is a good navigator on "The Bob Newhart Show"; Woody is a good bartender on "Cheers"; Felix is a good photographer on "The Odd Couple"; Wojohowicz is a good police officer on "Barney Miller"; George Utley is a good handyman on "Newhart"; and Radar O'Reilly is a good company clerk on "M*A*S*H."

By the time of the impeachment hearings in the spring of 1988, many Arizonans no longer thought of Mecham as an Innocent. The Innocents in the sitcoms do not become defensive or aggressive. They are loved by viewers and other characters on the show because they tolerate differences in others and have a wisdom about human relationships that transcends their lack of sophistication. Innocents do not demand that everyone else become like them, or suggest driving Mack trucks through adult bookstores, or jab their fingers at reporters demanding that they never ask "for a true statement again!" (*Arizona Republic*, 30 Sept. 1987).

Nevertheless it was this view of Mecham as an Innocent — not in the legal sense, but in the sit-com sense — that his attorneys relied on for the spring 1988 trial in which Evan and his brother Willard were acquitted of criminal intent in concealing a $350,000 loan to his campaign fund. No one argued that the loan had not been concealed. Instead, the defense claimed that concealing the loan was a simple mistake made by a naive bookkeeper. The jury — and to a large part — the citizenry of Arizona bought the defense's portrait of Evan and Willard as innocents in a tainted world.

In the beginning, the jokes may have been Evan Mecham's nemesis, drawing attention to his faults while establishing a comraderie among his opponents. But in the end they may have been what saved him. As Cicero observed two thousand years ago, "People want criminals attacked with more forceful weapons than ridicule" (1987, 17). Since for over a year Evan Mecham had been closely tied in people's minds to jokes and ridicule, the prosecution had a difficult task trying to change the governor's image from that of bumbler to that of criminal.

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Cliff Dwellings

Dixie Partridge

Here, rock has a soft face
and wind moves above like spirit.
I listen down the long slant
of switchback trails, steps carved
where red rock accordions through the canyon.

Lodgepole ladders reach the base of the dwelling:
three stories in places, a hundred stone rooms.
Noon heat wavers from fire pits
of the opened kivas. Brief shadows
at a window, footfall
on the terrace stone.

Far beneath the overhang, where full light
never touches, the dark cool
of heavy shade: cupped imprints along walls
collecting ghost water, sudden rivulets
filtered from the green table.
Grains stored in the cool caverns.

Despite the cords that keep us
from all but a sampling, I move in
and in. The quiet ripens
when the hikers leave.
Anasazi women felt
safe here, giving birth: a new cry
echoing off cascades of stone,
stilling the men
at worship below in the kiva.

Silence leans
from the rock as I place my palm:
a hollow, round from grinding,
the flushed pulse
from the sandstone walls.

DIXIE PARTRIDGE lives in Richland, Washington. Her poems in this issue are part of Watermark, *the recently completed manuscript for her second book of poetry. Her first,* Deer in the Haystacks, *came out from Ahsahta Press in 1984. Her poems have appeared in many national and regional journals, and in several recent anthologies.*

Abandoned Farmyard, November

Dixie Partridge

Today I saw near a barn
the bed and crossbar of an old hayrack,
sunk into earth like the hull of a boat,
a dying thistle bloom grown out
from the soft mulch
of wood,

and I thought of winter
already deep into Wyoming,
my father dreading
and welcoming it, ample reason
to refuse all tasks, his ragged
pasture fences submerging
into snow.

I opened
for a cold wash of pain,
but my shoulders relaxed
in the late autumn sun; light deepened
into that startling place
where no one comes to visit.

Nothing Holy: A Different Perspective of Israel

Ehab Abunuwara

FOR THE FIRST NINETEEN YEARS OF MY LIFE I defined myself as a Christian-Palestinian-Israeli-Arab. I inherited this religious-racial-political affiliation in several ways. Culturally and linguistically I am an Arab. My family's Christian Arab lineage probably descends from the Christian Arab communities that have persisted in the Middle East since before the ascent of Islam. We have lived in the part of the Middle East called Palestine geographically and the Holy Land figuratively. When the state of Israel was established in 1948, Jewish armed forces conquered two-thirds of Palestine; a large group of Palestinian Arabs stayed in their villages and towns (including my home town of Nazareth), thereby becoming Israeli citizens. This group of Palestinians, now referred to as Israeli-Arabs, composes about 17 percent of Israel's population; Christians make up the same percentage of the Arab minority. This unique and rare situation has united the peoples of Israel in a system of frictions and pressures on one side and of cooperation and understanding on the other. I have achieved a wavering balance between these complex minority/majority relationships and conflicts that has allowed me a certain degree of satisfaction and identification with each.

Then, through a rare event, I came in contact with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I was not looking for a religious commitment, but when God began to answer my prayers, I knew I had heard the truth, and my commitment followed.

Now I added a new label to my self-definition — Latter-day Saint — and it dominated all the others. The gospel motivated me to become not just the best Palestinian or the best Christian, but the best human being I could be. Because I wanted all the good I saw in the gospel, I knew that I needed to redirect my life. I committed to change habits and customs, such as giving up coffee to obey the Word of Wisdom in a society where coffee is a must at the

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end of any kind of social gathering or visit. I had to leave Israel to enjoy the blessings of baptism and full membership in the priesthood. A mission to share my knowledge with others soon followed.

Seven years later, once again a resident of Israel, I am still trying to live the gospel. Living in Israel as a Latter-day Saint remains in itself a great challenge; but I recognize added challenges. As I began to interact with Church members, I found that we did not see eye to eye on political issues. This did not bother me at first because I respected each individual's right to personal political beliefs. I was surprised, however, to find that Mormons tended to associate their political and religious beliefs. I learned that for many Latter-day Saints, the impassioned stories of biblical power struggles learned in Sunday School are resurrected in twentieth-century conflicts unfolding in living color, complete with close-up reports, on the six o'clock news. The story of David and Goliath is reborn for them as the "small" Israeli army faces the "large" armies of the Arab nations. They see the face of Esther mirrored in the images of thousands of beautiful Jewish women serving in the Israeli army, and they read the fulfillment of prophecies about Armageddon and the gathering of Israel in the last days in the victories of the Zionist movement over the cries of Jihad from Moslem leaders. I was amazed to find that such biblical images represent the entire reality of modern Israel for many Latter-day Saints.

I have heard these beliefs expressed, often in a Church forum, by Church members who have either traveled to Israel or who have lived here for an extended period of time. On one occasion, a visitor to Israel gave a fireside speech to the local Church members. His talk was politically oriented and filled with praise for Israeli military power. I have long forgotten his actual words, but I still remember the resentment I felt at that meeting. This sort of blatant partisanship and militarism was not what I had expected from a spiritual leader. After the talk, people lined up to shake his hand. A friend wanted to take me to the stand to meet him. Still shocked from what I had just heard, I did not want to exchange greetings. Thinking that my reluctance was due to shyness, however, my friend kept encouraging me. It took me a few minutes to rethink my position and to accept the leader as a Church representative while acknowledging his remarks as purely personal beliefs. I wished fervently, though, that he had made those same clear distinctions.

I felt threatened by this association between religion and politics. Ironically, I had always feared exactly these kinds of dangerous attitudes among members of the Moslem faith. I have developed my own definite views over the years, based on my experiences and strong feelings of justice and fairness. My knowledge and understanding of the history and complexities of the Israeli-Arab conflict, although limited, justify my concern with what I see as an unfair partisanship.

A few months later, as I was attending my first semester at BYU, I took a religion class from a teacher who believed his political views were God-inspired. In preparation for a class discussion, he distributed copies of an article written by a Church member. I was surprised to find that the article discussed political rather than spiritual theories. I recognized the ideas from a

political science class I had taken a few months earlier in Israel and was familiar with the pros and cons of each theory. The article's arguments were based not on any significant spiritual references, but rather on political figures, such as a former CIA agent and late American president (whose names I cannot remember) who endorsed a socio-economic outlook that I could not accept, in spite of what my instructor said.

The class discussion quickly became a heated argument between the teacher and me. Shaking with anger, he accused me of being close to blasphemy. Though I shared my testimony and commitment to the Church before the class ended, I am sure that many students in that freshman class, who did not have the intellectual maturity to deal with what they had witnessed, were unnerved by the heated discussion. But I was not ready to compromise my beliefs for arguments offered without significant proof.

Another incident that disturbed me was an article I read in the 23 October 1984 BYU *Daily Universe* proposing that a person cannot be both a good Mormon and a Democrat. This crude mixing of church and politics prompted me to write a sarcastic response that was also published in the *Daily Universe* one week later.

The Church has made it clear that it does not identify itself with political parties. Still, some members manage to express their political views in a Church forum, feeling confident of a "spiritual" ratification. For example, an audiotape popular among missionaries, entitled "The Conversion of a Jew," relates the conversion experiences of an American Jew. In addition to faith-promoting experiences, the convert relates some of his political ideas and encourages his audience to use the word "Israel" instead of Palestine, implying the exclusion of Palestinians and their political aspirations in that area. I do not know who gave him the right to use a Church-sponsored activity dedicated to sharing beliefs in Christ to promote a political view. What would have happened if among the listeners there had been an investigator who did not agree with these political views?

An even more unfortunate experience occurred to me at the Missionary Training Center at the London Temple grounds, where I was preparing to serve in the England London Mission. To keep us occupied at night, the MTC president arranged for a series of speeches and lectures by local Church members. One speaker presented a slide show about the Holy Land, which he had visited a few times. Because I had been introduced to him as the missionary from Israel, I suspect he thought that I was a Jew, an understandable mistake that people often make when meeting someone from Israel.

During his presentation, the speaker made a point of denigrating Arabs. He looked my way frequently, somehow supposing that if I were a Jew, I was also an Arab-hater. One of his slides showed an Arab woman near a house. Because the slide revealed little detail, he gave extensive commentary. He told how his guide — also a Church member — took him to this house where for a small price the poor woman allowed them to photograph her humble surroundings. This good Church member described with condescension the woman's poverty, hinting that it represented the plight of all Arabs. I won-

dered how he had missed the many lavish Arab villas through the West Bank. I could only pity such an expression of moral bankruptcy. Of course he was entitled to his own beliefs, but I felt it inappropriate that he share them in such a forum.

This kind of one-legged expertise on the Middle East that comes from a trip or two to Israel seems to prevail even among more informed but biased Church members. One such "expert," Gerald N. Lund,[1] has written a popular book entitled *One in Thine Hand* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), whose shallow understanding is an outright insult to the Palestinians. I would have hoped for more from such a learned and devout man and from Deseret Book Company than this opinionated, biased, and unrealistic presentation. I realize the author is merely expressing his own beliefs, but I wish he had not used such a thoroughly Mormon wrapping.

In typical Hollywood fashion, the story itself is unrealistic, but this is not its main defect. Let me briefly explain one or two ideas from the book that bother me.

In the story, a young American LDS man, while flying to Israel for a visit, meets and befriends a young LDS Palestinian man. Once in Jerusalem, he also meets a young Jewish woman who runs the hotel where he is staying. During the course of the book, these three characters take part in breath-taking adventures against Palestinian terrorists and the Egyptian army. As expected, the American hero and the Israeli woman fall in love, and she experiences a conversion to the Mormon faith. While seeming to offer authoritative information and analysis of the Israeli experience, in truth the book contains subtle discrepancies throughout.

The book presents three different types of Palestinians: the bad, the poor, and the good. The bad are, of course, blood-thirsty terrorists who drop into the story from nowhere to kill and torture Jewish children and give the American hero his chance to prove his chivalry and honor. Through the words of the Palestinian character, the author implies that the Palestinian Liberation Organization is composed of subhuman "terrorists at heart," who not only hate Israel but are imposing their will over the Palestinian refuge camps as well (pp. 14, 15). He ignores the fact that the Palestinians have accepted the PLO as their sole representative.

The second character type is the poor Palestinians. Like the Jews, they suffer from the atrocities of the bad Palestinians. The father of the young Palestinian, who was killed by a bomb planted on a bus, belongs to this group.

Then we have a good Palestinian, a reformed terrorist who repents and returns to live in the occupied territories in friendship and love with the Israelis. This made-to-order Palestinian has been enlightened by the Western ethics of freedom, dignity, and basic rights but somehow has managed to convince himself (perhaps after listening to some Mormon's "inspired" political beliefs)

[1] Lund received his B.A. and M.S. degrees in sociology from Brigham Young University and did postgraduate work in New Testament and Hebrew at Pepperdine University and the University of Judaism in Los Angeles. He has worked extensively in the Church Education System, most recently as dean of their Lands and Scriptures workshop tour.

that they do not apply to his people, who live under oppressing occupation, deprived of freedom and rights. I see an underlying naive assumption in Lund's characterization of someone who is bringing education to his people to teach and enlighten them while ignoring their needs for freedom and self-respect. Lund's Palestinian sees education as an alternative to the PLO (p. 16) when in fact most PLO leaders are college educated. Palestinian resistance in the West Bank is centered among its educated and students; universities in the West Bank are regularly closed for months because its students have participated in demonstrations and acts of protest against the Israeli occupation.

The Jewish personalities in Lund's book are ideal role models: strong family members, military heroes, and compassionate businessmen. But this distortion of the Palestinian experience is just an appetizer to prepare the reader for the author's true attitude toward the Palestinian nation, expressed later in the book.

The conversion story of the young Jewish woman is the book's heart. After an initial period of learning and acceptance, she begins to have concerns. Why would the Savior die for her sins? It is a troubling idea she cannot comprehend. In an act of heroism and selflessness, the Palestinian hero rescues his American and Jewish friends from the Egyptian army and in the process loses his own life. This act helps the young Jewish woman understand the meaning of Christ's sacrifice.

The Palestinian dies so the Jew might be saved. Although I appreciate the element of sacrifice involved, I am uncomfortable at the casting. Certainly the Palestinian is presented as noble person, but this "solution" eliminates him from the plot. What if he were a black, sacrificing himself for two whites? Or a woman dying to save two men? As a Palestinian, I find the author's solution unacceptable, for I see this same solution being imposed on my people. Unfortunately, some fundamentalist Christians believe that the Middle East conflict would dissolve under a God-directed sacrifice of the Palestinian nation to bring the Jews to the knowledge of the Messiah (see Halsell 1986). Lund's analogy fits disturbingly well with such ideas, as do, I fear, the beliefs of many Latter-day Saints. With this scenario only the "good" Palestinians would understand the weight of the mission "inspired" Mormons have called upon them to perform.

The Israeli-Arab conflict can, however, be interpreted differently. I see the development of the conflict from a historically deterministic perspective, which to me seems more logical. The conflict has resulted from international developments that changed the whole world and specifically influenced the history of the Middle East. The Zionist movement was one of many nationalist movements that spread throughout Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Jews, who kept themselves distinct in nations where they lived (often, granted, because they were consistently rejected and persecuted by their fellow citizens), felt they had the right to be a nation, to have a home where their dream of security, freedom, and integrity could be secured. Their yearning for the Land of Promise was a mystic part of their worship, and Palestine became the logical choice for their homeland.

As the Zionist movement gained strength among the Jews, the spark of nationalism touched the Arabs as well, who had been under Turkish rule for four hundred dark years. The two movements clashed as the Jews began emigrating to Palestine after the First World War, aided and encouraged by Great Britain, to whose commonwealth Palestine belonged. The Balfour Declaration promising a British commitment for a Jewish homeland in Palestine alarmed the Arabs, who considered it another form of Western colonialism threatening their national independence. An armed struggle between the two movements was inevitable.

The formation of the state of Israel in 1948 brought on what the Palestinians refer to as the catastrophy. As the Zionist movement achieved its goal, the Palestinian national movement developed as a separate branch of Arab nationalism. For the next twenty years, the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries became institutionalized. Then following the Six Day War in 1967, the Palestine Liberation Organization emerged as the representative of the Palestinian national movement.

In 1978, Anwar Sadat surprised the world by extending peace offerings to Israel, resulting in the withdrawal of Israeli troops and citizens from Sinai and ushering in the beginning of Arab acceptance of a peaceful resolution to the problem. In light of the recent successes of international efforts to reconcile regional conflicts, peace in this region of the world seems possible. With too few leaders of vision like Sadat, the conflict has been allowed to continue for too long. The Palestinian leaders' moves to open a dialogue between the United States government and the PLO indicates a historical maturity similar to Sadat's.

The possibility of peace would be a devastating blow to Christian eschatologists who prefer to see this conflict as God-inspired, leading eventually to Armageddon and the return of the Savior. Such kingdom watchers, whose motto might be, "Blessed be the warmongers, for they will hasten the kingdom of God," could hinder American attempts to bring a just and enduring solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. I fear that many Latter-day Saints might be found among such a group.

The only theology I can relate to the conflict are the words of Christ in Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers"—who, sadly, are in the minority. The Israelis and Palestinians have been fighting for more than seventy years in one way or another, using every dark method of conventional warfare. To generalize about the situation after examining only a few separate incidents, as many Latter-day Saints do, does not show moral or political maturity. I would not be so troubled if Mormon attitudes were built on purely political considerations, though I might still question the morality of such considerations. I am used to being in the minority in my political views, even among my own family and Palestinian friends.

Some might claim that God somehow inspired the Zionist movement to bring the Jews to Palestine, an event prophesied by early Church leaders for the last days (see Young 1977, 121). Even if that assumption is correct, any survey of the historical events that followed concerning the Jews and Pales-

tinians, including the Jewish Holocaust in Europe, would only show how much unfortunate and demonic suffering the Jews have endured on one side and the Palestinians on the other. To imagine that the hand of God was behind such innocent suffering contradicts the basic tenets of Christianity. I find it difficult to believe that God has orchestrated the Jewish-Arab conflict during the last seventy years. It was political from the beginning and eventually will be settled politically. The land of Israel has been filled with so much hatred and so many atrocities from both sides that I do not feel comfortable calling it holy.

I might have been able to overlook this intermingling of politics and religion if I had not felt its damaging effect on the development and function of the Church in Israel. I do not wish to dispute the spiritual/inspirational authority of Church leaders who devote much of their attention to this land, but I feel that those leaders are influenced by general Mormon perceptions about Israel often gleaned from members who live in Israel or have some "expertise" about it. An increasing number of Palestinians have joined the Church abroad, and many have expressed to me their great resentment at this biased attitude of Church members, though most of their resentments are based on personal experiences outside Israel.

I have felt on many occasions that this one-sided attachment to the Jews in Israel indicates an ignorance of the internal structure of Israel itself. One Church member who has been a pioneer of the BYU Study Abroad program in Israel mentioned that she had lived many years in Israel before discovering the Palestinians and learning to understand them. The permanent directors of the BYU program in Israel were among the few who became aware of the need for interaction between Church members and the Palestinians and who showed genuine respect for the Palestinians. These good people took steps to initiate interaction between the Palestinians and BYU students. But the main problem remains beyond the reach of any BYU program.

I see little in the Church policies towards Israel to indicate a real consideration of the Palestinians. The Church's overzealous attachment to the Jews in Israel along with an oversimplified understanding of the situation in Israel have caused Church members to overlook the large population of Arab Christians in Israel who enjoy freedom of worship with no interference from the Jewish establishment. In addition, that same establishment has no legal or moral interest in interfering in the worship of a larger group of Christians and Moslems living in the occupied territories. Yet the Church has made no serious effort to share the gospel with this population or to build a strong relationship with them, in contrast to their many fruitless efforts with the Jews in Israel.

I found it ironic a few years ago when the Jerusalem branch had an open house for its newly renovated meeting place, "The Mormon House," that no Jewish friends attended. I am certain that Church members in Jerusalem invited many of them. At the same time, the few Palestinian friends from Bethlehem, whom the special representatives of the Church in Jerusalem have befriended, came. The friendships that members have made with the Jews have been political and businesslike, unlikely to lead to spiritual sharing. These

relationships have developed and thrived because of Church involvement with projects like the Orson Hyde Garden on the Mount of Olives and the BYU Jerusalem Center, which is itself an end-product of such relations.

For many years, planning for the Center proceeded smoothly because of close political connections between Israeli officials and Church members inside and outside Israel. Real opposition did not surface until construction of the building itself was in process during the summer of 1985, when ultra-orthodox Jews and some semi-fascist groups discovered the building and mobilized their members to protest. When they found that legally their actions came late, they tried to mobilize their political power through governmental intervention. After the initial shock from the unexpected attack on the Center, BYU officials and the Church organized to counteract the opposition with political action.

In May 1988 the Church won in the political arena, but not in the spiritual one. To continue using its BYU Center, the Church had to promise to limit its use. To ensure that the BYU Center not be used as a center for proselyting, a joint committee of BYU personnel and Israeli officials was formed to supervise any public events taking place at the Center. In addition, students attending the center must now sign an agreement committing to refrain from missionary work during their stay in Israel. This general and seemingly forward restriction has caused a kind of paranoia among the students and the local members, who fear that any uncautious statement or act might be interpreted as missionary work and thereby jeopardize the Center and the Church's relaship with the Israeli government. Consequently, the Center is becoming an "ivory tower," used mainly by young LDS American students with minimal interest in the lives of the peoples of the Middle East. They enjoy an intensive few months and a "spiritual trip" in the land they call "holy," with all the added tourist attractions.

During the past year, students have also been able to observe daily, from the elevated security of the Center's gardened terraces, their Palestinian neighbors across the street battling with stones against the Israeli soldiers. White clouds of tear gas often blur such views. These unfortunate events bring the students face to face with the realities of the conflict.

Thus, the Church's political victory has come at a cost. The Church and its friends are now indebted to the Israeli officials and Jewish personalities who helped them. The Center has become part of a political bargain; any wrong move could jeopardize its future.

In all the Church's activities and plans in Israel, I discern no real awareness of the special needs or potential of the Palestinian population. A few miles to the north and south of Jerusalem are two Arab cities with large populations of Christians and university campuses. For a small portion of the money invested in the grand Jerusalem Center, a project in either town for academic and social activities would have brought the Church close to the homes of hundreds of Christian families and would have given Mormon young people an opportunity for cultural, spiritual, and political experiences. Yet in light of metaphysical connections between politics and religious views, such a project could never have been conceived.

At one time the Church had several special representatives in Israel, older couples called on special missions to help local members and to develop friendships with Israelis. Because of the loving efforts of one of those couples, I am now a member of the Church. But these representatives have been withdrawn from Israel to ease any Jewish concern about missionary activity. In addition, two Palestinians who are not Israeli citizens have been denied permission for baptism. The first, from the Gaza Strip, was attending BYU at the time of the denial, in the fall of 1985. He later moved from Utah, and I lost contact with him. The other man lives in Bethlehem and has been in contact with Church members in Jerusalem since 1982. On his own, he has read and translated large portions of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants into Arabic for his own study. In fall of 1988 he visited his brother in Honduras to search for work and while there received the formal missionary discussions. He intended to be baptized in Salt Lake City while visiting friends who had served as representatives of the Church in Jerusalem. His baptism was not authorized because he was returning to Bethlehem.

According to Brigham Young, the Jews "will be the last of all the seed of Abraham to have the privilege of receiving the New and Everlasting Covenant. You may hand out to them gold, you may feed and clothe them, but it is impossible to convert the Jews, until the Lord God Almighty does it" (1977, 121). I am afraid that Latter-day Saints have surrendered to the Jews more than material things by their irrational fascination with Israel and their distorted understanding of the meaning of "Chosen People."

Should the Church not pay equal attention to the other seed of Abraham, of whom there is no such gloomy prediction? My love and concern for this seed have prompted me to write these words. I hope that no one will accuse me of being anti-Jewish. I have no reason to dislike the Jews or to favor them as a nation. I believe that both feelings originate from the same notion of anti-Semitism that refuses to see the Jews as a normal nation. I live with them on a day-to-day basis, and I see them just as I see the Americans with whom I lived for three years or the British with whom I lived for two. We are all offspring of the same God; any perceptions of superiority or inferiority originate in the human mind, not in God's mind.

I feel great love and friendship for the Church members I have known in Israel, and I do not wish to criticize them. My own conversion would not have been possible without the love and support that I received from members of the Church in and outside Israel. What I wish to criticize are the attitudes towards Israel that have developed among Church members. The development of the Church in Israel has been greatly affected by the planning and construction of the BYU Center. Unfortunately, because its use is watched and restricted, the Church's future growth in Israel and among the Palestinians looks bleaker than before.

For the good of the kingdom of God on earth, I invite all Latter-day Saints to reconsider and re-evaluate their attitudes toward the peoples of this land. On numerous occasions, Spencer W. Kimball stressed the need to be ready so the Lord will open the necessary doors to build the Church and proclaim the

truth. Evidently we were never ready when it came to the Palestinian doors.

Throughout this article I have expressed the frustration and disappointment I feel every time I think of my past experiences or of the current status of the Church in Israel. It is these feelings that have prompted me to write this essay. Fortunately, recent developments in the international arena toward peaceful solutions to regional conflicts, including the Middle East, allow me to end this article on an optimistic note. The land on which the BYU Center is constructed is part of East Jerusalem, which consists of the old city and a number of Palestinian neighborhoods outside its walls. These areas were occupied after the Six Day War and later annexed by Israel, though most of its inhabitants refused to accept Israeli citizenship. The international community also refused to accept this unilateral Israeli action, considering it to contradict international law. According to Israeli law, the land was later confiscated from its Palestinian owners, who never recognized the Israeli action. Any future settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must offer a change in the status of East Jerusalem acceptable to both sides. Under these circumstances Israel could lose its sole control over the Center, and the Church might find a more friendly host in a future Palestinian entity. Recent progress by the Church in neighboring Jordan is heartening and indicates that the Church is open for all races and nationalities. Sincere reappraisal and consideration could result in a similar relationship with the Palestinians.

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Obviously Arthur

Dian Saderup

"YOU ARE A MAMMAL, AND SO IS A RABBIT." This bit of wisdom is contained in the introduction to *Enjoy Your Rabbit*. The book further explains that consequently a rabbit has more in common with a human than does, say, an alligator. I looked at the gray mound on my kitchen table. Its nose had a perpetual twitch, its ears were pink antennas, and its tail was the best evidence I had ever encountered that even God, creator of heaven and earth, couldn't resist a cute idea. It was quite plain, even to my untrained eye, that no one would ever mistake this creature for an alligator. I was soon to discover, however, that the line between one species of mammal and another can become, well, blurred.

I had bought my rabbit three hours earlier at the American Fork Training School. When I entered the 4-H barn I'd found a high school girl, two mentally handicapped boys, and about a hundred cages of big rabbits, baby rabbits, and every other kind of rabbit. I had had rabbits on my mind for quite some time because I had been sad for a number of weeks. Whenever I get sad I begin to think about rabbits. I attribute this to a bout of melancholia I suffered as a young girl. A member of my ward brought me a rabbit to cheer me up, and it did. Since then, whenever a glum mood besets me, a host of rabbits is not far behind. They hop endlessly in and out of my consciousness like soft balloons rising into a slate sky. I mentioned this to a friend once, and she suggested I had a "fixation" and should seek professional counseling. I considered her advice and concluded that what we all needed was not fewer rabbits, but fewer psychologists helping people get over rabbits.

When I told the girl at the 4-H barn what I wanted, she said, "Oh yeah, you called. Don put a couple back here for you to choose from." I wondered how it was possible to be surrounded by so many rabbits and still sound as bored as she did. The girl showed me to a cage that held two adolescent rabbits, rocketing around their enclosure.

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"Do I have to pick one of these?" I asked.

"That's just what Don told me. Something wrong with them, or what?"

"No. They're fine rabbits, I'm sure. It's just . . . er, neither one is the rabbit I need." I didn't know how to explain myself. It was a matter of the heart.

One of the handicapped youths said, "They all taste the same once you put 'em in the pot. Ha ha. They all taste the same, don't they Julie?"

I was horrified when I looked around at the hundreds of rabbits in the huge barn and realized there weren't enough people in the whole state of Utah who'd want them as pets. And I had thought the school raised rabbits because they liked them!

"Can I please look around at some of these other ones?" I asked anxiously. "It can't hurt if I get one of them instead, can it?"

"I just know what Don told me."

"Well, can't you call Don?" I felt certain the rabbit I wanted was somewhere in that barn; if it wasn't my three dollars, it would be somebody else's.

She shrugged and said, "I'll see what I can do," then walked away.

I wandered down the long center aisle of cages. There were mother rabbits with newborns. There were toddler rabbits. There were bucks. There were white ones, brown ones, ones with black spots ringing their eyes. There were dwarfs and giants. Then I saw him. In a cage with eight other toddlers and a doe. His brothers and sisters were all in a restless heap in one corner of the cage. He was lying across from them, perfectly still. He was gray and looked small enough to fit cupped in my palms. I began to feel very excited. Out of the millions, maybe even billions, of rabbits in the world, I had found the one meant for me. It was quite miraculous. Some people never in their whole lives get so lucky as to find the one creature meant just for them.

Julie returned. "Don says you can have any of the babies along this row, as long as it's a male."

"Would you please check this cage?" I asked, afraid to betray my specific hope.

She went through the heap. "Male, male, female, male, female, female, female, female."

"Could you check this one?"

She picked him up. "Male."

"That's him. Could I please buy that one?" My voice almost trembled.

"Okay."

I fumbled in my pocket for my three dollars. She handed me my rabbit.

That afternoon I alternately read *Enjoy Your Rabbit* and looked at my new pet. The book told me that rabbits could be "easily" housetrained and that because of this and their attractive personalities, they were "rapidly approaching dogs and cats in popularity in the everyday American household." My phone rang. It was a girlfriend to whom I had never confided my fixation.

"I got a new pet."

"I thought your landlord didn't allow dogs or cats."

Clearly, she had never read *Enjoy Your Rabbit*. My landlord was similarly naive. "It's not a dog or a cat."

"What is it? A fish?"

"A rabbit."

Laugh. Laugh, laugh.

From that day forward I have repeatedly observed that the surest way to evoke laughter in even the most dour of individuals is to tell them you have a pet rabbit. The very word *rabbit* seems to be fixed in the guffaw-cough-ho-ho department of our collective unconscious. Have you ever heard anybody giggle at an alligator? At a housefly even? I am convinced that 99 percent of all people do not take rabbits seriously. Historically speaking, the miracle is not that Noah built the ark, but that he included my pet's forebears in its cargo.

"What could have possessed you to get a rabbit?"

"I guess the Holy Ghost."

She regaled herself with that one. Just the Sunday before, in testimony meeting, a man had told the congregation that when he'd needed a car for his sales work, the Lord had directed him to an ad in the *Daily Herald*. Within two hours this person had become the owner of a '76 Ford Pinto, complete with air conditioning, the whole thing costing less than $350. I thought it was difficult to say where God's hand was or wasn't at any given time, but if by chance he was into finding inexpensive automobiles for needy salesmen, it seemed he wouldn't begrudge locating a three-dollar rabbit for a melancholy mammal.

"Have you named it?" she asked, twittering.

I had not. I looked at my rabbit in his wire cage on the center of the table. Though he was only an infant, he was calm and dignified and sat motionless, his white chin resting on his two front paws. His eyes were gray and deep. His name obviously was Arthur.

I told her this.

To mention her response would be redundant. We soon hung up.

At the time I got Arthur, I lived in a studio apartment in the upper story of an old house. In my room I had a double bed that did not hide away into a couch, a chest of drawers, a single table for eating and working, a small refrigerator, and a cabinet with a miniature sink and one gas burner. The floor was carpeted. I gave Arthur dominion over the one tabletop in our quarters; his cage became an Eden surrounded by an expanse of *Daily Heralds*.

After reading *Enjoy Your Rabbit* I was confident that this arrangement would soon be obsolete anyhow. All a rabbit keeper had to do was let his charge loose a few times, and it would naturally choose a spot to do its business. It would return to that spot henceforth and forever, despite the intrusion of a plastic pan filled with sand. When I let Arthur out to play on the floor for the first time, he immediately emptied his bladder in the center of the room. I wasn't particularly keen on the idea of a rabbit toilet in the middle of my small living area, but I supposed if it had to be there we'd learn to live with it. Arthur explored his new home while I scrubbed the carpet with a bucket of water and Lysol. He sniffed my hands and wrists. He perched himself on his hind feet to examine the contents of my bucket but couldn't quite see over the top. He nuzzled the sweater I'd discarded on the floor.

Suddenly he leapt a foot into the air, made a ninety-degree turn, landed, and in astonishing bursts of flight, zigzagged around the entire circumference of the room. I dropped my scrub brush to watch. When he was done, he casually resumed his study of my discarded sweater, then turned around upon it, and emptied his bladder again. (The author of *EYR* apparently hadn't interviewed Arthur when he had conducted his research.) My pet seemed satisfied with this demonstration and now settled himself on the floor. He sat utterly still, his ears two tiny billowed sails forming a V above his gray head. I was content just to stare.

That night in the dark, I could hear him stirring about his cage: his paws on the wire floor when he hopped; his nose when he sneezed (which he did fairly often); his teeth when he chewed his alfalfa pellets; his tongue as it lapped his water; and, his pee when it hit the newspapers. Each of his rabbit sounds was equally comforting to me, and I fell asleep listening to them.

Arthur and I quickly fell into a normal living routine. Whenever I left the apartment, I took him with me if possible. I had a large straw handbag for my schoolbooks that I converted into a discreet rabbit carrier — I saw no need to advertise Arthur's presence in places like the grocery store, for instance. I did learn quite soon, however, that it would not be possible to take Arthur everywhere. I hadn't been studying more than ten minutes at the Brigham Young University library when he decided to conduct an investigation of his own. I'd set the bag on my lap and was petting him as I read an English lit text. He insisted on climbing onto the table. Several patrons walked by and laughed loudly (what else?). I put him under the table and tried to hold him in place with one foot while petting his back with the other. He was more interested in the stacks than in my Nikes.

Then I made my second mistake of the day. I read ten lines of Walter Scott. When I looked down, Arthur was nowhere. Alarmed, I searched the row of tables where I had been sitting and checked the aisles of the stacks as well. It was no good. Frustrated, I crawled from table to table to see if he'd stowed himself beneath the feet of some unsuspecting student. "Excuse me," I said when my head knocked a book from the edge of one table onto the floor, "I don't suppose you've seen anything unusual in the past two minutes?" The student simply stared. I grimaced and quickly continued on, scanning every inch of floor space. For the first time I could see the advantages of owning an alligator. It would hardly fit in a handbag, and even if it did it was highly unlikely to become lost in a library. An alligator had a way of making its presence known. Arthur, at least at this moment, seemed content with anonymity.

Yet I was to discover many times in the coming weeks and months that it wasn't really anonymity Arthur loved but a stimulating game of hide-and-seek. For example, about six months after the library incident, when he was full-grown and I had made him a little fenced area outdoors, he chewed through the pickets and escaped one evening. I found this out at midnight when I went to check on him before retiring. For thirty minutes I crept barefoot, in my nightgown, through the front and back yards of all my neighbors, loudly whispering, "Arthur. Here, Arthur." When I finally acknowledged defeat,

my flashlight dangling uselessly by my side, I felt the warm wetness of his nose on my ankle and turned around to see my pet nestling into a self-satisfied ball on the lawn. This scene repeated itself twice in as many nights.

But I am getting ahead of myself. That day in the library, Arthur was hardly more than an infant, and I had not yet come to know his ways. So there I was apologetically crawling past scholars, lovers, and every other manner of creature apt to be found in the seclusion of a library but still unable to locate the one creature there who was not apt to be so found. Eventually I emerged in an open area with four large tables. The occupants looked at me as I passed. Then suddenly they began to giggle. I gingerly craned my head to scan the entire scene. There was Arthur, six inches behind my feet, settling into the sphinx position. He had the nerve to yawn.

The following Saturday I carted my rabbit to a Relief Society Homemaking meeting. He seemed sleepy and tractable enough, and besides I was feeling a bit glum. While one sister carefully explained how to make an adorable tube sock (function unknown), I let my eyes droop. As if on cue, another woman suddenly exclaimed, "She's got a rabbit in her purse!" Jolted, I clutched the carryall to my bosom. My pet peered over the top directly into my face.

I smiled at the sisters. "Yes, I do, don't I."

Despite the teacher's pleading, the class was unable to concentrate on tube socks for the greater part of five minutes. This episode, following hard upon the library incident, convinced me that Arthur's place was, most likely, in the home.

This doesn't mean he stayed there all the time. When outdoor activities came up, he always went along. I took him camping up North Fork Canyon with me and three friends. With a thirty-pound pack on my back and Arthur's cage cutting into my thighs in front, the stepping stones of the river we crossed were especially formidable. I took him to the driving range when I went to practice golf three times a week. With my clubs slung over one shoulder, a canteen hooked to my belt, two buckets of balls in one hand, and a rabbit carryall in the other, I was as heavily laden as a camel among a party of rich Bedouins. Arthur wore a red collar. When we went golfing, I attached a long, frayed rope to it and tied him to a fence. My pet enjoyed nibbling on the high grass next to the fence where the mower couldn't reach and making sudden sporadic forays onto the wider green, stabbing this way and that, kicking his heels and wheeling his hindquarters in sharp horizontal arcs through the air. I kept a strict watch on him, though: the boy driving the mechanical ball scooper-upper liked watching golf better than he liked watching where he was going.

This brings me to another point. As my fondness for Arthur grew weekly, daily, hourly, I began to fear for his safety. Mammals can be terribly fragile, and rabbits are no exception. In fact, I suspect they lead the whole pack. My first rabbit had lived with me for only six months when one day he began acting sickly and twelve hours later died. When I took Arthur as a toddler to a church picnic and tied his rope to a tree where his presence could be enjoyed

by all, I left him unattended for a few minutes while I crossed the lawn to chat with a friend. Glancing his way a few moments later, I saw the bishop's four-year-old son swinging him by the neck at the end of his rope, like a lasso. I screamed and raced to Arthur's side as other ward members, alerted by my cries, converged on the spot.

By that time, I had already discovered Arthur's fascination with electrical cords. When released from his cage, his general habit was to urinate, then go immediately to the nearest light cord and begin chewing on it. I tried buying wide masking tape to seal all cords against the walls, but inevitably he would find that inch-and-a-half length of exposed cord that stuck out to accommodate the plug.

Once, after the nearly full-grown Arthur had discovered how to unlatch his cage, a thud woke me in the early morning hours. Normally, I sleep so soundly a brontosaurus passing through my bedroom wouldn't wake me, but somewhere in my sleepbound consciousness that thud registered itself as significant. I awoke instantaneously. Arthur was sprawled on the floor — stunned — having leapt from his cage on the table. It became obvious to me that a young rabbit, if not injured through human mishap or error, would, some way or another, compensate for this omission on his own.

I hefted Arthur from the floor and crawled back under my covers to curl up with him at my side. He peed. (Someday I'd like very much to speak with the author of *EYR.*) Hopelessly awake, I then stripped the sheets from my bed and pondered the perils of rabbit raising. Arthur was a robust rabbit, having grown stronger and bigger with each passing week. When I'd first gotten him, he was barely five inches long and weighed twenty-one ounces. By the end of summer, he was nearly two feet when he stretched full length and weighed over twelve pounds. His fur was pale gray around his face and shoulders but darkened to a deeper gray on his back. His stomach and paws were white, and so was the fur under his chin.

When he would wash his face and his delicately shaded pink ears, he'd sit up on his flat hind feet, lick his front paws, and rub them over the area needing cleaning, like a cat. He'd bat his ears down to bathe them, invariably fastidious about every inch of his appearance. His round white stomach was a pouch that rested on his big back feet whenever he sat up like this. I thought that his underside with all its roundness and white fur looked like the belly of a very small polar bear. And now the peril: in a mortal world such perfection is as transitory as the seasons. It reaches a zenith then is obliged to decline, if not cut off outright by the vagaries of chance. Infirmity (or worse!) is the final reality, beauty and vigor the initial illusion. Change and decay in all around I see. . . . It was all rather grim stuff.

Not long after this moody meditation, Arthur stopped eating his alfalfa pellets. I had just bought him a new sackload. Two days passed. He didn't consume a one, though he seemed reasonably perky. The afternoon of the second day I went to my English grammar class. When the lecture was over, I looked at my notes. The top of the page was marked: GERUNDS. Beneath this declaration were pencil sketches of rabbits: a rabbit on his haunches, a

rabbit on its side, two rabbits asleep, one rabbit eating. I pulled on my sweater and hurried out of the building. My rabbit wasn't eating.

Overhead, the sky was boiling with black clouds. As I bent my way homeward, huge drops of rain splashed my forehead and sandaled feet. There was an age when men read portents in the sky and omens in the roar of the elements. When Jesus died there were earthquakes, and the sun refused its shining. By the time I reached our house, my worst fears had bloomed into demons. I took the stairs two at a time. When I opened Arthur's cage, he didn't jump up and press his nose into my palm for pats. He just lay there. It was a Friday afternoon. The only vet I trusted — the one my mother took her three cats and dog to — was in Salt Lake City, an hour's drive away. When I called, the receptionist said if I had a lethargic rabbit who wasn't eating I'd better bring him in. The clinic would be open for another hour and fifteen minutes, then would close for the weekend.

In those days I drove a red '66 Mustang convertible that I'd named Jack. I'd had Jack's top down all week. When I raced out to the driveway, the seats and carpet were already soaked by the downpour. I hauled the convertible top out of its fold-away bed behind the back seat and tried to latch it into position above the windshield. The white vinyl had shrunk from that afternoon's sharp temperature drop. For five minutes I umphed and humphed without success. My hands got raw from trying. I knocked at my neighbors' houses on either side and across the street. Nobody was home to help. Just down the road was the social security office. I ran and found an elderly man leaning against the wall of the building, taking cover from the storm under an overhang. He was trying to light a cigarette. His thin cold hands could hardly hold the match.

"Excuse me," I called, "could you help me a minute? My rabbit's sick and I've got to take him to the vet in Salt Lake and my car's top is down and I can't get it to stay up because I'm not strong enough by myself and I need somebody to help me do it. I know it's raining but the vet's going to go home in an hour and I hate to ask you to do this but could you please come hurry and help me?"

He dropped his match onto the wet cement. The cigarette dangled from his bottom lip. "Sick rabbit, you say? Oh, I don't know what I can do, but I figure I can get a sick rabbit out of a locked car. Got a coat hanger?"

I grabbed hold of his thin shirt sleeve and pulled him along after me. We worked on Jack's top for another five minutes, me pulling, him tugging. He was huffing so hard his unlit cigarette dropped from his lips. The forces above were heaving water down on us by the tubful. My anxiety escalated to near panic. Why wasn't I like those mothers who, when seized by adrenalin, could lift a station wagon off a child? Where was the strong arm of the Lord when I needed it?

In a General Motors Gremlin heading up the street. I saw the car, and without thinking ran into the road, my arms two frantic flags above my head. The driver stopped. He looked like a university student and was wearing a tie: an angel incognito. I looked like I had just crossed Niagara Falls. On foot.

I would hate to have to tell those two Samaritans that all their efforts, in the end, were for nothing more significant than a sack of alfalfa pellets. You see, we latched the roof. I drove to the animal hospital. The vet was somewhat mystified. He could find nothing whatsoever wrong with my rabbit. He told me to buy Arthur some spinach as a dietary supplement. I did so forthwith. Arthur consumed a half pound of spinach in less than ten minutes. It was then I suspected the pellets. I'd bought a new brand precisely when Arthur had stopped eating. When I picked up some Pillsbury's Best Feed the day after our visit to the vet, Arthur ravished an entire bowlful. I have always said that I would rather starve than eat mayonnaise. Apparently I had transferred some of that same general disposition to my pet. It was a revelation to me that I could live so intimately with a rabbit for four months and not know there were causes for which he would waste away.

But then I was beginning to suspect there were lots of things I didn't know about this creature who had come to inhabit my heart as well as my house. Just being the steward of a mammal doesn't give you absolute access into the secrets of its soul. Even an amphibian such as a frog is — in some fashion — the final sovereign of itself, the keeper of whatever mysterious matter marks it as individual. If two hundred sparrows fell as a flock from heaven, God would still be constrained to note the occurrence in two hundred separate journal entries. I suppose that when Arthur had grown too big for his cage on the kitchen table and I had commissioned my father to build him a hutch for out-of-doors, I was not only saving my carpet from ruination but acknowledging my rabbit's own individuality and ultimate independence from me. Ours were two distinct personalities.

And I was under the distinct impression that Arthur's was a personality that wasn't saying everything it knew. He had the appearance of a sage. When he slept, his tiny black eyelashes would only droop halfway shut, and his antennas would each be cocked in a different direction — eyes that saw and ears that heard, even while at rest. His mouth, which you could only see from underneath him, would be absolutely sober, a firm inverted U. I am convinced that in his heart of hearts, despite his natural playfulness, Arthur always retained an uncommon sense of personal dignity.

Once, just prior to his move outdoors, I sat watching him drift toward sleep. He was positioned exactly like the sphinx, that ancient repository of secrets, when his head began to droop to one side. Further and further it drooped, as my mother's had long ago in church when, as the organist for our congregation, she had sat next to the bishop and had fallen asleep, her head eventually dropping onto his shoulder. When Arthur's head finally nodded against the floor of his cage, like my mother, he jolted awake — quite aghast — and hurriedly mustered his body into a more dignified posture.

One may say this merely shows us that Arthur, like most mammals, possessed an ego. Undeniably so. Nevertheless, it was when he was resting, upright or otherwise, that I felt most certain the wisdom of the ages was locked somewhere inside his silent, perfect form. He was the embodiment of some-

thing bigger than a bunny, though I would have been hard pressed to say just what. Whenever I tried to express this belief to friends, I came out sounding like one of those people who think the secret of the universe can be found in a pebble. I didn't bring up the subject very often.

But I pondered it when I was alone. The night of a lunar eclipse, I was out on my porch for several hours watching the progress of the earth's shadow across the moon. When the eclipse reached totality, the moon — instead of looking, as it usually did, like a luminescent cutout taped to the black sky — suddenly leapt into three-dimensionality. It resembled a large orange Christmas ornament hung upon the expansive limbs of space. For the first time in my life I became aware of the universe not just as a vague infinitude, but as an infinitude of relationships between actual objects — planets, moons, stars. Everything that *was* had a specific place to be.

It was then that Arthur, whose hutch sat across the lawn from me, began drinking from his Rabbit Oasis, his tongue jangling the ball bearing at the end of the spout. I couldn't see him but could only hear the sound of his tiny tongue on the metal ball. He was drinking because he was thirsty. He was thirsty because his body was working as it should. He was a rabbit living in his rabbit house in the backyard of a hundred-year-old home in Provo, Utah, the North American continent. The three-dimensional moon was in its place. Arthur was in his place. The moon was revolving around the earth as it should. Arthur was drinking as he should. All of us were located at specific points in a colossal cosmic design.

I can't explain why I should have felt so comforted by the sound of a three-dollar rabbit drinking from a five-dollar Rabbit Oasis bought at Hailstone Pet Store. That my rabbit should be, and that he should be — like most everything else in creation — in his appointed sphere, seemed to me a great and greatly reassuring mystery. That's all. Maybe it wasn't that Arthur knew so much but that through him I knew so much. Maybe that's why I thought he seemed to hold some ancient secret. Or maybe he really did.

This lofty speculation is far removed from the everyday reality of pee. Within a week of my acquiring him, my pet had proven *EYR*'s optimism on the housetrainability of rabbits insupportable to the point of absurdity. When let out of his cage, Arthur not only failed to choose a single spot in our apartment for the voiding of urine, he selected — with unaffected nonchalance — as many points as possible for this activity. Any kind of motion at all on his part — whether crossing the room, hopping onto my bed, or taking up residence under the table — seemed to trip off some primitive mechanism within him associated with the making of water. When he finally moved outdoors, though I would miss his constant presence, I would not miss the constant smell of Mr. Clean.

Then I had a great idea. I don't know why it hadn't occurred to me sooner. My next visit to Albertson's supermarket was momentous: I planned to examine the relative merits of Pampers and Kimbies. I soon selected Kimbies as the superlative, accident-free diaper due to its gathered legs. Kimbies came in three sizes: newborn, infant, and toddler. Though I knew Arthur was

large for a rabbit, it didn't occur to me that he could be larger than a newborn human, so I bought the smallest size. I might just as well have tried to diaper a dinosaur with a dishtowel. I tried the next size up. Another $3.75 — piff — gone. When I finally bought the toddler Kimbies, it was with deep apprehension: I couldn't imagine my pet's hindquarters were as large as a child's "two years or over," but then again what if they were?

The diaper fit perfectly. For a full minute after fastening it on him I was ecstatic. Though he would live in his big new hutch, Arthur could still come indoors, without any unpleasant consequences, when we liked. I set him on the floor. Then, when he began to hop wearing the cumbersome item, I did an inconsiderate thing. I laughed. It was really entirely impossible not to, though I realize that is no excuse. Perhaps that is why my plan failed so quickly. Arthur sensed his dignity was being impinged upon and would have none of it. It took him scarcely thirty seconds to disengage the offending article. There was no keeping it on him. I ended up using the thirty-six variously sized diapers as dustcloths, dishtowels, pillow stuffing, packing filler for breakables, and, a year later when we moved from the place, blotters for icebox melt when I defrosted the refrigerator. Even then, I still had thirteen left over.

So Arthur moved out into the lone and dreary world, permanently. Neither of us was entirely pleased with this arrangement, but by this time he had grown so large that his, ahem, problem could be effectively managed no other way, Mr. Clean notwithstanding. That's when I constructed the fence. If he wasn't going to have as much company as he was used to, he might as well have more freedom. As earlier explained, he readily found a way to thwart the enclosure by burrowing under the pickets or chewing through them. I plugged the holes he made with rocks, and, when I ran out of those, with big #2 cans of peaches or pork and beans. The fence became a monument not only to his cunning but to my ingenuity.

I kept him in his hutch when I wasn't home, but even when I was I couldn't keep a watch on him every minute. One evening after he had escaped his yard, he failed to come to my calls. After an hour's searching I could find him under none of his favorite bushes. He had never carried a game of hide-and-seek to this extreme — he was too fond of my affection and the wilted lettuce leaves I brought as presents. I began to be worried. I looked for nearly two hours. When I went to bed that night, it was the first time I had done so without knowing where he was. I told myself he would turn up by morning, ready for his broccoli to start the day. Broccoli was his second favorite food.

But morning came, and Arthur did not. I worried myself at school until 1:00 P.M., then came home and ransacked every plot of foliage in the neighborhood. Another evening went by and still I did not know my rabbit's whereabouts. When I told a friend on the phone about Arthur's disappearance, he said, "No way he could still be alive with all the dogs and cats around. Might as well go and get another one right now." I suppose had my friend a hundred sheep and should lose one of them, he'd be content with the ninety and nine. The next morning I embarked on a still more ambitious campaign, going up

and down the streets in our neighborhood, knocking on doors, inquiring if anybody had seen my missing mammal. By this time, though, I was so heavy-hearted my veins seemed to run with cement. If I didn't find him soon, I would have to take to my bed.

I came to one yard with a man in a wheelchair and another man sitting by him on the lawn.

"Excuse me," I said, "I was wondering if by any chance you've seen a big gray rabbit." I waited for the usual, No, sorry.

"Big gray rabbit?" the one who wasn't in the wheelchair said. "Yeah, I seen a big gray rabbit this morning — a great big honking sucker." People had always been impressed with Arthur's size.

"You have!? Where was he?"

"On the road to Edgemont." Edgemont was at least four miles from where we lived. For Arthur to have gotten there in three days, he would have had to make a beeline down University Avenue. It seemed someone would have noticed him and stopped to pick him up on such a busy street.

"Where on the road to Edgemont?" I asked.

"At the bend. You know."

I did. "What was he doing? Was he just going along?"

"No."

"Was he sitting there?"

"No."

"Well, what then?"

"He was *on* the road."

It was a moment before I understood his meaning. When I did, it was like a boulder had just been heaved out of the sky on top of me. I could hardly bring myself to ask my next question but finally summoned the breath to do so. "Was this big gray rabbit wearing a red collar?"

He almost choked laughing when he answered, "I didn't really notice."

"Oh," I said. "Thanks." I turned toward home, the landscape blurring around me. I tried to think what I should do. It was too obvious. I had to get in Jack and go find my rabbit. I couldn't live not knowing his fate, and if he was lying dead on the road to Edgemont, he had to be properly buried. I put a shovel and a cardboard box in Jack's trunk. I was going to be strong. I was going to do the necessary thing. But as I drove down University Avenue and got closer and closer to Edgemont, it was too much. I began to bargain: "If this big gray rabbit can just not be Arthur . . ." By the time I reached the fateful curve in the road, I had begged divine capital with every bit of spiritual collateral I possessed. I had even suggested a full-time mission might not be beyond feasibility.

Yet the field remains white already to harvest, my sickle having not been thrust in. I don't know how I could renege on so many promises. I guess I simply forgot them, until now. Arthur was not the big gray rabbit on the road to Edgemont. I could find no rabbit at all, despite cruising that strip of pavement at least five times, holding up a pack of audibly annoyed vehicles with each pass I made.

Then it occurred to me that the sanitation crew might have already come and shoveled him up, shipping him off to the oblivion of the incinerator. I was thrown into a panic almost as severe as my initial one: I might *never* know what had become of my rabbit. He could well be up in smoke — or he might be miles from the road to Edgemont, having fallen into kinder hands than those of the Provo City Public Works Department. On my way home I stopped at a 7-Eleven and bought two Hershey bars with almonds. I ate them in the time it took to cover the distance between two traffic lights. At that moment, life seemed singularly terrifying to me and the fate of all mammals unbearably cruel. Around every bend in the road lurked death or perhaps nothing more significant than the bluebells nodding their heads along the soft shoulder. It took great faith simply to step out of bed in the morning, let alone get in a car and drive.

It also took faith to post twenty-five flyers advertising Arthur's disappearance on telephone poles throughout Provo:

LOST RABBIT
Large, Gray, Tame
if you have seen this rabbit
PLEASE Call
374-8113
REWARD
for his return alive or dead even

Within sixty seconds (no kidding) of my walking in the door from this expedition, a woman six blocks from where I lived called. She had seen one of my signs. Yes, the big gray rabbit she had found was wearing a red collar. I was at her doorstep two minutes later. She took me round back. There was Arthur — sitting quietly in a big hutch with four other rabbits!

At the sight of me he became a flurry of animation, chasing first to one end of the hutch, then to the other, pawing the wire windows. She opened the cage, and I lifted him from it. He plastered my face with licks as I kissed his mobile nose a dozen times. It wasn't until we had calmed down that the woman, who adamantly refused any reward, saying that Arthur was one of the most delightfully gregarious rabbits she had ever met, told me how my pet had found his way into her yard. It was then I realized he had not simply wandered off and gotten lost: he had actively gone looking for playmates and had discovered the only rabbits within two miles. Arthur had grown up in ways I had never before acknowledged. He wanted a wife.

As I drove home, Arthur sat on my lap, nibbling on my finger. I spoke to him solemnly, promising to get him a companion. But that night I lay in bed pondering the difficulties of fulfilling this vow: I could handle two rabbits, but not two hundred. I considered the option of having the female spayed but worried that that would alter her hormonal chemistry and make her unreceptive to Arthur's attentions. I didn't want my pet to suffer the pangs of unrequited love, nor the loss of self-confidence so intimately connected with sexual

rejection. I thought about getting him a male friend. Unfortunately, though this may have satisfied Arthur's biological urges, I couldn't countenance the thought. Castration seemed cruel, and the only other alternative I could come up with sounded rather ridiculous: vasectomy. The more I thought about it, though, the less far-fetched it appeared. People have it done. Why not rabbits? That night my mother called from Salt Lake City. The very next day she was going to take her dachshund to the doctor to have a nasty tooth pulled. She agreed immediately to ask Dr. Mosteller about the feasibility of my plan.

The following day I anxiously awaited her report. I wondered if the vet would think it funny, or if perhaps he did this kind of thing more often than anyone would suspect. This particular veterinary center was the Mayo Clinic of animal hospitals. If anyone could be expected to take the idea of a rabbit vasectomy seriously, it was these guys. When my mother phoned she said Dr. Mosteller had appeared to suppress a smile when she proposed my plan, and then, saying that he would need to confer with a colleague, had hastily excused himself from the room. When he returned he was sober-faced enough. He told her it was doubtful the procedure had ever been done, though he would be willing to try. He couldn't promise it would be successful, but the attempt would cost me $110.

I felt terrible when I had to tell Arthur I couldn't afford a $110 rabbit vasectomy that might not work. It seemed that getting him a spouse was, at the moment, simply impracticable. He was going to have to wait. I look back on that period and think I could have exerted greater effort — gotten him a spayed wife, for example, and hoped for the best — but the truth is I didn't really want a second rabbit. A single splendid one was sufficient for my needs. So, selfishly, I put my promise to Arthur on hold and doomed him to suffer the same lack of romantic love which afflicts 97 percent of all the mammals I know.

Arthur never got a wife. He also never got an inescapable fenced yard and hence spent a great portion of his life in his hutch. I would put him out on a long chain attached to a heavy brick (I didn't want to endure the agony of losing him again), but this measure of freedom did not, I am certain, compensate for that larger portion of which he had been deprived. I would dream of one day being able to afford a house with a cinder block fence he could not undermine, but that day never came.

If the truth be known, there was a host of dreams I had for Arthur that was never fulfilled. There are also regrets: affection I failed to give at times when my school and work schedules were pressing; carrot skins and cabbage I sometimes put down the garbage disposal because I was too tired or lazy to take them out to his cage. There was the time I went to campus, leaving him unsupervised on his brick because I didn't want to pick him up and get fur on my navy dress putting him into his hutch — and came home to hear from a neighborhood child that three boys had been kicking him. There were *two* times I left him in his house for several days while I went to Salt Lake and arrived back to find he'd knocked his water over and was perishing of thirst —

it would have been little bother to ask a friend to come check on him. There are the suspenders I never engineered to hold a diaper on him; though he might have been embarrassed to wear them, the fun of visits indoors would have quickly offset his reluctance, I am sure.

Oddly, it is regret, I think, that sometimes makes a person understand the nature and depth of his love for a mammal. Regret is the shadow that throws the world of our hearts into three dimensionality, making us not paper cutouts but rounded creatures of flesh and bone. Yet, praise be to God, it need not cancel our gentler joys, merely burnish them.

I suppose the gentle ritual I enjoyed most of all in caring for Arthur occurred at bedtime. Every night before turning in (or almost every night — sometimes I'd give in to fatigue), I would go outside and make sure he had everything necessary for his nocturnal comfort. In his desire to be stroked, he would often hamper my efforts to fill his bowl or bottle by pressing his head into my hands, following every movement I made. But I was careful to make certain he had plenty of Pillsbury's Best Feed and that his Rabbit Oasis was full and securely hooked to the wire mesh of his hutch window, before indulging him. During winter, I also had to replenish the dry leaves I kept in his cage hoping he'd build himself a warm nest — he seemed to much prefer eating them to sitting upon them.

Then I would stand in my nightgown or robe — my feet bare or shoved without socks into loafers — and pet his forehead, cheeks, and nose. He loved having his face caressed and would sit with enormous patience each night while I did so. No matter how cold the night air, he was always a soft warmth beneath my touch. The sudden warm, rough, wetness of his tongue licking my wrist would be like some secret intimacy exchanged between the only waking creatures in a world that all around them lay darkly sleeping.

Those nighttime encounters ended abruptly last May. One morning Arthur appeared listless and wouldn't eat a bite of apple, his favorite food. His eyes seemed slightly cloudy. When he was no better by afternoon, I took him to the vet. The doctor gave him a shot and some antibiotics for me to put in his water. He thought Arthur had some type of respiratory infection. For the first time in a long while, I moved my rabbit back indoors. When I went to bed that night he was sitting quietly in his portable cage on the kitchen floor of the house we had recently moved into. The next morning, when he sat on his hind feet to bathe himself I was cheered. He still had energy to worry about his appearance. One edge of the apple slice in his cage had been nibbled, another good sign.

But I waited all day long for him to nibble some more. He didn't. And the *Daily Heralds* under his cage were still readable: he hadn't peed in over twenty-four hours. By afternoon, I was so concerned that his kidneys might be damaged if he didn't pee that I put him on my bed. In the past, he had never once failed to pee when given access to a bed. Nothing happened. I picked him up and cradled him for a long time. He was limp in my arms. At midnight, I gave him a lettuce leaf. He took a tentative bite.

An hour later Arthur died.

A friend and I buried him that night. I swaddled him snugly in the white dress I had worn in the Days of '47 pioneer parade and my first time through the Salt Lake Temple. I hesitated before covering his face, last. It was raining hard. My friend dug a deep hole in the garden patch behind the house. When the hole was ready, I knelt in the mud and lowered my bundle into it. The bottom was slightly uneven, and I couldn't get Arthur's head to lie flat. I didn't like the idea of him having a crook in his neck even if he was dead, but finally I gave him up to the uneven earth. I watched as my friend shoveled the mud back into the hole and the last piece of white fabric disappeared beneath the heavy soil. I had done the necessary thing. The rain came down on us like millions of tears.

My friends indulge me now when I talk about Arthur, my fixation having long ago come into the open. But few of them, except a girlfriend named Suzanne who had a parakeet that died, seem to understand the peculiar fascination my late rabbit holds for me. I feel lucky to be a Latter-day Saint in this respect, because our prophets have always taught that all mammals will be resurrected at the last day. When animals dwell in heaven, they will sit near God and be full of vision and power, even rabbits. Yes, I realize, when all rabbits are resurrected, they will make a pretty sizable herd surrounding the throne, but for this we can be grateful: infinity is a big place. It is a comfort to me in times of melancholy to think of mammals of every kind filling the streets of the celestial city, taking care of one another, making sure that everyone's food dish is always full of apples, broccoli, or other nourishing things: oats for the horse, corn for the ox, wheat for man.

Sometimes I think back on the night Arthur died. He lay on the kitchen floor. I huddled next to him, stroking his perfectness to the last. He was long and wide and flat against the floor, like some small boat, and his big back feet stuck straight out behind him like white paddles. Before my friend arrived, I carefully stowed those comical feet back beneath Arthur's white belly, as befit his dignity and as, I am sure, he would have wished. Since then, though, I have imagined him as he left this world for a different one. I have seen his spirit paddling up through the open sky, on that strange journey we will all eventually make. There he is, sailing upon the broad air, finding out the place where angels live.

A Little Love Story

William Cottam

FOR A MORMON BOY STEEPED IN THE TABOOS of religious purity and small town morality, nothing is so frightening yet so inviting as the wedding day. It was early morning, the first of September. From my upstairs bedroom window, I could see out beyond the temple to the distant Arizona canyons, free and unexplored, their vast expanses marked by varied hues of blue. The muddy and winding Virgin River glistened and trembled below. Not wide enough to be a real "river," it separated the town from the desert. On the east and west sides of the valley, flat volcanic plateaus lay like the walls of a box canyon. They were twins, prehistoric airfields. Behind me was the Red Hill. I knew it so well I didn't have to look back, having run hundreds of times up and down its sides, hiding from make-believe dangers lying in wait in its crevices.

St. George was my town. I had ridden my bike down every street, past every house a thousand times. And the people, I knew them all. Life was simple there. In the summertime, the running ditch water and chirping crickets were the only night sounds. Cottonwood trees along the banks shed fluffy seeds and bred yellow June bugs in the spring. The ditch water wound its way past roots and under roads, through backyard gardens, spreading out to flood lawns of Bermuda grass, and then returned to pass beside the pampas and pomegranate bushes and the old adobe homes. "Trees of Heaven" covered the valley like green umbrellas, and ants and little boys alike crawled up and down their trunks.

The Woodward School was the center of our young world with its mysterious bell tower that never once sounded, old inky blackboards, and well-carved benches that we studied for some message of romance. There were playgrounds (without equipment) and recess, the student police force, homeroom announcements, dances that brought trembling to every young man, forgotten gym clothes, yellow buses for out-of-towners, lines at the drinking foun-

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WILLIAM COTTAM is a teacher and father of four.

tain before the late bell, tests and grades, assemblies, student elections, fire drills, yearbooks. Old teachers with names like Syphus, Miles, and Pendelton and roots deep in the town's past taught the exotic and the basics: geometry, American literature, gym, woodworking, home economics, and always morality.

Doris lived up Diagonal Street, in "Sand Town" as we called it, in the First Ward where the streets were dirt and the afternoon wind filled every corner with red sand from the hill. Her father "drove truck" and rode with the sheriff's posse in the St. George and Las Vegas rodeo parades. He wore a white felt stetson and pearl-handled pistols. Riding through town in his old Buick, he used to sing "Ghost Riders in the Sky." He died of a heart attack one April day while working at Ron's Sporting Goods and Bike Shop. The store smelled of the new rubber bike tires that hung from the ceilings. I vaguely remember seeing him there once while I was working on a scouting merit badge in the back with one of the bicycle repairmen. I wish now that I had gone out to the front, leaned over the counter towards Mr. Earl, and said coolly, "When I am twenty-one, I will marry your youngest, fun-loving Doris!"

In the center of the valley, at the southern edge of the community, rises a great white temple, which Brigham Young and the early townspeople — including my ancestors — helped build. It was a community service project in the 1860s, a welfare project when people were starving, a temple built from the fruit of the desert environs by a tiny, poor village. To this day, members of the community can tell you which forefather hung each door. My own great-grandfather, Thomas Cottam, and his sons built the cane-bottom chairs, molded the ornamental plaster-of-Paris grape clusters that decorate the ceilings, and poured the concrete walkways.

The walls are a crystalline white stucco, belying the hand-hewn red sandstone blocks beneath. The brow of the walls was designed to resemble a medieval fortress — without, of course, the slings, cannons, or other accouterments of war. Still, from time to time on Easter morning, a trumpeter is summoned from the community to the walk-around of the tower to sound a sacred message: "He is Risen! He is Risen! He hath opened heaven's gate. We are free from sin's dark prison, risen to a holier state. And a brighter Easter beam on our longing eyes shall stream."

Silver arrows top the temple spire, one pointing east and the other heavenward. From the ground, two staircases ascend to the building's front doors — doors without knobs, waiting to be opened by the Son of God when he comes to usher in his millennial reign. It is always quiet on the temple block; the flowers perennially bloom and the grass is ever green. Their arms around each other, young lovers walk the temple grounds, sit beneath the mulberry tree (when it is not bearing fruit), and kiss under the canopy of Virginia creeper and roses. Still, no one dares defile the "House of the Lord" by climbing the long white steps.

At night great lights flood the temple walls, and nearby locust trees cast a shadowy figure on the steeple. Some onlookers below claim the figure is the Prophet Joseph kneeling in prayer. It is not difficult to divine this sign.

Doris and I walked around the temple on our third date. That was the night I wanted to take her hand, draw her close, and kiss her.

Pop's kindly voice followed the curling smoke of burned pancakes up the stairs. "Wake up, Son. You had better get up. You're getting married today, you know." I did know, actually. I had been searching for an escape since daybreak and, with the hollow hope that comes with fear, had wondered if perhaps Dr. Reichmann, who had first delivered me twenty-one years before, would deliver me once again. Would he write an excuse that I could send with someone, saying I had broken my leg or was too sick to travel? But there was no back door to slip through now. I had previously considered canceling the engagement several times, always giving up on the idea, thinking that Doris might not return the tablecloth I had embroidered (as a kid) and given her as a gift and wondering how I would face the embarrassment of returning the sheets and pillowcases Vaughn and Diane had given us as a wedding gift when they came through town months before. What sort of note could I leave now for the reception guests at the First and Third Ward chapel?

I had been looking for someone to marry. I shared, as I supposed, the simple, solitary goal of all returned missionaries. I came home from the mission fields of Sweden grown up, a new person, independent of the past. Gone was my youthful habit of collecting kisses from every girl who would give them. Those were pleasant little conquests, explorations into the world of pleasure — tests of acceptance, small adventures. But now I wanted the peace of marital security, the eternal sort of happiness promised the virtuous. I wanted a Church-sanctioned courtship, a celestial marriage, the marriage Earnest Eberhard describes in his little blue bible, *What Shall We Do with Love?* I wanted to score high enough on his checklist of compatibilities to secure the eternal life promised me.

I underlined whole pages of Eberhard with my red pencil. I knew them well and had used them on study-buddies like Clark Ence to get *them* to date righteously and marry. How then could *I* escape? I could hear the voice of the happily married prophet, David O. McKay, saying to seek the early morning primrose high up on the cliff away from the dusty road below, away from the common traffic, and when I found her, that girl who motivated me to do my best and to make the most of myself, that young lady was worthy of my love and would awaken love in my heart. (I wasn't aware that *he* didn't find his primrose until he was nearly thirty. By the time I was twenty, many young ladies had already stirred my heart.)

Doris and I first met in the high school library while preparing for the ward Mutual Improvement Association's speech competition. The assigned topic was "Who Is My Neighbor?" That day we walked to the church together. My speech stressed the unorthodox view that not everyone was my neighbor, especially not the enemies of humankind, those wolves in sheep's clothing in town, whose deeds my dad frequently recounted to us in great detail. I won the competition. Doris clearly remembers that it was she who won.

Next, I saw her in the *Washington County News*. I was a missionary in Sweden, tossing out newspapers from the mission office addressed to missionaries who had more important things to do than read their local hometown gossip and grow homesick. As best I recall, her photo was on the front page as Dixie College Homecoming Queen. It seemed obvious to me that this girl was not one who had appeared on everyone's kiss list — but someone the reformed me would want to date.

And there she was the day after I returned from Sweden and registered at Dixie College. It was January. The grass was frozen, but the sun shone brightly. She was laughing, walking arm-in-arm with friends towards the Institute of Religion, across the street. (She insists that she would not have been heading *there*, that she never took a class at the Institute.) She was brunette with bangs, and her shoulder-length hair curled attractively under. She wore beautiful clothes (sewn by her mother) and drove a new white Pontiac with a turquoise interior, bought after her father's funeral. The college handbook for 1966–67 called Doris "the old Crow," which no doubt had something to do with her deep voice. It continued: "She is efficient, understanding, poised, and generally lovely . . . but the only editor of Dixie High's newspaper who could hit her 'psychological sickbed' consecutively once every week for 36 weeks." The bio ends promising that students will be happy to know that their "Doris Days" have just begun. Such being the case, I asked her out to the Saturday Night Dance.

She already had a date. I took an attractive blonde instead. The four of us met at the dance at the Rec Hall. Doris and I danced together once as Tom Jones crooned from the phonograph: "Try to remember when life was so tender that no one wept except the willow. Try to remember when life was so tender that dreams were kept beside your pillow. Try to remember when life was so tender that love was an ember about to billow." We didn't find each other particularly attractive.

Several days later, Elizabeth Beckstrom, whose grandfather served for twenty-five years with my great-uncle in the St. George stake presidency and who had always taken an interest in me, caught me by the arm as I was leaving the library and said we had to talk. "I know a young woman you ought to meet."

Well, with that encouragement I climbed the hill to Mrs. Beckstrom's home. She was an older woman, bright and cheerful — a female sage who often delighted the community, especially college students, with her rapid-fire delivery of tales of early Dixie. She had a strong moral eye and didn't hesitate to tell us what she saw. "Doris Earl. Do you know her?" Before I could respond she continued, "She is a most wonderful person, quite unusual, one who has character — quality — which I don't see often in young women. She's a girl, Willie, . . ." (she paused to be sure I didn't miss her point) "that you would do well to marry. Now I'm not interfering with your life, but if you're smart, you'll pay attention!"

I called Doris again. This time she was free. That night we went to a friend's wedding reception, then to the Saturday Night Dance, and last for a

drive past the college. We rode and talked and, finally, back at her place, ate hamburgers and drank orange juice. It was easy, comfortable fun. I thought, while rounding the corner of Tabernacle Street on my way home, that perhaps the Spirit had whispered to me that she was the one I would marry.

Jimmy Cox, my lifelong next-door neighbor who studied psychology (well enough to hypnotize people), said that Doris was too strong, that I would never be boss in my own home. Claudia Haslem, secretary at the Institute, said that as far as she knew, Doris was not entirely active in the Church, that she did not attend Institute classes. Jay Andrus, my double-dating friend of the past decade, reminded me that no one else had done for me what Doris had. "Who else has given you so many free meals and all that orange juice?" he asked. My brother Alvin thought Doris was terrific. Pop pointed out that Doris "had large bones," and he was a qualified judge of that since my mother was embarrassingly heavy. Yet he hastened to add that Doris was certainly a very fine person.

Doris wasn't interested in marriage. We talked of everything else, every imaginable topic from birth control to ambitions to children. We even visited the local hospital together as a class assignment to observe the newborns. We discussed money, and I imagined that she could probably waste a fortune, which my father thought my mother had done, though he never had more than a few dollars to lose. We talked of friends. I complained about her liberated, arty group, reminding her of her patriarchal blessing, which counseled her to choose her friends wisely. She, in turn, reminded me how much fun those friends were and what loyalty they shared.

Eventually, after several dates, we kissed. It happened on the sofa in the living room of her mother's house. She had a cold, and I was tired. She remembers that the kiss was not that great. It didn't do a lot for me either — I felt no great manifestation of love, even after three years of abstinence of all kinds. But what the first kiss lacked, subsequent ones made up for. We saw each other daily, though I continued to date Marie, an attractive coed from Kanab. My cousin David and I even went on a two-day trip with Marie and one of her friends. The four of us went boating on Lake Powell, ate dinner with Marie's family, hiked in Zion Park and the Coral Reef sand dunes, listened to a Peter, Paul and Mary cassette, then returned to St. George. Later that night I went to see Doris, who rubbed lotion on my sunburn and listened without censure to my adventure.

From her mother's car, Doris and I saw the world: the abandoned mining town of State Line with its rusted automobiles, overgrown frame buildings, and dilapidated vats; the eternal desert south of St. George and the Arizona border; Smith's Mesa and the summer wheat fields and the rainbow of a storm; Zion Park and the steep-walled Virgin River Narrows; the road to Kolob in the dark, past the little pond and apple orchard where Carol Cornelius and I used to swim. Once we returned from a hike on the Red Hill to find her mother busy with company and the only private spot the bathroom. We hiked above St. George, along the Black Ridge, tracing the route of the pioneer

water system. We explored Pipe Springs, Warner Valley, Oak Grove. And always we felt pleasure — delicious and laden with anticipation.

Doris went to California with her mother when summer came. I worked as a cook at the Trafalga Restaurant. We corresponded, and she changed her mind about marriage. Of course, by then my post-mission desire for matrimony had left me entirely. But I worried about the upcoming year. I'd be leaving for school. All alone. Where would I live? How would I eat? And what about Doris? What if she met someone interesting, which she might very well do at a university? One morning she showed up unexpectedly at the back door with the news that her brother had offered her a trip to Europe if we didn't marry and $500 if we did. A week later as I stood frying hamburgers at work, someone called out, "Turn on the radio. Doris Earl is giving a dramatic reading in the Miss Utah Pageant." It was *Our Town.*

And it was enough.

At either end of the sealing room a pair of mirrors face each other creating an endless repetition of those at the altar. We knelt across from each other, Doris Earl and I. At the head of the room sat Rudgar Atkin, the marriage license in his hand. Around the room friends and family and my father and her mother had come, proud and smiling, to witness our marriage. I looked over the altar at Doris in her wedding dress of pearls and lace. Just for a moment, she appeared to me to be celestial. She was intelligence — beautiful, noble, and filled with light.

We said *yes* to each other.

Outside, we met near the steps of the temple, on the lawn. We smiled for a few photographs, then, borrowing her mother's car, alone with our wedding gifts, we drove east towards school.

Grief

Joan Shaw

SHE HAD BEGUN FALLING ASLEEP AT ODD MOMENTS — not when she was sitting in a chair, reading a book, or anything like that — but rather when she was doing things that ordinarily kept a person awake, like sitting at the desk in the kitchen writing thank-you notes or doing the accounting or even talking to Clayton, her forestry professor husband, at the dinner table.

And the subject could be anything. It could be a twenty-car pileup on I-15 or a spectacular robbery on Fourth Street, right around the block — she'd still fall asleep in the middle of it, in the middle of her own *sentence*, eyes shut, head drooping to the side, oblivious to her husband's voice calling — "Edith? Hey, Edith?" — the dark eyes behind his gold-rimmed glasses blank pools of bewilderment over this thing — this soft, intrusive veil that was drifting over his wife of twenty years.

Edith Mott had been the typical, active faculty wife for seventeen of those years — well groomed and self-controlled, amiable, willing to chair one committee after another. And even after these past few months, she still looked the part to perfection — feathery gray-blond hair, body gently rounded by the weight of four decades, given to wearing suits with softly scarved blouses and low-heeled pumps. Falling asleep in the middle of conversations, though — that was new.

The first time she had fallen asleep that way was at the funeral of her son. There she was, standing not ten feet from the casket, with Dale lying stiff and still in the tucked white satin lining, dead so suddenly, so *absurdly*. The bishop had just beckoned for her and Clayton to come up for a last look before the lid was finally closed. She'd started off well enough — with eyes that had not yet

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shed tears but were nevertheless blank, empty, the way eyes come to look after facing such swift, immeasurable absurdities as the loss of an only son to a high school football accident. But suddenly she had faltered, felt faint . . .

. . . no, not faint . . . drowsy, rather . . . hardly able to put one foot in front of the other . . .

Her knees gave way . . .

And her husband, Clayton, had caught her.

Later the doctor seemed to think that these "little spells" were Mrs. Mott's way of avoiding her son's death, of wiping it out of her mind. But Edith had never avoided Dale's death; it was the death's absurdity that she avoided, its hilarious absurdity.

For should she ever really lose control . . . if she had lost control at the closing of the casket . . . if she had actually started *laughing out loud* . . .

At first after the accident she had tried anger, tried it on as though it were a tailored suit in black. How well could her elbows bend in order to cut a person dead, for instance? How easily could she turn contemptuously on her heel in that fitted skirt? While dressed in that tight, black rage could she stare coldly enough to penetrate the soul of her husband, who had always loved football?

For Edith had come to know all about fathers living through their sons. It was a heady thing, that dream of being the star on a high school football team, and what male would turn up his nose at the prospect — cheerleaders in full scream as he raced for a touchdown, cookies slipped surreptitiously into his locker by the pep club girls, trophies grandly handed over to enshrine his courage, his heart, his overwhelming desire to win, his zeal for sacrificing everything — even his life — for his teammates, as though the varsity squad were engaged in an unremitting war of global proportions.

And then Dale had been Clayton's only son, his only child. Naturally Clayton would want him on the Westville High team after the boy had proved to be such an outstanding athlete, after the coaches had praised him so, packing the ears of father and son with glory. Ah, how it had maddened Edith! — that praise given the players for staggering back into the game, half dead and filthy, knees and knuckles bleeding, ankles taped with elastic bandages. One of Dale's sophomore trophies had been awarded for just that sort of thing — for "courage" — raw, physical, childish, obedient courage; and of course after that he would rather have died than look like a weakling.

Which is just what he did.

And so she had raged for a while at Clayton, and at all men like Clayton — those fathers living through the glorious, causeless victories of their boys — while she looked at her son in his white and gold casket. The mirror on the opened lid reflected a young, squarish face, with a faint sheen of hairspray on the light brown cap of his hair. He had turned seventeen just the August before.

The angled mirror in the casket had been the brainchild of the mortuary owner, unnerving the elderly bishop during his eulogy and giving the whole

ceremony the aura of solemn but spectacular celebrity — complete with standing room only in a stakehouse built to hold a full thousand during stake conference.

She could feel them pressing against the air behind her, the entire Westville student body and a good part of the opposing team's as well — heads upon heads of them reaching far back into the auditorium and up into the choir seats, gathered around the doors, rising from folding chairs in the aisles, all of them unfairly alive, straining to see the reflection in the casket lid that was about to be lowered, as the bishop beckoned the parents to leave their seats...

Edith's purse had been lying on the pew beside her, and before going up to the casket she'd reached down to get it. Then Clayton had taken her arm . . .

I'm big, Mom, I'm bigger than anyone on the team, don't worry so much, look, I could pick you up with one arm — Hey Dad, Mommio thinks I'm gonna hurt my bod . . .

Don't worry so much, Edith, thousands of kids play high school football every year and never get hurt . . . A lie, Clayton, a filthy LIE . . . !

. . . and she had stepped into the aisle and shaken Clayton's arm off, roughly, cruelly; she had wanted to hurt him. He'd been so stupid back then. He could never think ahead, could never see things staring him in the face. And then she'd turned to put her arms around him — a tall, loosely strung man in a dark suit, his hair thin and colorless, his eyes reddened and tragic behind his smeared glasses. Appalled at what she had just done, she had held him, hearing his sobs, wondering why she herself stood just as unaccountably dry-eyed as she had remained from the very beginning. Finally she had whispered to him — standing there in the aisle while the bishop waited — by the casket with hands folded in front of him — she had whispered, "Ah . . . it was just a thing that *happened.*"

And then, stepping forward with Clayton, she had quietly fallen asleep.

She had awakened, reluctantly, in the cloak room, lying on the sofa next to the hymnbook cupboards, swamped with lassitude. A small man dressed in a gray suit was kneeling beside her — a doctor who had attended the funeral with his son, a member of Westville's junior varsity squad.

The cloakroom doorway had been jammed with high school students, red-eyed, eyebrows contracted in concern. Edith had caught sight of them when her eyes first fluttered open, had felt their affection drift over her like a pall, and had groaned at the weight. She hadn't wanted their affection — still newly dressed in her black wool rage — she had wanted instead their *deaths.* She had wanted them dead because Dale was dead, because . . .

. . . asleep? You say she's ASLEEP?

Ah yes, Professor Mott, I've seen this happen . . . Your wife will be all right . . . I believe it may be a suppression of sorts . . .

Edith . . . are you awake, Edith? Wake up hon . . . Dear? . . . Hey, Edith . . .

But she hadn't wanted to wake up; her eyelids glued themselves shut, blotting them all out — Clayton and the doctor and all those heads. She hated all of the students because they were alive, the quiet ones who read in their rooms at home, and the studious ones who went to the libraries and labs, and the musical ones who practiced with the orchestra and band, but especially the ones in Dale's crowd — the ones who dragged Westville's Main Street on Friday and Saturday nights in their Camaros and Firebirds and TransAms, resplendent with rear spoilers, hood scoops, fender flares, and channel trim; or in Baja pickups with dummy spots across the roof and chrome roll bars in the back, wide tires rolling around on the outside of trimmed fenders like big, black donuts. She wanted them all dead . . . *DEAD* . . .

. . . *usually termed narcolepsy, Professor Mott . . . nothing to worry about . . . it'll fade away after a year, a year or a little more . . . the grief, you see, is buried* . . .

. . . but Edith knew all along that hating Dale's friends didn't make sense, not any sense at all, that nothing made any sense except the absurdity of her son's death, and that instead of sleeping she should be laughing, as surely as Dale himself would be laughing — if he could — into that dark, absurd mirror.

She had said no to Dale, absolutely no. What could football ever lead to except trick knees, arthritis, and back trouble in his thirties? Track was different; track was clean, dignified. Why couldn't he be satisfied with track? She had said no and had stuck to her decision for many weeks while the boy slammed in and out of the house, sulky and bad tempered, missing, as he told her twenty times a day, the chance of a lifetime, and all because of her.

How can you be so stubborn? he'd said. How can you be so *mean*? Do you have something against me, do you hate me or something? he'd said. The coaches had come to *him*, they'd thought him that good. He hadn't even signed up for varsity, but Coach Schmidt had seen him run during the track meets and one day had taken Dale, along with Bahler, the line coach, to the weight room where the two men had practically begged the boy to try out anyway.

And he'd *only been a ninth grader* . . . though his voice had already changed by then, he was growing a small patch of chest hair, and Edith sometimes thought her son had left and a character out of *Hollowe'en Howl* had come to take his place.

She could close her eyes and still see him sitting on the bean bag in his bedroom, somnolent, the walls around him resonating with the stereo sounds of Motley Crüe, Quiet Riot, Iron Maiden . . .

. . . or lying on his bed, awash in that libidinous beat, engrossed in *Muscle and Fitness* and *Pumping Iron*, covers spread with gleaming bodies rippling with bronze, bulging muscle, satin G-strings holding it all together . . .

And the girls were always hanging around by then, too; eyes staring out of faces rouged so heavily on the sides that they looked sick with fever; eyelids green and fringed with black; blonde hair springing from their heads like

mattress stuffing or else hacked short on top with the sides slicked back. They'd come to the door, or they'd call on the telephone: Is Dale around? Is Dale up yet?

And Edith would yell up the stairs: Dale! Dale! Are you going to sleep all day? She'd go into his darkened bedroom and pull open the drapes. What do you want, he'd mumble. It's Saturday; I have to get up all week for school, and I'm tired, *physically dead.* I did a hundred and fifty pushups yesterday, my biceps . . . my deltoids . . . my hamstrings . . .

Where's the protein in this breakfast? he'd say later. I need a hundred grams of protein a day. And still later he'd say, I'll be home when you see me; and the next morning he'd say, What do you mean sacrament meeting, who goes to sacrament meeting . . . ?

His voice had become hoarse, unfinished, a foghorn of complaint: some jock-hating paranoid had given him a D in English, his blue pullover had been put in the dryer and now it was too tight, where were his Van Halen tapes, who took his gym bag, somebody stole his new sweats, how was he supposed to know where the big green towel was — he didn't watch his towel like a hawk at the gym — he had other things to do: his bench presses, his leg curls, his deep squats, his dead lifts. . . .

His neck over the past year and a half had changed into a sinewy superstructure rising like a stump of an oak from his shoulders. It was wider than his head and had taken hours upon hours to develop . . .

Is Dale around? Is Dale up yet. . . ?

The stereo shook the house; the background bass, the drum, the animal beat, the carnality pulsated through her brain, her sinuses. The very capillaries lining the skin underneath her forehead throbbed and made her eyes ache. Dale! Dale! she'd cry. Turn that thing *DOWN.* . . . Someone wants you on the *PHONE!*

Who is it . . . who wants me?

I don't know, a couple of girls . . .

He'd been taken away at the *wrong time,* at the peak of that purgatory that mothers and sons so often go through, circling each other warily like two strange dogs. She'd known that in time they would get through it, reborn and healed. It would only take time. But there had been *no time.*

Dale had been struck solidly in the chest by one of those bulbous football helmets: a boy from the other team, a big senior, had run straight into him. It happened during the homecoming game; the other team was a longtime rival — the Red Rocks, from out in the county. It had been important that Dale's team win this game. The coaches had harangued them on this point with gut-wrenching earnestness. This was an important game; a win would set the tone, you see, for the rest of the season.

Dale had taken the blow during a kickoff, but he'd continued to play until the final quarter, when the coach, suddenly aware that his prodigy was gasping and heaving for breath, took him out of the game. The win was in the bag by then anyway, thanks to this sophomore wonder, this boy Dale; thanks to his

courage, to his heart, or rather to those blood vessels in his heart, ruptured in three places by that ramrod shock to his chest and sending by then steady, inexorable jets of blood into his lungs, slowly filling them, until it was too late, *too late . . .*

. . . Oh, your boy had courage, Mrs. Mott, real team spirit — he cared so much. Why don't the others care as much as I do? he asked me last year. I can still see him, standing on the sidelines dressed in his pads, mud from head to toe. We were losing badly, what a season, a tragedy, and he said to me, Why don't the others . . . ?

Edith had looked at the coach, speaking his passionate eulogy in her living room the day before the funeral, and had wondered just what he'd expected of her. Am I supposed to be proud? she'd wondered. Am I supposed to be comforted? He realized, surely, that she'd never gone to the games. She'd told Dale — after finally caving in under the psychological warfare and letting him join the varsity squad in the ninth grade — that she'd never watch him play. She'd seen snatches of the game — during her own high school years and on television and in the neighborhood schoolyards — reverberating with the hoarse, acrimonious cries of the players. She would keep this one last pledge; she would never watch her son play football.

"Am I supposed to thank you?" she was ready to say. "Get out of my sight before I . . ."

But no, she'd never said anything like that. It had boiled up from her insides like lava inside a volcano and had gotten to the tip of her tongue. Then she'd swallowed it back, far back inside, where she'd crammed and condensed the laughter that threatened every minute to engulf her and everything and everyone around her.

The man who'd talked to Edith was actually the athletic director, Coach Schmidt — a large, solemn man, smooth-shaven, with a brush haircut, stomach curved outward over an oval belt buckle. It was Coach Schmidt who had finally arranged for Dale to go to the hospital — but not until the boys had showered and changed, hitting each other on the back, drunk with euphoria. Dale's chest pains had begun then, doubling him up in agony, and Coach Schmidt, alarmed at the pain, at the bluish tinge around Dale's mouth, called an ambulance.

And so they had taken Edith's son to the hospital . . .

. . . and he had died in the emergency room, shortly before midnight.

The doctor who'd treated her at the stakehouse had insisted that Edith go directly home after the graveside ceremonies, take the medication he'd prescribed, and sleep. *Sleep*! How much of that was she to do in the nearly twelve months that had passed since Dale's funeral? How many strange, dreamless waves of sleep had washed over her, erasing as much as an entire afternoon from her life? And at last she would wake to see standing before her in her imagination the boy who had broken, literally broken, Dale's heart —

abashed but nevertheless living, his glossy blond hair cut short on the sides, high and wavy on top, his face pale, just as it had been when he stood among the Red Rock varsity squad, his teammates surrounding him, aggressively protective, even in the rites of mourning.

He wasn't to be blamed, you see; Dale wouldn't want that at all. No matter that spearing an opponent with your helmet had been outlawed years before, was not ever supposed to happen in high school football. It was all so absurd, so impossibly absurd.

Perhaps it hadn't happened. Perhaps it was just something she'd dreamed about in one of those lost afternoons — a nightmare born from her deep-ingrained fear of the game. And she, groggy still from her deep, unnatural sleep at these times, would half expect to find Dale in the house somewhere, waiting impatiently for her to get him something. She'd find herself looking around, dry-eyed as always, watching, listening, intent for some clue as to where the boy was, what he wanted.

But the house remained always quiet, dead quiet; or perhaps rustling slightly with Clayton's footsteps as he moved around the kitchen, pouring out a glass of orange juice or milk and padding quietly with it up the carpeted hallway in his slippers, the eyes behind his gold-rimmed glasses dark and troubled and slightly bemused.

Edith . . . ? Her husband stood one night in the living room doorway, absently rubbing a finger around the top of the glass he was holding while he looked in at his wife, waiting. It had been eleven months and twelve days since the death of their son, and Clayton wondered when, as the doctor had predicted, those unaccountable naps would fade away. Edith? he said. Are you awake . . . ?

Edith . . . ?

Reconciliation

Edwin B. Firmage

INTRODUCTION

> So we do not lose heart, though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. (2 Cor. 4:16)

I COME FROM A RELIGIOUS TRADITION that does not celebrate the common Christian calendar, other than Easter and Christmas; yet in this portion of my life, I have come to appreciate the religious seasons. I feel the natural rhythm, the conjoining of biological and spiritual impulses with which our earth itself is in organic synchronicity. While I intend to address loving my enemies, in this Lenton season I have sensed a larger theme — reconciliation — of which loving enemies is only a part.

The Preacher tells us,

> To everything there is a season,
> And a time to every purpose under heaven:
> A time to be born, and a time to die;
> A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
> A time to kill, and a time to heal;
> A time to break down, and a time to build up. (Eccl. 3:1–3)

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Increasingly, the latter half of life brings the times of healing and building up. In the first portion of our lives we are appropriately concerned with the external world: forming an ego separate from physical things, parents, and gender identification by rejecting one for another. We select a profession and close the door on other possibilities that interested us. We discover a mate and, with some regret, sever relationships with others. We come to see ourselves as members of a particular family, a tribe, a nation, a discrete religious tradition.

And then, beginning perhaps in one's thirties and accelerating at mind-wrenching, soul-threatening speed in one's forties, all the lines begin to blur and then disappear. Rather than defining myself negatively — "I am not female; I am not Catholic; I am not black; I am not Russian" — I begin to see that indeed I am all of those things and much more.

For twenty-five years I have written about the nuclear arms race, the dangers of biological and chemical weapons, the need for arms control agreements, and for constitutional restraints upon our propensity to wage executive war thoughtlessly with cataclysmic, inhuman results. I have also spent much of my life working for legal protection of human rights, influenced profoundly as a young man by working with Hubert Humphrey, Roy Wilkins, and Martin Luther King, Jr. These topics continue to be central to my life, and I hope they always will be.

But increasingly I see the need for an inner dimension to match these political efforts. The physical world of law and government is essential but incomplete. Without inner development, we will annihilate each other in one last spasmodic act of human genocide.

Recognizing an inner reality in no way denies the reality and the importance of the objective world. Those philosophies that do make such denials are dangerously unbalanced. For those of us in the West, however, these denials have not been our danger. During the last millennium, we have become masters of our physical environment with a completeness that no earlier age could comprehend through Aristotelian empiricism; Thomistic syllogism; modern science; conscious rational dialogue; and structures of economic, political, and religious power dominated totally by males. Only a handful, furthermore, has comprehended inner reality: mystics of all of the world's great religious traditions; poets and artists; storytellers who have recorded our inner life in fairy tales, myth, dreams, and ritual; gnostic groups sensing the powerful imbalance of an orthodoxy transfixed with worldly power; and, in modern history, pioneers of depth psychology, preeminently Carl Jung.

But the inner and outer paths have an integral relationship, whether called the ego-self axis, yin and yang, compensation, or thesis and antithesis. Now, as if our globe were indeed one living system, compensating elements are rising simultaneously, not denying the truth of the previous elements but contesting their completeness. A sexual revolution so profound that it can be compared only to the Reformation in its impact is radically changing our very view of the human psyche. Quantum physics hints at an integrated wholeness to our cosmos that obliterates boundaries between space and time, the organic and the inorganic. Brain research reveals an inner cosmos at least as intricate and

related. Depth psychology postulates a dialogue between the conscious world of the ego and the unconscious. Whether by contemplation, meditation, dream, or active imagination, we move toward wholeness by bringing to consciousness the compensating messages from the unconscious.

RECONCILIATION — GOD WITHIN AND WITHOUT

> All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. . . .
>
> God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
>
> Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:18–20)

For Carl Jung, humankind possesses an inner impulse toward individuation which leads us to seek within ourselves the image of God. This movement compensates for a vision of God as only transcendent, beyond reach, aloof, bleak, occasionally tyrannical, masculine, and thoroughly patriarchal. The immanent God found in our unconscious is both maternal and paternal, warm. By mid-life, petitionary prayers to a transcendent God alone may be so dry, so unrewarding, that a responsive relationship with such a being seems impossible and reconciliation seems presumptuous.

Jung called this view of a transcendent God the "effect of prejudice that God is outside of man," a "systematic blindness" (1958, 1:482), and explained that for the extroverted West, "grace comes from elsewhere; at all events from outside. Every other point of view is sheer heresy. Hence it is quite understandable why the human psyche is suffering from undervaluation. Anyone who dares to establish connection between the psyche and the idea of God is immediately accused of 'psychologism' or suspected of morbid 'mysticism' " (in Dourley 1984, 25).

Jung further observed, "Christian education has done all that is humanly possible; but it has not done enough. Too few people have experienced the divine image as the innermost possession of their own souls" (1953, 308).

Saint Teresa of Avila, a Spanish mystic of the sixteenth century, perceived that vision through a lifetime of contemplation:

> Remember how St. Augustine tells us about his seeking God in many places and eventually finding Him within himself. Do you suppose it is of little importance that a soul which is often distracted should come to understand this truth and to find that, in order to speak to its Eternal Father and to take delight in Him, it has no need to go to Heaven or to speak in a loud voice? However quietly we speak, He is so near that He will hear us: we need no wings to go in search of Him but have only to find a place where we can be alone and look upon Him present within us. (1978, 114)

Meister Eckhart, a German mystic of the late thirteenth century, said: "To get at the core of God at his greatest, one must first get into the core of himself at his least, for no one can know God who has not first known himself. Go to the depths of the soul, the secret place of the Most High, to the roots, to the heights; for all that God can do is focussed there" (1941, 246).

The quest for God within ourselves is, I am convinced, the central task of reconciliation. If we worship only the transcendent God, we are cut off from the divinity within our own souls, the image of God shared by all human beings who have ever lived, among all cultures, all religious traditions, all nations under heaven. This cosmic anomie Jung called *uprootedness* (in Dourley 1984, 25).

In a letter to a friend, Jung charted the change that must occur to preserve God's image within the soul and its terrible importance for our worship and for our being:

> Man's relation to God probably has to undergo a certain important change: instead of the propitiating praise to an unpredictable king or the child's prayer to a loving father, the responsible living and fulfilling of the divine within us will be our form of worship and commerce with God.
>
> His goodness means grace and light and His dark side, the terrible temptation of power.
>
> Man has already received so much knowledge that he can destroy his own planet.
>
> Let us hope that God's good spirit will guide Him in His decisions because it will depend upon man's decision whether God's creations will continue.
>
> Nothing shows more drastically than this possibility how much of divine power has come within reach of man. (1973, 2:316)

Yet the predominant tradition of a transcendent God, "out there," wholly Other, has a vital message as well. It warns us against identifying the image of God within ourselves with the objective Person of deity lest we suffer ego inflation and megalomania. Our goal is not to deny the transcendent image without but to seek reconciliation: between the image of God within us all and our worship of the transcendent God.

Reconciliation occurs as we right wrongs in our objective, physical world. Reconciliation also occurs as we heal ourselves within. Finally, reconciliation takes place as we establish a means of dialogue between our objective existence and the world of the unconscious.

Sexual Reconciliation

> Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. (1 Cor. 11:1)

We have witnessed in the great religious traditions a savage suppression of femininity for at least two or perhaps three millennia. Women have been treated as if they had no souls. At the time of Jesus, women were not allowed to study Torah — the foundational scriptures of Moses. Women, like children and slaves, were not commanded to offer morning prayer. Women, along with children, slaves, and the insane, could not be counted in the quorum necessary for public prayer (Swidler n.d., 2). A daily prayer at the time of Jesus rejoiced: "Praised be God that he has not created me a gentile; praised be God that he has not created me a woman; praised be God that he has not created me an ignorant man." Leonard Swidler, a contemporary religious scholar and teacher, notes that Paul, sensing the reconciling message of his

Master, deliberately provided an antithesis to that daily prayer: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28; Swidler n.d., 2).

In the temple at the time of Jesus, women could enter only one outer court, the Women's Court, five steps below the men's court. Women in the synagogue were separated from men and were not allowed to read aloud or perform any major public function of worship. In public life generally, a rabbi would refrain from dialogue with women.

Indeed Jesus was a feminist. He gathered women disciples as well as men (Luke 8:1 ff; Mark 15:40 ff). He associated directly and publicly with women in an open, friendly manner. In what must have been a deliberate act, Jesus appeared first to a woman after the resurrection, and Mary Magdalene has announced this awesome event to Christians ever after. This cathedral commemorates her. Jesus' teachings on divorce (Mark 10:2 ff; Matt. 19:3 ff) were designed to add full personhood to the status of women, who could be stripped of the protection and promises of marriage simply by the husband's announcement (Swidler n.d., 8).

The attitude of Jesus toward women, contrasted to the severe discrimination of that time, is a model we need to remember today. In comparison, contemporary religious leadership, with notable exceptions, should appear in public only in sackcloth and ashes. I applaud the elevation of Barbara Harris, a black divorced woman, to a bishopric of the Episcopal Church in our own country. She is a beacon for us all.

The American Catholic bishops have led out on issues of great importance during this decade, speaking eloquently and prophetically on nuclear weaponry and economic justice (National Conference 1983, 1986). Catholicism has preserved much that may help us seek reconciliation between men and women in religious life. I am thinking of the honor accorded to Mary, the Mother of God, and other acknowledgments of the numinosity of feminine spirituality recognized in its saints and the religious vocations open to women. Now American Catholics are grappling with the role of women in religious life and ecclesiastical government. I honor this attempt to face the past and come to terms with this enormous self-inflicted wound.

Within my own religious tradition, I long for the time when four black people, three of them women, will sit on the stand as General Authorities at General Conference. No reason exists in Mormon doctrine, I believe, to prevent full priesthood participation by women with every office and calling in the Church being open to them. This profound visual message would transcend in immediate healing power every sermon ever given in our holy house, the Mormon Tabernacle.

Carl Jung taught that we all have within us elements of both masculinity and femininity. Although our psyches seem to form themselves, more or less, congruently with our biological sexuality, I accept the reality of this inner duality. Jung personalized this feminine presence within a male as the anima. Within women the masculine or contrasexual presence is the animus.

I met my anima recently through active imagination. I had previously dreamt of a graying brunette woman, strikingly beautiful. During my imaginative experience, I encountered her again. She seemed to be my guide into the world of the unconscious. She was not the image of God. For me, a male, the *Imago Dei* is male. But she is my way into subjective spirituality, into those parts of my unconscious mind that are accessible to me. I learned that I could reenter that room in my previous dream at will and converse with the beautiful woman.

Whether in a positive or a negative way, we all project elements from inside ourselves outward, onto people and things in the objective world. We do this positively to learn and to gain perspective by distancing ourselves from our own parts. We do this negatively by projecting characteristics that we will not acknowledge as our own onto another person, then responding with fear, anger, or repugnance.

By withdrawing our projections, we acknowledge elements of our own psyche that have been suppressed unrecognized into the part of our unconscious that Jung termed *the shadow.* We may acknowledge, nurture, and embrace our animus/anima and our shadow in meditation and in listening prayer and, in so doing, approach our center. The alternative is a psyche dangerously polarized and fragmented. John Sanford, a contemporary Episcopal priest and Jungian analyst, put it this way:

> The union of the personality is represented in the imagery of the unconscious as a great love affair. The opposites within us are so far apart that only the great unifying power of eros can bring them together. This can be said to be the common denomination, the basic psychological fact, in all love affairs, and for the person who wishes to become whole it is the great underlying factor that can never be disregarded. (1980, 89)

In 1955, Emma Jung wrote:

> In our time, when such threatening forces of cleavage are at work, splitting peoples, individuals, and atoms, it is clearly necessary that those which unite and hold together should become effective: for life is founded on the harmonious interplay of masculine and feminine forces, within the individual human being as well as without. . . . Bringing these opposites into union is one of the most important tasks of present-day psychotherapy. (1955, 87)

Jesus taught that we must love ourselves. I am convinced that a vital part of such self-love is our acceptance and love of our contrasexual self. By "love," I do not mean simply rational dialogue with our unconscious. The anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* understood. "By love may He be gotten and holden; but by thought neither" (1952, 14). For this reason, mystics of all ages often expressed their spiritual union with God in erotic imagery. Witness the Song of Solomon, or the writings of Lady Julian of Norwich.

Our relations with those of the opposite sex are vital to our growth and our loving capacity. But pain may be the cost. Jung noted that marriage, like individuation, was not a course away from pain, but precisely the reverse: "Seldom, or perhaps never, does a marriage develop into an individual rela-

tionship smoothly and without crisis; there is no coming to consciousness without pain" (1928, 193). Within and without, the reconciliation of our sexuality is at the center of psychological wholeness, our individuation, awakening with the likeness of God.

RECONCILIATION WITH THE BODY

> What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you . . . ? Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit. (1 Cor. 6:19–20)

Jung offered three profound criticisms of Christianity (Dourley 1984): its subjugation of the feminine; its denigration of the physical body as inferior to — or less real than — the world of the spirit; and our Manichaean-like separation of good and evil without sensing the creative tension in holding this polarity in equipoise. He felt that this deemphasis on physical reality was understandable as the early church did combat with the Roman empire's debased moral and spiritual values. But without jeopardizing that Christian vision of a moral order, Jung believed we must bring the human body into harmony, finding an equilibrium between spirit and body, discovering both full individuation and the inner image of God.

Jung's position seems consistent with modern medicine and all we know of human psychology. Repression or denial of our humanity cannot lead to robust spirituality. Early church fathers taught that the human spirit was physical although more subtle or refined than the body. Surely the Christian faith, based on the revelation of an incarnate God, should be the first, not last, to recognize the reality and the holiness of the physical body.

George MacDonald, a Scottish novelist and poet, sensed this a century ago:

> It is by the body that we come into contact with Nature, with our fellow-men, with all their revelations of God to us. It is through the body that we receive all the lessons of passion, of suffering, of love, of beauty, of science. It is through the body that we are both trained outwards from ourselves and driven inwards into our deepest selves to find God. There is glory and might in this vital evanescence, this slow glacier-like flow of clothing and revealing matter, this ever uptossed rainbow of tangible humanity. It is no less of God's making than the spirit that is clothed therein. (1872, 238)

Unless we believe that our spirit dies in mortal death and then resumes life at the resurrection, what other message did Jesus mean by emphasizing as he did the physical nature of the resurrection? He appeared in a locked room to the disciples and said, "Behold, my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

God is our Father and Creator. He made us as we are, our physical bodies no less than our souls. His Son took flesh in a physical body which he repossessed after death, walking, talking, inviting his disciples to touch him, even eating fish with them to cement the point.

George Appleton puts it this way:

> It is as a body that I am most aware of myself, and my strongest and most elemental instincts are directed to satisfy the needs and desires of the body. The body is

> a wonderful organism — breathing, circulation of the blood, digestion and sewage, sexual feeling and the capacity for union and the procreation of children. The body has a marked effect on the feeling tone of its owner. It is an integral part of our being; it is basically good because given us by God. It must be the servant of the total personality through which the person expresses himself in demeanor and behavior. (1976, 15)

Jung says that the unconscious will attempt to compensate for an imbalance in our lives. If we ignore the body, we may experience some form of psychosomatic illness or another attempt by our unconscious to restore the balance. The answer is not to supplant spirituality with licentiousness, nor to deny the body in physical self-abnegation, but rather to reach for a balance in our quest for individuation. By listening to our body, by respecting and loving our body, we allow a dialogue between our physical and spiritual selves so that we may achieve and maintain a balance. This balance is the reconciliation we seek.

Reconciliation and the Subjectivity of Evil: The Love of Enemies

> First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. (Matt. 7:5)

I believe that evil, like God, has an objective, transcendent existence. That is, evil exists outside of me. Once in a while we experience consummate evil; Nazi aggressors in World War II, perhaps, represent such external reality. But it seems to me that the subjectivity of evil is far more serious. A Manichaean view of the world as clearly good or clearly evil is difficult to maintain. The War of 1870, World War I, and wars in Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, Nicaragua, and El Salvador do not allow such simplification. Instead, individual stupidity, greed, and fear — especially fear — were evident in abundance among every faction.

So much that we call evil is a fragment of our own soul — unacknowledged, disowned, and suppressed into our unconscious shadow, there to be projected onto another. Jung explained:

> If you imagine someone who is brave enough to withdraw all his projections, then you get an individual who is conscious of a pretty thick shadow. Such a man has saddled himself with new problems and conflicts. He has become a serious problem to himself, as he is now unable to say that *they* do this or that, *they* are wrong, and *they* must be fought against. . . . Such a man knows that whatever is wrong in the world is in himself, and if he only learns to deal with his own shadow he has done something real for the world. He has succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesimal part of the gigantic, unsolved social problems of our day. (n.d.)

The problem is the paradigm. Do we choose to see the world, and our own souls, as possessing both good and evil, to be held in equipoise; or do we see a battle without quarter or restraint of means to the extermination of one by the other? Here the Catholic Church has wisdom to offer our young Protestant brothers and sisters. Some sorts of wisdom come only through the distillation of time over centuries. Catholic art: paintings and sculpture; philosophy;

literature; and tolerance — surely not always present or at least dominant — nevertheless reflect such insight into human foibles and fallibility.

One of the early struggles of Christian history was between the Manichaeans and St. Augustine. The Manichaeans saw good and evil as absolutely separate. Augustine was too wise for such single-mindedness. Yet thereafter, we seem in each generation to repeat this same debate.

A wise friend, Richard Rohr (1986), the noted Franciscan retreat master, related the insight of Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares, which concludes by instructing the farmer to let the wheat and tares grow together until maturity. From the Sunday school class of my youth, I would have been pulling up tares in every direction lest I get pimples, hair in unwanted places, and lose all natural body fluids. Now, along with my brother Richard, I see the tares of my youth as the wheat of my life, and surely the wheat of my youth is the tares of my life.

The subjectivity of evil is the psychological reality behind the spiritual principle of loving one's enemy. Indeed, if we could obliterate evil by a gigantic effort and thereafter live free from pain, grief, travail, and tragedy, and somehow progress without pain toward the image of God, we would be fools not to do battle to the death with evil. But it doesn't work that way.

I do not doubt that a malevolent force exists and means us harm. But I also know that God shapes life to work serendipitously toward our healing and wholeness. Dark forces within us, however unintentional, in dialogue with the self, can produce good. In Goethe's *Faust*, when Mephistopheles is asked who he is, he replies, "A part of that power which always wills the evil and always works the good" (in McIntyre 1941, 91). And Wordsworth said, "A deep distress hath humanised my Soul" (1966, 4:259).

The Book of Mormon prophet Lehi perceived this vision and instructed his son: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, . . . righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad" (2 Ne. 2:11). He saw the fall of Adam and Eve as premised on this principle: "It must needs be that there was an opposition; even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life. . . . The Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself" (2 Ne. 2:15–16).

Swiss philosopher Henry Frederic Amiel said, "Sorrow is the most tremendous of all realities in the sensible world, but the transfiguration of sorrow after the manner of Christ is a more beautiful solution of the problem than the extirpation of sorrow" (1918, 285).

Amy Carmichael's words are appropriate for our Lenten season, with her double meaning of "lent" intended:

> Sorrow is one of the things that are lent, not given. A thing that is lent may be taken away; a thing that is given is not taken away. Joy is given; sorrow is lent. We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and our sorrow is not our own, . . . it is lent to us for just a little while that we may use it for eternal purposes. Then it will be taken away and everlasting joy will be our Father's gift to us, and the Lord God will wipe away all tears from off all faces. So let us use this *lent* thing to draw us nearer to the heart of Him who was once a Man of sorrows. (He is not that now, but He does not forget the feeling of sorrow.) Let us use it to make us more tender

> with others, as He was when on earth and is still for He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (1955, 193)

The reality seems to be that the dark and light of our souls are so inextricably blended together that destroying one destroys the other. For Jung, our shadow possesses those characteristics that are integrally our own but that the ego has rejected during its development and socialization. The shadow for Jung is not consummate evil, although evil may proceed from the shadow. Our vitality, our energy, and our power may reside in the shadow along with much of our creativity. As our conscious self, our ego, confronts and acknowledges the shadow, we disarm evil, but we do not obliterate it. Surrender of our shadow's elements, even if possible, would be disastrous for our peace, objectively and subjectively. Our growth to wholeness as we move toward God's image demands dialogue, not death.

It is from this understanding that we make sense of the seemingly senseless teaching of every spiritual master: the injunction to love our enemies. When my enemy is within me, I can destroy him only by destroying myself. When my enemy is without, I corrupt myself by using means incompatible with my life to destroy him. Paul admonished that we "not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). My enemy possesses characteristics that make him indistinguishable from myself. Even after I destroy him, he will resurrect in yet more fearful form. Nobel novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn, speaker of uncomfortable truths to both East and West, understood this point: "If only it were so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the dividing line between good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being, and who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?" (in Forest 1988, preface).

Martin Buber said, "One shall not kill 'the evil impulse,' the passion in oneself, but one should serve God with it; it is the power which is destined to receive its direction from man" (1948, 71).

Reconciliation through dialogue is the only way. Jesus taught, "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44). Mohandas Gandhi said:

> It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business. . . .
>
> A non-violent revolution is not a program of "seizure of power." It is a program of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power. . . .
>
> I have only three enemies. My favorite enemy, the one most easily influenced for the better, is the British nation. My second enemy, the Indian people, is far more difficult. But my most formidable opponent is a man named Mohandas K. Gandhi. With him I seemed to have little influence. (1949, 249, 8, 249)

Martin Luther King, Jr., before sealing his witness with his blood, enunciated the same powerful truth: "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our ability to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. We will not hate you, but we cannot, in good conscience, obey

your unjust laws . . . and in winning our freedom, we will win you in the process" (1963, 40).

This element — not simply accomplishing a political objective by nonviolence but rather a dialogue with the enemy until enemy becomes friend and both perceive a clearer truth — was the linchpin in Gandhi's search for truth. It represents the same vital factor of dialogue and equipoise Jung perceived in the inner cosmos of our subjectivity.

CONCLUSION: CONVERSION AND RECONCILIATION

> Jesus: The kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:21)
>
> Buddha: We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world. (in Byron 1976)
>
> Albert Einstein: The most beautiful and profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the power of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand wrapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms — this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness. (in Barnett 1949, 95)

If humankind has hope — and I believe firmly we do — then transformation must be within or it will never happen without. Monsignor William H. McDougall, a Roman Catholic clergyman, sensed this need for transformation. In the revised edition of his second book, *By Eastern Windows*, he noted, "All of the values we are promoting in [the American Catholic Bishops' Peace Pastoral] letter rest ultimately in the disarmament of the human heart and conversion of the human spirit to God" (in Weigand 1988).

Carl Jung observed the same:

> Today humanity, as never before, is split into two apparently irreconcilable halves. The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate. That is to say, when the individual remains undivided and does not become conscious of his inner contradictions, the world must perforce act out the culprit and be torn into opposite halves. (1953, 9:70–71)

For Jung, the answer was individuation: a state of compensatory dialogue between the ego and the unconscious that propels us toward the image of God. I would use the more conventional religious term of conversion. Without conversion or individuation no legal or governmental constraints in the objective world can save us from destruction. The outer world simply reflects the reconciliation — or its lack — within. In that sense, subjectively we create the objective world:

> The great events of world history are, at bottom, profoundly unimportant. In the last analysis, the essential thing is the life of the individual. . . . This alone makes history, here alone do the great transformations first take place, and the whole future, the whole history of the world, ultimately springs as a gigantic summation from these hidden sources in individuals. In our most private and most subjective lives we are not only the passive witnesses of our age, and its sufferers, but also its makers. We make our own epoch. (1953, 10:149)

But Jung held out hope for such transformations, beginning within each individual. "The afternoon of humanity, in a distant future, may yet evolve a different ideal. In time, even conquest will cease to be a dream" (1953, 11:493).

Albert Schweitzer also spoke to that hope:

> We are no longer content . . . to believe in the Kingdom that comes of itself at the end of time. Mankind today must either realise the kingdom of God or perish. The question before it is whether we will use for beneficial purposes or for purposes of destruction the power that modern science has placed in its hands. So long as its capacity for destruction was limited, it was possible to hope that reason would set a limit to disaster. Such an illusion is impossible today, when power is illimitable. Our only hope is that the spirit of God will strive with the sprit of the world and will prevail. . . .
>
> The miracle must happen in us before it can happen in the world. . . . Nothing can be achieved without inwardness. The spirit of God will only strive against the spirit of the world when it has won its victory over that spirit in our hearts. (in Mozley 1950, 107–8)

Hermann Hesse reminds us Christians that this phenomenon exists in every serious religious tradition:

> What then can give rise to a true spirit of peace on earth? Not commandments and not practical experience. Like all human progress, the love of peace must come from knowledge. . . . It is the knowledge of the living substance in us, in each of us, in you and me, of the secret magic, the secret godliness that each of us bears within him. It is the knowledge that, starting from this innermost point, we can at all times transcend all pairs of opposites, transforming white into black, evil into good, night into day. The Indians call it "Atman," the Chinese "Tao," Christians call it "grace." When the supreme knowledge is present (as in Jesus, Buddha, Plato, or Lao-Tse), a threshold is crossed beyond which miracles begin. There war and enmity cease. We can read of it in the New Testament and in the discourses of Gautama. Anyone who is so inclined can laugh at it and call it "introverted rubbish," but to one who has experienced it his enemy becomes his brother, death becomes birth, disgrace honor, calamity good fortune. Each thing on earth discloses itself twofold, as "of this world" and not of this world. But this world means what is "outside us." Everything that is outside us can become enemy, danger, fear and death. The light dawns with the experience that this entire "outward" world is not only an object of our perception but at the same time the creation of our soul, with the transformation of all outward into inward things, of the world into the self. (1971, 59–60)

Before consciousness is undifferentiated unity. Then comes separation into consciousness as we assert an identity apart from God. There follows further fracturing as we separate not only into conscious and unconscious parts, into worlds of objectivity and subjectivity, but yet farther apart as male and female, body, intellect, and spirit. Then in the physical world we subdivide endlessly into family, tribe, race, nation, and religious tradition. But finally a reconciliation begins.

Call it what you will — conversion, individuation, a rise of social consciousness — it is here that reconciliation between polarities occurs. Charles Peguy, a French writer, observed, "Everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics" (1943, 109). We discover the integral unitary system that comprises

the physical cosmos and the interior of our soul. Unification of the physical world and the world of psyche and spirit is not something we need to accomplish, only something we need to discover.

We may make this discovery through compassionate service in the objective world, as have Dorothy Day, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King. Such service teaches us our enormous common humanity that dwarfs the vital but less central characteristics distinguishing us. We sense our common aspirations, our human needs and impulses, and the stamp of divinity within us that makes us brothers and sisters and propels us toward God. We may make the same discovery by meditation and contemplation, comprehending God's image at our center, or by Jungian depth psychology, by which our conscious self or ego enters into dialogue with those parts of our personal unconscious available to us through dreams, meditation, Christian and non-Christian mysticism. Archetypes of the collective unconscious, which possess the numinosity of God, communicate with our ego to compensate for the one-sidedness of the latter, attempting to provide a gyroscope of the spirit as we proceed toward individuation and a realization of the image of God.

Thomas Merton, perhaps this century's most profound and most honored Christian mystic, described this journey in the traditional language of interior Christianity, from St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, and Lady Julian of Norwich, to Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme, Evelyn Underhill, or Dag Hammarskjold.

After an early period of contemplative life in the Trappist abbey in Gethsemani, Kentucky, memorialized in his brilliant early autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, Merton experienced conversion. His record of this occasion is a classic in Christian confession, every bit as honest, insightful, and numinous as the best of St. Augustine in his *Confessions*. Merton had gone from the abbey in Gethsemani to Louisville, the nearest city, for medical treatment:

> In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the centre of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed by the realization that I loved all these people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, or spurious isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness. The whole illusion of a separate holy existence is a dream. . . . This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud. . . . It is a glorious destiny to be a member of the human race, though it is a race dedicated to many absurdities and one which makes terrible mistakes: yet, with all that, God Himself gloried in becoming a member of the human race. A member of the human race! To think that such a commonplace realization should suddenly seem like news that one holds the winning ticket in a cosmic sweepstake. . . . There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. . . . There are no strangers. . . . If only we could see each other [as we really are] all the time, there would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed. . . . I suppose the big problem is that we would fall down and worship each other. . . . The gate of heaven is everywhere. (1966, 156–58)

Other mystics have clothed the same thought in different words. Francis Thompson, a Victorian English poet, wrote:

> The angels keep their ancient places;
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
> That miss the many-splendored thing.
>
> But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
> Cry — and upon thy so sore loss
> Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
> Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross. (1965, 349)

Leo Tolstoy recorded his own conversion in words reminiscent of Richard Rohr's rendition of the parable of the wheat and tares.

> Five years ago, I came to believe in Christ's teaching, and my life suddenly changed; I ceased to desire what I had previously desired, and began to desire what I formerly did not want. What had previously seemed to me good seemed evil, and what had seemed evil seemed good. It happens to me as it happens to a man who goes out on some business and on the way suddenly decides that the business is unnecessary and returns home. All that was on his right is now on his left, and all that was on his left is now on his right. (1921, 103)

John Woolman, an American Quaker in the nineteenth century, rejoiced:

> While I silently ponder on that change wrought in me, I find no language equal to convey to another a clear idea of it. I looked upon the works of God in this visible creation, and an awfulness covered me. My heart was tender and often contrite, and universal love to my fellow creatures increased in me. This will be understood by such as have trodden the same path. Some glances of real beauty may be seen in their faces, who dwell in true meekness. (1910, 6–7)

This then is our quest. From unconscious unity to the pain of consciousness and separation, out of the Garden of Eden into consciousness and moral responsibility, then back into a union that never really ended. Just days before his death, Merton said, "We are already one, but we imagine that we are not. What we have to recover is our original unity" (1973, 308).

We seek reconciliation within, which allows reconciliation without. Within and without become one as I pull into myself all that is without. Within my own soul I become male and female, Mormon and Catholic, Jew, Muslim, and Hindu, Soviet and American, black, brown, and white.

Remember Gandhi's instructions to the Hindu who had murdered a Muslim after the murder of his own wife and child. Gandhi instructed the shattered man to adopt and raise a Muslim child — but to raise the child as a Muslim. Thus the shattered man might become whole.

Love is not found in creeds or ideas but in people. The inner journey allows ecumenicism because it cannot prevent it. No church or religious tradition stands at the entrance as the protector and definer of orthodoxy when the door is in my own soul. Hence we effortlessly pass over obstructions to unity in the objective world. Merton said, "It is my belief that we should not be too

sure of having found Christ until we have found Him in that part of humanity that is most remote from our own" (in Forest 1988, 25).

In this Lenten season we pray for reconciliation throughout our globe and within the cosmos of our souls. This is the message of the intercessory prayer of Jesus:

> Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word;
>
> That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
>
> And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. (John 17:20–22)

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

This issue features the work of Andrew Whitlock, a photographer, adjunct professor for the Utah State University Art Department, and current associate curator for the Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art at Utah State University.

Whitlock says of the photographic essay presented here:

"I'm a member of a unique brotherhood bonded by disillusion, despair, chance, exhaustion, shock, aftershock, wounds, and death. That brotherhood, abandoned and branded, came "home" from Vietnam to fight a second war — an inner war.

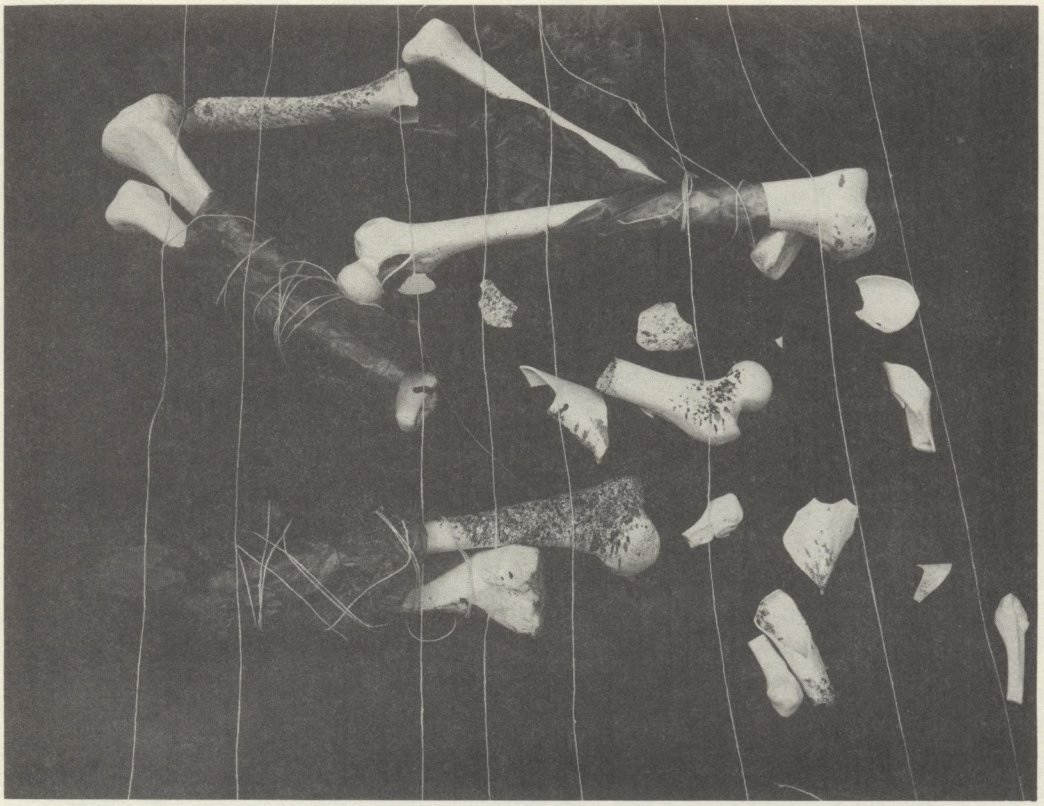
"I both believe and epitomize the image of returned Vietnam veterans whose war continues. Now after almost two decades, I have found a means of facing that wrenching time of instant transformation from boy to man. These are my photographs born of implausible reality, nightmares, flashbacks, and sleepless nights.

"Each photograph is an unearthing of some small corner of my past experiences — combined with symbolic items and hand-colorized silver prints to help interpret a time and prolonged event incomprehensible to both the participants and those who avoided and/or, ignored that war.

"I use red, violet, and purple, along with yellow, and the colors of the Vietnam Service Medal.

"Consciously I am trying, to be aware of some things, but I think that I have a lot of subconscious pulling out, and I am dwelling on the past experiences that I'm not totally aware of, until that work is pretty well in the making.

"The changes have not been easy. The years since have been difficult, and I'm still working on resolving the inner war. The photography is helping."



REVIEWS

Mormondom's Second Greatest King

King of Beaver Island: The Life and Assassination of James Jesse Strang by Roger Van Noord (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), xii, 335 pp., $24.95.

Reviewed by William D. Russell, chairperson of the division of social science at Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa, and past president of the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association.

In the fall of 1971, Roger Van Noord, a reporter for the *Flint Journal*, went hunting with two friends on Beaver Island, Michigan. When the leader of the Beaver Island Historical Society showed them what he claimed to be the robe and crown used in James Strang's coronation ceremony in 1850, Van Noord became interested in this prophet and king of one faction of post-martyrdom Mormonism.

Van Noord's subsequent study of Strang's career resulted in this book. It is a successful, well-documented biography, the first significant book-length study of Strang since Milo M. Quaife's now-dated *Kingdom of Saint James* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1930). While the author has not consulted all the secondary sources, he seems to have examined virtually all extant primary sources. Van Noord used the three most important collections of Strangite materials — at Yale University, the Detroit Public Library, and Central Michigan State University — as well as the collections of the LDS and RLDS churches, the National Archives, and the state historical societies of Wisconsin and Michigan.

The portrait of Strang that emerges is not fundamentally different from that given by previous non-Strangite writers. We see a young atheist with dreams of royalty. Converted to Mormonism a few months before Joseph Smith's death, he claimed to be Smith's successor by producing the famous "letter of appointment" from the Prophet, announcing a divine visitation on the day of Smith's murder, and unearthing the alleged Rajah Manchou Plates. Subsequent revelations strengthened his claim that he was the prophet God wanted to lead the Mormon movement. After all, he insisted, what revelations had Brigham Young produced? The Strangites came to use the words of a popular Mormon hymn as a taunt: "A church without a prophet,/ is not the church for me;/ It has no head to lead it,/ in it I would not be" (p. 37).

But while most earlier studies focus on Strang's leadership of a community of saints in Wisconsin, the bulk of Van Noord's book concentrates on the Beaver Island years of his political career. This is where Van Noord makes a major contribution to our knowledge of Strang. LDS and RLDS historians have been more interested in the early years of Strang's career as religious leader, when he set forth most of his religious ideas, and in the nature of his claims

to be Smith's successor. But by 1851, Strang was established on Beaver Island, had been crowned king, was engaging in polygamy despite his early opposition to it, and had published his *Book of the Law of the Lord.* While the final years of his career, culminating in his 1856 assassination, may be less significant to LDS and RLDS church history, they are more interesting as Michigan history.

Van Noord concentrates on the economic and political opposition that Strang encountered from Gentiles, the legal actions against the Strangite Mormons, and Strang's reasonably successful political career. Although he did not achieve his ambition of being governor of Utah Territory, Strang was elected as a Democrat to the Michigan legislature. A newspaper usually hostile to Strang, *The Detroit Advertiser,* wrote that as a legislator, his "standing for influence, tact, intelligence, ability and integrity was second to none" (p. 194). Another newspaper called him the most talented debater in the House. After the Republican Party was organized in 1854 and took control of the legislature, however, Strang's political influence waned.

What motivated this unique Mormon prophet/king? According to Van Noord,

> The most credible explanation is that after the death of his daughter in 1843, Strang realized his life span was limited and his goals might never be accomplished. However, when he viewed the power and promise of Joseph Smith and the Mormon church, his dreams of royalty and empire were rekindled. With Smith's assassination Strang saw his opening and, in a bold bid, presented himself as Smith's successor. In debater's terms, he assumed the affirmative position of prophet and presented his proof: the letter of appointment, the visit by an angel, the brass plates, the testimony of witnesses — the latter with precedents in Smith's career. Based on the evidence, it is probable that Strang — or someone under his direction — manufactured the letter of appointment and the brass plates to support his claim to be a prophet and to sell land at Voree" (pp. 273–74).

Strang lay dying for some three weeks without naming a successor. His church dwindled, but even today a few hundred Strangites remain, still hoping that one day God will call a successor to the prophet who was one of America's rare kings.

Twin Contributions

Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847–1869 by Eugene E. Campbell. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988, ix, 346 pp., $20.95.

Richard W. Sadler is a professor of history at Weber State College in Ogden, Utah.

WHILE GENE CAMPBELL lived through much of the twentieth century (1915–86), the focus of much of his historical research and interest was the nineteenth century. His earlier research and writing on Brigham Young, Fort Bridger, Fort Supply, Mormon colonization in the West, and polygamy all served as foundation stones for what he no doubt considered to be the capstone of his career, *Establishing Zion.*

During virtually all of his professional career, Campbell was employed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He began as a seminary teacher in Magna and later became an Institute of Religion instructor and director in Logan. From 1956 until 1980, he was a member of the history faculty at Brigham Young University, serving part of this time as chair of the department. Although well known throughout his professional career of nearly four decades for his sense of humor and easy-going manner, he was best known for his uncompromising search for historical truths. On one occasion in describing his method of teaching he said, "I will never knowingly teach my students something they will have to 'unlearn' later on" (p. ix).

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Establishing Zion is not a history of Utah or of the Great Basin, but rather a history of the growth of Mormonism in those areas between 1847 and 1869. From time to time Campbell focuses on the larger scene of western history, setting the stage for discussions about mining, settlement, and territorial expansion. He does not discuss Mormon immigration from Europe or generally from the eastern United States but rather concentrates on the growth and development of Zion in the West. The book was published two years after Campbell's death, and the publisher's forward suggests that Campbell had completed research on the manuscript by the end of 1982 and had "virtually finished writing by 1984–85."

While nineteen chapters, photographs and maps, and a bibliography and index all serve to make this a handsome volume and an important contribution to Utah and Mormon history, the lack of footnotes is a flaw that must be laid at the doorstep of the publisher. Including footnotes would have required an extensive effort by the publisher, but such an addition would have immeasurably increased the book's value to both general readers and historians. With footnotes this volume would indeed have been the capstone of Campbell's career. As the book is, it is often impossible to trace quotations, used widely throughout the volume, to a specific reference in the bibliography. Campbell and the public could have been better served.

While chronicling the first two trying decades of colonization in the Great Basin, Campbell describes the colonization process, the lure of California gold, relationships with Indians, religious developments including polygamy, the Mormon Reformation, the Utah War, economic development of Zion, and the Civil War. Campbell seems interested in having the Latter-day Saints and their experiences viewed from various angles, exposing and exploring the divergent views produced by differing historical documents. He notes that irrigation, although widely practiced by the Saints, did not originate with them; they had observed its practice in Lebanon, the Holy Land, Syria, Egypt, the Great Basin, and in old and new Mexico. Campbell details the Saints' early irrigation and agricultural experiments in the Great Basin, including the seagull and cricket "miracle" of 1848, and notes:

> Although little was said about the role of the gulls in saving the crops at the time, the inspirational aspects of the episode were emphasized over time until it came to be regarded as a unique incident in Mormon history. Such an interpretation ignores the fact that gulls and other birds returned regularly each spring to Mormon settlements, devouring crickets, grasshoppers, worms, and other insects. But the episode was providential to the colonists who needed food. (p. 30)

Campbell's recounting of this incident is typical of his approach — he seeks historical truths with balance and with empathy.

When discussing colonization, Campbell suggests, as he has done in earlier articles, that outer colonies — Idaho's Salmon River country, Nevada's Carson Valley, Las Vegas, San Bernardino, and the Colorado crossing at Elk Mountain — were all generally unsuccessful. He maintains that as early as April of 1857, Young was willing to give up the "Mormon Corridor" to the Pacific because it was much easier to charter immigration ships from Europe to the eastern United States than to California, the railroad was being extended, and Congress had rejected the State of Deseret with its proposed Pacific ports. Saints were becoming increasingly more attached to the Great Basin, and Young also felt that the Saints could never "dominate" and thus survive in the San Bernardino area. Campbell notes that "like many great leaders, Brigham Young was responsible for both the church's successes and failures" (p. 146).

Establishing Zion reads well and is very much a "people's" history of Zion, recounting the lives and difficulties of the common folk as well as the decisions and changes effected by Church leaders. Camp-

bell's love of the people and of this era are apparent. There is, however, little evidence that Campbell utilized recent research (since 1978) in either the text or the bibliography. The volume does give readers new insights into the era of the establishment of Zion in the West. It also serves as evidence that the historical community is much better off for having known Gene Campbell.

Latter-day Saints, Lawyers, and the Legal Process

Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900 by Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 430 pp., $27.50.

Reviewed by Michael W. Homer, an attorney practicing in Salt Lake City, Utah.

THE ATTITUDE OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY Latter-day Saints toward lawyers and the legal process is well documented and has been widely discussed ever since Joseph Smith studied law hoping to be admitted to the bar. What has not been completely understood, until the publication of this book, is the role played by the Church's ecclesiastical courts in Mormon jurisprudence in the nineteenth century.

Firmage and Mangrum's book is divided into three parts. The first two, entitled "Early Mormon Legal Experience" and "A Turbulent Co-existence: Church and State Relations in Utah," comprise approximately 70 percent of the book. Here the authors rely almost entirely on readily available published source materials, drawing heavily from secondary sources and making no claim that their summary reinterprets the Church's attitude toward the legal process or church-state relations. Nevertheless, these sections are valuable additions to Mormon history, containing the first comprehensive legal history of Mormonism.

The most significant contribution of the book is Part 3, "The Ecclesiastical Court System of the Great Basin." This section analyzes Church court decisions not previously available to scholars, used with special permission by Firmage and Mangrum. The authors demonstrate that Church courts during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries dealt with a wide range of subjects, including land disputes, water rights, domestic conflicts, contract disputes, tortious conduct, and other subjects now resolved by civil courts. These courts were central to the Church's goal of establishing Zion or the "kingdom of God"; they had exclusive jurisdiction over Church members involved in civil disputes (those attempting to resolve such disputes in the civil courts were subject to excommunication), and they offered an alternative to the divisive influence of the adversarial civil legal system the Saints detested. The ecclesiastical courts enabled the Saints to resolve social conflicts using their own notions of community and temporal affairs (p. 261).

The authors claim that Church court records demonstrate that high council decisions were remarkably uniform, relying extensively on scripture and instructions from Church leaders (p. 290). Unfortunately the court decisions discussed remain unavailable to scholars; they are unpublished, and the authors have not included the names of the litigants. This makes it extremely difficult to meaningfully evaluate their conclusions.

Nevertheless, some of the authors' conclusions about the legal process in Utah Territory are questionable. For example, they contend that the Church firmly believed in the separation of church and state and that even though the municipal high councils of the Church exercised both civil and ecclesiastical authority in the State of Deseret from 1846 to 1849, the merging of

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Church and state during this brief period was "out of necessity rather than theological preference" (p. 126). The authors base this conclusion on the Salt Lake High Council's voluntary relinquishment of its jurisdiction in the city administration and the establishment of the provisional State of Deseret with legislative, judicial, and executive branches similar to those in other state and territorial governments. Even though the ecclesiastical court system remained after the municipal high councils were dissolved and had exclusive jurisdiction over disputes between Church members, the authors maintain that the "Mormons deferred to secular courts in criminal affairs and in civil disputes with nonmembers" (p. 24) and that the ecclesiastical courts were meant to deal only with disputes between Church members (pp. 24, 214).

Yet there is little or no evidence that the Saints deferred to secular courts (at least those controlled by non-Mormons) in criminal cases and in civil disputes with nonmembers. Firmage and Mangrum pay little attention to the Church's attempt to enlarge the jurisdiction of the probate courts to include both civil and criminal jurisdiction and to funnel all criminal cases and disputes between members and nonmembers alike into the Mormon-controlled probate courts rather than the federal judicial system. The authors do note that Church members avoided the federal courts because of the poor caliber of territorial judges. Yet they ignore other important reasons, including the non-Mormon judges' attempts to apply the common law in Utah Territory during the nineteenth century.

The authors point out that applying the common law first became an issue in the murder trial of Howard Egan before Judge Snow and that during the territorial period, the Saints fought against legislation adopting the common law for the territory (p. 217). But the authors do not discuss the Territorial Supreme Court's ruling that the English common law was to be applied in the territory. Because of this act alone, the Saints sought to remove Chief Justice John Fitch Kinney and other judges who had participated in the decision, even though before that time the Mormons and the judges had enjoyed apparently good relations. The common law provided the federal judges with a legal basis, beyond legislative enactments of the Mormon-dominated legislature, upon which to base their decisions, effectively undermining Church authority in the territory.

Firmage and Mangrum draw no distinction between the Saints' rhetoric about separation of church and state and their simultaneous belief that the Church leaders should have control of both. The evidence suggests that the Saints used the civil mechanisms of government to strengthen their own religious structure during the governorship of Brigham Young. Although the State of Deseret was organized with three branches of government, separate and distinct from the Church, it is also true that Brigham Young was governor, Heber C. Kimball was chief justice and other Church officials held most of the seats in the legislative assembly. During the pre-territorial period, civil authorities did not hesitate to use the civil government under their control to advance the cause of Zion, adorning laws with religious values.

When Utah was made a territory instead of a state in 1850, the Saints were disappointed, not because the government structure was different from their State of Deseret but because outsiders could now control at least two branches of the civil government. Yet, for almost eight years during the territorial period, the Saints were able to effectively control all three branches of government. Brigham Young was governor until 1858, even though President Franklin Pierce had attempted to replace him on several occasions.

The judiciary remained under Mormon control largely because of frequently vacated non-Mormon positions on the court (admittedly prompted and encouraged by some Church members), leaving control of the courts in the hands of Mormon ap-

pointees or those non-Mormons content to apply Mormon standards in their courtrooms. Furthermore, the legislature during this period expanded the jurisdiction of the probate courts, allowing Church members to have their cases heard in civil courts presided over by Mormon judges.

Thus, the Latter-day Saints believed in the separation of church and state, as long as they controlled both. When in control, they mingled religious influence with civil government; when they lost control, they discouraged, even under the pain of excommunication, participation in civil government and devised ways to resolve disputes outside the government, using their religious values instead of commonly recognized civil principles.

Firmage and Mangrum conclude that their study demonstrates that, contrary to traditional Mormon historiography, Latter-day Saints continued to seek the "kingdom of God" after the Manifesto of 1890 and into the twentieth century (see pp. xvii, 263, 311, 379–80 n. 1). This conclusion is not new. In his *Great Basin Kingdom*, the pre-eminent economic history of the Church in the nineteenth century, Leonard Arrington wrote: "Despite interferences, both natural and human, the Church and its members adhered stubbornly to 'revealed' policy until to continue to do so would have brought consequences worse than leaving the Kingdom" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958, pp. 410–11). Arrington pointed out how changes occurred after the 1890 Manifesto (pp. 380–409), and that Latter-day Saints continue to believe in the eventual realization of Zion through Church participation in the world of business and government.

In another important work, *Quest for Empire*, Klaus J. Hansen wrote that having to abolish polygamy convinced "Church leaders to postpone attempts to establish [the kingdom of God] to an undetermined future." Subsequent changes, including Church leaders' abandonment of the need for paramount ecclesiastical authority in temporal affairs, assured Mormonism's transition into the twentieth century as an acceptable, even respected, American religion (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967, pp. 149–51). According to Hansen, political control over Church members did not pass from the hierarchy to civil authorities with the Manifesto, and Church leaders actively pursued the kingdom of God even into the twentieth century (pp. 178–79).

The records of the ecclesiastical courts, now brought to light by Firmage and Mangrum for the first time, support these and other historians who have concluded, without the benefit of these records, that the fight for the kingdom continued into the twentieth century.

Zion in the Courts begins a meaningful discussion of the role of the ecclesiastical courts in Church history. The authors are to be commended for their analysis of historical documents unavailable to historians. Readers interested in the Latter-day Saints' participation in the legal process and the precarious relationship between Saints and the so-called "gentiles" during the territorial period will find this book enlightening and worth the price.

A Double Dose of Revisionism

The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri by Stephen C. LeSueur (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 286 pp., $24.00, and *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852: "And Should We Die . . ."* by Richard E. Bennett (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 347 pp., $24.95.

Reviewed by Stanley B. Kimball, professor of history, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville.

EACH YEAR FIRST-CLASS PRESSES add to the growing number of excellent Mormon monographs. Twenty-nine major studies

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appeared in 1988 alone. These two volumes from the University of Missouri Press and the University of Oklahoma Press are worthy companions to the best of recent years.

LeSueur's revisionist study challenges many traditional ideas about the persecutions of the Saints in Missouri during the 1830s. He argues the Saints' own militancy, Zionist aspirations, prejudice, and poor judgment led to the "Mormon War" of the summer and fall of 1838 and the subsequent expulsion of the Mormons from Missouri into Illinois.

The author has not only used recently discovered sources, including journals, letters, petitions, and official documents but has elected to present a much-needed, detailed description of the Missourians' attitudes and activities. Many readers will disagree with LeSueur's sometimes negative and sharp criticism of Church leaders during this Missouri period, but these new interpretations deserve study and consideration. Although he refutes many LDS claims, he does so objectively, giving the verse and chapter of his evidence. (For a very recent and more traditional interpretation of the Missouri persecutions see Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts . . .*, [Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988], pp. 59–79; and Jesse and Whittaker, "The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri . . .," *BYU Studies* 28 [Winter 1988]: 5–41.)

LeSueur's definitive study of one of the most difficult and important periods in early Mormon history fills a major lacuna. His book is thoroughly researched and massively documented with 664 footnotes. (He did, however, miss some important documents in the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.) The book includes fifteen illustrations, two maps, and a bibliographic essay.

Although the Saints had been in Missouri since 1831, three developments in the spring and summer of 1838 led to their final denouement. First they began to gather in Missouri in greater numbers; second, a number of their members banded together in a secret, militant (Danite) society; and, finally, they adopted a belligerent stance against their perceived enemies outside the Church.

The role of the Danites is one of LeSueur's main topics, his black beast. He argues persuasively that despite belief and tradition, Joseph Smith and other Church leaders not only knew of the Danites, but approved of their organization and activities. Indeed, LeSueur goes so far as to write, "The Danites represented main stream Mormonism" (p. 46). Here LeSueur and I part company; I feel this view is an exaggeration.

Perhaps the author's most startling revisionism is Chapter 7, "The Mormons Retaliate," in which LeSueur's Mormons "loot," "confiscate," "set fire," "plunder," "threaten," commit "desperate crimes," and "gut Daviess County" — activities seldom mentioned in official Church histories and manuals.

Bennett's book is also a definitive, massively documented (978 notes) treatment of an important but little known and understood period in Mormon history — Winter Quarters. (It is much superior to the recent account of the same subject by Conrey Bryson.) The author's thesis is that much of what became peculiarly Mormon evolved at Winter Quarters. He terms it "Mormonism in the raw on the way to what it would be later in the century" (p. 169).

Most readers view the Winter Quarters period as a hiatus between the Nauvoo and the Salt Lake Valley experiences, a mere way station to be endured, a period when little of real import happened. Bennett carefully and compellingly shows the error of this assumption. He maintains that important economic, political, and theological developments crowded upon each other during this period: the Saints learned how better to deal with the U.S. government and the Indians; apostolic supremacy and succession were made firm; revelations were received, new patterns of worship imple-

mented, and a battalion raised; and of course, plans for the great trek west were formulated.

Readers will find some surprises in Bennett's account of just what Joseph Smith said and did not say about the Saints going west and just how much, or how little, Brigham Young knew about where the Church was to resettle there; furthermore, tables clarify some of the vexing demographic questions about the Winter Quarters era.

The first four of Bennett's fifteen chapters track the Saints to Winter Quarters and see them settled. The remaining chapters systematically and thoroughly treat different aspects of the Winter Quarters experience — Indians and Indian agents, economics, sickness and death, Mormon society on the frontier, social and religious life, re-establishment of the First Presidency, and the abandonment of Winter Quarters.

I wish the author had made more of the trek across Iowa and of the main 1848 departure from Winter Quarters, but these are hardly serious reservations. I thoroughly recommend both these monographs to all serious students of the Mormon scene, the exodus, American frontier communities, and Missouri trials.

On the Edge of Solipsism

The Edge of the Reservoir by Larry E. Morris (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 233 pp., $7.95.

Reviewed by Helen Beach Cannon, freelance writer, teacher of English composition at Utah State University, and an editorial associate of DIALOGUE.

COMPARISONS, THEY SAY, are odious, yet I find it difficult to comment on Larry E. Morris's new novel, *The Edge of the Reservoir*, without referring to Anne Tyler's latest novel, *Breathing Lessons* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988). That I happened to read the two books at roughly the same time may provide an unfair context for this review but may also fortuitously shed light on respective strengths and weaknesses.

First, consider a few striking similarities. Both *Breathing Lessons* and *The Edge of the Reservoir* are clearly domestic novels focused on middle-aged central characters given to fantasizing, probing memories of adolescent flames, and dwelling on mid-life losses and blunted passions. Both forge minimalist plots through funerals, child rearing, and the doldrums of daily life, both expose the silliness of marital quarrels, and, uncannily, both even conjure up the lyrics of fifties' and sixties' pop songs to hang their woes upon. Maggie Moran, the forty-eight-year-old protanognist of *Breathing Lessons*, has learned to read her taciturn husband's moods by the tunes he whistles. Early in their marriage, for example, after a quarrel, he had turned silent and left, whistling a tune whose words she later recalled: "I wonder if I care as much as I did before. . . ." When the marriage becomes less romantic, the words to his whistled tunes even relate to the task at hand; he whistles "This Old House" whenever he tackles a household repair job and "The Wichita Lineman" when he hangs out the clothes (p. 13).

Similarly, thirty-eight-year-old Ryan Masterson in *The Edge of the Reservoir* recalls how his high school love, Rose Richards, had loved Gene Pitney songs — "It Hurts to Be in Love," "I'm Gonna Be Strong," "Half-Heaven, Half Heartache." From these sentimental songs, he divines in Rose, for all her LDS optimism, a sense of the sad and the tragic.

Love lyrics from the fifties even play a part in a zany funeral scene in Tyler's book, and she has Maggie observe: "Why did popular songs always focus on romantic love? Why this preoccupation with first meetings, sad partings, honeyed kisses, heartbreak, when life was also full of children's births and trips to the shore and longtime jokes with friends? . . . It struck Maggie as disproportionate" (p. 64).

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Disproportionate. This word provides the key to an essential difference between the two books. While both novelists allow their characters utter freedom to fantasize, Maggie's imaginative flights are funny and wide-ranging while Ryan's dwell on ill-fated teen romance. Tyler's protagonist is aware of certain necessary losses — her girlish figure, her friends, romance, even her children's unquestioning love and respect. Though she notes these losses, she does not cynically, humorlessly agonize over them.

Ryan does. Disproportionately. From the book's first pages, he is despondent over losses. He bemoans the loss of his athletic prowess, his physique, and even his hair; he mourns his lost artistic avenues and wrings his hands over love lost within his marriage. He grieves, understandably, over his mother's death, his father's remarriage, and his stifling profession. Mostly though, he second-guesses his long-ago decision to give up Rose because she was a died-in-the-wool Mormon girl. As early as page five, Ryan's disillusionment is apparent: "What do you do when you find that your marriage and your career are both failures?" For Ryan, only youth has worth and zest. Aging is, and always will be, a process of losing.

> It's amazing to turn fifty and look back at the things you've lost.
>
> Amazing to turn sixty and look back at the things you've lost.
>
> Amazing to turn seventy... (p. 173).

Youth remains Ryan's eternal goal — "If you could live after death, what could be better than to be young in a world without time" (p. 226).

This chronicle of losses, of foundered ambitions and dissipated dreams, presents a bias against age that also becomes more disproportionate than realistic, more self-pitying than candid: "A teddy bear, a Schwinn three-speed, a box of baseball cards, a bag of marbles, a bow with five or six arrows — he could think of all kinds of things he had treasured as a kid. He had lost all of them, and he couldn't even remember how" (p. 106).

Most of all, he has lost his illusions and, if he ever had it, a depth of conjugal love: "Marriage — the cure for loneliness and sexual frustration. That's what you believed when you were young" (p 117). His shallow commitment to his wife is epitomized by his temptation to accept a stranger's advances. Though he turns the woman down, he does so less from virtue than from "paralysis" and then looks upon the encounter as an "opportunity" missed (p. 150).

There is disillusionment in Tyler too, but it is touched with humor and further mitigated by Maggie's essential and unsinkable optimism. Somehow Tyler is able to turn banal and even potentially shattering situations into half-comic, half-meaningful moments that transcend self-indulgent pulse-taking. Who but Tyler would find meaningful a moment in the cellar when Maggie discovers herself mourning over, of all things, the loss of a humidifier and realizes the ludicrousness of her emotion? "What on earth was wrong with her? she had wondered. Would she spend the rest of her days grieving for every loss equally— a daughter-in-law, a baby, a cat, a machine that dries the air out? Was this how it felt to grow old?" (p. 180)

It is this detached awareness of personal folly that Ryan lacks. Tyler has drawn her muddling characters with genuine affection, enough to allow them occasional laughter, to let them be more than instruments for expressing a fashionable contempt for life.

Perhaps because Ryan humorlessly dwells on a marriage that hasn't lived up to the honeymoon and a life that hasn't measured up to high school yearbook predictions, the issue of a Gentile living among Mormons, an issue that could be central and revelatory, seems only superficial. Endlessly turning in the wind of his youthful decision to give up Rose because of her "testimony," Ryan never makes a mature effort to understand gospel depths.

Perhaps we can forgive him, since no Mormon character in the book ever moves beyond a stereotype. The women carry in

casseroles and attend to mothering; rigid and patriarchal, the men attend to their meetings. Rose's father is this sort of cardboard character, as is Ryan's Aunt Norma, who never stops doing penance for having married a non-Mormon. It is the image of their grim relationship that makes Ryan turn his back on hope. He watches his aunt's pious, unflagging Church activity. In contrast, he sees his beloved Uncle Neal as an eternal outsider, even though, as Ryan poignantly observes in his funeral tribute to his uncle, "He was a Christian. He lived a full life, and he loved his family and friends. He was a good man" (p. 197).

Even Rose, with her "testimony," never seems to move beyond Church activity and a longing for temple marriage. Perhaps this is the image we present to the non-Mormons among us, but there has to be more:

> Rose's Sundays would probably be like Norma's — up at 7:00 to do her hair and read scriptures, Neal sleeping till 9:00 or 10:00. Norma would leave for Sunday School at 10:00 and be back at 11:30. She would fix lunch while Neal watched TV. After lunch, a thirty-minute nap, then off to choir practice and sacrament meeting. . . . When she returned in the evening, Norma put on the Tabernacle Choir and sat in her rocking chair to knit (pp. 128–29).

Who wouldn't walk away from the possibility of repeating that scenario for a lifetime of Sundays?

Morris does manage to bring Ryan's solipsistic circling to a suggestion of resignation. When, after Uncle Neal's funeral, Ryan seeks out Rose's mother, the most sympathetic Mormon in the book, he is forced at last to recognize that his dream of Rose has been in stasis while her life has been in human flux. Mrs. Richardson shows him a picture of a middle-aged Rose who has married and lost a daughter, a Rose very unlike his adolescent dream.

Tyler uses a photographic image too, but not to signal a belated resignation. Looking at snapshots, Maggie (never a realist herself) only half faces life changes she'd rather not admit — that her ne'er-do-well son, Jessie, for instance, is now a divorced, unemployed grownup whose picture she would rather not display.

Tyler could have made this realization into an epiphany for Maggie. Instead, in a way more true to Maggie's character, Tyler simply has her rationalize the picture gap away: "They had run out of wall space by then. Besides, Maggie's mother was always saying how trashy it was to display one's family photographs anywhere but a bedroom" (p. 300).

Tyler's book closes not so much with resignation, then, as with realistic continuity. "Oh Ira," Maggie asks her husband, "What are we two going to live for all the rest of our lives?" (p. 326) Ira keeps playing his game of solitaire but reaches out with one hand to draw her close. With the other hand he transfers the four of spades onto a five. With that deft image, built on all that has come before, Tyler gives her readers to know that Maggie will continue to try to fix lives according to her how-it-should-be notions. And Ira, we feel certain, will continue to be perplexed by Maggie's botched attempts but will go on quietly loving her just the same. In his way, too, he'll keep trying to make things come out right, just as he does with his games of solitaire.

Author Morris, on the other hand, leaves us less assured. Presumably Ryan has at last renounced his adolescent dream of Rose. How will this overdue recognition change his neglected marriage or remedy his no-win job situation? It is not that a novel requires such resolutions; it is that Ryan has been so defined by this dream that the reader can scarcely picture him otherwise now.

Throughout Morris's book I wondered, "Why this title?" and assumed in part that it referred to Ryan as a Gentile living out of the Mormon mainstream. Perhaps, though, it best fits the last pages, where Ryan as a character has nowhere to go. His self-realization has brought him, ironically, to an impasse — to the edge of the reservoir.

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