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**A BED WITH A
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(p. 65)

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THOUGHT OF
ELBERT PECK**
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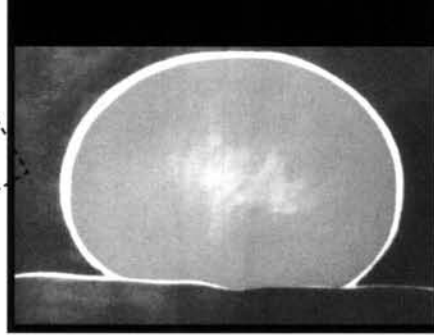


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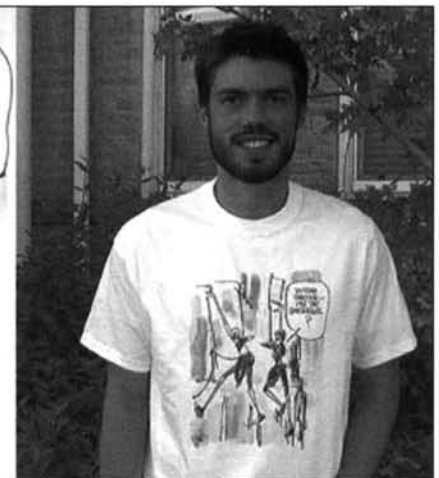
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SUNSTONE

MORMON EXPERIENCE, SCHOLARSHIP, ISSUES, & ART

November 2001

Issue 120



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"THIRD" RESTORATION?

I WAS SHOCKED by the April 2001 issue of SUNSTONE. I found the editorial, "The Church Formerly Known As . . ." and the fiction piece, "He Finishes with a Flourish," to be beyond interesting—they were edifying. This is a new experience. When I first subscribed, SUNSTONE followed the law of thirds: one third of the content was inspiring, one third was strange, and one third was apostate. I thought this was fun. Over the years, however, the inspiring content diminished to the point where my wife no longer read SUNSTONE at all—she said most articles were either self-indulgent or boring, and seldom edifying. I have to agree that the magazine's recent fascination with its own brief history has been getting rather tedious, but I loved the bizarre news, obtainable nowhere else. However, the cynical and mocking tone of some articles often prompted what my wife referred to as a "dark, SUNSTONE spirit." She literally could tell when I had been reading it by the spirit I carried with me. So I had decided not to renew my subscription—you were just not good for my soul.

This last issue has changed my mind. Parts of it were inspiring and edifying enough to give me a better and more Christlike spirit than I had before I read it. In your ongoing quest to develop a broader appeal, I suggest this acid test: do people walk away after reading your magazine feeling more spiritual than when they started? When people find even half of your articles to be uplifting, you will not have to fight for acceptance. So I am renewing my subscription for another year, to see if this new editor can help SUNSTONE evolve in this direction. If nothing else, can he at least restore the law of thirds?

ROB PAGE

Cheshire, Connecticut

NAME DISTRACTION

YOUR REPORTING AND the editorial, "The Church Formerly Known As . . ." (SUNSTONE, April 2001) on the Church distancing itself from the name "Mormon" caught my attention. When bureaucrats take over a company, government, or organization, they vow they will "improve" things. When not much improvement occurs, or when things get worse, they invariably change the name of the company, department, or organization to proudly mark their "improvement."

This latest "revelation" that for more than

a century and a half we have used the wrong-sized letters in part of the name of our Church, ignoring the fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith used identical print size (in 1841 as editor of *Times and Seasons*) seems more a distracting boondoggle to obscure the fact that the quality of our worship services and our religious life has deteriorated since the Correlation power grab.

We are adopting the "high Christology" of Saul of Tarsus (who never knew Jesus of Nazareth) and are following the path of many other organizations and churches, with "control" as the watchword. I am not elated.

LEW W. WALLACE

Arimo, Idaho

WE CLAIM THE PRIVILEGE

THE NEWS ARTICLE on California's Proposition 22 (SUNSTONE, April 2001) caused me to reflect again on certain marriage issues. I voted no on the initiative not only for reasons of conscience, but also for personal interests. Some time ago, I entered into an interracial marriage. A few years ago, my non-traditional marriage would have been considered immoral by many churches, including ours, and even illegal in a number of states, including Utah. Even today, at least one current member of the Council of the Twelve has privately expressed disapproval of interracial marriages (for the sake of the children). There is also a large age difference in my marriage. Many Church members have expressed to me their disapproval of such an age difference in a relationship. One Church leader said, "It is just not right," meaning, I guess, it is not natural, not normal, and not traditional.

Non-traditional marriages seem to run in my family. My great- and great-great-grandfathers were both polygamists. Between the two, they had some 18 wives. Perhaps, if Joseph Smith had been more honest and open about polygamy, we might have a fourteenth article of faith something like this: "We claim the privilege of marrying according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them marry how, where, who, or how many they may."

GARY ANDERSON

Pasadena, California

ALASKA, TOO

I WISH TO comment about the news article on California's Proposition 22 in the April

2001 issue of SUNSTONE. I was living in Fairbanks, Alaska, when a statement was read from the pulpit encouraging Latter-day Saints to support an amendment to the Alaska constitution prohibiting marriage status for gays.

Your article claims, "Unlike the campaigns in Hawaii and Alaska, to which Church headquarters made lump-sum contributions of \$600,000 and \$500,000 respectively, the drive to endorse Proposition 22 in California entailed rallying members to raise funds themselves and to volunteer time campaigning." This is not wholly accurate, for members in Alaska were also encouraged to donate funds for the effort.

After hearing this plea, I told my bishop that I had no intention of voting for the constitutional amendment and intended to support those trying to defeat the measure. Soon after, I had a temple recommend interview in which the bishop said he wouldn't sign my recommend until I had met with the stake president. As I did, the president asked me to return for a follow-up interview after I "fasted and prayed" about what I was supposed to do. The message was clear, but unstated, that if I continued to refuse to support the ballot initiative, my recommend was in jeopardy.

At my follow-up interview, and after the election, my stake president relented. Still, I feel angry that these Church leaders felt it was okay to use this tactic to whip members into line on this issue.

THAYNE ANDERSON
Munich, Germany

CORRECTION, PLEASE

ON THE INSIDE back cover of the July 2001 SUNSTONE is an ad for the tapes of the sessions of Sunstone West.

In the ad, my paper is mistitled as "The Development of an Anti-Mormon Gay Theology." The correct title is in fact, "The Development of an Anti-Gay Mormon

Theology." This transposed title first appeared in the preliminary symposium program but was corrected for the final version. Unfortunately, the error reappeared in the ad.

While my paper is critical of some current rhetoric, I stress in the paper that I believe the Church has the absolute right to teach that homosexual behavior is sinful and to discipline members who engage in homosexual behavior. Mindful of the negative connotation of the term "anti-Mormon," I ask that this correction be made.

DAVE COMBE
Ventura, California

BECOMING PILLARS

I ENJOYED CHARLOTTE ENGLAND'S "The Pillars, Posts, and Beams of My Faith" (SUNSTONE, July 2001), especially her comparison of her faith to pillars of the Parthenon still standing above chunks of former roof, friezes, and statues. She notes these pillars are not one solid shaft but built of layers of carefully fitted stones. Probably the faith of most of us is built in sections, subject to distress by storms that blow off protective roofs and throw rocks. Our faith may sometimes need adjustment, even shoring up.

Also inspiring is England's crediting the influence of female relatives, their personalities, advice, and comfort. Often when I face life's obstacles, I feel my mother's presence. I sense the encouragement of other women as well. Memories of their lives give me a clearer idea of my problems and how to tackle them.

I have just read *4 Zinas* by Martha Sonntag Bradley and Mary Brown Firmage Woodward. Everyone should read this book about four generations of women who didn't merely survive their times and trials of faith but became pillars of them.

LYNN SMITHERS
Boulder, Colorado

STANDARDS PLEA

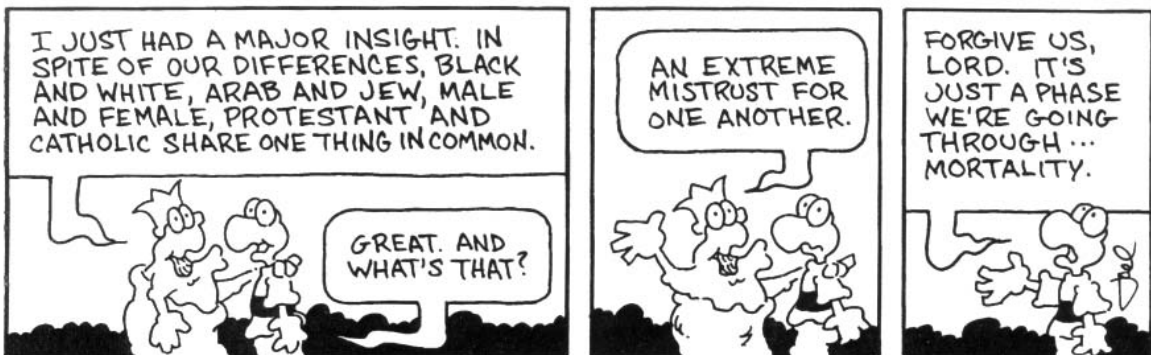
YOUR TWO MOST recent issues of SUNSTONE have been welcome in our home. Dan Wotherspoon has stepped in at a most difficult time and done a champion job. We support the efforts of him and his colleagues in reviving the magazine and opening Sunstone's doors.

I wish I felt the same cheer about the Sunstone Foundation Board of Trustees' editorial, "Open, Independent, Responsible," (SUNSTONE, July 2001). Those three words and ideas ring hollow after the debacle I witnessed at this year's Sunstone West. At the opening plenary session, the board publicly criticized one potential presenter in front of the assembled group and explained why that paper—among all the papers—could not be supported by Sunstone.

This was one of the most inappropriate public displays I've witnessed. This public humiliation seemed designed to ensure that the board was on record as opposing a presentation that the institutional church might find offensive. I recognize that the board has attempted to address this controversy through a subsequent session at the Salt Lake City symposium, in which both board members and the presenter in question participated (Tape #SL01-336). However, cruelty is difficult to undo. If the board's representatives thought the presentation was potentially offensive, they should have straightforwardly excluded it on those grounds. Justifying the paper's exclusion on grounds that it supposedly lacked adequate scholarship was a deceptive excuse.

According to the statement read at the plenary session, the quarantined presentation did not meet Sunstone's standards. I sat there and wondered, since when did Sunstone presentations have scholarly standards? Part of what I've enjoyed about Sunstone events is that the openness of its fo-

Pontius' Puddle





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rum has resulted in the occasional oddball, off-center, and (dare I say) goofy presentation over the years, among many excellent ones.

Not long after the excluded paper was delivered in an unofficial session, a Sunstone “regular” gave a presentation that included negative disclosures about a deceased president of the Church. Although these statements were not the focus of the presentation, why didn’t members of the board question that presenter’s scholarship, even though it appeared to me (as someone whose vocation is research) that the research left significant questions unaddressed? Why did this presenter escape board sanctions, while the other’s paper triggered a finger of shame? Could it possibly be that favored speakers are allowed liberties and latitude others are not? Certain other sessions (as enjoyable as they were) were delivered off-the-cuff, lacked references, were poorly organized, and were non-scholarly, so why was this one paper singled out for public rebuke?

So now I wonder what the Board of Trustees means by “open,” “independent,” and “responsible.” Do they mean that they will be open if the presenter is one of their associates? Do they mean that they will sponsor independence of thought as long as no one is upset by it? When they are “responsible,” to whom will they respond? Will they consider those who look solely to Sunstone to provide some intellectual, social, and emotional contact with their beliefs? For many who no longer participate in the LDS Church, Sunstone remains their one link to the religion that once embodied their beliefs.

Sunstone’s mission statement reads, “We encourage...responsible interchange of ideas that is respectful of all people and what they hold sacred.” I propose that Sunstone formalize this interchange by establishing peer review of proposed presentations. Review of abstracts by multiple peers, who are not members of the board, would not only decentralize Sunstone’s decision-making processes but would enhance the quality of presentations without relying on arbitrary judgments.

JANET BRIGHAM

Mountain View, California

PARTISAN JUSTICE

I DON’T WISH to carry on a perpetual conversation with Jay Baxter in these pages, but two points in his last letter (SUNSTONE, July 2001) deserve comment.

First, Baxter suggests that more Mormons are Republican than Democrat because they

see more truth in that party. I contend that many Republicans are blindly partisan and (as is the case with many Democrats) apply a different standard to their own party. Hence, we never heard an outcry from Mormons about the adulterous affairs of Newt Gingrich and Henry Hyde, Republicans guilty of behavior similar to President Clinton’s.

Second, Baxter believes Democrats could attract more Mormons by supporting Orrin Hatch for Supreme Court Justice. I, for one, think that price is too high to pay. I’m embarrassed Hatch was such an ardent supporter of Clarence Thomas for the Supreme Court in the face of allegations that should have been taken much more seriously and fully investigated. Also indefensible was Hatch’s persistence in preventing a large number of President Clinton’s nominations to the federal bench from coming up for confirmation (because he wanted more conservative judges) followed now by his accusations that Democrats are holding up President Bush’s conservative nominees. A similar hypocrisy is seen in Hatch’s call for finding the truth and following the “rule of law” during the Clinton hearings and then refusing to follow the same principles in the hearings for Ted Olsen as Solicitor General. In this and the disputed presidential election, Senator Hatch has acted in arbitrary, capricious, and partisan ways.


While in some ways Hatch would be a kind of funky justice, given his ties to Napster, his song-writing, and his appearance in the film *Traffic*, I worry he would be unable to sever his long and deep Republican Party ties. Many recent split decisions on the court suggest that we cannot afford another justice like Justices Thomas and Scalia.

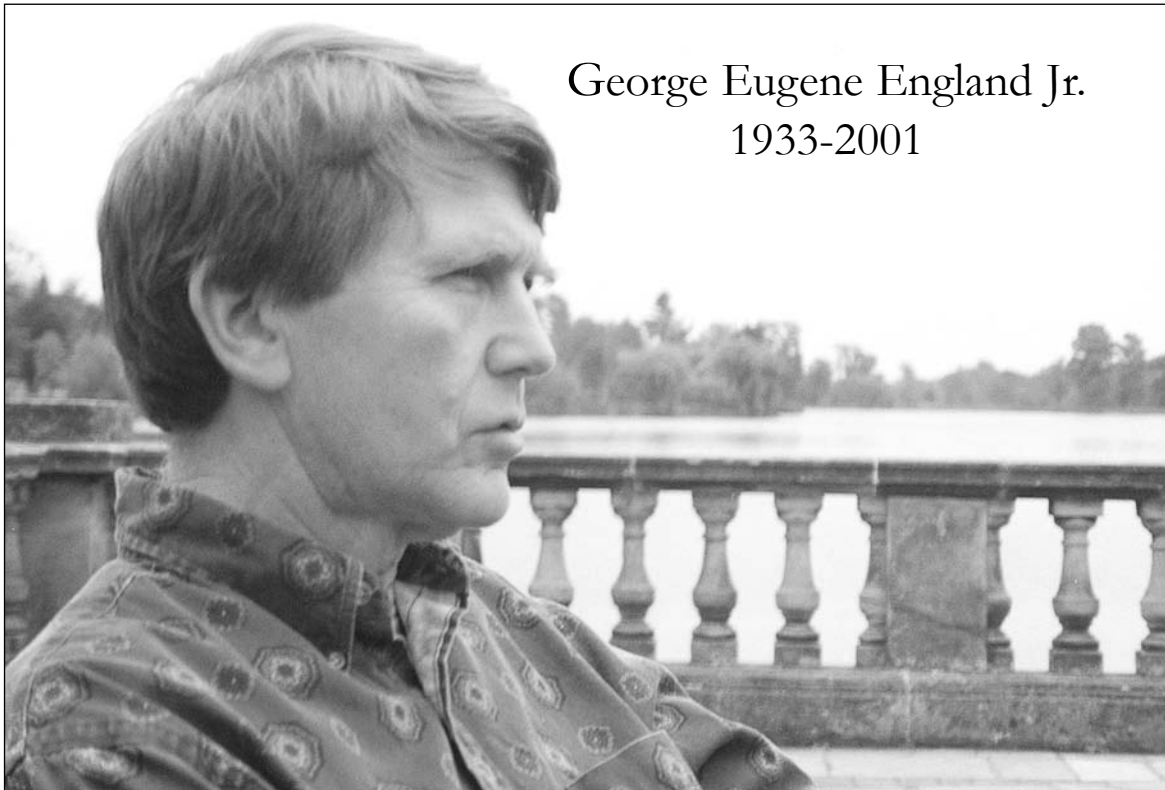
What the court needs is not a partisan politician, not another conservative (or liberal) ideologue, but a judge with a record of fair and balanced judgment, one steeped in the history and tradition of justices who have exercised Solomonic judgment in times of great need for the nation. It is ironic that Mormons, who believe the priesthood might some day be called to save the Constitution, are so enthusiastic about such a partisan politician as a potential nominee. With Justice Orrin Hatch, the proverbial thin thread by which the Constitution might hang might become even thinner.

ROBERT A. REES

Brookdale, California

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George Eugene England Jr.
1933-2001

JANE ENGLAND—TAKEN AT HAVES CASTLE, ENGLAND, 1988

“Enduring”

*R*eality is too demanding for me to feel very safe any more in the appalling luxury of my moments of utter skepticism. God’s tears in the book of Moses, at which the prophet Enoch wondered, tell me that God has not resolved the mystery of being. But he endures in love. He does not ask me to forego my integrity by ignoring the mystery or he would not have let Enoch see him weep. But he does not excuse me to forego my integrity by ignoring the reality which daily catches me up in joy and sorrow and shows me, slowly, subtly, its moral patterns of iron delicacy.

Edgar to his blind father in King Lear:

*Men must endure
Their going hence even as their coming hither.
Ripeness is all. Come on.*



Eugene England passed away on 17 August 2001 at home surrounded by his family. He was buried the next day in a private graveside ceremony at Wasatch Lawn in Salt Lake City. While a bagpiper played traditional music, his children and grandchildren carried the casket to the gravesite under a cherry tree. Son-in-law Paul Nelson conducted the service, son Mark offered the dedicatory prayer, and daughter Jane read Gene's poem, "Kinsman." Family and close friends shared memories of Gene and sang "Amazing Grace." Charlotte led everyone in shoveling dirt onto the lowered casket.

The casket was a simple pine box built by Mark, with iron handles forged by Paul. The interior lid was painted deep blue, dotted with stars and sea shells. The sides were decorated with drawings by Gene's grandchildren. At the mortuary, before the graveside service, family members dressed the body in temple clothing. Then family members placed personal mementos and gifts in the box, including photos, drawings, poems, letters, wheat stalks, favorite toys, and a grandchild's swimming trophy. Useful gifts for the afterlife included a fishing net and fly, pencils, favorite books and plays, including King Lear.

The following Saturday, hundreds gathered at the Provo Tabernacle to celebrate Gene's amazing life. They were treated to glorious recollections of his boyhood, Church service, life as a family man, and as a best friend and fishing partner. The service also included a wonderful slide presentation set to the music of Cat Stevens, Louis Armstrong, and the Beatles. And, as we might expect, Gene still had the final word as his stake president played a recording of Gene's testimony from a meeting this past January.



FROM THE EDITOR

WITHOUT THE “BUT”

By Dan Wotherspoon

NOTHING LOOKED VERY interesting that hour. It was November 1997, and I was attending the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Francisco. I enjoy these conferences and go whenever I can. But this time I was there on assignment from my wife, Lorri: find a job! A *real* one. A position that might actually require my then eighteen-month-old “piled higher and deeper” degree.

If I said I felt optimistic about landing lots of interviews at the conference, I’d be lying. I had been a very good student; I had good references and letters. I had a decent amount of teaching experience for someone just coming out of school. Yet, I thought my *vita* had one major, job-prospect-killing flaw: it had “Mormon” written all over it.

My bachelor’s degree was from Brigham Young University; about two-thirds of my public presentations had dealt with Mormon topics; and—the supreme killer—somehow (maybe having breathed too much L.A. smog), my Claremont professors and I had decided it would be okay for me to write my dissertation on a Mormon topic! Surely, we reasoned, a big religion department somewhere would need a Mormon theologian sometime soon! (Okay. OKAY! You can quit laughing now!)

In case we were wrong, I tried to develop demonstrable competencies in several other teaching areas, and I was applying for those positions. But after two job seasons without many nibbles, I was feeling very conspicuously Mormon—and not happy about it. Somehow, through all the gut-wrenching, ego-sucking months I’d been applying for jobs only to be disappointed, I had convinced myself that despite two graduate degrees in religion, I looked to search committees like some naive Utah boy who, yes, had studied all the big theories, but must still believe all that “crazy” stuff they’d heard about Latter-day Saint beliefs or Mormon missionary zeal.

I now see how flawed my reasoning was. When I meet people who are Catholic, I don’t automatically assume they believe *every* idea ever spoken by someone in the Catholic past. Why couldn’t I believe others would think the same way about me? I knew there were diverse opinions in Mormonism, just as in every tradition, but I was convinced *they* didn’t think that. And, as I searched desperately for answers to the “why me?” disappointments of job-searching, I became certain I was the one paying for every simplistic or literalistic notion, every ultra-conservative or archaic statement ever made by any Mormon senator, and every past, weird Mormon doctrine ever preached.

I’m ashamed to say I felt that way during that conference. I wanted to renounce my BYU diploma and start all over on a different path. I wanted to run out of my Mormon skin. Whenever I talked with others who asked about my main academic interests, I’d mumble: environmental ethics, public theology, philosophy of religion. Yawn, you bet—but *safe*.

AS I was saying, the upcoming hour looked bleak. But I didn’t really feel like torturing myself again in the book area by coveting volumes I couldn’t afford, (or to get in any deeper trouble when I got home because I had *already* bought too many books.) So, I decided to attend a session on human cloning. One of my students at Salt Lake Community College was planning to write on this issue for my Ethics course, so I decided to pick up a little extra information to help me better evaluate her grasp of the issues.

The session began very slowly. Mechanics of the process, Dolly the sheep, yeah, yeah. Hmmmm, some in the gay and lesbian community were excited about the prospect of human cloning; a Christian theologian rambled for a while. But then, *she* spoke! I’ve forgotten her name and nearly everything she

said. She argued against cloning, but that wasn’t what was important. *She* was the revelation . . . at least to me.

She was on the panel to offer a Jewish perspective. And that she did. She took us on a wonderful tour of various strands of Jewish thought dealing with creation and the sanctity of life. But more important, she also spoke of her own experiences as a participant in certain Jewish rituals dealing with the human body in both life and death.

Who knows why I was struck by her presentation the way I was, but rather than hearing the details, I was totally captured by the thought that I was listening to an undeniably bright, articulate, confident Jewish woman speak about how her life and thinking had been informed by her education and experiences within her religious tradition. And she didn’t feel the need to apologize for it! She hadn’t begun her remarks with any disclaimer about how she rejects certain ideas from various strands of Judaism. She didn’t say, “Yes, I’m Jewish, but not *really* Jewish.” She liked who she was, and she was not ashamed to speak her mind nor to share how her thinking had been affected by her immersion in Jewish culture.

I was stunned. “*This is a model for me!*” In a conversation before the very next session, the question of my academic specialty arose. Without thinking, I blurted, “I’m a Mormon theologian!”

FOR a long time, I’ve thought about how to position myself as a Mormon *and* someone with far-ranging interests outside Mormonism. I’ve wrestled with whether I should use the first-person “we” or a third-person “the Mormons” when I speak or write about the Church. How many times I’ve changed my mind on that one! I’ve agonized how to tell stories from the scriptures to my children when I don’t always believe the incident described represents God’s intervention or when it posits a line of reasoning and a worldview I don’t fully agree with.

I’ve flip-flopped so many times on how “Mormon” I could really be and still maintain my integrity that my wife has finally learned to just quit listening closely. It was just too painful for her each week to keep trying to figure out what kind of priesthood holder she was married to. She had married a guy in a bishopric who was steaming toward a career in the Church Education System, but then. . . .

Well, I’ve stabilized a bit, and here is what I’ve decided to try: to be a Mormon without the “but.” Oh, I still think plenty of “buts.”

"Yes, *this* teaching, but not *that* crazy idea." "Now, *here's* a leadership style I like, but keep me out of *that* guy's ward, please!" "Sure, the scripture says *that*, but remember Paul is writing and he's a wacky zealot! No need to try to make *that* idea fit with the rest of the gospel."

No, what I mean by trying it "without the but" is that I'm going to try to squelch the feelings that cause me to want to say, "Yes, I'm a Mormon, but I'm a *liberal* Mormon," "but, I'm a *thinking* Mormon," "but, I'm an *embarrassed-by-Tom-Green* Mormon," or any other "buts" that might spring to mind. *I am* a Mormon. Why should I surrender the right to use the term without a disclaimer because of some vague notion of what a *real* Mormon is?

At the Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium this past August, we had a wonderful session titled, "How Big Is the Mormon Tent?: Toward a New Definition of What It Means to Be 'Mormon.'" To ensure a balance of perspectives, Mark Thomas, the session's creator, and I found panelists to represent the views of an "active, believing," a "fundamentalist," a "cultural/liberal," and an "excommunicated, but believing" Mormon. We also asked Jan Shipps and Armand Mauss to provide analysis.

The session generated a great discussion that spilled into the halls afterward and even

filtered into several other sessions. After it was over, a bit late, I joined a light-hearted conversation between Stacy Burton and Lorie Winder Stromberg who had already decided to scold us (teasingly) for not including on the panel enough kinds of Mormons. Inspired by one of the categories that was offered by Armand Mauss in the session, the "hunting and fishing" Mormon, they had been thinking up some really funny adjectives for the kinds of Mormons *they* were. (I won't share them here.) I loved our exchanges, and in that conversation, the idea for this editorial was born.

Yes, we can quickly and easily state short descriptors or offer small disclaimers when we publicly identify ourselves as Mormons. But in doing so, aren't we selling ourselves *and* those we meet short? Why should we make it easy for ourselves or others to define us in any way *against* anything else in our own tradition? We're more complex than any qualifier. And so is our tradition. We're far bigger than any label. And being "Mormon" is a far more encompassing thing than just a set of ideas or a subset of quirky people who've embarrassed us somewhere along the way. Stacy and Lorie are far bigger and more wonderful than any of their imaginative labels. They and we ought to bring our whole selves to every self-examination. We need to be a "full fact" for others to have to make

sense of. If we give them some easy way to dismiss the full complexity of our Mormon lives, we'll never fit comfortably within our tradition, for the notion of a *real* Mormon will never expand to include us.

AS I've examined my feelings about the recent terrorist attacks, I've noticed an interesting change in another way I self-identify. Until now, I have been pretty low-key about being a United States citizen. Over the years, I've too-often played the smug critic of some of the naive patriotism I've encountered. "America: Love It or Leave It" has made me shudder for too long. I've also been far too quick to notice "Ugly Americanism" whenever it rears its head in international affairs or multi-cultural encounters. I've even caught myself almost apologizing while discussing politics with friends from Jamaica whose nation has been hurt by certain American, World Bank, or International Monetary Fund policies. I've forgotten to notice many of the good things about our nation.

I'm ready to try to be an American "without the but" as well. ☺

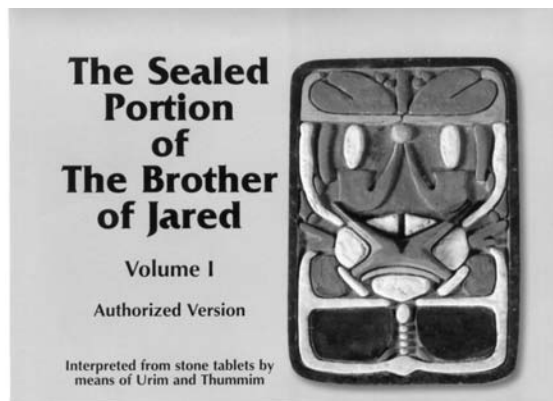


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And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered and behold the book shall be sealed and in the book shall be a revelation from God 2 Nephi 27:6-7

Those who follow the witness of Joseph Smith have long awaited this writing, known as the "Sealed Portion"—that portion of the Book of Mormon plates that Joseph was "forbidden" to translate. This volume is not from an abridgement on metal plates but is an original account from a stone tablet.

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TRANSITIONS

THE PUBLIC THOUGHT OF
ELBERT PECK*Reflections on the Occasion of His Departure from Sunstone*

By Philip Barlow

IT IS POSSIBLE to overestimate the rational intellect. As Goethe noted, "Humankind, divided by reason, leaves a remainder." And, beyond the mere intellect, faith is a precious thing. Without some form of it, we do not successfully arise from our bed each morning. In my judgment, an utter loss of spiritual faith by those who have grown religiously tone-deaf is tragic.

Even so, there is little virtue in unconditional faith. Unquestioning faith is as easily induced in Muslims as in Christians; as readily sponsored in the children of Baptists or Nazis as in the children of Latter-day Saints. Unexamined faith shares responsibility not only for admirable acts of devotion and self-sacrifice, but also for layered superstition, for narrow lives zealously spent in misguided enterprises, and even for mass murder. Any faith worth retaining, any adult and ethical faith, must needs be "a thoughtful faith."

If the "thought" part of "a thoughtful faith" is to nourish, sustain, and broaden our views, it will leave room for prayer, meditation, humility, and receptivity. Thought, however, requires courageous exploration, open, honest, and good-will dialogue with those of differing views, critical thinking, and a regard for thought that is disciplined, documented, and debatable. Questions press themselves: Faith in what? Why? Based on what? Applied how, and with what qualifications? What does *this* mean in light of these

facts, or of that circumstance, or of those conflicting principles?

To be both thoughtful and competent, sustainable faith requires of a community two things (beyond acts of worship, ritual, service, love, and shared experience). First, faith demands access to an open forum, where all inquiry is welcome, where the wisdom and truth of questions and their proposed answers can be weighed (and rejected or amended or embraced or extended). Second, sustainable faith needs a forum whose intent resembles that of the 11th-century thinker, St. Anselm, whose approach to theology is printed as the motto each year on the Sunstone Symposium program: "Faith Seeking Understanding."

Please notice that an open forum is not necessarily identical to a forum guided by Faith Seeking Understanding. An open forum, whatever the intentions of its organizers, may include speakers who have little faith, or little understanding, or who are more interested in groaning, in self-promotion, or in launching cheap shots than they are in careful thinking. Likewise, a forum of Faith Seeking Understanding may be marred by defensiveness, insufficient rigor, unexamined suppositions, and subtle or not-so-subtle censorship. There is much overlap, but also certain tensions, between these two imperfect models of a forum or an ongoing symposium.

ANY sensitive person who is willing to assume the task of coordinating, negotiating, and presiding over this sort of gathering with its many tensions is apt to be both rewarded and bruised. If he or she were to bear this mantle for a long time, he or she might even become beat up or burned out, for the material pay is modest, the en-

ergy demands considerable, the intellectual, emotional, and social strains severe, and the criticism certain. A great many people owe a tremendous debt to Elbert Peck for what he has given of himself during the past fifteen years in the interest of facilitating human inquiry, spiritual growth, and the study of all things Mormon.

People may already value Elbert's individual contributions to Mormon thought. (I don't know, for I live in rural Indiana among its corn and tobacco plots but few humans. No one talks to me much out here.) But the notion occurs to me that because of Elbert's position as SUNSTONE editor—which entails much orchestrating, cajoling, and editing—and because his own writing has primarily taken the form of editorials that are brief, unpretentious, and designed as "tracts for the times," and they have not yet been gathered together under one binding, he may be remembered primarily as an intelligent and gregarious facilitator of many wonderful events, while his writing may fade into oblivion.

It would be a mistake for those of us who seek a thoughtful faith to let Brother Elbert's thought fade in our group consciousness. I know that Elbert believes some things that I do not, and that I believe some things he does not. But wherever our debates might take us, I believe his thought warrants our ongoing attention. I will suggest why I think so by naming several motifs and traits of Elbert's writing.

I will restrict myself to Elbert's public thought. Doubtless he, like President Bush or President Hinckley or me or you, privately thinks and believes many things he chooses not to put in print. An interesting study would surely emerge from those ideas Elbert has not put into his editorials! Yet what he has written for publication is subject to our scrutiny. What follows, then, are observations based upon my review of his editorials in the magazine during the past decade and a half. I will restrict myself to five observations. You will do well to be skeptical of such a tidy number.

THE first theme I will call "applied intelligent compassion," but which Elbert, with less fanfare, calls "cutting people some slack." Here is an example: In 1991, not long after the public learned that many parts of Elder Paul H. Dunn's thrilling and moving baseball and war stories were not true, there were many reactions: scandal, humor, sadness, a sense of betrayal, sympathy, and shock. Many loud whispers were heard, and much head-wagging took



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Elbert's editorials reveal that he himself wants to be included. . . . He writes: "I prefer to see myself as a citizen in God's republic rather than as a subject in God's kingdom. The first metaphor calls out better things in me. Citizens matter; the social body requires their daily, free-will contributions."

place throughout the Church. Elbert's reaction interests me. His published ambivalence left a trail of more "on the other hands" than one might easily count. Elbert was careful not to condone lying for the Lord, and he argued strenuously for the primacy of truth and the precariousness of a faith grounded on illusion, yet he nonetheless did a remarkable thing. His honesty and generosity and willingness to be publicly vulnerable led him to identify with Elder Dunn in an important respect. In his editorial for the September 1991 issue, Elbert put it this way:

Some time ago I attempted to write a short story about missionary life. . . . I took two powerful real-life experiences, one at the start of my mission and another just before I was released, and combined them into one event in the fictional story. To get the story so that it would describe and evoke the feelings I wanted readers to feel, I worked on it for over a week. For several hours each night I sat at the computer reading and rereading the narrative, changing words, rewriting sentences, then reading it out loud again. In my attempt to elicit the genuine emotions I had felt on my mission, I found myself living the fictional creation in my mind, even when I wasn't working on it. . . . I eventually produced a story that was authentic for me, but alas, not for any other reader. I abandoned the project.

Weeks later, while in conversation over dinner with some friends, I commented, "That's just like an experience I had on my mission . . ." and I began to relate, in all honesty, the fictional story I had earlier created. Halfway through the telling, shocked, I suddenly realized that I wasn't telling my real-life experience. Blushing, in the rush of embarrassment and confusion, I said, "No, that's not what happened to me. . . . What did happen? . . ." I queried myself, perplexed. Briefly, my friends looked at me bemused, and perhaps worried. Fortunately, one of them said something and the conversation moved on, leaving me alone to untangle this internal mystery in my mind. It took some time to

divorce the married stories and restore them to their proper place in my mission narrative. I vividly remember that discomfiting event (I hope correctly) because I was stunned by how guilelessly I believed the myth I was vigorously telling. I realized that if I had gotten away with that performance a few more times I may never have been able to reconstruct the "truth," even if I had a good missionary journal (which I don't, so now I am not that confident that the two separate stories are indeed factually accurate, but I'm quite sure that something like them did happen.)

As a whole, Elbert's essay is subtle and balanced. The rest of it, like the part I have shared, comes from a generous soul.

ELBERT believes The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a source and a force for enormous good in the world because of its practical fruits. They are impressive, and Elbert follows Jesus in finding such fruit an important criterion for attention. "The genius of the Church," he wrote in his final editorial (April 2001), "is how it recreates the interconnected Mormon pioneer village in each modern ward, how it interweaves the lives of its members." Agreeing with Eugene England, and in contrast to popular understanding, Elbert comes close to suggesting that just as the practical outranks mere theory, the Church is truer than the gospel. Where "community" is increasingly difficult to achieve in the modern world, Mormonism engenders community and franchises it. Hence, exploring the nature, challenges, joys, and implications of Zion is a second Peck preoccupation. For him, if one can grasp the inspiration of Mormon community-building, one grasps what is best in the enterprise Joseph Smith launched. Elbert believes that, despite the risk of intellectual smothering, homogenization, boring services and classes, and exaggerated claims to exclusive truth, each Mormon ward becomes a workshop for love.

IF the best part of the Church is the partially realized reach for Zion, Elbert's commitment to this virtue is everywhere

balanced by a third theme: his plea for tolerance, his call for the celebration of diversity and inclusion. For example, after reflecting warmly on the inspiring acceptance and love in which he had basked in two communities—an LDS ward and a gathering of New Age gay pagans—Elbert, in his April 2001 editorial, mourned the irony that each of these loving communities would find the other off-putting, and even immoral. Then came a revelation, a thunderclap: "The presence of love within a community, does not prove it is Christian." He cites Jesus: "If you love those who love you, what reward can you expect? Even the tax collectors do as much as that. . . . Even the heathen do as much" (Matthew 5: 46-47, Rev. English Bible). To be Christian, love must transcend the bounds of ideological coziness; it must extend even to one's enemies.

Elbert's thrust here could sponsor a rich conversation, for "tolerance" and "inclusiveness" can be oppressive clichés in the hands of the "politically correct" thought police. I wonder whether the principles of tolerance and inclusion themselves can prove that a community is Christian. Jesus Christ conditioned with additional principles his culture-rattling, history-changing demonstration that love must not rule only among like-minded people. He did, after all, spend a good portion of his ministry calling people to repentance—and not always in polite language. Toleration and inclusion of diverse people may be right and proper, but they did not necessarily entail, for Jesus, a nondiscriminatory embrace of all human behaviors. Thus Elbert's notion above, like all good, provocative thought, has sufficient power to incite constructive discussion on an issue too pressing for responsible contemporaries to ignore.

Elbert's preoccupation with inclusion has several dimensions—democratic ones in particular. He laments for instance that, for all the *talking*, our LDS notion of General "Conference" has so little *conferring*. Elbert himself extends an inclusive and conferring reach far and wide to all. But my favorite passage in Elbert's diffuse campaign for inclusiveness reveals that he himself wants to be included. This comes out in his writing as a

For Elbert, encouragement does not entail encouraging mediocrity—which our non-professional, do-it-yourself Church culture can inadvertently foster—nor does it encourage dishonest praise.

humble, non-combative, but persistent position. Drawing, perhaps, on his love of Thomas Jefferson, Elbert writes: “I prefer to see myself as a citizen in God’s republic rather than as a subject in God’s kingdom. The first metaphor calls out better things in me. Citizens matter; the social body requires their daily, free-will contributions” (September 1996).

If we had time, we might consider other topics that dominate the editorials: the integrity of doubt in a context of faith; doubt resolved less by intellectual certainty than by living and serving; the importance of reason tempered by the insistence that scholarship and discourse be charitable; an urging to be active in public life; the overflowing goodness of God and grace; the resilient absolutes from the Sermon on the Mount to forgive, to not judge, to live simply, to attend to the poor.

BUT rather than elaborate more themes here, I will ask you to think about two aspects of Elbert’s work that affect all his themes. The first of these is that his writing displays an “achieved simplicity.” This theme is important, and must be distinguished from being simple-minded. Let me explain.

A few years back, I joined colleagues at Hanover College in team-teaching a megacourse called Eurasia. On one occasion, I was to lead a discussion on what may be the most challenging poem in the English language: T. S. Eliot’s “The Wasteland.” The almost-perverse difficulty of the poem prompted me to ask a campus friend, an expert in literature, the question, “What is poetry?” After a minute, she proffered the best response I’ve heard: “Poetry, is music, imagery, and compression.”

When I say that Elbert achieves simplicity, I mean that he compresses. The result is not simplistic but simple. To see this, one needs to know that Elbert Peck has a capacious mind. He is extraordinarily well-read. He can recite much of Robert Frost from memory. He is unusually adept with the scriptures, including the Bible’s various translations. He is in touch with what is going on with other faiths and understands something of their history and theology and language. When such a mind as his successfully forges

thought into simple form, an element of poetry is at work—something analogous to what scientists mean when they call “elegant” a formula that comprehends and conquers complexity by succinct expression.

One way Elbert expresses this achieved simplicity is his penchant for making lists: two dozen *do’s* and *don’t’s* for Mormons that would make our church services and communal life better (September 1996) for instance, or one hundred things he has learned from being editor of *SUNSTONE* (December 1995). Anyone can conjure lists, of course—my house and office are full of them. And Elbert’s lists, while he avoids elaborating the obvious, are full of small as well as great matters. Hence, an undiscerning ear is not apt to hear what is profound there. But as a list-maker myself, I can testify that constructing good lists is rather more difficult than it may sound. Even the small items on Elbert’s lists seem to me a consequence of careful thought and phrasing.

Before sampling thoughts from his lists, I’ll give one more example to show what I mean about the potentially important difference brought to bear by carefully crafted phrasing. Let us not mistake simplicity for superficiality.

A year or so back, my mother-in-law took a horrifying misstep, fell, and died. In the weeks afterward, many kind friends extended their sympathy to this mother’s aching children and husband: “I am so sorry.” “How awful.” “What a tragedy.” What can one say at such a time? One cannot quite bring oneself to say nothing, and yet speech seems doomed. This was all the more apparent in far away Indiana, where many kind people, who had not known the deceased mother, offered sincere sentiments to her traumatized daughter. In this context, I was on one occasion captured by the simple but distinctive expression of concern voiced by a casual acquaintance. Rather than, “I’m so sorry,” this woman asked gently, “What was your mother like?” This was not the only good thing to say at such a time, so do not misunderstand me as attempting to create a formula. But perhaps you can see that this query, in this context, created space for an anguished daughter to give something back, to honor her mother in that moment.

If you are with me so far in distinguishing

“simple” from “simplistic,” we are prepared to appreciate the achieved simplicity of Elbert Peck’s public thought, the extreme version of which is his impulse to make lists of compressed conclusions. For example, inspired by H. Jackson Brown Jr’s small work, *Life’s Little Instruction Book*, Elbert undertook in the September 1996 issue to shape a list of simple “rules . . . that will make a qualitative difference in our lives and the lives of fellow yoke-bearers.” “I’m not Moses,” he wrote, and acknowledged that in constructing his list, he had experimented by forming many laws, which he had then discarded as trivial or obvious (such as “respect meetinghouse property”) or others that were mere “personal gripes, hobby-horses, and . . . matters of personal style” (such as the suggestion that we should “change the sacrament water to grape juice”). Of the surviving suggestions—of the innumerable things that one might think of to live by in our communal religious life—the first item on Elbert’s list of *do’s* and *don’t’s* for Saints is: “Compliment quality: a beautiful organ prelude, a moving lesson, an inspiring sermon, and any ward newspaper.” (This last item no doubt derives from the strain of producing a magazine himself.)

The simple suggestion of “complimenting quality,” if one considers the whole of Elbert’s thought, interests me a good deal. We can see it is a constructive suggestion rather than a tearing down. It has behind it, further down the same list, another Peckish point: “Assume most people feel inadequate; speak encouraging words.”

But for Elbert, encouragement does not entail encouraging mediocrity—which our non-professional, do-it-yourself church culture can inadvertently foster—nor does it encourage dishonest praise. And his stress on *quality* is particularly important. I have argued on my own campus that the acquired ability to distinguish quality from the infinite number of pretenders offered us by our culture (including, sometimes, our educational institutions and our religions) may be the most profound reward of a liberal arts education. Indeed, I have read one Hebrew scholar who argues that the best translation of the allusion to the tree from which Adam and Eve partook is not the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,” but the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad.” That is, human progress is

conditioned not only on moral distinctions, but also on the ability to distinguish good from bad quality generally. (If you don't know what I mean, go reread Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, whose philosophy of quality already, decades ago, outflanked the current culture wars of postmodernism.) In any event, Elbert has a gift for recognizing bad- and good-quality thought and scholarship, and he has not been overawed by an author's reputation or high office, nor does he yield to the pressure tactics of some or another "ism."

Elbert's list offers another simple thought, a practical suggestion for improving public prayer: "Don't preach when praying publicly; speak conversationally and briefly." This much may be obvious, though, as church members, we are erratic in our practice. But Elbert goes on: "In your public prayer, concretely answer these questions: What do we truly yearn for? And how has God touched our lives?" Small, simple—and perhaps enough, if followed, to change the tenor of our prayer worship.

A SECOND trait influencing most of the editorials—the last aspect I'll consider here—is that Elbert has combined a sort of spiritual entrepreneurship with his commitment to the importance of grassroots participation. This means that his editorials are not pontification, but rather

invitation. His list of *do's* and *don'ts* for Saints, for example, is not a pretense to fix the Church once and for all, but is rather an attempt to induce all thoughtful Saints to generate their own lists—which Elbert was willing to consider publishing—in the interest of getting all of us to think concretely about being better citizens in God's Republic. Similar efforts at religious democracy include Elbert's experiments in trying to get readers to craft and publish their own psalms and prayers; the introduction in the magazine of sections valuing and trying to stimulate the participation of new and younger contributors; and Elbert's launch of regional symposiums.

As Brother Elbert surrenders the editorial helm of the magazine and direction of the symposiums, I honor his labors. He has, during his tenure, sought balance and fairness, devoting countless hours trying to recruit believing, faithful Saints to participate in open conversation. While insisting on the necessity of honest religious and scholarly probing, he has generally said "no" when he should have and has subsequently endured, with grace and strength, the lashes of those who would want these forums to be shaped only in their political or theological image. He has been, as one friend observed, the unofficial bishop to a great many Saints who have felt themselves wounded through more-official channels and policies. He has cham-

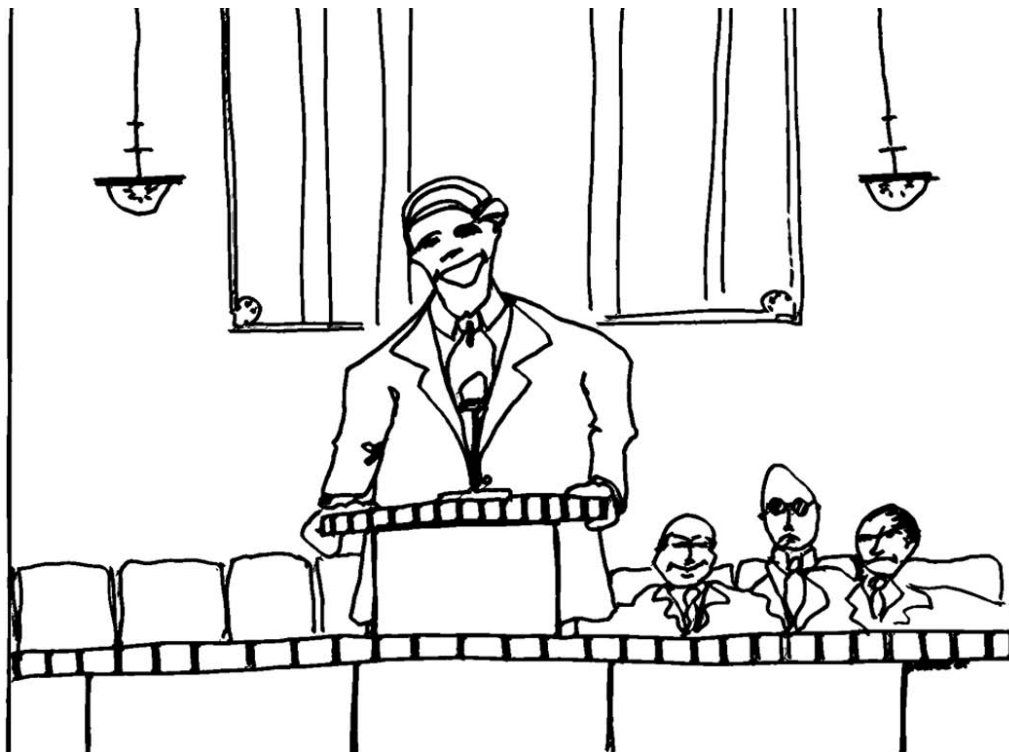
pioned the cause of reason and honesty and generosity and competence in religious discourse. He has construed quite literally the Book of Mormon maxim that "When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God." And despite a long-term, relentless engagement with conflicting forces of daunting strength that could drive most any of us into depression, he has, over the years, retained a ready laugh.

SUNSTONE culture, at its worst, *debunks*. Sunstone, at its best, *inquires*. Inquiry is driven by questions, and at the core of the idea of questioning is a *quest*. The deepest expression of the quest is to know "what it means to be human"; to know, in our context, "what it means to be a Latter-day Saint"; to probe what it entails to do those things with increasing awareness—more honestly, more nobly, more faithfully—"to better serve our God."

In the end, not every Peck editorial is a classic. And his own interests, of course, inform his writing. But as imperfect as he is, there remain enduring aspects of the published thought of Elbert Peck that promote that task of discovering our humanity, our Sainthood, and our God.

Don't throw away your old Sunstones! ☺

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CORNUCOPIA

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Ward Stories

THE BLESSINGS OF BUILDING

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WHEN ZION WAS being established in the tops of the mountains, Mormon churches were built by Church members. Everyone gave their time, skills, money, and sweat. Each member helped build what became the center of community activity and pride.

During most of the twentieth century, only half the financial burden for chapel building fell on individual congregations, with Church headquarters paying the other half. Local ward leaders were empowered to raise their share of the cost any way they could. Directly assessing members was the easiest method, but rarely produced the cash needed. So members would often undertake fund-raising projects: they would contract to clean stadiums after games or perform assembly work for local manufacturers, dip chocolates to sell on Valentine's

Day or hold bake sales in shopping centers. But the biggest source of local funds was usually the "credit" members received for donated services, materials, and skills. They did the lowliest labor and cleanup—but also some of the bricklaying, woodworking, roofing, plumbing, heating, and cooling.

As a young adult, I helped build chapels in Utah, Colorado, New York, New Mexico, California, and Germany. From tradesmen much wiser in practical life than I, I learned to erect foundation forms, finish concrete, lay floor tile, float sheetrock joints. I often worked twelve-hour days wheeling concrete, even once being cheated out of credit for four of those hours when the ward clerk announced "no one works that long," suggesting I must have been lying on my report. I was exhilarated to walk through a completed building and identify my contributions in a perfectly finished product (or even in a few of the flaws).

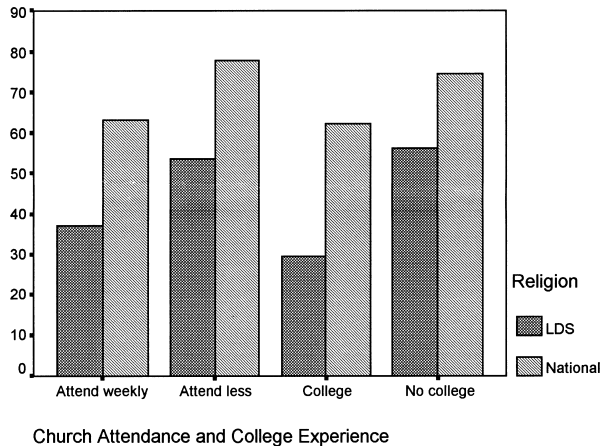
The highlight of my chapel-building life came in 1962 when my wife and I moved to Boulder, Colorado. On our first Sunday there, the bishop announced construction on the new building would start within weeks. We as a ward had to contribute \$150,000 in cash or sweat equity, and we had only nine months to do it!

Our three-hundred-member ward included many young

Peculiar People

EDUCATION AND RELIGION, SEXUALLY SPEAKING

Percent of Women Having Premarital Sex



IN 1995, THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF FAMILY GROWTH interviewed over ten thousand women aged fourteen to forty-five. The results indicated that premarital sex is less common among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For both Mormon women and the national population, premarital sex is less common among those who attended church weekly when they were teenagers and who have attended college. Interestingly, the gap between regular church attenders and those who attended less often is about the same for Mormons and women nationally. In contrast, the gap between those with and without college experience is greater among Mormons. The college/non-college gap is only 12 percentage points nationally but is 27 percent for Mormons. These findings suggest that for LDS women, college attendance is a better predictor of obedience to the law of chastity than is church attendance.

families with fathers in graduate school or in their first job. Leaders scrutinized membership rolls to identify talents or connections which might help in chapel construction. Some members had built much of their own homes, so they became supervisors. Two less-active sons of the Relief Society president became stonemasons. Others hung sheetrock, laid tile, and shingled the roof.

We were blessed in other ways: a recent convert ran a plumbing shop; an experienced cement finisher moved into the ward; and a professional sheet metal worker returned from a job in New York. The plan called for us to finish most of the outside work before Thanksgiving and work inside during the winter, but excavation revealed a stream where the basement would be under the stage in the cultural hall. A concrete beam had to be built to span the stream and support the walls, and the furnace moved to a new spot. Construction was delayed three months, and we had to work outside through the winter.

Saturdays were big-time work days and not just for men. Women not only provided ample food for the workers but also painted and finished. We felt we all were building our chapel. And while working together at whatever task, members became fast friends. Sheetrock crews learned about the families of their partners; roofers who climbed up in galeforce winds to nail shingles will always appreciate their companions who passed them the materials.

The bishop had the most painful job—reminding us regularly of the continuing cash shortfall. One Sunday toward the end of the project, when about to plead for additional donations, he was made almost speechless. Before sacrament meeting, a young family of very limited means presented him with a can full of bills and coins. It was money they'd been saving for years to buy a family organ, but now they felt the chapel needed it more. Choking and crying, the bishop told us that story, thought a moment, said he had no more to say except he knew we'd do our best, and closed the meeting.

By the time the building was finished, we had exceeded our assessment of \$150,000 in cash and sweat equity. Records showed that members donated almost twenty thousand hours during the building process, which meant that the average adult member put in about two hundred hours. Several members gave more than five hundred hours, and one put in more than two thousand hours. Two weeks after completing the building, we felt angels present as President Hugh B. Brown dedicated and consecrated the building and the ward choir sang, "Bless This House" and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." We had finished building our chapel!

THE CHURCH DOESN'T build this way any more. Headquarters pays almost all the cost, hiring a general contractor who employs subcontractors to do the actual work. The chapel goes up in a disciplined, orderly fashion. There are no delays for lack of funds, no rework required because novices were trying a craft for the first time, no pleadings for members to finish work and clean-up so construction could go forward the next day.

The new way of building reflects our modern culture—effi-

ciency, conformity, and specialization are in vogue. Individual involvement and creativity are out. Perhaps the immensity of Church operations and legal risks make these changes inevitable. Yet I'm saddened that we don't erect and pay for chapels the way we used to do. We are paying a price in lost opportunities to build community and unity in the process. I wonder if the cost has been worth it.



—J. FREDERICK (TOBY) PINGREE
Salt Lake City, Utah

In Their Daily Lives . . .

NO SHAVES AT THE BARBER SHOP

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE "INSTRUCTIONS TO Employees" of the P. W. Madsen Furniture Company of Salt Lake City. Presented to the employees circa 1870, they offer an intriguing glimpse at life in the Kingdom of Saints.

OUR NEW BUSINESS CODE

Store open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 8:00 P.M. except on Saturday then store open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 9:00 P.M. This is in effect the year around. This store will remain closed each Sabbath.

DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES

Sweep floors, dust furniture, office shelves and show cases. Remember, Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Trim wicks, clean chimneys and fill lamps. Make your pens carefully (but you may whittle the quills to suit your individual taste.) Open the windows for fresh air. Each clerk should bring in one bucket of water and one scuttle of coal. These things are necessary to prepare us for the day's business.

Any employee who smokes Spanish cigars, uses liquor in any form, gets shaved at the barber shop, or frequents pool halls or public dance halls will give his employer every reason to suspect his integrity, worthy intentions, and his all around honesty.

Each employee is expected to pay his tithing, that is 10% of his annual income, to the Church. No matter what one's income might be, you should not con-

tribute less than \$25 per year to the Church. Each employee will attend Sacrament meeting and adequate time will be given to each employee to attend Fast Meeting, also you are expected to attend your Sunday School.

Men employees will be given one evening off each week for courting purposes. Two evenings each week, if they go regularly to Church and attend to Church duties. After any employee has spent his thirteen hours of labor in the store, he should then spend his leisure time in the reading of good books, and the contemplating of the Glories, and the building up of the Kingdom of God.

/s/ P. W. Madsen

This last paragraph is significant. Polygamy was the vogue in 1870. The instructions and privileges applied both to mar-

ried and unmarried employees. One night a week was insufficient if an employee wanted to court more than one woman, hence the bonus of an extra night for good conduct.

—submitted by RALPH W. HANSEN
Boise, Idaho

Mormon Musings

WHAT MAKES SCRIPTURE “SCRIPTURE”?

I went through my entire mission uncertain whether or not I believed that the Book of Mormon was a historical record. I had no problem testifying to people that I knew the Book of Mormon was the word of God. I felt the Spirit when I read the book. I felt that God spoke to me through the

Of Good Report

WISDOM AND THE ORDINARY PERSON

Ptolemy Tompkins, in his new book, The Beaten Path: Field Notes on Getting Wise in a Wisdom-Crazy World, offers us a lively account of his own spiritual quest for wisdom. The son of New Age celebrity-author Peter Tompkins (The Secret Life of Plants), Ptolemy has searched all of what he calls the major “Life Manuals” so prevalent in today’s enlightenment-giddy society. He’s read Black Elk and Carlos Castaneda, J. D. Salinger and Alan Watts. He’s searched the classics, the Tao-te Ching, the Bhagavad-Gita, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, and every psalm and sutra he could find. And he’s survived to tell about it.

THOUGH I DIDN’T know it back then, I was eventually to discover that there had actually been plenty of times and places in which the task of getting wise—and in particular the first brush with the world of wisdom that so often happens during a person’s teenage years—didn’t have to be quite the isolated, depressing, and disorienting experience that it had ended up becoming for me. For in fact, most of the world’s vast stock of wisdom traditions never told all the regular people out there living their ordinary lives that they were making a dreadful mistake by doing so at all. Even when a wisdom tradition has exceptionally harsh things to say about the shortcomings of the human situation—and all of them do in some spots—in the great majority of cases these remarks are not intended to actually stop a person in his tracks and keep him from living the life he has been given. Instead, the intent is to place that “normal” existence within a wider context—to show it in the light of the larger, more powerful, and more mysterious universe of spiritual realities that surrounds and upholds it.

It is precisely because most people throughout the world and throughout history have so keenly believed that everyday life depends upon such a larger landscape of spiritual meanings that a direct encounter with wisdom has always been such an important part of becoming an adult. However, for most people most of the time, this *encounter* has been just

that: a brief, controlled introduction, followed by a return to ordinary life. Even when this first brush with the spiritual world was deeply traumatic and unsettling—as it could indeed be for the members of many tribal cultures, for example—the trauma tended to be momentary and was not intended to so shock the wisdom pilgrim that he or she lost all touch with the more mundane realities and responsibilities of his or her life. . . .

AT its best, I eventually came to think, real wisdom is something like the service road of a highway. Rather than calling every last person away from their role in the mundane, nuts-and-bolts world of human life and human problems, wisdom’s job is to run along parallel with that life, flashing in and out of view. Just because the service road is vital to the functioning of the highway doesn’t mean—as sometimes seems to be happening today—that everyone should forsake that highway altogether and crowd onto the service road instead. For most people most of the time, just being aware that the service road is out there is enough. For as Lao-tzu said of the Tao, it is sometimes most useful when no one sees it at all.

—PTOLEMY TOMPKINS
from *The Beaten Path*
William Morrow, 2001, 186-88

The All-Seeing Eye

“SUPER BEST FRIEND” JOSEPH



EPISODE 504 OF *SOUTH PARK* IS BY NO means the first time Mormons have been mentioned in the crude Comedy Central cartoon, but this is the first time Joseph Smith has made a cameo appearance. In the episode, aired on 4 July 2001, Jesus recruits the help of Joseph Smith along with Buddha, Mohammed, Moses, Lao Tze, Confucius, and other world religious figures to fight the growing cult of magician David Blaine. “His followers are growing at a rate even faster than mine,” laments Joseph Smith as he helps monitor the cult’s activities from the “Super Best Friends” headquarters. “If he gets tax-exempt status, then he’ll become a *real* religion!” In the end, the Mormon prophet helps save the day by using his super powers to freeze the pool where the “Blainiacs” are drowning themselves in a mass suicide attempt.

book’s teachings and narratives. But when teaching investigators, I was careful to say that the Book of Mormon “tells us” about a prophet named Lehi who brought his family from Jerusalem to the New World in 600 B.C., because I did not know if that “telling” was historically reliable or not.

Of course, if it’s not historically reliable, then what is it instead? Fiction? A fabrication by a New York treasure hunter masquerading as a prophet, seer, and revelator? This is the dilemma the orthodox like to present: either you believe Joseph was what he said he was—a prophet translating ancient scripture through the power of God—or you believe he was a fraud. I wasn’t willing to say Joseph was a fraud. Nevertheless, I saw problems with accepting the Book of Mormon as historical.

I don’t need to rehearse those problems here; *SUNSTONE* readers are no doubt well acquainted with them. And while I had not yet decided whether those problems were compelling enough for me to reject belief in the historicity of the Book of Mormon, I did take them seriously. Reading from the Book of Mormon thirty minutes every morning as a missionary, I took note of passages which lent credence to the thesis that the book was a nineteenth-century creation—and I took note of passages which suggested that the book really was the product of an ancient culture.

The important thing, however, is this: my uncertainty about the Book of Mormon’s historical origins did not keep me from drawing spiritual nourishment or direction from the book—that being, of course, the primary reason I read it every morning and the primary reason I read it with others.

Even now, years after I decided that it makes more sense to me to believe the Book of Mormon is a nineteenth-century creation, I still look to the Book of Mormon for inspiration, comfort, and insight. I still accept the Book of Mormon as the word of God.

Why? Because as I see it, what makes a text the word of God—what makes scripture scripture—is not its origin, but its use. Traditionally, Jews and Christians and Muslims and Mormons have believed that certain texts are the word of God because God spoke them at some point in the past through prophets. By contrast, the reason I believe certain texts are the word of God is that when I read them, I feel God speaking to me in that moment. Like Ralph Waldo Emerson, I believe it’s more important that God speaketh than that he spake.

When I say, “I know the Book of Mormon is the word of God,” I mean, “I know that God has spoken to me through the words of this book, and if you listen carefully as you read it, you can hear God speaking to you, too.” Clearly, I disagree with the orthodox about the Book of Mormon’s origins. And I differ with the orthodox over what God is trying to say through the book. But we do seem to be in basic agreement about what the book is meant to be used for.



—JOHN-CHARLES DUFFY
Salt Lake City, Utah

Faith-Promoting Rumors

CELESTIAL CELLULOID

DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE RECENT RICHARD Dutcher films, *God’s Army* and *Brigham City*, several Hollywood studios are becoming intrigued with the idea of making Mormon films. Rumored to be in the works are special LDS remakes of several classic films:

SAVING ELDER RYAN: In order to save their mission buddy from the evils of the world, a group of returned missionaries must venture into the University of Utah, find Elder Ryan, and take him back to BYU. Almost all of them go inactive in the process! Drama/War.

THE REAR WINDOW OF HEAVEN: From his apartment window, a wheelchair-bound home teacher spies on his neighbors and becomes convinced one of them is not paying a full tithe. Thriller. To be released direct to video. \$25.95, plus ten percent additional charge for S&H.

SOME LIKE IT DECAF: Two Mormon missionaries witness a hit by a drug cartel in Colombia and must disguise themselves as Catholic nuns in order to escape the jungle. Further complications set in as both of them fall in love with Sister Sugar Kane, a sexy nun who plays the ukulele. Comedy.

CASABLANCA WARD: In order to get their temple recommends renewed, intellectuals and feminists move to Casablanca, the last liberal ward in Salt Lake City. The plot thickens as Bishop Rick Blaine's ex-wife also moves into the ward and asks him for permission to marry her new fiance in the temple. Drama/Romance.

JOSEPH, KEVIN, AND THE AMAZING RAINBOW-COLORED DREAMCOAT: This biblical epic explores the real reason Potiphar's wife failed to seduce Joseph. As time goes by, Joseph and his partner Kevin become successful art dealers in San Francisco—but will he forgive his eleven brothers for having supported Proposition 22? Drama/Musical.

THE MESSENGER: THE STORY OF SONIA JOHNSON D'ARC. Based on the true story, this film explores the career of a real-life heroine and asks again the troubling question: was she an inspired leader or a deranged heretic? In the visually thrilling final scene, Sonia Johnson D'arc is burned at the stake center. Drama/War.

THE PLANET OF THE AP's: An astronaut lands on a planet ruled by tyrannical gorilla-like creatures who boast of having served as Assistants to the President during their LDS missions. "Darn you!" exclaims the hero as he sees Moroni's trumpet half sunk in the beach of a post-millennial Lake Bonneville. "Darn you all to heck!" Adventure/Action/Science Fiction.

—HUGO OLAIZ
Salt Lake City, Utah

From the Classroom

UNTHINKABLE!

SHORTLY AFTER COMPLETING A BEAUTIFUL SHIP of steel and wood, a boat builder announced his oceanic craft was absolutely unsinkable. He even named it *The Unsinkable*. "Just look at her," the builder would

exclaim to visitors, "She is the best there ever was! The strongest, the most stable—unsinkable!"

For a while, the townspeople believed the builder and spoke highly of the ship as they passed in the shadow of her enormous, impressive stature. But after years of hearing extravagant, unproved claims, they began to wonder when the ship would go to sea. "Oh, she's too good to go to sea," the builder would exclaim. "Too beautiful! Too strong! Why the sea would only burden her perfect hull with barnacles, and the salt would only diminish her shining brass. No, she's too good for the sea. Much too good."

Before long, the builder and his boat became an object of derision to the townspeople. "Too good for the sea?" they would laugh, "Well, what was she built for?" Soon, instead of thinking it unsinkable, they became convinced of just the opposite. "I'll bet she can't take to the water for more than an hour before splittin' a rail and sinking to her grave!" "Unsinkable! UNTHINKable is more like it!"

The builder grew ashamed and very sad. He knew she was a good boat and was built to withstand the storms and waves and winds of the sea . . . but he was just too afraid to let her try.

WHILE I was teaching seminary several years ago, the early-morning students took an opportunity to verbally assassinate an absent class member's supposed loose morals. Word had gotten around that she had fallen prey to the school Don Juan but was soon thereafter dropped from his very full, little black book.

"She's a slut," one boy impetuously said. The class giggled. A freshman girl laughingly chimed in, "One of the biggest in school. And she has been since seventh grade. It's so gross."

I quietly listened to them piously voice their opinions. I wondered how many of the girls leading the attack had ever been asked on a date and what they would do if this predator started paying attention to them. I wondered how many of the boys would have liked to date this girl if they thought she would accept their invitation. She was physically attractive and possessed a certain kindness that seemed to attract the male members of the class whenever she attended.

I realized that much too often people will make serious judgments about the character, looks, and soul of another human being without ever having proverbially walked in their shoes. With teenagers—especially religious teens—judging is admittedly a constant. "Who knows," I interrupted the slander, "who knows what any of you girls would do if you had this boy come on to you." The room was sheepishly silent.

After a moment or two, one of the older girls spoke up. "Well, I'd never date a boy with standards like his." It was a good response. One taught from the cradle and unquestionably a safe answer, smart, but I was not convinced it was based in reality.

I quietly asked the group to close their eyes and think of their favorite entertainer of the opposite sex. I then asked them to imagine that this teen idol somehow came into their lives and started paying a great deal of attention to them . . . in a

Sunspot

SUNSTONE IS ON THE MAP!

WE RECENTLY STUMBLED UPON SUNSTONE ROAD IN Taylorsville, Utah, and found ourselves wondering if the city planners might really have had our enterprise in mind as they considered what to name this street.

Exhibit A: How do you spell that? Is Sunstone one word or two?

Exhibit B: As you come from the south, the road begins as a meandering north-south lane, yet as you continue to travel, it soon heads left, ending up as an east-west street!

very moral way (at least at first). I suggested that after they had been showered with attention, expensive dinners, limousine rides, paparazzi, and whatever else would impress them, that the physical attraction would start to get intense. Knowing their idol was not LDS (or even considering that he or she was), I asked how many of them would be able to resist these feelings and avoid these advances.

One boy raised his hand. "I would never let it get to that point," he said as if he were Joseph before Potiphar's naked wife. I congratulated him on his desire to never let it get to that point, but pushed a little further. "So, Brad," I asked, "who is the celebrity you really admire?"

He carefully smiled. "Cindy Crawford." The class about fell apart at the image of Brad with Cindy Crawford.

"So," I said, laughing too, "Cindy Crawford finds you the most irresistible young man on earth and takes a great amount of interest in you, yet you would refuse even her friendship?"

"Absolutely," he said, with a smile as big as it could get. The class roared, proving they knew that in this case, even Brad could fall. I then suggested that maybe to our student in question, this Don Juan had been the teen idol of her dreams. I reminded them that what she was purported to have done was wrong and detrimental to her spiritual and physical well-being, but that our obligation was to have empathy for her, love for her, and acceptance of her as our sister. I very strongly said that my point wasn't to suggest they purposefully expose themselves to temptation, but should they ever be tempted with the same type of thing, maybe some of them would make some of the same mistakes. Maybe we shouldn't be so quick to judge another human being.

"But," an intelligent girl from a very dogmatic family replied, "I thought we could never be tempted beyond anything we couldn't resist."

I explained that while this doctrine might be true, the assumption that we would bear every temptation successfully

she had been told she was righteous and to never think otherwise. Sure, repentance was necessary for the times she got mad at her brother or when she took a cookie after her mother had told her to wait until after dinner. But for the most part, she'd been led to believe she was good. That her eyes were blue and hair was blonde because she was a chosen person; that she lived in a free country and spoke English because she was more loved of God than a black-haired, brown-eyed boy in South America. She thought she was *better* than that girl in question because the girl came from a broken home and wore "hoochie" clothing; because her father wasn't LDS and her mother hadn't been through the temple. She believed the little red sports car she washed every Saturday in the shade of her picket-fenced yard made her worth more to the God of the universe than her classmate who would probably never have a car like that in her entire life. Finally, she believed that she had never really sinned, that she had made some errors and mistakes, but that she was truly on the road to perfection.

"I think," she replied, "that we all might sin. But some sins are far worse than others."

"We all *might* sin?" I asked, echoing her words.

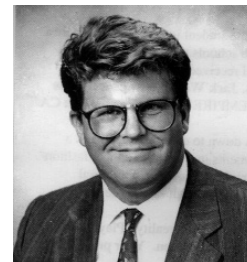
"Okay. We all sin," she admitted somewhat sarcastically, "but I will never sin like her."

The class was quiet, and I let it stay that way for a solid twenty seconds. I could tell by the look on many students' faces that they realized something wasn't right; that a sin was taking place right before their eyes from a person who thought she never did anything wrong.

"Good for you, Jill," I said with soft resignation. "Good for you."

was incorrect. If doing so were possible, then more than one person could enter and exit this world without ever having sinned. And that if that were the case, we really wouldn't need a Savior. I continued, "The scriptures say we all sin, right?" The room was silent. "Right?" I repeated.

This girl had to think for a moment. Somewhere in her short life,

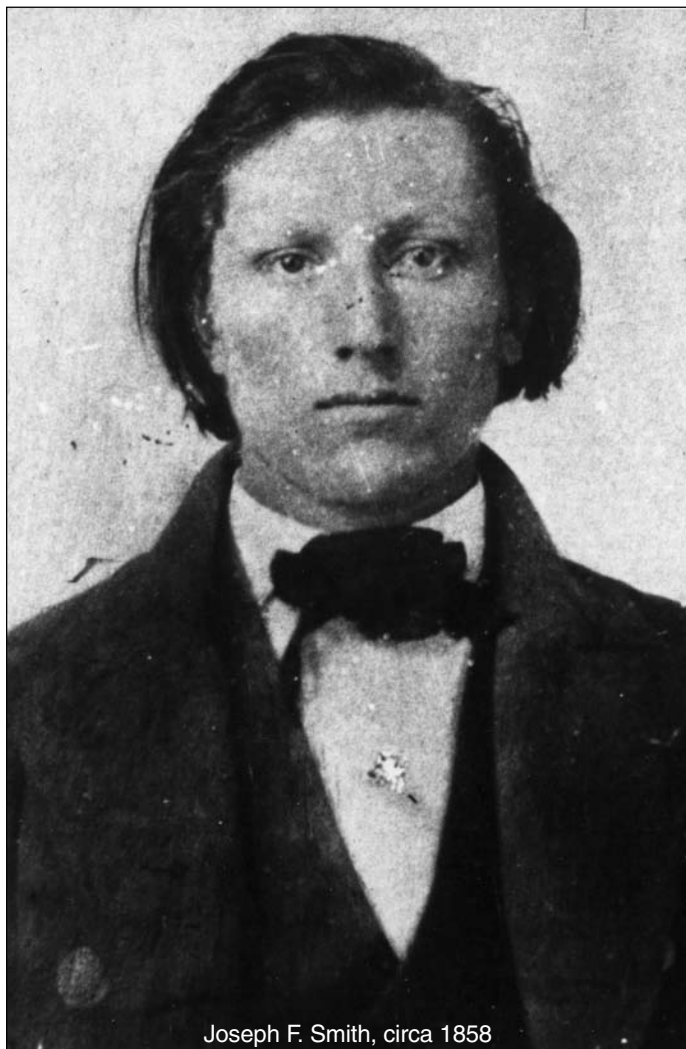


—SHAWN MCCRANEY
Park City, Utah

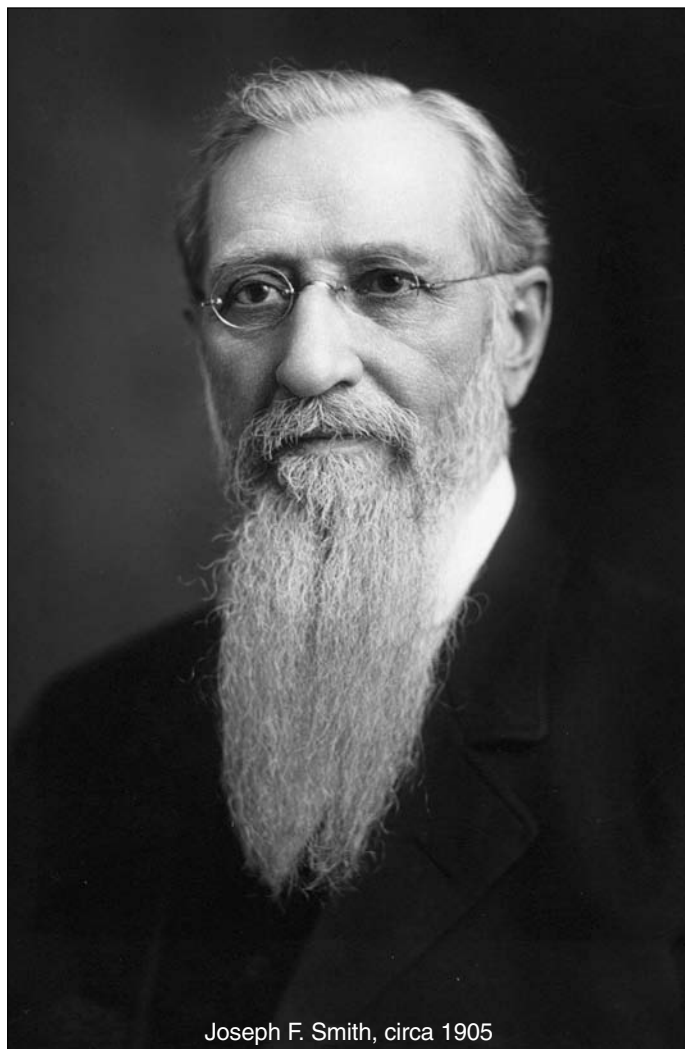
By birth and temperament, Joseph F. Smith was destined for prominence. He was of the “royal lineage”—nephew of the Prophet Joseph and son of the Patriarch Hyrum—and his zeal for the Restoration never wavered. Whatever privileges may have accrued to him from his parentage were surpassed in spades by the trials he suffered as a young man. Combined, they produced a complex and very human being.

BEFORE THE BEARD: TRIALS OF THE YOUNG JOSEPH F. SMITH

By Scott G. Kenney



Joseph F. Smith, circa 1858



Joseph F. Smith, circa 1905

H E IS THE MAN WITH THE LONG BEARD WHOSE face we have been looking at for the past two years on the cover of the 2000–01 Priesthood and Relief Society manual. He is Joseph F. Smith, son of Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith, sixth president of the Church (1901–18), and the father of the tenth, Joseph Fielding Smith. He was born in Far West, Missouri, two weeks after the Haun's Mill massacre, and he died in Salt Lake City eight days after the end of World War I.

President Smith's accomplishments are remarkable. He husbanded five large families and steered Mormonism into a safe and uncontested position in American culture. He defined the nature of Mormonism *sans* theocracy, cooperatives, and polygamy. He is truly the father of modern Mormonism.

But his many triumphs cannot be appreciated without understanding in like measure the trials and inner struggles he endured. I hope this portrayal will be a step toward an honest and empathetic portrait of the young Joseph F. Smith, of the man before the beard.

“. . . stupified with horror”

E ARLY IN THE morning, five-year-old Joseph heard tapping at his mother's bedroom window, then a man's voice from outside. His father was dead. Uncle Joseph, too. A mob had rushed the jail and shot them. Mary screamed in anguished denial, then began to sob uncontrollably.

As word spread, friends and relatives began to call—among them, B. W. Richmond, a non-Mormon staying at the Mansion House.¹ He described the scene:

[Mary] had gathered her . . . children into the sitting room and the youngest about four years old sat on her lap. The poor and disabled that fed at the table of her husband, had come in and formed a group of about twenty about the room. They were all sobbing and weeping, each expressing his grief in his own peculiar way. Mrs. Smith seemed stupified with horror.

Joseph recalled, “It was a misty, foggy morning. Everything looked dark and gloomy and dismal.”²

About three in the afternoon, two wagons bearing the martyrs reached the outskirts of town. Eight to ten thousand distraught mourners lined the streets. When the wagons reached the Mansion House, the rough pine coffins were unloaded and carried into the dining room. The families were asked to wait outside until the bodies could be cleaned. When they were allowed in,

[Mary] trembled at every step, and nearly fell, but reached her husband's body, kneeling down by him,



SCOTT KENNEY is a technical writer and historian living in Alpine, Utah. An earlier draft of this article was presented at the 1999 Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium (Tape #SL99-325). An expanded version can be found in the “articles” section of Scott's website, www.saintswithouthalos.com.

clasped her arms around his head, turned his pale face upon her heaving bosom, and then a gushing, plaintive wail burst forth from her lips: “Oh! Hyrum, Hyrum! Have they shot you, my dear Hyrum—are you dead, my dear Hyrum!” She drew him closer and closer to her bosom, kissed his pale lips and face, put her hands on his brow and brushed back his hair. Her grief seemed to consume her, and she lost all power of utterance.

Her two daughters and two young children clung, some around her neck and some to her body, falling prostrate upon the corpse, and shrieking in the wildness of their wordless grief.³

At 7 the next morning, new coffins lined with fine white linen and covered in black velvet were ready. The bodies were laid inside, and protective squares of glass covered the faces. Then the coffins were put into pine boxes and set on tables for the public viewing.⁴

In late June, on the banks of the Mississippi River, the fog lifts early, and temperatures rise rapidly. In the Mansion House, decomposing flesh generated putrid gases, and the corpses swelled. By noon, Hyrum's face was nearly unrecognizable, his neck and face forming one bloated mass. Although the gunshot wounds had been filled with cotton, blood and other fluids oozed out, trickling down to the floor and puddling across the room.

“Kneeling in a pool of the comingling dripping gore of the Martyrs on the floor,” Dan Jones wrote, Mary, Emma, several of the children in their care, and Lucy turned to one another alternately crying, “My husband, my husband too.’ ‘My father

**“They
turned to
one
another
alternately
crying,
“My
husband,
my husband
too.” “My
father in
blood.”
“And my
father is
dead too,”
and
“My Sons,
my sons.”**

STYLE NOTE : Paragraphing has often been added to quotations; punctuation has been standardized; original spelling has been retained except all sentences begin with a capital letter and names are consistently capitalized. Underlined or all-caps words denoting emphasis are italicized instead. Interlinear additions are enclosed in slashes (/.../).

in blood.' 'And my father is dead too,' and 'My son, my sons.'"⁵

A mixture of tar, vinegar, and sugar was kept burning on the stove lest the stench overwhelm the visitors, who, "tracking their feet in the prophet's blood" passed through the apartments "from morning till night . . . and in the house for the live-long day the lament of sorrow was heard."⁶

At 5 P.M., the doors finally closed, and the families took their final farewells. Mary lifted Joseph up to look upon the faces of his father and the Prophet, for the last time.⁷ Peering through the glass, he saw faces once so familiar, now distended and ashen, their jaws tied shut, cotton stuffed into the bullet hole at the base of his father's nose.

Joseph retained few memories of his father, but his mother's lifting him to see Hyrum's body was one of them. At five, he could not fully understand the meaning of death. The anguish in his mother's voice, the sight of his father's and Uncle Joseph's barely recognizable bodies, the stench—it was no doubt a traumatic day. And not only on that day, but for many days following, the sorrow, anger, and fear of the entire community reinforced the horrendous nature of his father's murder. How could the experience *not* have a lasting effect?

When he was twenty-one, Joseph returned to Nauvoo for the first time and recalled how as a young boy, he had hidden when strangers came to town, fearing he, too, would be "taken to prison."⁸

It was a sorrowful visit. His companions wanted to visit Carthage jail, but it was too much for Joseph. He would wait for them a short distance

away. As he told the Twelve many years later, while the others were gone, he

met a man who said he had just arrived five minutes too late to see the Smiths killed. Instantly a dark

cloud seemed to overshadow Bro. Smith and he asked how this man looked upon the deed. Bro. Smith was oppressed by a most horrible feeling as he waited for a reply. After a brief pause the man answered, "Just as I have always looked upon it—that it was a d----d cold-blooded murder." The cloud immediately lifted from Bro. Smith and he found that he had his open pocket knife grasped in his hand in his pocket and he believes that had this man given his approval to that murder of the prophets, he would have immediately struck him to the heart.⁹

" . . . I felt mighty big about it, I tell you"

AFTER THE MARTYRDOM, Hyrum's widow, Mary Fielding, was the sole care-giver and provider. His oldest child had married four days before the murders, but Hyrum's brother Samuel H. died on July 30. His pregnant wife, Levira, needed help, so Mary took in three of his five children.¹⁰ It is little wonder that Joseph's sister Martha Ann recalled their mother "seldom smiled," and getting her to laugh was "quite a feat."¹¹

Emma, Mother Smith, and many of the Smith family remained in Nauvoo; but Mary, her older brother, Joseph Fielding, and younger sister, Mercy, decided to follow Brigham Young. When William, the only surviving Smith brother, learned that Mary had permitted her step-son, John, to join the vanguard in February, he furiously berated her for siding with Young against the rest of the family. Listening upstairs, Joseph "longed for age and maturity in order that he might defend his helpless mother from such unwarranted and bitter assaults."¹² At eight, he felt keenly it was his role to protect his mother and family.

The family left Nauvoo in September 1846, crossing the Mississippi just hours before the cannonading of Nauvoo commenced. Then Joseph drove a team three hundred miles to Winter Quarters. "I never got stuck once and I never tipped the wagon over, I never broke a tongue or reach or wreched a wheel," he crowed. "I got through the journey just as well as the old men who drove the teams and I felt mighty big about it, I tell you."¹³

Two horrid winters followed at Winter Quarters. Joseph witnessed more than a boy's share of suffering and death. Six hundred men, women, and children died before Mary's family got out in the spring of 1848.¹⁴

Joseph left a detailed account of the trek west (discussed below). Suffice it to say for now that the young boy believed driving a heavily loaded wagon for a thousand miles and performing all the chores done by the men, except night guard duty, demonstrated he was almost a man.

In the valley, Mary selected a spot on Mill Creek. Before the snows came, there was time only to build a ten by twelve shelter, primarily for cooking, but where she also taught Joseph to read.¹⁵ They lived in the wagons. The winter was cold. Food was in short supply. Bread was rationed. Some boiled leather for soup. Mary's family dined on parched corn

"He found that he had his open pocket knife grasped in his hand in his pocket and he believes that had this man given his approval to that murder of the prophets, he would have immediately struck him to the heart."

and corn-meal, milk and butter, supplemented with nettle greens, thistle roots, and sego lily bulbs.¹⁶

In the spring of 1849, Mary moved the family a mile west, where they began construction of an adobe house, fourteen by twenty-two, that would house eight persons.¹⁷ Crickets destroyed much of the first three years' crops, but the harvest of 1851 was successful, and prospects for the Smith family finally began to improve.¹⁸

“ . . . like a comet or fiery meteor ”

IN THE SUMMER of 1852, Mary fell ill. She had always been small and frail; only her indomitable will had carried her through fifteen years of deprivation. But this time it was different. She was taken to Heber C. Kimball's home.¹⁹ To prevent their possible infection, the children not allowed to visit. Eight weeks later, she died.

When Joseph heard the news, Martha Ann recalled, he passed out.²⁰ He was thirteen. Through the chaos of his short life, his mother had been the only stabilizing force. He remembered the hardships she had endured and the times he had disappointed her,²¹ concluding that no one had rendered her the service she deserved.²² In death, he idealized—if not idolized—Mary as

the refined, pure gold of womanhood and motherhood—wise, intelligent, faithful, and indomitable. . . . Her faith in God and the holy gospel was implicit, boundless, sublime. Her patience in trials, her unwavering fidelity to her husband's family through all the persecutions and drivings, her endurance in poverty and hardships, and her perfect integrity to every good word and work were beyond anything I have ever seen in womankind.²³

Hers was a model no mere mortal could ever supplant. Joseph later described the year and a half after Mary's death as “perilous times. . . . I was almost like a comet or fiery meteor, without attraction or gravitation to keep me balanced or guide me within reasonable bounds.”²⁴

In the winter of 1853–54, schoolmaster D. M. Merrick called Joseph's little sister, Martha Ann, to the front of the class to be disciplined. As she approached, he pulled out a leather strap and directed her to hold out her hand. “Don't whip her with that!” Joseph suddenly exclaimed. Merrick turned “and was going to whip me; but instead of whipping me, I licked him, good and plenty.”²⁵

A “good and plenty” licking went beyond purely defensive intervention. Nor was this likely an isolated incident. Joseph was expelled from school.²⁶ As one acquaintance discreetly put it, Joseph was “quick with his temper and not afraid to let his fists fly.”²⁷

“My temper was beyond boiling . . .”

IN EARLY 1871, Joseph prepared a reminiscence for publication in the *Improvement Era* that reveals the depth and persistence of his childhood rage.²⁸ The narrative begins

with Joseph's genealogy back to his paternal grandparents. Next, in rapid succession, he tells of his mother's conversion and move to Kirtland, her marriage to Hyrum, the massacre at Carthage, Winter Quarters, and the trek to Utah. Chronologically, the next subject would be pioneer life in the Valley and Mary's death. But Joseph doesn't go there. Instead, he backtracks to early 1839. He reports his mother took him to Liberty Jail shortly after his birth and discusses how their home in Far West was ransacked and a mattress was thrown on top of him—he barely escaped death—events he only could have known from his mother or, perhaps, Aunt Mercy. But all that is prelude to a conversation he overheard between his mother and Harlow Redfield, second counselor in the Provo bishopric and a member of the Provo City Council.²⁹ In 1839, Redfield had been visiting the Smith home when the looters invaded. Joseph wrote:

I well remember when in 1851 or 2 he came to Utah, he came to my mother and endeavored to explain matters, saying that he endeavored to pick the lock, so that the mob should not break it. However satisfactory this explanation was to himself, my mother could not swallow it, as she plainly told him.

My own opinion is that bro. Redfield was caught (as he supposed at least) in a tight place, as it seems he was at my Father's house when the mob came, and knowing that opposition was perilous, and would be inadequate to deter the mob from their purpose, he concluded that a quiet submission, and a seeming willingness for the mob to search the house &c. was the best policy, therefore took a part, as though he was one of the mob.

As bro. Redfield died in the church I should like to think well of him, but this I must say, however pure his motives, my mother would never *acknowledge* /his explanation/ of the deed.³⁰

Originally Joseph wrote, “Mother would never acknowledge a *forgiveness* of the deed,” but he then crossed out *forgiveness* and replaced it with “his explanation.” Forgiveness was not lightly bestowed.³¹

Next, Joseph proceeds to two Winter Quarters incidents in

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which Mary's intuition/inspiration prevents a band of rustlers from stealing her cattle, and nine-year-old Joseph outmaneuvers a band of Indians until help arrives.

Then in the spring of 1848, desperate to get her family out of Winter Quarters, Mary presses young and untrained animals into service pulling wagons. It takes three days to get to the staging ground at Elk Horn, a prohibitively slow rate of travel. At that point, "a circumstance occurred *I shall never forget and have not yet even forgiven.*" Captain Cornelius P. Lott,³² to whose company they are assigned, examines their wagons and animals, and declares it is

folly for "Widow Smith" to attempt the Journey, and said he, "Go back to Winter Quarters and remain till

**For Joseph,
the trek
to Utah
became a
downward
spiral into
the hell
of un-
controllable
fury and
murderous
rage.**

another year so that you can get assistance,³³ for if you start out in this manner, you will be a burden on the company the whole way, and *I will have to carry you along or leave you on the way.*"

To this disconsolate harangue Mother calmly replied, "Father Lott, I will beat you to the valley and will ask no help from you either." At this he seemed quite nettled and said sharply, "You can't get there without help, and the burden will be on me," and

turned on his heel and went away.

I was then a little boy, and I felt grieved and hurt at the harsh and disencouraging manner of "Father Lott," and the cold rebuff he gave my mother.

Mary contracts for additional oxen, so when the company rolls out, she is ready. "All went smoothly," Joseph continues, until they reached the north fork of the Platte where they spot another company of Saints in the distance. It is the company of Jane Wilson's mother. Jane, "a subject of charity" traveling with the family, goes off to join her mother, expecting the two groups will camp together that night.

But Lott decides to stop at noon and calls everyone together. "Is all right in the camp?" he calls. All reply affirmatively. "When Mother spoke he exclaimed, 'All is right, is it, and a poor woman lost!'" Mary "very mildly" explains Jane "has gone to see her mother and is quite safe." Enraged, Lott exclaims, "I rebuke you widow Smith, in the name of the Lord! She is lost and must be sent for at once." So Joseph's older stepbrother John is sent to overtake the company ahead "travelling

in the night through droves of ravenous wolves." As expected, Jane is fine.

Next, mid-way across Wyoming, he describes the now-famous blessing of the oxen. Interestingly, however, the crux of the story as told here is not the power of faith, prayer, or priesthood, but Lott's fuming about Mary's sick oxen, the irony of hers being healed and his dying, and his suspicion that Mary had poisoned his animals.

One of our best oxen laid down in the yoke as if poisoned, and all supposed he would die. Father Lott now blustered about as if the world was about at an end. "There" said he "I told you /you/ would have to be helped, and that you would be a burden on the company." But in this he was mistaken, for after praying for the ox, and pouring oil upon him he got up and we drove along only detaining the company a very short time. But we had not gone far when another fell down like the first. But with the same treatment he got up, as the other. I believe this was repeated the 3rd time, to the astonishment of all who saw and the chagrin of Father Lott.

Farther down the trail, one of Mary's oxen dies of old age; then three of Lott's ablest oxen and his best mule die.

This was a sore trial to the old man, and a very great loss, as he was obliged to get help in order to proceed. I heard him say, "It looks suspicious that 4 of my best animals should lie down in this manner all at once, and die, and everybody's cattle but mine escape!" and insinuated that Somebody had poisoned them through Spite, all of which was said in my presence and for my especial benefit, which I perfectly understood, altho' he did not address himself directly to me.

Now the climax:

It was well for Father Lott I was only a stripling of 10 /9/ years of age, and not a man. Even four years latter [the year Mary dies], Such an occurrence would have cost the old man dearly, regardless of his age, and perhaps been a cause of regret to myself.

My temper was beyond boiling, it was "white hot," for I knew his insinuation was directed or aimed at my mother. . . .

At this moment I resolved on revenge for this and the many other insults and abuses this old fiend had heaped upon my mother, and should most certainly have carried out my resolution had not death come timely to my relief and rid the earth of so vile and despicable an incumbrance while I was yet a child.

Providentially, Lott dies before Joseph is old enough to act on his murderous intent, and all ends well.³⁴

Joseph recalls Lott was also spiteful because Mary would not allow Joseph to stand guard at night "and performe all the duties of a man to which she had no objections, and which I did faithfully in the day time, for I yoked, un-yoked and drove my own team and took my turn of day guard with the men, and was equal to the best, which was more than reason could demand or than any /other/ child in camp of my age did."³⁵

For the Church, the trek to Utah became a spiritual as well as temporal journey—the recapitulation of ancient Israel—exodus, travail in the wilderness, and finally, emergence into the promised land. For Joseph, it became a downward spiral into the hell of uncontrollable fury and murderous rage. I suspect the “white-hot” feelings actually emerged from his mother’s death. As he tried to make sense of it all, perhaps it helped him find an outlet for the overwhelming sense of loss and helplessness to focus his anger on someone like Cornelius P. Lott who, as Joseph remembered, had so contemptuously sneered at the one now risen to beatification.

That hatred lasted a long time.³⁶ Twenty-three years after the fact, one senses Joseph was indeed furious as he committed the story to paper.

“ . . . tell it to no body ”

AFTER MARY’S DEATH, Joseph was nearly inconsolable. For a year and a half, he ran wild, without effective guidance or discipline. He beat up the schoolmaster and likely took up drink and tobacco.³⁷

When he was only fifteen and a half, he was called on a Church mission to the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. His father’s seventy-four-year-old uncle, Silas Smith, was also called and would be his first companion. They served together in the Kula region of Maui, a beautiful setting on the hillside of Mount Haleakala. But Joseph missed his friends. The food was strange and often scarce. The customs were foreign, and he could not understand the language. Other missionaries received mail routinely, but for six months, none came for him. Finally a letter arrived from George A. Smith, the first communication from home since he had arrived. Joseph replied:

With Joy and Grattitude I Recieved your Letter . . . It mead my hart rejoice when I Saw it for It was the first Letter that I had resieved from the valleys of the mountains. You must exkuse all the mistakes. As you well know, I am A new beginner. I am young and yet have time to Learn.

After reporting his travels and the welfare of the missionaries, Joseph asked that he be remembered in family prayers that I may holde out faithful and bair off my calling with honour to myself and the cause in which I am ingaged. I had rather die on this mission than to disgrace myself ore my calling. These are the Sentiments of my hart. My prairs is that we may holde out faithful to the end, and evetually be cround in the kingdom of god with those that have gon before us.³⁸

Life on the islands was humbling. After four months, he felt he had learned a great deal. He wrote Martha Ann:

I could give you much council, that would be benifisial to you as long as you live upon this earth. . . . Be Sober and prayerful, and . . . never feel down harted but be merry /in your hart/ and p[r]ay[er]ful and keeps a prayorful hart and a thoughtful mind and the Lord will bless you . . . only be kind to your Sisters and mind what they say to you and never [il-

legible word] above them, for they are your older Sisters, and it is for them to give council and also for our older Brothers. You be kind to them and do what they [say], and do not get cross. And study your books . . . and think more of Joy in your Hart, than Sorrow in your mind, and keepe it all to your Self, and tell it to no body, and you Shall be blessed.³⁹

At the time, Joseph himself was quite “down harted,” but he followed his own counsel and kept it to himself.

“ . . . and but fiew are exceptionable ”

HIS LETTERS WERE always cheerful, expressing gratitude to the Lord and his servants, and determination to fulfill his calling honorably. He worked hard to learn Hawaiian, and, according to President Francis A. Hammond, at April conference, he was able to address the congregation in the native tongue, “causing all the saints to rejoice exceedingly. He has only been here 6 months. The Lord has been with him in getting hold of the language. He spoke very feelingly & I was rejoiced much to hear his voice in the native language.” Unfortunately Joseph had “a few hard words” with another elder the next evening, and Hammond was obliged to give them “some good hints . . . about giving way to their evil passions.”⁴⁰

But when Hammond was transferred to Lanai, Joseph was made president of the Maui-Molokai conference. At age sixteen, he was responsible for 1,253 Saints in forty-one branches plus three Utah Elders—one of whom suffered paranoid delusions.

It was a challenging assignment. Hawaiian culture was in shambles. Hawaiians outside of Honolulu lived in filthy squalor. Many were addicted to liquor; and traditional sexual promiscuity brought syphilis to virtually every village.

Those who joined the Church were disillusioned when priesthood blessings did not save their families in the smallpox epidemic of 1853. In addition, they had raised funds to purchase a printing press, but when it arrived, President Young directed it be sent to San Francisco where George Q. Cannon would use it to print a newspaper.⁴¹ By the time Joseph arrived, there was little enthusiasm for the Church.

A gathering place had been designated at Palawai on Lanai, where Saints could be free of corrupting influences. The

“I had rather die on this mission than to disgrace myself ore my calling. These are the Sentiments of my hart.”

“Websters unabridged was very providentially beyond your reach”

Joseph estimated the extent of his schooling at three years and three months,⁴² so as part of a self-education regimen, he would often use large words to build and practice his vocabulary. One of his favorite targets for his philological perambulations was J. C. Rich. An example from a 27 July 1861 letter to Rich:

“Humbly deprecatingly and appologetically imploring your Extreem leniency and benevolent paliation of my unpardonable inadvertancy in procrastinating to such an incorrigible extention, my feeble essay to expaciate in acknowledgement of your eloquential acrafampthical but brief, curt, communication of the 13th inst. I assume”

On a separate occasion, Rich teasingly responded:

Your ‘vocabulary arrangement’ was duly received this morning and if nothing interferes with my phrenological developments I <opine> that I can digest its contents in about 3 days! Language is entirely incapable of expressing my thankfulness and gratitude that Webster’s unabridged was very providentially beyond your reach at the time you penned your ‘unassuming missive;’ because I’ve got to ransack 759 pages of the Dictionary now before I can fully comprehend the details.”⁴³

strongest members were called as pioneers—leaving many branches without leadership. The people grumbled about constant pleas for donations for the colony, in addition to tithing and feeding and housing the missionaries. Worms ate the colony’s first crops, then there was drought, problems with the cisterns, and so on. The pioneers returned to their homes poorer than when they left and spreading dissatisfaction.⁴⁴

Under these conditions, the number of baptisms barely outpaced the number of deaths. After a year, he was transferred to the Big Island. The living conditions were wretched, and despite his resolve not to be a grumbler, on occasion he just had to let it out:

I have seen many things since I have been on the islands, and some of them are apalling. I have seen whol famelies who ware one sallid [illegible] of scabes (having the itch) and every stich or rag they had about them or on their premisis, war alive with the itch. I have slept in these circonstances, I have shaken hands with those whos body and handes ware a scab! I have eaten food mixed up like unto batter with such handes, and I never was so hearty, but I cannot say strong, in my life. My body has been cler of diseas of all kindes, until now, and now I perceive that I have a slight touch of the cantagian, but I must thank God for his goodness I entered a house where several persons was eating and there was a large dog stood with his head over [a] calabash of poi, his mouth and eyes ware drooling and running watter matter &c. He had some fiend here upon him, but scabes, running sores, lame skin, no flesh, bones &c. being the most prevalent. Whether any of the dog was amalgamated with the poi or not I shan’t say but the poi was given

for us to eat.

Syphilis and other sexually-transmitted diseases ran rampant throughout the islands. Like most haoles, including Mormon missionaries, Joseph attributed these conditions to wickedness. “The fact of it is, their nation is roten, and stink because of, and with their own wickedness, and but fiew are exceptionable.”⁴⁵

Occasionally, they didn’t seem so bad—they could even be enticing. One evening on Maui, “We seen a sight that was worth all other ‘sights’ that I ever seen. It was composed of 3 native girls engaged in a Hawaiian dance. It is more than I can describe.” A year later, the maturing teenager observed, “My thoughts have been curious a long back.”⁴⁶

Joseph’s final assignment, as president of the Molokai conference, was especially challenging. Over a hundred members had been excommunicated in

the previous twelve months—nearly half of the membership on the island.

On enquiring for a place to stop, no one knew. On asking for the president, we were informed he had left the church. We suseded in geting a Mormon to lead us to the meeting house. This we found transmorgri-fied into a carpenter’s shop and was full of rubbish, boards, tools &c. We soon prevailed in geting it cleaned out. I sent for the prest. of the branch, asked him his reasons for leaving the church. He said because the rest were leaving, and his mind changed &c. I gave him a good preaching to warning him of his perrilous situation, his forfeiture of all blessings &c. but it seemed wors than throwing words away to talk with him.⁴⁷

Finally Joseph let loose in his diary:

I have ate enough dirt and filth, put up with anough inconveniencies slept sufficiently in their filth, muck and mire, lice and everything else, I have been ill treated, abused, and trod on by these nefarious ethnicks just long anough. I believe it is no longar a virtue, if they will not treat me as I merit, if they will not obey my testimony, and my counsels, but persist in their wickedness, hard heartedness and indifference, their lyings, decietfulness, and hard hearted cruilty as regards the servants of the Lord, I will not stay with them, but leave them to their fait. I believe to the bottom of my soul the Lord Allmighty does not require any one to put up with what we have to put up with among a portion of this people.⁴⁸

In five months, he and his companion baptized three and excommunicated thirty-six. Colleagues on other islands also

reported net losses. From July 1855 to October 1857 mission membership fell nearly 25%, from 4,200 to 3,200. Brigham Young decided to abandon the mission.⁴⁹

Joseph had arrived in the islands a lonely, contrite, anxious boy. Three years later, he departed a confident preacher of the gospel.

“. . . they have changed to something stronger . . .”

HE REACHED THE Salt Lake Valley on 24 February 1859 and enlisted the next day in the militia—most likely in Orrin Porter Rockwell’s new Mill Creek company. He was now also free to turn to romance. Prior to his mission, Joseph had taken an interest in Jane Fisher, the sister of one of his old Mill Creek chums. Apparently, he even proposed to Jane while on his mission but told her she was not to make the engagement public. When he returned, however, things were different. On 26 June, Jane wrote:

You said you would be happy to hear from me, every month, and I was vain enough to think you ment what you said. . . . Everybody thinks you and I are engaged. Now dont think yourself insulted and trample the letter under your feet till you have finished. . . . Joseph I swear by all I hold dear that I never wronged you so much. Never did such an expression pass my lips. . . . When you return, people will find they were mistaken, and pitty me. For that I do not care. I scorn their pitty, as I have their scoffs, but you too would pitty and despise me for daring to aspire to your affection. . . . But allow me to give you the same advice you did me. Do not marry the hand alone but be Sure She has a heart.”⁵⁰

Uncertain of their feelings, Joseph

“I could have shrunk out of existence . . .”

WHEN JOSEPH RETURNED from his mission, he brought with him two things he probably never intended to acquire: a love of liquor and an addiction to tobacco.

During this period, many faithful Latter-day Saints drank wine and other alcoholic beverages. Many men chewed tobacco, including at least half of his missionary companions.⁵¹ Joseph picked up both habits,⁵² but tobacco was the bigger problem:

From my childhood—for twenty years and upwards I chewed the filthy weed. I never saw the moment during the whole time that I was not inwardly ashamed of it, insomuch I endeavored to keep it to myself, using great caution. One day I went into the president’s office. He whispered to me, I was obliged to whisper back. He smelt my breath, and started in surprise. “Do you chew tobacco?” I could have shrunk out of existence, or annihilated myself from very shame, and he saw I was ashamed of myself, and pitying me said, “Keep it to yourself!” When I went out I was resolved that I who so hated hypocrisy—now thoroughly hating myself—would conquer my appetite for tobacco or know the reason why. I tried with it in my pocket, but it was no use. My hand would involuntarily find and put it in my mouth, and it seemed when at last it was all gone, and I vowed I would not touch again, and all my friends were dead or gone on a journey, *everybody* was cross and crabbed, including my *amiable* wives and loving children, and I had no very definite purpose in life!⁵³

President Young had told the Saints, I have my weakness . . . [but] I will not make my wrong a means of leading others astray.

Many of the brethren chew tobacco, and I have advised them to be modest about it. Do not take out a whole plug of tobacco in meeting before the eyes of the congregation, and cut off a long slice and put it in your mouth, to the annoyance of everybody around. . . . If you must use tobacco, put a small portion in your mouth when no person sees you, and be careful that no one sees you chew it. I do not charge you with sin. You have the “Word of Wisdom.” Read it.⁵⁴

Later, when Joseph left on a mission to England, President Young was still using tobacco. But Joseph held himself to a higher standard. Trying to quit nicotine made him “cross and crabbed,” but being unable to quit was infuriating. Finally, after more than twenty years of use,

I conquered—and now, when I think of it, I feel ashamed that I was so weak, and strange to say the appetite, though still with me and perhaps as strong as ever, it is at my command. It is no longer the master, but a subdued, conquered enemy ever on the alert to revolt, but daily growing weaker and more faint.⁵⁵

Thirteen years later, he spoke of his struggle with alcohol. At an 1883 meeting of the School of the Prophets, he acknowledged “he had used tobacco, and he loved liquor,” but he had quit and believed anyone who wanted to could do the same.⁵⁶ References to his drinking are not extensive, nor do they suggest excess. For example, in 1862, his missionary associates wrote him they were “lonely when you left so we downed the bottle of wine you forgot when you left.” A few months later, he was presented with a gift of “3 bottles of wine;” in 1873, he received a bottle of champagne and “treated my folks;” when he left for England the next year, he was given a bottle of wine, and once there, he was “treated very respectfully to wine and cake.”⁵⁷

and Jane continued to see each other through the summer, fall, and early winter. Apparently they broke up in December, about the time Joseph went to Fillmore as sergeant-at-arms for a legislative session. Two months later, Jane's indignant father wrote him:

You have been keeping company with my Daughter ever since your return from your Mishion & from the testimony before me you solicited her to be your wife before you returnd whitch indirectly was granted. I will here state that before the Move south you could have had my consent & from that time untill two

**“It is a taske
to me to
delineate
the feelings
of my
beating
heart. . . .
Since I saw
you first the
admiration
and
respect I
first
conceived
for you
have daily
grown.”**

Months ago you Could have had it grudgeingly & since that time you could not have it at all. I told her at least two months ago to not have anything more to Doo with you for it was my opinion that she would lead a Miserable life. . . .

I beleive she would have maried you & Dragd out a few miserable years in broken hearted wretchedness under the tyranical influence jelousy & self importance . . .

You have stood in the way for the last 8 or 9 months when she could have Bettered herself 2 to 1 with out any trouble but your covetynes and jelous disposition would not give her

up . . .

You say your folks are all against you. So much the more you are to be pitied for not haveing a mind of your own . . . You also state that you seen Brother kimble [Heber C. Kimball] & he has Counsald you to do as you have done.⁵⁸

Three days after this rebuke, Joseph began pursuing his cousin, Levira. Trying to appear as sophisticated as he possibly could, Joseph wrote:

It is with feelings of true emotion that I attempt to address you a few lines this morning. It is not however without embarishment & difidence that I engage in this taske. I say taske because it is a taske to me to

delineate the feelings of my beating heart, in writing. Still 'twould be a plesurable taske, Could I but penetrate the future, and see therein, the completion and fulfillment of my ardent hope, but like the divinity of a Cato's Immortality, "Shadows, Clouds and darkness hang about it." I would that it was otherwise, but this is not the point. . . . I am aware that our acquaintance has been short, to you, I do not know how pleasant, but allow me to say, that since I saw you first the admiration and respect I first conceived for you have daily grown, till they have changed to something stronger and more fervent. . . . Not knowing therefore; the state of your feelings, It becomes a duty that I owe myself, to simply aske you, cousin how you feel toward *me*, what you think of "Cousin Joe," or whether it is agreeable to you or not that I should encourage farther my desires, or scese to know or hope, or dream of thee, as something nearer, dearer, and more Chois than just a Cousin and a friend.⁵⁹

Six weeks later, on 5 April 1859, Brigham Young married the two in his office.⁶⁰ Joseph was twenty, Levira almost seventeen.

“the throbbings of the heart that loves”

THE YOUNG COUPLE seemed very much in love when, after barely a year of marriage, Joseph left on a mission to England. "Levira, I think of you all the time," he wrote en route to New York. "I pray for you, and more—. But enough. You know the throbbings of the heart that loves." He also had a word of counsel: "Remember Vira, your duties to your God, and to your mother. Do not give way to too much hilarity and rudeness. Be a woman! Respect age and take good council, though it be from a fool."⁶¹

Taking counsel was a virtue Joseph had cultivated since he had been sent on a mission. It was a virtue he expected of his wife. Levira tried, but she was by nature an independent-minded woman. She was also fun-loving, which might have been the perfect antidote to Joseph's serious personality. When he encouraged her to cultivate sobriety, she teased, "I am getting so sober that I can hardly know how to take a joke, so you must not joke me a great deal."⁶² To which he replied, "I do admire sobriety in you dear. I admire it in any one." Then, speaking more of himself than anyone else, he added:

There is a state of sobriety verging upon melancholy that I do not like. You must avoid that above all things for it will make you disagreeable both to yourself and your friends. . . . I do not want you to get disheartend, nor downcast. Keep chearful, yet be sober i.e. not wilde!⁶³

When he had been gone four months, Levira rather apprehensively mailed him a photo of herself.

I almost fear that you will give me a downright real good scolding for daring to be so presumptuous as to do such a thing without being requested so to do. But notwithstanding, however, I think I am going through a process that is calculated to harden me in time, so

that I can take a scolding and not hurt my feelings not the least either, but never from you. No. Five words from you either cross or pleasant would have more weight upon my mind than five times five would from any other being that lives on the earth.

You may perhaps think that I don't mean one word of it, but I do mean every word and a great deal more. It has ever been so. Cross words from you have fell like ice upon my heart, and yet I have fained to care nothing about them. . . .

I never could keep such a smooth face again, no never, and I hope from this time forth and forever I may never do or say anything that will cause you to disregard my feelings. There is a long lifetime before us I hope, and my earnest and constant prayer is that we may live it according to the best of our knowledge.⁶⁴

In the second autumn of Joseph's absence Levira became depressed. Mail arrived in Salt Lake three times a week, but there had been nothing from Joseph for six weeks. "I could not endure for one year to come what I have endured during the past time of your absence from home," she wrote in exasperation.

One look at my poor, pale face and wasted form would convince you of that. Oh! Joseph, I would give all I possess in this world if I could only see you, be clasped to your bosom, hear from your lips the comforting words I so much stand in need of at this present time, and you would have them for me. I know you would! There are but precious few men in this world who possess human hearts and feelings, and I thank God that he has given me one, and by his [illegible] I will strive to become worthy of him . . . the adversary has exerted his powers to destroy me, but I have fought against him. It has been a hard struggle but he has not been permitted to overcome."⁶⁵

Joseph replied:

"My time is fully occupied one way and another . . . nearly always so that I have to snatch an opportunity

to write whenever circumstances will permit. I am not exactly my own master, as duty is always to me binding. My desire is to do my duty. . . . You say you do not wish to disturb my mind with your sorrows. . . . And which is most likely to disturb my mind, to know the wors, and be able to sympathize with you and perhaps be able to suggest a remedy, or be

warned of danger and be kept in ignorance as to where or what it is, or how to meet it, and thus be compelled to endure the worst fears and suspense? . . . Should we not be one? I have never kept anything from you, that you should know. All my thoughts are yours. Let yours be mine.⁶⁶

Then, heightening Joseph's alarm, came word that Levira was "some better but unable to do anything yet." Brigham had sent a carriage to transport her to George A.'s home where she could be cared for.⁶⁷ As it turned out, Levira had fallen ill. In January, Martha Ann wrote that Levira "has been very low for a long time and she is very low yet but she is much better than she has been. . . . She has been low spirited some of the time."⁶⁸ Levira also spent five weeks at Brigham Young's home.⁶⁹

On 1 March 1862, he wrote, "You must cheer up, Levira, and learn (if you have not already) to take things as they come, which we cannot control." He had been feeling low himself, and didn't write often "because I have had no heart to write to anyone scarcely and even now, if you catch my spirit, I fear it will fail to enliven you. It takes but little to make me sad. I am very sensitive and rather melancholy inclined besides I scarcely ever have time to sit down, quiet and unquestioned long enough to follow out a link or two of thought, say nothing of a 'chain of thought.'"

The good news: "I expect to arrive in Great Salt Lake City in about six weeks! or about the time this letter reaches you!!!"⁷⁰

As it turned out, Joseph's release was postponed. After a six-month hiatus, Levira finally wrote again. The letter arrived on 5 July. She was still sick and weak, but hearing from her lifted Joseph's spirits:

Your letter has done me a vast amount of good. Do you know the Devil tried to weigh me down with the thoughts & fears that you were worse, and I do not



Levira Annette Smith

**“There are but
precious few men
in this world who
possess human
hearts and
feelings, and I
thank God that
he has given
me one.”**

know what else! but to Judge from my feelings, Dreams &c. Something Sorrowful, but your letter has done much to dispell the cloud, and to restore Sunshine.

Referring to letters from friends he had received in the past six months he joked, "It has been this, 'Levira is mending, I have been to see Levira and she is improving' . . . and all the time Since, that I really began to think you 'mended wors'!"⁷¹

In June, Levira complained of "a beating on the brain." In August, she wrote, "since I have been sick I am so nervous that it is imposible for me to write." She was living again at George A.'s home, where she expected to remain "the remainder of the summer & perhaps untill you come home."⁷² No one knew that was still more than a year away.

In February 1863, Joseph was beset by another episode of depression: "After meeting I was seized with a sorrowful, dejected feeling that hung like a weight upon my mind. I could not get rid of it." He went to bed at midnight and arose the next morning "very sad." He gave vent to his feelings "in prayer and tears."⁷³

The following month, mission president George Q. Cannon wrote Joseph that his departure would have to be postponed again—his organizational and clerical services were required for the upcoming season of emigration.⁷⁴

Finally, on 24 June 1863, he sailed for New York, docking on 6 July, and, after a brief side trip to Nauvoo, arrived in the valley on 4 October. He had been away three years and five months

"these death dealing, love destroying things—angry words"

LEVIRA WAS AT George A.'s home. Joseph took her back to her mother's boarding house, but her condition worsened to the point that George A. feared "the prospects of her recovery are not very brilliant."⁷⁵

For six weeks, Joseph rarely left her side and had not a single hour of uninterrupted sleep.⁷⁶ Levira described it as

"that terrible spell of sickness, six weeks, [during which] I never slept a wink, and my nerves were completely unstrung, so that I could not hold a pin, and was sometimes out of my mind."

Everything we know of those weeks is contained in Levira's 1867 letter to Brigham Young and Joseph's response.⁷⁷ In her letter, Levira accused Joseph of using "cruel expressions. . . . Said I ought to have a hole, bored in the top of my head and some manure put into it for brains." Joseph responded that it was only "a joke," that

in her wanderings she was sometimes more jocular than ever at any other time. And at such times I would joke with her. It was at such a time she was complaining of her brain feeling 'muddled,' &c. I said, 'I have sometimes thought that if a hole were bored into your head, and some manure put into it, it might be an improvement, but never mind, you are getting better now.' I am confident she perfectly understood me and knew it was in jest, but has since argued herself into the belief that I meant to insult her, or pretends to so believe to throw blame upon me and excuse her own conduct.

Recalling a separate incident, Levira described how one evening Joseph went out to help her mother build a chicken coop, but warned her

if I heard anything unusual, not to get up or look out. They had been out a long time. It seemed two hours to me, and I was very tired, and anxious for someone to come in. Just then a band of music came along and stopped to play in front of our house. So I raised one corner of the blind and looked out of the window. Joseph . . . immediately came in with a rope, which he doubled four or five times, and struck me five or six times across my back notwithstanding I begged of him not to strike



Joseph F. Smith in Liverpool, England, circa 1861

"Should we not be one? I have never kept anything from you, that you should know. All my thoughts are yours. Let yours be mine."

me and said I was sorry that I had disobeyed him.⁷⁸

Joseph countered that Levira was, “to all intents and purposes, insane or possessed, and I had to treat her as I would a wilful and disobedient child. There was no one but me that could do anything with her.” He defended himself, saying that sometimes he had to use force “to prevent her doing herself injury, and to compel her to take medicine and food.” On the evening in question, he left to stow away some vegetables in the cellar, charging her strictly to lie still,

for I knew that at the least noise she did not understand, and often at imaginary noises, she would jump out of bed and more than likely run out of doors in her night clothes, as she had many times attempted to do.

After only a few minutes, he heard her get up, cross the room, and open the window. He rushed back to find her looking out the window at a band playing “Dixie” in front of Gilbert & Company’s boarding house across the street. To get her back into bed he struck her—only twice—not with a rope, but with “a peach limb not as large around as the butt of an office pencil.”

Joseph was only twenty-three, trying to care for a highly agitated young wife whom he hardly knew (and certainly not in this condition) who was sometimes, by her own admission, out of her mind, other times more “jocular” than he had ever seen her, but always so high-strung and erratic that he dared not, or could not, sleep. Considering his hot temper, and his tendency toward depression, his was a herculean effort, emotionally and physically.

After these episodes, the couple had three peaceful, albeit financially strapped months. Brigham Young had publicly proposed that the Saints donate \$1,000 to help Joseph get started in life. Brigham himself contributed \$50; others donated small amounts, molasses, a parlor stove, and a pony. Joseph sold the pony and used the cash to help defray the expense of his next mission.⁷⁹

This time, Joseph, with three other veterans, was to assist Elders Ezra T. Benson and Lorenzo Snow in retaking the Hawaiian Mission from adventurer Walter Murray Gibson.⁸⁰ President Young suggested Levira might go too, if she thought the change in climate might be good for her.⁸¹

Joseph left on 2 March 1864.⁸² For reasons unknown, Levira did not accompany him. But her mother’s sister, Derinda (or Dorinda), visited Salt Lake in the summer and offered to take Levira to San Francisco where she and her husband Hazen Kimball would look after her. Brigham and Heber C. Kimball (no relation to Hazen) blessed Levira, and she arrived in San Francisco in September.⁸³

Completing his brief mission in the islands, Joseph returned to San Francisco on 5 November 1864 and went to the Kimball home, only to learn that Levira was visiting her uncle, Derinda’s brother, in the country.⁸⁴ She did not return for a week. By then, Joseph was in no mood to be trifled with:

If you had felt right, or enjoyed the good spirit . . . you would have said, Now Joseph, you know I am weak, and I would like to spend a little time here, but

whatever you say do, that is right, and that will do! Was it so? No ‘Vira you knew better than I did what was right, you did not ask my counsel, I took the liberty to counsel as I thought it was my right, you were offended, my advice was not welcome, you did not offer to be one, & united with me, regarded coming home as untimely and at last consented in anger, after it had been put off to the latest moment.⁸⁵

On 24 November, they boarded a Salt Lake-bound train in Sacramento. But sixty miles later, at Dutch Flats in the high Sierras, they were snowed in for two or three days. Levira became ill and wanted to go back. “I saw you did not want to come and I was determined you should have your own way /at the sacrifice of my own feelings/,” Joseph wrote, so he arranged for her return.⁸⁶

Before parting, he urged her to stay with her aunt, Agness Coolbrith Pickett and her daughter Ina, rather than the Kimballs.⁸⁷ But after a few weeks there, Levira decided she could not abide Mr. Pickett’s anti-Mormon tirades and moved back to the Kimballs. She had some teeth pulled and cavities filled, then began to complain of neuralgia, kidney problems, and bronchitis, and chronic nervousness. A doctor diagnosed an “ulcerated womb” that hemorrhaged in March 1865. It might, he thought, have been a miscarriage. For several months thereafter, Levira suffered heavy, debilitating menstrual flows. Three successive doctors variously prescribed whiskey and water (three times a day); electric charges; nerve tonic and pills; morning walks, light meals, and tepid baths.⁸⁸

In Salt Lake, Joseph was hired to do clerical work in the

“I am confident she perfectly understood me and knew it was in jest, but has since argued herself into the belief that I meant to insult her, or pretends to so believe to throw blame upon me and excuse her own conduct.”

Church Historian's Office.⁸⁹ He wrote Ina asking her to keep tabs on his wife. Ina thought Levira was a "hypochondriac." Despite Levira's illnesses, Ina wrote, she had been seen at various places of amusement and attended "common balls . . . to which *anyone* who paid their dollar was admitted."⁹⁰

When Joseph suggested to Levira that her protracted stay might be due to something other than ill health, she became irate:

You insinuate that I have other and private reasons for desiring to remain here which heavens knows my heart I have not, and it is unkind

of you to imagine so base and cruel a thing of me, and to upbraid me for circumstances and afflictions which I am powerless to avoid. Oh! If I should accuse you in the same manner, what would you say? and how would you feel, to think I had no more confidence in you.⁹¹

Joseph's misgivings may have been reinforced by her insistence that her mother not come to California, that it would be a needless expense, and she would be home "soon."⁹²

Joseph had taken a job as a clerk in the Church Historian's Office working six days a week compiling Church history for 1852-53, and recording Endowment House ordinances.⁹³ We do

not have his letters to Levira for this period, but from her letters, it appears he was anxious about her attitude about returning to Salt Lake. He missed her and was feeling blue. On 16 June, she wrote:

You want me to talk plainly to you. What shall I say to you? that I am true to my husband? Yes, in all truth and sincerely, I say it. That I am not fascinated with the illurements of the world? No I am not. You may think otherwise but I care nothing about the worldly minded foolish people, here or anywhere else unless they are good and that is not often the case tho there are some good kind hearted people. The people here are very free hearted and good to the poor, make presents to friends and acquaintances, and seem very liberal, more so than at home. . . . I would like to be comfortable, and see my friends so and live to improve the minde and body. One should not be ne-

glected more than the other. I believe in improvement. So do you, so does the world. So far I like it, for I like everything good.

Now I want you to cheere up, as much as possible. Take good care of yourself and grow young, not old, for if you frightened yourself by looking in the glass, I fear you'll frighten me. I want you to look well, and feel well when I come. Go out and get livened up a little, it will do you good. I fear you stay at home so much and do so much writing [at work] you get blue and brood over all [your] trouble. You must not write steadily. It is hurtful and if a little hurts me a good deal must injure you. If I were you [I] wouldnt do it for any body. If you make yourself old and ugly, morose and cross, I will not love you so look out, I give you warning.

You lead the life of a hermit, "see nobody, care for no body, go no where." You do yourself injustice. When friends invite you out why don't you go? I do not want you to stay at home in loneliness, because I am not there. When I *am* there if not able to go out, then I will want you to bear me company and we'll have good times "you bet."

You do your Parents injustice when you say "you are a fool" for they were intellectual both of them, and you are a "chip of the old block," and have no need to be ashamed of yourself.

I know whats the matter, and what you want, and what will do you good, and me too. If you had come for me and we could travel together I would have felt better and you to, a change of scenery and lively company is what you want with a contented, happy, minde.

I hope you may feel better when I come home, and if you don't I'll get Martha Ann to help me whip you, she used to be pretty strong, and if you are *sick*, we can manage you I guess, so look out, for a flogging and all sorts of tricks, and don't think you know a "heap" when you don't know anything. If you get the "big head" what will I do with you? I cant imagine unless—by-the-by, I shower your head in cold watter. Maby you'd like it, and then again maby you wouldn't.

Now drive away those dreary thoughts.

Levira will not from thee part.

Levira will not break thy heart,

My Joseph dear, my Joseph dear.⁹⁴

Two months later, Levira returned. She had been in San Francisco almost a year and had changed. She had discovered a fashionable world of comfort and entertainment, and she liked it. Joseph was focused on his Church and civic responsibilities. He had been elected to the city council and territorial House of Representatives, and served on the stake high council. Levira became easily bored. They argued frequently. After one stormy confrontation, Levira wrote:

You were very angry this morning. You said I made

"Now drive away those dreary thoughts. Levira will not from thee part. Levira will not break thy heart, My Joseph dear, my Joseph dear."

you so, true I did talk unwise to you for which I am sorry and I ask you to forgive me for all I said this morning and for every other offence that I ever gave you in my life. I would to heaven that I never had given you any offence that no angry or unkind word had ever escaped from my lips to you Joseph that no hard feelings had ever arisen between you and me and from this time I say let us drop them forever and indulge no more in these death dealing, love destroying things—angry words. In the name of Levira I will from this very hour try to improve in word and deed, and subdue my quick and impulsive nature.⁹⁵

But when the snow began to melt in 1866, Levira was anxious to get out of the house. “Through her importunities, and continual teasing for a carriage and carriage riding,” Joseph recalled, he agreed to buy a third interest in a second-hand carriage. “After this I heard nothing but ‘buggy,’ ‘Take me out,’ ‘I need to ride.’ ‘You’ve got a carriage take me out,’ &c. &c.” Exasperated, Joseph exclaimed he “wished the carriage was smashed,” and accused her of harboring “ideas above her station.”

“I am sorry to have to say I have been under the necessity of setting my foot down very firm at times,” Joseph confessed, “generally allowing her to have her own way, as she always felt that I had no right to dictate. And she never once, to the best of my recollection, cheerfully obeyed my counsel. More especially since my return from England, but particularly after her Aunt Derinda visited her from California. Our troubles date from that visit, as our letters will show.”⁹⁶

“he will learn to love me”

WHILE CLERKING IN the Church Historian’s Office (George A. Smith’s home), Joseph made the acquaintance of Bathsheba Smith’s eighteen-year-old niece, Julina Lambson. Julina’s parents, who lived just two blocks away, were unable to support four children, so she lived mostly with her aunt.

For some time, apostle Erastus Snow had been urging Joseph to take a plural wife,⁹⁷ so when Julina returned from a six-month visit to relatives in Fillmore, “he [Joseph] did not lose any time . . . in finding out whether or not I had found a

companion for life. . . . President Young had advised him [to get a wife] and he had told him a number of times, so he thought he should obey. I have always thought that the President would have liked him to marry one of his [Brigham Young’s] girls. And I know he could have had any girl he knew for the asking.”

Julina’s reply to Joseph’s proposal was, “Ask my mother and Uncle George. I would not marry the best man living without his consent.” George A. readily gave his blessing, but Julina’s mother “knew how much he [Joseph] thought of his wife Levira: ‘Julina, Joseph has a wife whom he loves and he is not marrying you for love.’ I answered, ‘Mother, I love him and if I am good he will learn to love me. He is the only man I have ever seen that I could love as a husband.’”⁹⁸

After years of angry confrontation, “Joseph has a wife whom he loves,” was an astute observation. Joseph would never be attracted to another woman the way he was to Levira, and Julina wisely recognized the difference in his feelings. He was passionate about Levira, but Julina was the better match—and learn to love her he did.

Julina and Joseph were married on 5 May 1866. Levira, Joseph acknowledged, “performed her whole duty most nobly and good, for which I am thankful,” then added, “far more on her own account than on mine. I have had no other object in view than to obey counsel and benefit ‘Vira as much or more than myself.”⁹⁹

Two months later, on 1 July 1866, he was ordained an apostle.¹⁰⁰ (The ordination was not made public, there not being a vacancy in the Council of the Twelve.)

“You are to be pitied, and I forgive you”

ON 24 JULY, he set off with traveling bishop A. M. Musser on a two-week tour of the southern settlements, followed by a month in the north, then back south for three weeks.¹⁰¹ Levira, ever restless and seemingly bent on irritating her husband whenever possible, moved back to her mother’s. For several months, she had lacked the energy to make her bed or clean the room, but while Joseph was gone, she attended the lectures of cousin Alexander H. Smith, son of Joseph Smith, Jr. Alexander was visiting Salt Lake on behalf of the RLDS Church.

When Joseph returned in late September, he discovered Levira was not at home, but he waited until the next day to go



Julina Lambson Smith

**“He is the only man
I have ever seen
that I could love as
a husband.”**

to her mother's. Levira "received me with marked disrespect and discourtesy in the presence of my brother John, S. H. B. Smith, and William Pierce. I subsequently called several times and her conduct toward me was most petulant and disrespectful."

On his way to city council meeting on 4 October, Joseph stopped by to retrieve his keys from Levira. The house was

"I considered it unbecoming and disgraceful, and . . . I would not allow it. And if ever I caught a stranger and a gentile in her bedroom again . . . there would be blood shed if I swung for it."

quite dark except for one candle by which he saw her sitting close to a Mr. Harris. (Levira said he had been reading to her, to which Joseph retorted if that were so, "it was from a book with raised letters and he had read by *hand*.") Joseph flew into a rage. According to Levira, he called her

a d--n whore. A little stain'd illegitimate whore and a liar, and if he ever caught a man in my room again there would be blood shed if he had to swing for it. He threw my chair back against the stove, and opened the front door so that passers-by could hear, and said, madam, if you want a divorce I'll give you one. When I said, very well, I'll take it, this

evening. So he left the house.

In his own defense, Joseph explained,

I was now almost choked with anger and humiliation, and could not contain my rage. I was therefore not responsible for what I said or did. Still, I remember everything distinctly. I do believe that if I had been armed I would have done violence to him, and I told him so. I told her plainly her conduct was 'whorish and illegitimate.' I did not call her a whore. I asked her if she was not ashamed of herself, and if she thought such conduct was becoming a married woman. And furthermore, whatever she thought of it, I considered it unbecoming and disgraceful, and so long as she was my wife, I would not allow it. And if

ever I caught a stranger and a gentile in her bedroom again under such circumstances, there would be blood shed if I swung for it.

Joseph was "not responsible for what [he] said or did" because he was filled with passion.¹⁰²

That night he agreed to give Levira a divorce. But the next day, he returned seeking reconciliation. She insisted he apologize to Mr. Harris.

To this every feeling in me revolted. Nevertheless, after considering the matter, I wrote a studied apology to Mr. Harris, as non-compromising as I could word it, regretting that I had lost my temper and had spoken so harshly to my wife in the presence of a stranger.

Levira accepted the apology, "and things went on again as before, although a weight was upon my mind that almost disheartened me, for I saw where her course would lead her to."¹⁰³

Eight months later, they separated for the last time. But the emotional attachment had not dissolved. He wrote:

I do not want your things . . . nor do I wish to deprive you of one grot that is yours. Neither do I begrudge aught that I have done for you, tho' you have requited me heartlessly, evil for good. I blame others [Derinda Kimball] and pitty you.

As for the items she believed to be hers, Joseph, hurting deeply, continued:

I will simply say, you are welcome to your conviction, and your conscience /will/ never accuse you of having told the truth! . . . I am astounded at the brazen impudence manifested in two lines of your note, that in relation to "your cow cherry"!! Contemplating the deliberate affrontery intended, the unparalleled impertinence of such ideas, I do not wonder that you claim blankets and anything else that is not yours!! But words are futile. You are to be pitied, and I forgive you.¹⁰⁴

Joseph did not acknowledge any responsibility for the break-up. When it became known that Levira had gone to California and obtained a divorce on grounds that Joseph had taken a concubine,¹⁰⁵ questions arose in Salt Lake, to which he replied,

My first wife * * * [asterisks in original] was intimately acquainted from her childhood with the young lady who became my second wife, and it was with their [sic] full knowledge and consent that I entered into plural marriage, my first wife being present as a witness when I took my second wife, and freely gave her consent thereto. Our associations as a family were pleasant and harmonious. It was not until long after the second marriage that my first wife was drawn from us, not on account of domestic troubles, but for other causes. In eight years of wedded life we had no children. She constantly complained of ill health and was as constantly under a doctor's care. She concluded to go to California for her health and before

going procured a separation. This all occurred previous to 1868.¹⁰⁶

The reasons Joseph gives above gloss over the issue of Levira's jealousy, which, from time to time, he indicated had been a factor. In remarks to Hawaiian missionaries in 1886, he confided that he "had paid so much attention to his first wife that she was unwilling to share his affections with his second wife. He advised the missionaries to avoid his trouble by 'bestowing no more love upon one wife than can be given equally to several.'¹⁰⁷

That jealousy might have been a strong factor is also hinted at in a letter Levira wrote to RLDS president Joseph Smith III in 1880. In it, she intimated that polygamy had been the source of her troubles with Joseph. Summarizing her complaints President Smith replied, "when [Joseph] married others you were dissatisfied and after finding the condition to be unendurable . . . you left him."¹⁰⁸

Joseph's relationship with Levira had been complex and painful. The fact that Levira moved out twelve weeks after Joseph married Julina suggests that their "associations as a family" were probably not "pleasant and harmonious." However he finally sorted it out in his own mind, the failure of his eight-year marriage was a tragedy—one of the greatest trials of his life.

"essentially a domestic man"

THE MARRIAGE TO Julina was blessed, as, for the most part, were the marriages to his succeeding wives. In each relationship, the parties had to deal with the jealousies, personality conflicts, and misunderstandings that naturally arise in plural families, but considering all the stresses, Joseph was remarkably successful as a husband and father.

"I am essentially a domestic man," he wrote. "I lack cosmopolitan qualities. I could burrow in the sacred precincts of my home and be content to dwell forever in the society and hearts of my family, and no more go out from them."¹⁰⁹

On 14 August 1866 (eleven days before Joseph completed his response to Levira's charges), Julina blessed Joseph with his first child, Mercy Josephine. In 1869, Julina and Joseph's next wife, Sarah Ellen Richards, both bore daughters. Sarah's infant lived only six days. Julina's daughter, Mary Sophronia, survived, but Josephine remained the apple of her father's eye.

Then in the spring of 1870, Josephine became ill. Joseph stayed up with her several nights in a row. On 5 June, he wrote in his diary, "I have no appetite. My sympathy and solicitude for my darling little Josephine has greatly bowed my spirit, notwithstanding I think I have received a testimony that she will not die. Still she is a sensitive, delicate and tender little creature, and loves her 'papa.'"

She died the next day. Joseph grieved for a long time. "It is one month yesterday since my little loved, cherished, darling Josephine died. . . . O! that I could have saved her to grow up to womanhood. I miss her every day, and I am lonely. My heart is sad. God forgive my weakness, if it is wrong to love my little ones as I love them and especially my first darling babe."¹¹⁰

Joseph married Julina's sister, Edna, on 1 January 1871, and on 30 January, Sarah delivered another daughter, Leonora. Edna brought the first son, Hyrum Mack, into the family on 21 March 1872.

" . . . the veritable traitor [who] has poisoned your peace"

IN THE FALL of 1872, James and Mary Ann Fielding McKnight moved into the house next door. If ever there were a man who would test Joseph's patience, it was James McKnight. He had married one of Joseph's cousins, but treated her shabbily, and he had the irritating habit of turning his animals into the Smith corn patch at night where they did considerable damage.¹¹¹

On New Year's Day 1873, Joseph went to "have a settlement" with McKnight. "He insulted me, and would give me no satisfaction. I struck him three times with my cane. I then went and complained of myself to [Justice Jeter] Clinton, for breaking the peace, explaining the whole matter." Then, he returned to see how McKnight, ten years his senior, was faring. The next day, Joseph "apologized for losing my temper, and asked his forgiveness for striking him." McKnight accepted the apology.¹¹²

Naturally, word that an apostle of the Lord had clubbed his neighbor with a cane provided fodder for titillating conversation in Salt Lake. At April conference, according to the *Tribune*, Joseph said he "did not claim to be perfect, as he had many weaknesses; he was a passionate man, and had sometimes been, to a certain extent, overcome by it, but had not done anything criminal in that respect. The gospel kept him at peace with his neighbors and his brethren, with whom he never had any quarrels that is, said Mr. Smith, but to a very limited extent."¹¹³

A year after the incident, McKnight wrote Joseph that his injuries were permanent and painful. Some doctors, he said, even believed his life would be shortened. Then, he added,

Your life-long plea of inherent and uncontrollable frenzy at the sight of some hobgoblin the heart of your temper has personified as the veritable traitor whose grim visage has poisoned your peace for a

**"Your
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. . . is worn
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quarter of a century past, is worn thread-bare. It cannot any longer screen moral and mental imbecility. The drunkard who murders another under the plea that his minor madness will relieve the crime of its monstrosity, exposes his predisposition to commit the crime.¹¹⁴

Setting aside the incendiary rhetoric, the core of McKnight's 1874 accusation is consistent with Joseph's defense in his and Levira's 1866 divorce proceedings: he sought to explain—and perhaps justify—outrageous behavior and language on grounds that he was overcome with rage. What McKnight adds is the interesting detail that these outbursts had “poisoned [his] peace for a quarter of a century past”—roughly since 1850. (The Smith family journeyed to Utah in 1848; Mary died in 1852.) For eighteen months after his mother's death, Joseph reported he was out of control—“like a comet or fiery meteor.” But neither the passage of time, nor missions to the islands and England, nor a calling to the apostleship had extinguished the fires of rage in his heart.¹¹⁵

“... *the question is could I do better*”

A MONTH AFTER McKnight's letter, Joseph was called to preside over the European Mission. Back in England, he found himself reflecting on his life. At thirty-six, he had three wives and nine living children. On 21 January 1875, he wrote Julina:

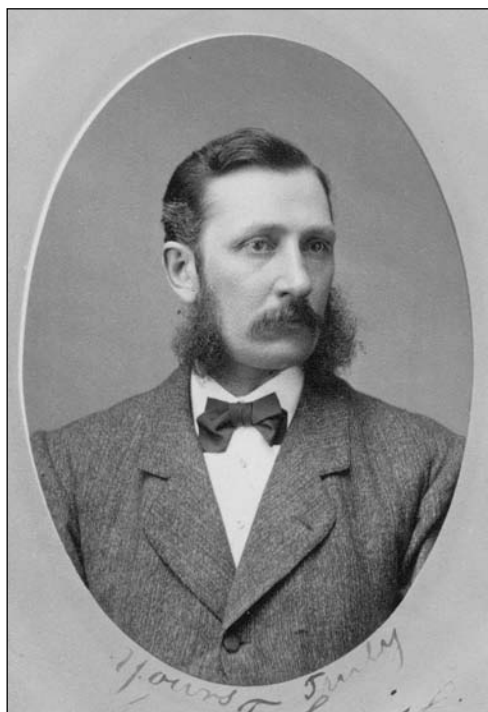
I have had some little time for sober reflection on my past experience, and can see many crooked ways that might with greater wisdom have been straight . . . not intentionally wrong, but ridiculous, foolish, the result of impatience and nothing more, but bad enough to leave a lasting regret that they ever occurred. Then I deeply regret many foolish, wrong, impetuous actions . . . but the question is could I do better to pass thro the same ordeals again. I hope so but I do not know.

. . . It is when we forget to love each the other, and cease to cultivate that divine plant (which may shoot up with remarkable vigor and make rapid growth in courtship, . . . but needs mutual nurture in the stern realities of connubial life) that distances grow up between man and wife, and one

outgrows the other (mainly in imagination). Then comes sorrow.¹¹⁶

On the same day, he wrote Edna, “I notice in myself a propensity to find fault or grumble, or to be dissatisfied with as many things as I can. I am sorry for it and I am glad I can see it to some extent and I hope to overcome it.”¹¹⁷ The maturing Joseph hadn't conquered his weaknesses, but he had begun to see them more clearly.

In 1904, Joseph endured three days of intense questioning by the Senate committee investigating the election of Reed Smoot, which was really an investigation of the Church and allegations of post-Manifesto polygamy. In 1905, Frank J. Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon, Joseph's mentor and colleague for forty years, launched a sustained and personal attack on President Smith in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. By then, he had learned an important lesson. “My greatest difficulty,” he wrote his son Alvin, “has been to guard my temper—to keep cool in the moment of excitement or trial. I have always been too quick to resent a wrong, too impatient, or hasty. I hope you will be very careful, my son, on these points. He who can govern himself is greater than he who ruleth a city.”¹¹⁸



Joseph F. Smith, Liverpool, England, 1874

“It is when we forget to love each the other . . . that distances grow up between man and wife, and one outgrows the other (mainly in imagination). Then comes sorrow.”

NOTES

NOTE ON SOME OF THE SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THIS ARTICLE. The Joseph F. Smith papers, including correspondence, diaries, account books, and miscellaneous papers, are in the LDS Church Archives. Shortly after they were delivered to the Historical Department in 1975, Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington invited me to go through them, suggesting I might prepare a biography. Unfortunately, the collection has since been closed.

1. B. W. Richmond's account is the only eye-witness description of Smith family activity in Nauvoo on 28 June 1844. Originally published in the *Chicago Times*, the account was reprinted under the headline “The Prophet's Death!” in the 27 November 1875 *Deseret News*. In its introduction, the *News* stated that the account “is in the main correct as concerning the tragedy

which is the burden of the article.” According to the *Times*, Dr. Richmond was not a member of the Church, but he was sympathetic to the prophet, having known him in Palmyra, New York. He had also visited him in Ohio.

2. Joseph F. Smith, “Boyhood Recollections,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 7 (April 1916): 58.

3. Richmond.

“My greatest difficulty has been to guard my temper. . . . I have always been too quick to resent a wrong, too impatient, or hasty.”

4. *History of the Church* (hereafter *HC*) 6:627.
5. Dan Jones, “The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum,” trans. (from Welsh) Ronald D. Dennis, *BYU Studies* 24 (winter 1984): 108.
6. Richmond.
7. Preston Nibley, *The Presidents of the Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1941), 229.
8. Joseph was not alone in his fears. His cousin Mary Jane Fielding recalled, “One time our enemies threatened to raid Nauvoo while the men were away. My Mother and Auntie were alone with us children so they began planning to defend our home. They brought the pitchfork, the hoe and the rake and the across into the house, and filled everything on the stove with water to heat. They also placed the cayenne pepper on the table ready to use and waited for the enemy, but they did not come.” Rachel Fielding Burton reminiscence, LDS Church Archives.
9. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 6 December 1889. Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
10. Samuel H. Smith’s first wife, Mary Bailey, left him with four children when she died in January 1841: Lucy, Suzannah, Mary, and Samuel H. B. His second wife, Levira, had a daughter, Levira (who would later marry Joseph F. Smith) and was pregnant with another child when Samuel died. She and young Levira went to live with relatives until she delivered; Lucy went to live with her grandmother Lucy Mack Smith; Suzannah, Mary, and Samuel H. B. moved in with Mary’s family. A few months later, eight-year-old Susanna moved to live with an aunt, Hannah Brown, in Wisconsin, and seven-year-old Mary moved to another household; five-year-old Samuel H. B. remained about a year before being taken in by his father’s cousin, Elias Smith. Ruby K. Smith, *Mary Bailey* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954), 188–90; Samuel H. B. Smith diary, 1, LDS Church Archives, MS 4672.
11. Pearson H. Corbett, *Hyrum Smith: Patriarch* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 426n6, indirectly quoting Mary [sic] Ann Smith Harris, Message to My Posterity (centennial letter) written 2 March 1881, opened 6 April 1930.
12. Susa Young Gates, “Mothers in Israel,” *Relief Society Magazine* 3 (March 1916): 131.
13. Joseph F. Smith, “Boyhood Recollections,” 59.
14. Over 350 deaths due to consumption (tuberculosis), scurvy, canker, cholera, scarlet fever, typhus, and other causes in Winter Quarters and nearby Cutler’s Park from 1846 to 1848 are documented in Conrey Bryson, *Winter Quarters* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1986), 131–63.
15. Joseph Fielding diary, 144; B. F. Cummings Jr., “Shining Lights: How They Acquired Brightness,” *Contributor* 16 (January 1895): 165.
16. Joseph F. Smith diary, 13 November 1860; Gates, 132. Regarding the home, see Frank T. Matheson, *The Mary Fielding Smith Adobe Home* (Boulder, Colorado: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1980), 62. The home, completed in 1850, stood on what is now the southwest corner of 27th South and Highland Drive.
17. Living with Mary were her children Joseph and Martha Ann, stepchildren John, Jerusha, and Sarah, and two elderly persons, George Mills and Hannah Grinnells, who had been with the family for many years.
18. Joseph Fielding Smith to James E. Talmage, 28 October 1908. At the October 1851 conference, President Young exulted, “Tithing is coming in so fast their will not be room to receive it . . . Our graineries & store House are full of wheat & good things.” Scott Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal* (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983), 4:72.
19. Joseph F. Smith to Solomon F. Kimball, 23 September 1898. Mary married her old friend Heber C. Kimball in 1846, which, in her case, meant only that she could call on him for assistance. Stanley B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 122–23.
20. Martha Ann Smith Harris, Message to My Posterity (centennial letter) written 2 March 1881, opened 6 April 1930. Cited in Don C. Corbett, *Mary Fielding Smith: Daughter of Britain* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1974), 265.
21. Joseph F. Smith, “The Love of Mother,” *Improvement Era*, 13 (1910): 276–280.
- When I was a child, somewhat a wayward, disobedient little boy, not

that I was wilfully disobedient, but I would forget what I ought to do; I would go off with playful boys and be absent when I should have been at home, and I would forget to do things I was asked to do. Then I would go home, feel guilty, know that I was guilty, that I had neglected my duty and that I deserved punishment.

On one occasion I had done something that was not just right, and my mother said to me: “Now, Joseph, if you do that again I shall have to whip you.” Well, time went on, and by and by, I forgot it, and I did something similar again; and this is the one thing that I admired more, perhaps, than any secondary thing in her; it was that when she made a promise she kept it. She never made a promise, that I know of, that she did not keep.

Well, she had a little rawhide, already there, and while she was talking or reasoning with me, showing me how much I deserved it and how painful it was to her, to inflict the punishment I deserved, I had only one thought and that was: “For goodness’ sake whip me; do not reason with me,” for I felt the lash of her just criticism and admonition a thousand fold worse than I did the switch.

22. Heber C. Kimball was an exception. “With the exception of the attentions, kindness and care bestowed by [Heber C. and Vilate Kimball] upon my mother in her last illness, for which I have ever felt to bless them, and which was accidental, she having been stricken down while attending meeting in this city, she received no support from either the church or any human being, while on the other hand she contributed largely to the support of others besides supporting her own family.” Joseph F. Smith to Solomon F. Kimball, 23 September 1889.

23. Joseph F. Smith to Susa Young Gates, 26 May 1890.

24. Joseph F. Smith to Samuel L. Adams, 11 May 1888, in “Courage: Joseph F. Smith Letters,” Joseph Fielding McConkie, comp., 2. Excerpts from Joseph F. Smith Letterpress Copybook in private possession. LDS Church History Library.

25. Charles W. Nibley, “Reminiscences,” *Improvement Era*, 22 (January 1919): 191–203; Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1966), 229. Teacher and pupil apparently reconciled shortly thereafter, however. On 5 May 1854, “in company with D. M. Merrick, bound for the Sandwich Islands. . . . In a day or so we joined some 18 of our brethren who were bound for the same place.” Joseph F. Smith diary. Merrick was not a Sandwich Islands missionary. His purpose in traveling with the missionaries, and how far they journeyed together, is not known. Later, Joseph said he had learned more under Merrick than any of the other five teachers he recalled. Cummings, “Shining Lights,” 174.

26. In 1867, George A. Smith said of Joseph, “His father and mother left him when he was a child, and we have been looking after him to try and help him along. We first sent him to school, but it was not long before he licked the schoolmaster, and could not go to school. Then we sent him on a mission, and he did pretty well at that.” Nibley, “Reminiscences,” 191.

27. Nibley, *The Presidents of the Church*, 236.

28. This publication is the beginning of a family myth—a story based on fact but serving a different purpose. It contains time-honored themes of persecution, exodus, inspiration, and betrayal. The manuscript was judiciously revised and expanded for Joseph F. Smith, “Recollections,” *Juvenile Instructor* 6 (March–June 1871): 37, 87, 91, 98–99.

29. In March 1851, Brigham Young reorganized the Provo Ward with Elias H. Blackburn as bishop, William Young and Harlow Redfield as counselors. The following month, Redfield was elected to the first city council. Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co. and Andrew Jenson Memorial Association, 1901–1936), 1:491; [Dale L. Morgan] *Provo: Pioneer Mormon City*, (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1942, compiled under the auspices of the Workers of the Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Utah), 63.

30. Harlow Redfield was accused of helping William McLellan and others plunder Joseph Smith’s house in Far West in 1839. The incident was reported in the *Deseret News* on 2 February 1854, which was publishing a history of the Church. No mention was made of Hyrum’s home or possessions. Redfield responded with a letter published in the 16 March issue of the paper:

“Once stern and unrelenting, he has mellowed as the years go on, until he sees but the good in humanity and forgives men their trespasses.”¹¹⁹

I was at Hyrum Smith's house, rather by accident than design, in company with McLellin and Burr Riggs, at a time when they took some books, etc., but was not with them when they went to Joseph's. Soon after the rumor got afloat; I explained the matter before the Council in Missouri satisfactorily, as I supposed, but some time after, an enemy, in my absence, again agitated the subject before the Conference in Nauvoo, which led to an inquiry before the High Council in presence of Joseph and Hyrum, and the subject appearing its true light, Joseph instructed the council to give me a certificate of acquittal, that would close every man's mouth.

The certificate indicated that no one was brought, “nor did an implication appear, nor do we believe that a charge could be sustained against Elder Redfield. He volunteered confession of certain inadvertent, imprudent [but] no evil meaning acts, that he greatly sorrowed for, and asked forgiveness for his folly in such acts.” Redfield was “forgiven” and his standing was to be “the same as if no evil insinuation had ever been brought against him.” Redfield concluded, “I will only add that I had before heard how that ‘poor Tray’ got whipped for being in bad company, and it ought to have been a sufficient warning for me, and I trust it will be for the future.” HC 3:287.

Redfield's admission of “inadvertent, imprudent [but] no evil meaning acts” may refer to breaking Hyrum's lock. If so, the high council, Joseph, and Hyrum himself accepted his explanation. But Mary did not. Instead, she passed on the accusation to Joseph and perhaps others. The episode leaves several questions unanswered: Was Mary the “enemy” who agitated the matter in Nauvoo? If so, why didn't she lodge a complaint before the high council? What motives might she have to pass on such a story to her young son? Did she hold a grudge against Cornelius P. Lott as well, and did she share it with Joseph in a way that affected his recollection of the trek to Utah?

31. “We must ‘pray for them that hate us and despitefully use us,’ and . . . I pray that my enemies and those who do evil be cursed with the Sting of their own inequity, and receive the reward due for their demerits. This is as good as I can feel towards them.” Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 8 July 1862.

“In all cases where charity can cover as a mantle a sin or even a multitude of sins without harm accruing to others, the mantle of charity is the right thing. Your grandfather [Hyrum Smith] won the title of a ‘merciful man’. No man will go farther than I to forgive a truly repentant sinner . . . Always lean towards mercy, but remember there is no forgiveness or remission of sin without repentance.” Joseph F. Smith to Alvin F. Smith, 22 July 1905.

32. Lott (1798–1850) had managed Joseph Smith's farm three miles from Nauvoo. Rhea Lott Vance, *Descendants of Cornelius Peter Lott: 1798* (Providence, Utah: n.p., 172), 7, 16. He and his wife, Permelia, were among the few who received their temple endowments prior to the opening of the Nauvoo temple. They also received their second anointings during the Prophet's lifetime. D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 114–16, 139, 494–98; David John Buerger, *Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship* (San Francisco: Smith Research Associates, 1994), 36, 64–65. Also HC 7:541; Joseph Fielding diary, 75. LDS Church Archives, MS 7617.

33. This is the only incident in Joseph's account supported by other witnesses. His uncle, Joseph Fielding, recorded, “One said it was great Folly to attempt to go as we were fixt.” Joseph Fielding diary, 195.

34. In the valley, Lott managed Brigham Young's Forrest Dale farm, four miles southeast of Temple Square, and one mile northwest of the Mary Fielding Smith farm. He died 6 July 1850, at the age of 51. Rhea Lott Vance, *Descendants of Cornelius Peter Lott*, 16. Other than Joseph's recollection, I have seen no derogatory remarks about Brother Lott.

35. In 1884, Joseph wrote Mary would not let him do night duty. He “was, therefore, frequently sneered at as being ‘petted by his mother,’ which was a sore trial to him.” “A Noble Woman's Experience,” *Heroines of “Mormondom,”* Noble Women's Lives Series, Vol. 2, (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1884): 27.

In the final incident of the manuscript, Lott comes to the large carriage where Mary, Martha Ann, and Joseph are sleeping, and urgently whispers “Indians,

Indians! Get up quick widow Smith! We'r beset by Indians' Mother replied, ‘Why don't you arouse the men, I don't see what I can do, father Lott.’ At this he went to the next wagon where some of the family were asleep, shaking it rather milder, and sneaked off, not wishing to carry the alarm any farther.”

36. When he was age 21, Joseph wrote John, “The hardest thing for me to forgive is wraped in the memory of C. P. Lott! Yet even that I forgive, tho' I never will forget it.” Joseph F. Smith to John Smith, 20 January 1861.

37. Just when Joseph began using tobacco and liquor cannot be definitely stated, but in 1875, he wrote, “From my childhood—for twenty years and upwards I chewed the filthy weed,” suggesting the early 1850s. Joseph F. Smith to J. D. T. McAllister, August 23, 1875.

Evidence for dating the early use of liquor is speculative. As noted in the text (sidebar, page 51) and below (notes 52–57), in 1883, he announced that he loved liquor but had overcome his problem with it. In 1903, an unattributed essay including the following lines appeared in the *Improvement Era*:

I had a good friend who told me, when I was fourteen years of age, that if I would refuse strong drink for the next six years there would be little fear that I would ever thereafter care for liquor, or become a drunkard. At that time, I was very fond of liquor, and, in one of my serious moments of reflection, I saw where it might lead me, and told such friend that I feared the results. It was then he told me how to avoid danger. I followed his advice, and liquor is no temptation to me now. But my habit was not formed without severe training of my will, without strict and frequent repetitions of self-denial.

Three circumstances suggest President Smith's authorship. First, he was the editor of the publication and there is no other indication of authorship; second, of the eighteen months he described as “perilous times for me . . . from Sept 21st, 1852 to April, 1854,” twelve were while he was fourteen; and third, as discussed in the text, though we have found no indication of excessive drinking, it was many years before he was able to give it up completely.

38. Joseph F. Smith to George A. Smith, 20 October 1854.

39. Joseph F. Smith to Martha Ann Smith (Harris), 28 January 1855, Joseph Smith Sr. Family Papers, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Vault MSS 775.

40. Hammond diary, 8–10 April 1855.

41. Scott Kenney, “Mormons and the Smallpox Epidemic of 1853,” *The Hawaii Journal of History* (1997): 9–26.

42. Joseph wrote that when he started as a missionary in 1854, “I was 15 years old and had never written a letter in my life, and did not know how to write a duzen words, but I began to feel the need of education so I studied and practiced and prayed and tried to learn and have been learning at a disadvantage ever since, until now I can just write to be understood.” Joseph F. Smith to Robert B. Taylor, 9 March 1875.

43. Joseph F. Smith to J. C. Rich, 27 July 1861.

44. Hammond diary, 27, 30 December 1854; 9–10 April, 9 June, 5 July 1855.

45. Joseph F. Smith diary, 4 July 1856.

46. Joseph F. Smith diary, 1 May 1856; 30 April 1857.

47. Joseph F. Smith diary, 22 April 1857.

48. Joseph F. Smith diary, 4 May 1857.

49. President Young later withdrew the remaining missionaries from all missions to defend Utah against an advancing federal army, but he had virtually given up on the Sandwich Islands mission before that decision was implemented: “The reports from the Sandwich Islands have for a number of years agreed in one thing,” Brigham Young wrote mission president Henry Bigler 4 September 1857, “and that is that the majority of the Saints on these islands have either been dead or are dying spiritually. It would appear that they occasionally, spasmodically resuscitate for a moment, only to sink lower than they were before. . . . You had better wind up the whole business and return with most of the Elders as soon as possible.” Minutes of the Honolulu Hawaii Mission, 16 October 1857. LDS Church Archives.

50. Jane Fisher to Joseph F. Smith, 26 June 1859.



This 1893 photo of women temple workers captures at one moment several important women in Joseph's life.
 (Seated L-R) Bathsheba Smith (wife of George A. Smith), Julina Lambson Smith (wife), Mercy R. Thompson (aunt),
 Zina D. H. Young, Lucy Bigelow, Minerva Snow. (Seated on floor) Edna Lambson Smith (wife), Christina Willardson.
 (Standing) _____, _____, Adeline H. Barber, Ellen Roy Metheny.
 (Esther Parkinson, Frances Cann Brown are in picture, but unidentified)

51. "I was surprised to learn that so many of the new brethren [in Joseph F. Smith's group] were in the habit of using tobacco. The majority of the 18 have used it more or less ever since they left their homes." Hammond diary, 28 July 1855.

52. In 1883, Joseph acknowledged to the Salt Lake School of the Prophets that "he had used tobacco, and he loved liquor," but he had quit and believed anyone who wanted to could do the same. *Salt Lake School of the Prophets: Minutebook 1883*, Merle H. Graffam, comp., (Palm Desert, California: ULC Press), 81. For the evolution of Word of Wisdom teachings and practice, see Thomas G. Alexander, "The Word of Wisdom: From Principle to Requirement," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (fall 1980): 78–87.

53. Joseph F. Smith to J. D. T. McAllister, 23 August 1875.

54. Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847–1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 176. In the 1870s, Brigham Young and George A. Smith in particular urged young men not to take up the habit. Joseph noted George A.'s comments about chewing tobacco: "It was a sin to chew tobacco, an unpardonable sin to spit tobacco juice on the floor, and total depravity to make a spittoon of a linen shirt bosom." Joseph F. Smith diary, 27 June 1871.

55. Joseph F. Smith to J. D. T. McAllister, op cit.

56. *Salt Lake School of the Prophets*, 81.

57. William W. Cluff to Joseph F. Smith, 26 September 1862; Joseph F. Smith diary, entries for 29 January 1863, 4 July 1873, 28 July 1874, 1 April 1874.

58. Joseph Fisher, Sr. to Joseph F. Smith, 23 February 1859.

59. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 26 February 1859.

60. Journal History, 5 April 1859. Levira (29 April 1842–18 December 1888) was the daughter of Samuel H. Smith (1808–1844), and Levira Clark (1815–1893).

61. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 14 June 1860.

62. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 23 July 1860.

63. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 5 September 1860.

64. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 14 August 1860.

65. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 3 November 1861.

66. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 17 December 1861.

67. Mary Jane Thompson Taylor in David Taylor's letter to Joseph F. Smith, 1 December 1861.

68. Martha Ann Harris to Joseph F. Smith, 12 January 1862.

69. Joseph F. Smith diary, 9 April 1862, citing letter of Zina D. H. Young.

70. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 1 March 1862.

71. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 8 July 1862.

72. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 29 June 1862, cited in Joseph F. Smith diary, 16 October 1862; Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 10 August 1862.

73. Joseph F. Smith diary, 8, 9 February 1863. Joseph did not record his feelings again until the diary entry of 27 April: "We had a little wine and spent the evening very agreeably, Samuel [H. B. Smith], Parley [P. Pratt, Jr.], and myself."

74. George Q. Cannon to Joseph F. Smith, 29 March 1863.

75. George A. Smith to John L. Smith, 29 August 1863, and to John Smith, 10

The Joseph F.



This family portrait was taken close to the time Joseph F. Smith succeeded with whom he had no children, Joseph had five other wives and Mary Taylor Schwartz (married, 1884, seven children); Edna Lambson (married, including Joseph Fielding Smith—top row, center); Sarah Ellen Richards (married,

Smith Family



ed Lorenzo Snow as Church president in October 1901. Besides Levira,
 d forty-eight children. His wives are (L to R seated by Joseph):
 married 1871, ten children); Julina Lambson (married 1866, thirteen children,
 married 1868, eleven children); Alice Ann Kimball (married 1883, seven children).

October 1863, Historian's Office Letterpress.

76. Joseph F. Smith to Brigham Young, 25 August 1864, Brigham Young collection, LDS Church archives; Joseph F. Smith to B. H. Watts, 12 August 1875.

77. Both documents are in the Brigham Young incoming correspondence, reel 74. Levira's letter is not dated; Joseph's (which follows immediately) is dated 25 August 1867. A note on the back of his letter indicates it was received 18 September 1867.

78. In an 1864 letter to Joseph, Levira made a similar complaint. For three and a half years, she had "patiently waited for one kind true friend to return to me to whom I could tell all my troubles and sufferings, and who would listen to sooth, comfort, and dispell all those clouds and sorrows from my heart." Instead, Joseph "could or did not comfort me. You acted as tho you hated me because I was sick and helpless. You tormented me, laughed at me, and Oh! I blush to say it, struck me. The act did not wound my body, but my feelings and pride . . . I must learn to bow to you, however inconsistent you might be even if it cost my life." Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, incomplete letter, n.d.

79. Cummings, 170.

80. Gwynn Barrett, "Walter Murray Gibson: The Shepherd Saint of Lanai Revisited," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40 (1972): 142–162; and R. Lanier Britsch, "Another Visit with Walter Murray Gibson," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (1978): 65–78.

81. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball to Joseph F. Smith, W. W. Cluff, and John R. Young, 10 November 1864, typescript, Brigham Young collection, 346–348; George A. Smith to William W. Cluff, 27 January 1864, Historian's Office Letterpress Copy Books, LDS Church Archives, CR 100 / 38.

82. *Deseret News*, 1 June 1864.

83. "Blessing upon the head of Levira Smith, previous to starting for the Sandwich Islands given by Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, in G. S. L. City, Aug. 4, 1864." On Thursday, 6 August 1864, J. C. Rich wrote Joseph that Levira planned to leave Salt Lake with Dorinda "next Tuesday," which would have been 9 August. "I am in a sort of quadery," Joseph wrote Levira's half-brother in mid-September, that he still did not know whether Levira was in San Francisco or not. Joseph F. Smith to Samuel H.B. Smith, 14 September 1864, Samuel H. B. Smith papers.

84. Joseph F. Smith diary, 5 November 1864.

85. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 14 March 1865.

86. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 14 March 1865.

87. Agnes Moulton Coolbrith was the widow of Don Carlos Smith (Joseph and Hyrum's brother), who died 7 August 1841. Their daughter Josephine Donna was Joseph's favorite childhood cousin. Joseph F. Smith to Lucy W. Kimball, 6 March 1884. After Agnes married William Pickett and moved to California, Josephine took the name Ina Coolbrith to disassociate herself from Mormonism. Though they held divergent views of the Church, Joseph and Ina remained good friends, sometimes corresponding five or six times a year until his death. A gifted poet and Oakland city librarian, Ina was named California Poet Laureate in 1919. Josephine DeWitt Rhodehamel and Raymund Francis Wood, *Ina Coolbrith: Librarian and Laureate of California* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1973), 317. Unfortunately, Ina's biographers do not appear to have known of her relationship with Joseph.

88. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith 8, 21, 25 December 1864; 2, 6, 19, 21 January, 13, 19 March, 7, 10, 14, 23, 29 April 1865, and an undated letter beginning, "I did not get this done in time to go last night."

89. Historian's Office Journal, 22 January 1865. LDS Church Archives, CR 100 / 1.

90. Ina Coolbrith to Joseph F. Smith, 3 January, 21 June 1865. Maureen Ursebach Beecher generously shared Ina's letters to Joseph F. Smith with me in the 1970s, before they became part of the Joseph F. Smith papers.

91. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 24 January, 7 April 1865.

92. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 10, 16 April 1865, and an undated letter to Brigham Young.

93. Historian's Office Journal, 22 January 1865 and following entries.

94. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 16 June 1865.

95. Levira Annette Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 20 November 1865.

96. Joseph F. Smith to Brigham Young, n.d.

97. Erastus Snow "was one of the most persistent and strenuous advocates of the doctrine to me personally in the days of my youth, and by whose urgent appeals I entered into its practice much sooner than I otherwise would; and to whom I owe directly my good fortune of marrying, when I did, my wife Julina." Joseph F. Smith to Susa Young Gates, 1 August 1889.

98. Leonard J. Arrington and Susan Arrington Madsen, *Mothers of the Prophets* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1987): 152–153, 157.

99. Joseph F. Smith to Samuel H.B. Smith, 13 June 1866, Samuel H.B. Smith papers.

100. Untitled document beginning "On Sunday afternoon July 1, 1866, President Brigham Young . . ." in the Brigham Young collection.

101. Historian's Office Journal, 24 July 1866; Joseph F. Smith to George Nebeker, 24 December 1866.

102. In making such a bold statement, Joseph may have also had in mind the successful defense argument made by George A. Smith in the 1851 murder trial of Howard Egan, who had killed James Monroe, the seducer of his wife: "In this territory it is a principle of mountain common law, that no man can seduce the wife of another *without endangering his own life*. . . . The man who seduces his neighbor's wife must die, and her nearest relative must kill him! . . . If Howard Egan had not killed that man, he would have been damned by the community for ever, and could not have lived peaceably, without the frown of every man." *Journal of Discourses* 1:97; Michael W. Homer, "The Judiciary and the Common Law in Utah Territory," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (spring 1989): 155; Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 217; B. H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 2d ed., (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 4:135–36n58.

103. These statements, and all other information about Joseph's and Levira's lives from her move back to her mother's through his apology to Mr. Harris, is drawn from their 1867 letters to Brigham Young, op cit.

104. Joseph F. Smith to Levira Annette Smith, 21 June and 18 July 1867.

105. Joseph and Levira signed the form for non-contested divorces on 10 June 1867. Levira initiated the California divorce in 1868 after establishing the requisite six months' residency. Joseph apparently did not comply with the California summons, and the divorce was finalized 10 July 1869. The Utah form did not use the word divorce: "Know all men by these Presents:—That we the undersigned . . . do hereby mutually *covenant, promise, and agree* to dissolve all the relations which have hitherto existed between us as *husband and wife*; and to keep ourselves *separate and apart* from each other, from this time forth." For a discussion of divorces in the Brigham Young period, see Firmage and Mangrum, 322–26.

106. Joseph Fielding Smith, added that the divorce was due to "interference on the part of relatives," and his father's "continued absence . . . in mission fields and in ecclesiastical duties." Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 230–31.

107. Fredrick Beesley journal, 11 April 1886. LDS Church Archives, F 408 #3.

108. Joseph Smith III to Levira Annette Smith, 3 February 1880, Joseph Smith III Letterbook vol 2, 486, RLDS Church Library-Archives. Notes courtesy of Buddy Youngreen.

109. Joseph F. Smith to Julina Lambson Smith, 21 January 1875.

110. Joseph F. Smith diary, 7 July 1875.

111. Mary Ann was Joseph Fielding's daughter by his second wife and was McKnight's fourth wife. Mary Ann McKnight to Joseph F. Smith, 9 June and August 1875; Joseph F. Smith diary, 31 December 1873; Mercy R. Thompson to Joseph F. Smith, 14 May 1875. When Joseph's barn burned to the ground in 1875, it was widely believed that McKnight was responsible. L. John Nuttall to Joseph F. Smith, 21 June 1875. After the fire, Julina informed Mary Ann that Joseph had come to regret his earlier advice that she stay with McKnight. Julina Lambson Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 6 June 1875.

112. Joseph F. Smith diary, 1, 7 January 1873.

113. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 May 1873.

114. James McKnight to Joseph F. Smith, 25 January 1874.

115. Julina understood that Joseph's anger stemmed from childhood. In 1875, when Brigham Young was briefly jailed for polygamy, she wrote to Joseph in England, "I have felt thankful lately that you were in England. If you had been here the night the President was sent to prison I think it would have riled that feeling you had born in you." Julina Lambson Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 14 March 1875.

Learning Joseph might be captain of a company crossing the plains in 1863, a British Saint wrote to him: "If such is true, I shall pray for your *poor temper*, and not your '*poor feet*.' Now pray do forgive me saying so. It was yourself who first told me about your *short temper*." M. A. Cook to Joseph F. Smith, 9 May 1863.

116. Joseph F. Smith to Julina Lambson Smith, 21 January 1875.

117. Joseph F. Smith to Edna Lambson Smith, 21 January 1875.

118. Joseph F. Smith to Alvin F. Smith, 8 June 1905.

119. Charles C. Goodwin (*Goodwin's Weekly*, 8 April 1916), cited in HC 6:477–78. Goodwin was editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune* from 1883–1903.



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THORSEN'S ANGLE

By Todd Peterson

JENS THORSEN SAT AT THE KITCHEN TABLE sorting fives and twenties into two piles—one much larger than the other—his head and hands trembling.

When he had counted it all out, he took up the smaller pile, re-counted it, and checked the figure against one on a scrap of paper. He wrote the amount on a tithing slip, stuffed the money into an envelope, licked the flap, and sealed it. Scooping up the larger pile, he rocked over to one side, pulled out his wallet, and slipped the cash inside.

“Mamma, come on down here,” he called into the generalness of the house. “Mamma, I got something for you.”

He took one twenty back out of his wallet and laid it on the table. In a few seconds, he heard his wife’s feet creak on the floorboards and then clonk down the stairs. As she walked into the room, Jens smiled with lips closed tightly over his teeth. He tapped the twenty with his forefinger.

“What’s that?” she asked.

“Dog winnings. That’s your share.”

She stared down at the bill then up at Jens. She blinked twice. “I don’t want no part of that money.”

“Now don’t start that again, Mamma. This is good money, and it’s your share.”

“I told you before, I don’t want no part of that filthy lucre. You can’t serve God and Mammon both, Jens Thorsen.”

“That money was raised fair and square in Juárez. You know that. Weren’t no lawlessness to it,” he said.

She turned back to the table. “That’s blood money sitting there on that table and burning its way to hell in your wallet. It’s blood money from innocent dogs, if that don’t make it worse. I won’t have no part of it, not now, not never. You hear me?”

When he saw that she was staring at it, Jens slid his hand over the top of the tithing envelope. Then he squinted through the window at the pickup truck out front.

“The Lord don’t want none of that money neither,” she said.

“The hell he don’t. Caesar’ll get what’s his, and God’ll earn

his, sure as rain, Mamma. That comes from on high, don’t it? The Lord delivered up that dog. I’m just sending some good luck back out to the Kingdom.”

“I won’t have you buying no groceries with that money, you hear? I won’t sit down to a fouled table or take fouled food.”

Jens slid his chair back and stood, palming the tithing envelope. “No one’s running it down your throat,” he said. He walked past her, leaving the twenty lying on the table.

“I won’t have you paying any bills with that money or buying me nothing with it, neither,” she called after him.

Jens switched on the television and took to his chair in the living room.

“You hear me?” she hollered.

Jens switched channels.

“If you don’t edify yourself this instant, I’m fixing to tell the bishop to burn up that money and scatter the ashes.”

“Never met a bishop yet what would turn back any money once someone give it to him,” he called back.

Lila picked up the phone and held the receiver to her chest. “Jens Thorsen, I’m a-calling.”

Jens switched channels again.

She raised her voice and spoke into the phone. “Bishop Bunker, please. Thank you.” She looked around the door jamb. Jens switched the channels. “Bishop, this is Lila Thorsen calling. Jens here has got himself some dogfighting money he wants to turn into sacred tithing funds, and—”

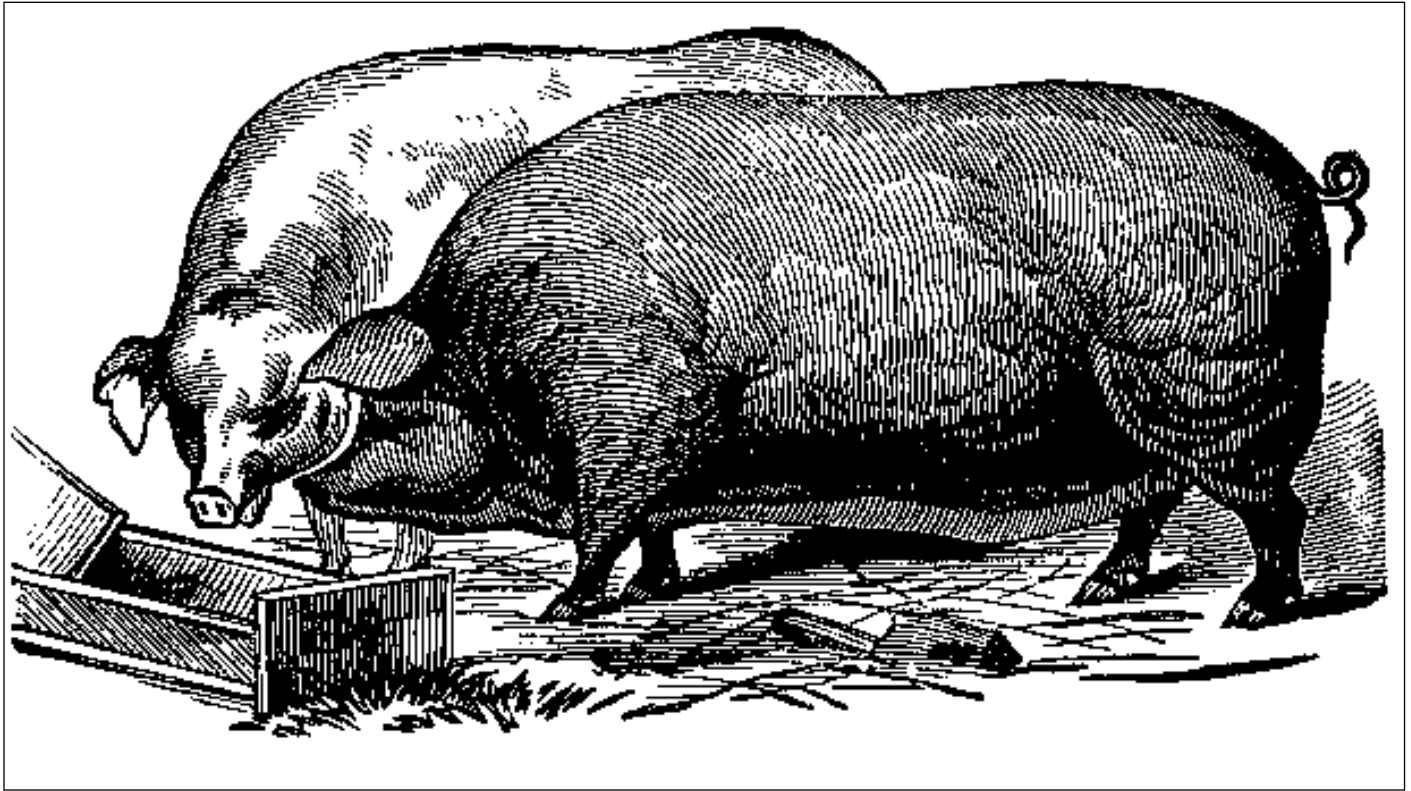
“Woman!” Jens bellowed from his chair. “What in sam hill do you think you’re up to?” He rose and hobbled a few steps toward her.

She clanked the phone down on the hook and wagged her finger at him. “You repent of this right now, or you can go on to the eternities by yourself. You hear me?” she said.

“It ain’t up to you,” he yelled back, leaning after his voice. “You’re stuck with me. Endure it to the end. Ain’t that how it goes?” he said.

“I don’t have to endure it lying down,” she called to Jens as he pushed past her, took his cap off the back spindle of the kitchen chair, and bore out through the mud room toward the corral.

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"Hogs will be hogs, and the devil's wages can't be brought to no holiness. You just remember that."

There, Jens turned and saw his wife at the window. He snapped his fingers and drew Enoch, his apron-faced bay, up to the fence. Absently, Jens took the back of Enoch's jaw in his hand. The horse tossed his head and nickered. Then Jens saw Lila turn her head, and he imagined she was eyeing the twenty-dollar bill on the table.

"You just watch, Enoch," he said. "She ain't so holy that twenty extra bucks won't have its effect." The horse scratched its chin on the fence rail and swished its tail. "Just you watch," he said. "She got her eye on us?" he asked the horse, stroking the side of its face.

The horse twitched its left ear. Jens turned his head slightly and watched Lila disappear into the shadows of the kitchen. He imagined her backing up to the table slowly, turning suddenly to snatch the bill, fold it, and stuff it down the neck of her dress.

When Lila appeared suddenly in the window, Jens tilted his head upward like he was staring off into the sky to prophesy the weather. "You see there, Enoch, she ain't above granted money," he said laughing. "Let's say we get you fed," he told the horse and then followed the fence to the barn and disappeared inside.

Jens was flaking some hay from a bale in the far corner when Lila trundled into the barn with a bucket of pig slop from the kitchen. When Jens turned to face her, she drew the bill out of the bosom of her dress, tore it slowly in half, and then dropped each half into the bucket, saying, "And render unto the hogs what belongs to the hogs." Then she left through

the back gate and made her way down to the hog pen.

"Good Lord, woman," he bellowed, "have you lost all sense?" He dropped the hay and took off after her. As he hobbled down the rise toward her, she lifted the bucket and overturned it into the trough. The hogs scurried up past each other and began grunting and rooting through the scraps. When Jens took hold of the fence, one of the Hampshire/Durrock crossbreeds drew one half of the bill up into its mouth and chewed until it was gone. "That one's going for ten bucks more," Jens muttered.

"Hogs will be hogs, and the devil's wages can't be brought to no holiness. You just remember that."

"I swear you'll be the goddam end of me," Jens said.

"You watch how you take the Lord's name. I don't imagine you and he's on any kind of good terms today," she said.

"I ain't going to turn the rest of my wallet out into the hog slop if that's what you're hoping," he said. "I just ain't made that way."

Lila smiled. She took the bucket by its handle and started off toward the barn. Watching the hogs squirm past one another, Jens saw a second hog suck the other half twenty into its mouth. Behind him, Lila stopped at the crest of the rise, in the shadow of the barn, with her hand on the gate. Below, Jens kicked wildly at a fence post. He screamed at the hogs, and then at the cottonwoods, and then at the crows, and then at the sky and the entire Kingdom of God, which he knew was out there someplace, lurking, lying in wait to catch him unaware.

*How do we understand mystics from all the major religious traditions who describe the height of spiritual communion as orgasmic? How does our physiological, cognitive, and psycho-social maturation affect our ability to experience profound emotional and sexual intimacy?
Could deeper joys still await us?*

HOW SEX AND SPIRIT ARE LINKED A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By Marybeth Raynes

Love is anterior to life
Posterior to death
Initial of creation
The exponent of breath
—Emily Dickinson¹

SEX AND SPIRIT ARE LINKED THROUGH LOVE, their common denominator. They are supported by a common trunk, like the branches of a tree or the limbs of our bodies. As Emily Dickinson and many others believe, love is inherent within all of experience, through all of our existence. Although others may assert that atoms or subatomic particles are the underlying feature of all that is, there is much more.² As we grow into the full flowering of maturity and beyond into the highest reaches of human consciousness, love is the direct experience we express most often.

Since love, or the lack of it, is connected in some way to all experience, why focus on the relationship between spirituality and sexuality? Indeed, many qualities of existence offer joyfulness and meaning: music, nature, learning, or physical activity. All of these and more may rightly be deemed “spiritual” because they increase the meaningfulness of the life we live and reflect upon it. These increase our “spiritedness,” or our awareness of the dimensions beyond mere physical well-being. And the best forms of these activities enlarge us beyond the boundaries of our own egos to genuine sharing with others. These

experiences could be spiritual experiences because they fit Paul Tillich’s definition that spirituality is our avenue of “ultimate concern.”³

Similarly, many subjects and experiences might be termed sexual or “erotic.” Audre Lorde’s definition includes the sexual but expands beyond it:

The erotic functions for me in several ways, and the first is in the power which comes from sharing deeply any pursuit with another person. The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them, and lessens the threat of their difference. Another important way in which the erotic connection functions is the open and fearless underlining of my capacity for joy. In the way my body stretches to music and opens into response, hearkening to its deepest rhythms, so every level upon which I sense also opens to the erotically satisfying experience, whether it is dancing, building a bookcase, writing a poem, examining an idea.⁴

We often spontaneously experience awareness of both eros and spirit at the same time, even if the activity is intended to be only one or the other. Additionally, for many of us, these two areas of experience are often those that carry the greatest emotional intensity. In these aspects of our humanity, we find the heights of joy and depths of meaning. Indeed, mystics from the world’s great religions frequently describe the height of communion with God or Spirit as orgasmic.⁵

Despite spontaneous occurrences of spirit and sex together, we see each as fundamentally different during our early stages of development. Although they seem unrelated for many years of our lives, we shall see that at later stages, they become inseparable. Also, as we shall see, both spirituality and sexuality



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can only reach their mature forms through learning and practicing love in relationship to others, as well as within ourselves. Both can be experienced and expressed only in how we treat ourselves and others. To engage in either, I believe we must consider both. How this dynamic interplay occurs is the focus of this paper.

AT EVERY STAGE of life, even when we are young children, both spirituality and sexuality are modeled, taught, and lived out in relationship to others. For example, the core of any moral code defines actions in relation to God and/or others. Likewise, the physical or mental expression or inhibition of our sexual feelings can occur in only two ways: in outward relationship with others or with images or impulses within ourselves.

Interestingly, although we have often recited that we must love ourselves before we can love other, the opposite may be true. Mark Epstein, a psychotherapist, maintains that our preoccupation with building our finite, limited self often keeps us from happiness. He asserts that “you don’t have to be happy before you can love someone else. On the contrary, you have to be able to love another person before you can feel good about yourself.”⁶ Or, is there really a chicken and egg dynamic between loving others and loving ourselves? I believe that since both are important, and each depends upon the other, we cannot decide which comes first. Instead, my best guess is that loving ourselves and others is learned in a long apprenticeship of reciprocal actions, much as an intricate dance requires both the separate and combined learning of each limb, each body, and each partner in an ever increasingly complex duet.

This same dynamic is true even when we are alone. We cannot have *any* experience that is not a relationship in some form. Consider a man who has decided one fine Saturday morning to fix his old truck in the driveway. He gets up before everyone else, eats breakfast alone, pulls all the necessary parts and tools from his workshop, goes out to his truck, and then spends the entire morning working on the carburetor. He sees no one, talks to no one. How is he in relationship to others?

Our man in the driveway has been trained by others and has internalized their instructions. Although he may not be aware of it, he is silently moving through the motions of ma-

nipulating his tools and engine parts, coaching himself much as he had been coached. The relationships that were once external are now within him, returning to his consciousness as sentences, images of past memories, or even body sensations and impulses to stop, proceed, or tighten the screw. Relationships persist, even if only within ourselves. If the early teaching in his life or auto mechanics class has been fairly positive, he probably had a fine time as he guided himself throughout the morning. However, if he had been criti-

cized or had received anxious or threatening coaching, then he may have experienced tension between himself and his inner coach. He may have externalized this past relationship as hostility toward his truck, for we often anthropomorphize our relationships with our favorite objects: cars, houses, land, toys. In fact, it is difficult to see how *any* internal activity is not relational.

In addition to external relationships, as we grow, we create complex and various facets of ourselves. These sub-selves develop and exist in relationship to each other.⁷ One of our most important discoveries as we mature is that we cannot be kind to one facet of the self, yet scathing to others, and still grow.

DEVELOPMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND STAGES

BEYOND THESE FAIRLY straightforward linkages between the external world and our internal lives, our understanding of ourselves grows delightfully richer if we consider the developmental stages of growth from infancy to the most mature levels of human flourishing. Various facets of life, such as mental or social competence, form a dense network of connections which become increasingly interwoven as we grow. These facets then become connected to still other lines of development.⁸ Indeed, several important aspects must connect if we are to achieve higher stages of growth. Much like a singer working to achieve mastery who must develop several skills interdependently—the physical capacity for strong breath and trained vocals, the mental capacity to learn first notes then melodies in sequence and harmony, the social and emotional capabilities to sing to and connect deeply with others, and so on—we too progress in stages, with each succeeding stage adding elements to our repertoire.

Loving ourselves and others

is learned
in a long apprenticeship of
reciprocal actions,
much as an intricate dance requires
both the separate and combined learning
of each limb, each body,
and each partner
in an ever increasingly complex duet.

Both spiritual and sexual growth depend on many other lines of development—physical, mental, social, and emotional. In the discussion that follows, I will provide an overview of the “dance” of that development. We will see that spirit and eros are far apart at some stages, integrated at others, and, in the large view, are isomorphic—their underlying developmental patterns are structurally similar.

In this essay, I use two structures. The first is a set of *principles of growth* by which we can interpret the various facets of development at each stage. The second framework is the *stages of human development* from birth to the most highly developed levels of consciousness. The relationship between the two is analogous to our own bodies: stages constitute the skeleton, while principles are the ligaments and muscles secured to the skeleton. Both bones and muscles are necessary to the other, both must be strong, but they must be strong in different ways to permit maximum functioning.

THE FIRST CONCEPTUAL structure, “A Few Orienting Principles of Development” (Table 1), assembled from various developmental theorists, is crucial because these principles apply to every stage of life and

A FEW ORIENTING PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

1. *Development unfolds in predictable, sequential stages.*
2. *We cannot skip stages.*
3. *Each stage builds on the previous stages.*
4. *Each stage transcends and enfolds the previous stage.*
5. *We are primarily in one stage at one time, but we can have experiences from several other stages at any time.*
6. *We require a system, or vehicle, to travel through all of the stages. This system is commonly called the “ego” or the “self.”*
7. *Growth in the brain must occur before and during growth in other areas.*
8. *Throughout every stage, all growth and experiences occur within the body.*

*Table 1

hold true in every facet of life—whether intellectual, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, or sexual.⁹ This list is by no means comprehensive, but the principles are, I hope, enough to help make sense of the stages themselves when we discuss them below.

Before you read further, it might be helpful to glance over both Tables 1 and 2 (below and page 50). Grasping the main principles of growth will make what follows more understandable and will help illustrate the necessity of using these principles in tandem with stage theory.

DEVELOPMENTAL PRINCIPLES

1. DEVELOPMENT UNFOLDS IN PREDICTABLE, SEQUENTIAL STAGES. The stages of psychological, social, moral, and sexual development are often pictured as a ladder, with each rung higher than the other. In this model, once we climb to a new level, we leave all previous rungs behind. Unfortunately, because of its hierarchical and exclusivist implications, this concept of the ladder does not adequately capture the realities of the growth process. For me, a much better image is a collapsible drinking cup, the kind you find in camping kits. When collapsed, it looks like a set of concentric circles, but as we pull it up, the rings rise one above the other, forming a well that is narrow at the bottom, but that becomes progressively wider as it goes up. Our growth is like this cup; each stage builds upon the previous stage, which remains embedded or encapsulated within in it.

Like the small central circle, when we are born, our abilities to understand and function in life are very limited, yet all of the outer rings, each a discrete developmental stage, are potential competencies and levels of awareness embedded in us, ready and waiting, if all goes well, to emerge later.

2. WE CANNOT SKIP STAGES. Even though the capacities and types of experience characteristic of outer, or more advanced, stages may look more attractive to us, we cannot concentrate on acquiring the capacities of those stages while ignoring intervening developmental tasks. We have to learn to speak before we can sing or tell a joke, walk before we dance or play ball, add before we can multiply. Similarly, we must clearly grasp our concrete, three-dimensional world before we can comprehend more abstract realms, learn to follow strict rules of fairness before we can adequately develop the generosity to incline them in the direction of our neighbor, and develop empathy for ourselves and others before we can truly love.

3. EACH STAGE BUILDS ON PREVIOUS STAGES. Like our drinking cup, each ring increases our capacity as it unfolds. With each stage, we grow in every area of development from the previous stage. We add capacities exponentially. The result is an ability for greater depth and breadth of experience than we had at any previous stage.

If, however, for whatever reason, an area of our life becomes stunted, we will experience little growth in that domain from that point forward. For example, if someone is intellectually

gifted but physically disabled, lacks opportunities to develop physical skills, or is disinterested in physical activities, she or he can continue to develop their intellectual gifts even though, physically speaking, they remain severely stunted. Physicist Stephen Hawking may be one of the most inspirational examples of someone who has built upon on his intellectual strengths while remaining cruelly limited in the physical domain. Most of us have areas of development that far outpace other areas.

This ability to compartmentalize and compensate is not true, however, in the realm of psychosocial (or spiritual/sexual) development. Development in both the psychological and social realms must synchronize with each other or either area risks being stunted. When thinking about moral and social development, it may be useful to think of a three-legged race. Each area is a separate developmental line—each with its own “independent” leg of individuality—but the other limb is interdependently

bound to a partner, joined in a common concern of connection to others. In each area, we must learn to consider both others *and* ourselves to reach genuine maturity. That is why both are necessary precursors to higher levels of spiritual and sexual development. At mature stages, we must associate reciprocally with others to reach our full potential. Our sense of identity must increasingly move beyond our discrete selves to a broader perceptual grasp of our deep interconnectedness and ways we are all alike or, in Christian terms, how all of us are part of the body of Christ.

4. EACH STAGE TRANSCENDS AND ENFOLDS THE PREVIOUS STAGES. The dictionary definition of *transcend* means “to pass beyond the limits of, to be greater than, to exist above and independent,” while *enfold* means “to envelop, to hold within limits; enclose, embrace.”¹⁰ For my purposes, the usual definition of *enfold* works well, but that of *transcend* does not, so I am borrowing Ken Wilber’s definition. To transcend is to grow in acquiring new capacities in ways that integrate and include whatever is expandable from all previous stages. It *does not* mean to discard previously developed capacities nor to find them irrelevant.¹¹ For instance, most of us learned to crawl before moving on to walking and running. However, crawling

still remains in our repertoires; and we use it when, for example, the plumbing under the house needs tending to or a small child wants to play bears.

As part of transcendence at each stage, we gain a fundamentally different view of the world than we had at previous stages. Santa Claus was real for us at one point in our lives, a myth at another, and later a story to illustrate the principle of generous giving. Similarly, *every* facet of life looks remarkably different at every stage (see Table 2). Each new stage brings a new understanding and explanation of reality. It is as if we are severely myopic (indeed, we are), but then at every new stage,

we gradually acquire a new set of lenses that allows us to see both nearer and farther, with more detail and from more angles, than at previous stages.

Until later stages (Stage 6 and beyond), we tend to trivialize, negate, and fight against the ideas, perspectives, and ways of being of both previous *and* future stages.¹² In this natural but immature defensiveness, we insist that there is no difference between

reality and our individual perspective, that what we are seeing is all that can be seen, and no other vision is valid. In the later stages, we not only see many other perspectives but can also grasp how they are all valid and useful in some ways. Setting about to integrate multiple perspectives becomes both an appealing and rewarding task.

It might be helpful to think of the earliest stages (the “pre-personal” stages, Stages 1 through 3) as seeing the world through a telescope (though perhaps without much magnifying power). As we move into a more advanced stage (Stage 4), we switch to binoculars—two coordinated lenses that allow us to see three dimensions. Then (at Stage 5), we add the ability to tinker with a zoom lens so that increasingly distant or fuzzy views come into focus. Later (at Stage 6), we add sub-lenses by which we are able to simultaneously view several objects at once—perhaps with an ability borrowed from the kaleidoscope—to observe *interlocking patterns* and how each small rotation alters each previous view.

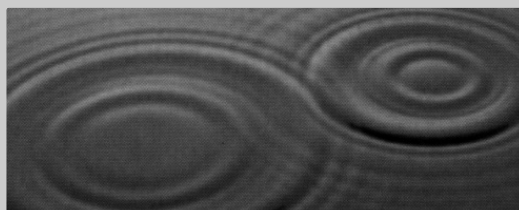
5. WE ARE PRIMARILY IN ONE STAGE AT A TIME, BUT WE CAN HAVE EXPERIENCES FROM SEVERAL OTHER STAGES AT ANY TIME. Because we are very complex personalities, we can and do experience feelings, ideas, and actions from almost every

**We gain a fundamentally different view of
the world than we had at previous stages . . .
It is as if we
are severely myopic, but then at every
new stage, we gradually acquire a
new set of lenses
that allows us to see both nearer and
farther, with more detail, and from
more angles, than at previous stages.**

Underpinnings of Spiritual and Sexual Development

Marybeth Raynes

	Stage (Wilber/Wade)	Age	Brain Functions (Wade)	Level of Thinking (Piaget)
Prepersonal Stages	1. Archaic/Reactive	0–2	Reptilian-Complex, Sensorimotor awareness	Sign: sign recognition only
	2. Magic/Naive	2–4	Reptilian-Complex plus Limbic	Symbols: pre-operational thinking
	3. Egocentric	4–7	Limbic system	Symbols: pre-operational thinking
Personal Stages	4. Mythic-Membership/Conformist	7–17?	Limbic system	Concepts: late formal operational. Dichotomizing rule/role mind.
	5. Rational/Achievement or Affiliative	17–adult	Limbic system + neocortex	Dialectical: abstract thinking with the ability to see two perspectives simultaneously.
	6. Vision-Logic/Authentic	Middle–late adult	Neocortex with coordination of right-left hemispheres	Synthetic: ability to see multiple systems/networks simultaneously
Transpersonal Stages	7. Psychic/Transcendent	Middle–late adult (rare)	Neocortex, plus coordination with other brain systems	Synchronistic: synthetic plus intuitive, emergent thought
	8. Subtle/Transcendent	Late adult (rare)	Neocortex coordination plus increasing control of lower brain	Stage 7 plus more numinous paranormal experience with all previous cognitive abilities intact
	9. Causal/Unity	Late adult (rare)	Stage 8 plus control over lower brain	Stages 7–8 plus all forms of consciousness



*Table 2

stage. For instance, we find ourselves reverting to less-mature behavior when we become frightened or anxious. At other times, we have remarkable experiences that temporarily lift us far beyond our usual level of generosity, sensitivity, or patience. Indeed, our “peak” experiences are very often “peek” moments which flash us a vision of how we may yet develop.¹³

Still, most of us primarily live at one particular stage at a time in which our worldview and everyday actions create a coherent reality. However, when we are moving from one stage to another, we are really occupying two places at once. We have one foot in each stage, rocking back and forth, unable to step firmly across the threshold into the new stage, yet unable to settle back into the too-familiar comforts and problems of the previous stage. A second exception to the one-stage-at-a-time mode can occur when we have a significant split between two or more facets of ourselves—with the separated parts in different stages. For example, “my heart tells me one thing, but my head tells me another.” In our culture, splits between the spiritual and the sexual are common.

6. WE REQUIRE A CONCEPTUAL SYSTEM, OR VEHICLE, IN WHICH TO TRAVEL THROUGH ALL OF THE STAGES. THIS SYSTEM IS COMMONLY CALLED THE “EGO” OR THE “SELF” Just as we need a car, bus, or plane to travel geographical distances or language to convey concepts, we require an inner system to move us through life. Without it, we would remain infants in understanding and capabilities. Although the term “ego” is often misunderstood as referring to that part of ourselves that contains only our self-gratifying desires, thereby causing us to ignore or harm others, this is a very limited view. Indeed, ego is better understood as a unifying system, that sense of self, or self-concept, that coordinates all of the facets of our emerging consciousness. It directs our development in all areas: intellectual, social, sexual, emotional, physical, moral, musical, spiritual, and so forth. It also regulates impulses, tests reality, balances our inner with our outer experiences, and integrates each aspect of ourselves and each stage of growth with every other. These are enormous tasks, and until we reach the more

mature stages, our ego performs these functions unconsciously and not always very well.¹⁴

In our earliest developmental periods (Stages 1 through 3), we do not have a stable sense of self and are indeed very egocentric. These stages, usually occurring from 0–7 years of age, are labeled “prepersonal” or “prerational,” because we do not yet have the capacity to use reason and feeling¹⁵ to include others’ rights or views into our own worldview and still maintain our sense of self. In these prepersonal stages, we are

either fused with others, or alone and alienated, often in quick succession. If as adults, we remain stuck at these stages—or if we are thrown back to these stages by a disappointment or trauma—we might rightly call the ego “petty” in some circumstances.

During the stages that follow, we acquire enough rational and emotional capacity (and hence sufficient social and moral sense), to develop a stable sense of our own self in an interwoven community of others. This is why

these have been labeled as “personal” or “rational” stages. We become capable of “autonomy-in-connection.”¹⁶ During the first of these stages (Stage 4), we approach, and then at the next (Stage 5), we reach, “the continental divide of development.” This is the point at which we truly acquire the capacity to consider and/or care for another, independent of but connected to our capacity to care for ourself. Before this achievement, we see every facet of the self as operating independently—as compartmentalized or split off from other facets of the self. Sex and spirit are opposed or merely unrelated. From here on, we understand that every facet relates to every other. Spirituality, sexuality, ideas, social action—all relate, debate, dialogue, and form ongoing “discussions” with each other. With each successive stage, we come to enjoy an even deeper integration and collaboration between all the facets of our self, other selves, and the larger “Self” or God. In these stages, our sense of self is our identity: we are a member of a tribe, church, or sports team (Stage 4); we are an individual who values the thoughts and actions of other individuals (Stage 5); we are a citizen of the world who sees universal similarities and connections among all humans (Stage 6).

**Spirit can enter into
our lives according
to the capacities
we have to receive
and use it. Developing
our whole selves
also increases
our abilities to develop spiritually,
however we might experience
that growth or whatever terms
we may use to express it.**

Nine Stages of Spiritual and Sexual Development

Marybeth Raynes

Stage (Wilber/Wade)	Age/est. % of adults who "max" at that stage ¹⁷	Self/Social (Maslow) <i>Ability to Love</i> a. Self development b. View of self, other	Moral (Kohlberg/Gilligan) <i>Ethical motive</i>	Spiritual (Fowler) <i>View of spirit</i>	Sexual (Wilber, Raynes) <i>View of sexuality</i>	
Prepersonal Stages	1. Archaic/ Reactive	0-2 yrs./ 0.1%	a. Safety b. Own body self/others have own body self	None	Undifferentiated	Pleasurable sensation within body-self, no concepts
	2. Magic/Naive	2-4 yrs./ 10%	a. Safety b. Own/other emotional-self	Magic wish	Intuitive- projective	Sensations in body, genitals, feelings, sex actions good or bad
	3. Egocentric	4-7 yrs./ 20%	a. Safety b. Own/other mind-self	Punish or obey, hedonism/selfish	Mythic-literal	Same as #2 plus thoughts seen as good or bad, mind-body split
Personal Stages	4. Mythic- Membership/ Conformist	7-17 yrs./ 40%	a. Belongingness b. Own/other group or social self	Law and order, approval, regulated fairness/care	Synthetic- conventional	Body, genitals, actions, thoughts are good if one follows rules, bad if not
	5. Rational/ Achievement or Affiliative	17 yrs.- adult/ 30%	a. Self-esteem b. Own/other personal self	Individual rights, fairness for self and others/universal care	Individuative- reflexive	Sexuality as aspect of personality. Own rules plus societal rules guide feelings, actions
	6. Vision- Logic/ Authentic	Middle- late adult/ 10%	a. Self-actualization b. World-centric self among selves	Individual and interper- sonal principles of conscience/integrative	Conjunctive (synthesis of all views, faiths)	Own and others' sexu- ality are good, joyous with principled action
Transpersonal Stages	7. Psychic/ Transcendent	Middle- late adult/ (rare)	a. Self-transcendence b. Spiritual-centric self	Universal-spiritual principles	Universalizing	Sexuality, spirituality (as aspects of self) are part of the whole or God; all consciousness
	8. Subtle/ Transcendent	Late adult/ (rare)	a. Same as #7 b. Self-integrated	Same as #7	Same as #7	All aspects, actions of self-others known as reflections of God; all consciousness
	9. Causal/Unity	Late adult/ (rare)	a. Same as #7 b. Self-self with God, "All that is"	Same as #7	Same as #7	Same as #8. All is direct, non-dual experience in all of life

*Table 3

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

If we continue to grow into even later stages of development, often called “transpersonal” or “transrational” (Stages 7 through 9), our self-system expands beyond just “this world” experience. We can have spiritual experiences at any stage, but in these transpersonal stages, we transcend our perception of our self as separate, even while we retain an awareness that we have, in fact, individual bodies and minds. As with all stages before them, these stages integrate and include all the previous stages, yet go beyond them. We become transrational—that is, we acquire the ability to perceive ourselves as fully part of all other realities, while still retaining an understanding of separateness. Our thinking becomes more refined. At this stage, we see ourselves as one facet of God, as part of all that is in the whole field of consciousness, and as part of “the invisible world that supports the visible.”¹⁸

7. GROWTH IN THE BRAIN MUST OCCUR BEFORE AND DURING GROWTH IN OTHER AREAS. We cannot achieve mature soul/spirit growth without increased neurological capacity. That is, we cannot develop in certain ways if certain neurological functions are hampered. For example, anyone who interacts with a Down syndrome child experiences something truly sublime in terms of pure, spontaneous, nonjudgmental, and wholehearted affection. In terms of loving, a Down child is literally hardwired to love. But because of a genetic structure that creates neurological limitations, this same loving child sometimes cannot easily discriminate between people who are worthy or even safe to lavish affection on and those who are not. They cannot show stable love by self-sacrifice or respond with love that sensitively matches the capacity and needs of the recipient of their love.

In contrast, a child without the genetic limitations of Down syndrome may lack the capacity for spontaneous affection and seem much more selfish in earlier stages of development, but as neurological development continues in its normal trajectory, opportunities for learning in emotional, moral, intellectual, and other developmental lines open up. As in all other biological growth, there must be a underlying physiological structure to support growth in other areas, even if these areas are known only through behavior and subjective experience. The brain increases the use and coordination of its various parts at each new stage of maturity. See Table 2, “Underpinnings of Spiritual and Sexual Development” (page 50) for essential basic brain development and cognitive abilities.

8. THROUGHOUT EVERY STAGE, ALL GROWTH EXPERIENCES OCCUR WITHIN THE BODY. Despite the traditional privileging of mind over body in Western culture, we exist in, through, and of our bodies. Our experience occurs through the physical web of brain, eyes, muscles, stomach, and feet, as well as nerves, arteries, and heart. In the earlier stages of development, we believe that sex, spirit, and others are outside of us and beyond us. Progression through the various stages means we increasingly know with our senses as well as with our minds that we *are* our bodies as well as our spirits.

THESE EIGHT PRINCIPLES constitute the first framework by which to understand development; the second set of concepts is the nine stages of growth. (See Table 3, “Nine Stages of Spiritual and Sexual Development,” page 52)

There are three major stages, each with three substages. In the earlier discussion of the sixth principle of growth, I briefly described the major stages—prepersonal, personal, and transpersonal. The three substages, though subordinate, are anything but insignificant, as each represents enormous gains in capacity for experiential breadth and depth.

In Table 3, the column headings list the developmental areas identified by major psychological theorists Abraham Maslow,¹⁹ Lawrence Kohlberg,²⁰ Carol Gilligan,²¹ James Fowler,²² and my own thinking with input from Ken Wilber. I will briefly sketch the major thrust of each theorist in the discussion of the various stages that follows, but interested readers should refer directly to their major works for a much more thorough explanation. My focus is not to summarize their words but rather to communicate a sense of how (from their combined perspectives) a person functions at each stage.

The two subheadings under the category “Ability to Love” in the Self/Social column indicate that both self-development and a view of others are necessary before moral development can occur. Both are also vital building blocks for sexual and spiritual development. When we have sexual experiences, or spiritual ones, we cannot make sense of them, remember them, or use them in our lives without having engaged in self-development or in having a view of ourselves in relation to others. Again, the ability to love is the common trunk from which the branches of our spiritual and sexual growth emerge.

Table 3 builds on two other lines of development that are necessary for self and moral development: (1) levels of brain development, and (2) stages of cognitive capabilities (shown in Table 2). As indicated in our earlier discussion (of principle 7), neurological development beyond a current stage is required for any other kind of growth into the next stage. Furthermore, all growth at each stage occurs in what may be a lock-step sequence: brain development, followed by cognitive development, then self development, and then moral development. If a person does not achieve a stage in this sequence, he or she cannot move on to the next level, including in the areas of spiritual and sexual development.

I give two names for each of the nine stages in order to give credit to both Wilber and Wade, and also because I consider that both together give a clearer image than either alone of the characteristics of each stage. The first name for each stage is Wilber’s (e.g., “Archaic”), while the second is Wade’s, preceded by a slash (e.g., “/Reactive”). The one exception to this is Stage 3, which both name “Egocentric.”

The nine stages we will discuss integrate the customary six stages of growth²³ developed in similar ways by many person-

ality theorists over the last century, but then add three more at the upper reaches of development. The two primary theorists I draw on for this paper, Ken Wilber²⁴ and Jenny Wade,²⁵ have identified these final three stages from their work with various religious texts and practices. Both Wilber and Wade are integrative thinkers working in a relatively new field of inquiry—transpersonal psychology—which seeks to link insights and research from psychology over the last century with the world's major religious and mystical traditions. Although they write independently, each is aware of the other's work. Their models are very similar and reflect basically the same stages of growth. Both are aiming at the equivalent of a unified field theory of the stages of consciousness—principles that produce a map of the stages of consciousness that is true for all of us in every culture and throughout time. I suggest interested readers first consult Wilber's *A Brief History of Everything*, and then Wade's much denser, but immensely rewarding, *Changes of Mind*.

FOUR DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS

Self and Social Development. Our thoughts, feelings, and actions regarding ourselves and others must grow into the basic skills necessary to negotiate life and to learn to love. Indeed, love is more than just a feeling; it is an art. Our ability to give and receive love consists of a set of mental, emotional, and social skills that grow exponentially as we grasp important concepts and marry them with warm expressions in our actions. Those who are at less-developed stages may love fully within their capacities, much as small children love their mother; but those with more developed and skilled minds and hearts can love more fully, like the mother who can maintain a constancy of caring through the ups and downs of her children's moods, achievements, and mishaps.

At the most mature stages, our loving is characterized not only by greater depth of feeling and awareness, but our actions are also guided by greater wisdom. We learn more and more to express caring that is much less attached to our own private or competitive concerns.

Moral Development. During the prepersonal stages, we are really not capable of moral action. We follow commands, we learn rules, we are rewarded or punished, but we do not have the capacity to internalize the ethical principles that underlie the rules. But at about age seven or eight—a period that will resonate with Mormon readers as the “age of accountability”—the capacity emerges to understand rules, identify what truly is or is not “fair,” and imagine how another person feels. At this stage, we can understand, make, and keep agreements. During the three personal stages (Stages 4 through 6), we develop this capacity to consider ourselves and others in connection. By the time we are fully mature, or self-actualized (Stage 6), we can simultaneously consider many points of view and a wide spectrum of alternatives for action. Further on, as we enter the transpersonal stages, we automatically consider others as we

reflect on options and take action.

This capacity to universalize our concerns and include all others within our moral decision-making is supported in religious literature. For example, according to scripture, both the Apostle John and the “Three Nephites” expressed a desire to remain alive ministering unto all the people of the earth until Christ's second coming. In Mahayana Buddhism, those seeking the enlightenment path take the vows of a Bodhisattva, a promise to continue to reincarnate and help others until *all* become enlightened. In short, most religious traditions hold up as important models of moral growth, those whose hearts and actions are oriented to the larger world, and less and less primarily to their own finite selves.

Spiritual Development. Spirituality grows in stages and is dependent upon both psycho-social and moral development. The labels in the spiritual development column of Table 3 (“undifferentiated,” “intuitive-projective,” “mythic-literal,” etc.) belong to James Fowler and are drawn from his important work, *Stages of Faith*. It is helpful to compare his labels with the ideas in the Self/Social and Moral development columns to gain a sense of how their cognitive and behavioral capacities coordinate with each other and create the groundwork necessary for each level of spiritual growth.

Essentially, the core idea is that spirit (whether Spirit, or spiritual realities) can enter into our lives only according to the capacities we have to receive and use it. Developing our whole selves also increases our abilities to develop spiritually, however we might experience that growth or whatever terms we may use to express it. Although these uses and expressions are highly varied throughout the world, they must all function within the capabilities determined by the level of our minds and hearts, and the size of our moral embrace.

Sexual Development. The stages of sexual development are my own contribution and follow closely the cognitive, social, and moral capabilities already outlined. During my research on sexual development, I found many sources that listed stages. Frustratingly, they were limited in crucial ways. Most considered only the development of physical capacities (important to be sure!) and the events/behaviors that unfolded at turning points in the life cycle; but they gave only minor consideration to the inner development needed for growth in this area. I crafted my summary statements by gleaning from many sources. I intend my descriptions as suggestions, not prescriptions, and welcome further insights.

Mature sexual and spiritual development requires advanced moral development, self-actualization and a wide capacity to love, and mature cognitive and emotional skills. Without advancement in all of these areas, no matter how delightful, exciting, meaningful, or connected we feel—our sexual experiences will remain partial, temporary, and at times conflicted. If we will continue to grow, we will come to experience greater depths of joy, connectedness, and ecstasy that we didn't imagine possible.

HOW SEX AND SPIRIT GROW

THROUGHOUT THIS ARTICLE, I have argued that every aspect of development has a physiological as well as psychological component. Because physiological development is quantifiable, many studies focus on what happens in our bodies. These states can be studied externally and results charted. External states lend themselves much more easily to categorization and description than do internal states of being. To try to present an internal as well as external view of how sex and spirit grow, I will briefly discuss each stage in analytic terms but will follow (in discussions of Stages 3 and beyond) the descriptions with love poems that illustrate an “inside” dimension of each stage. The poems dealing with sexual love are not sexually explicit because I want to illustrate breadth and depth of feeling and how God and/or a lover is conceptualized, rather than focus on physiological functioning.

STAGE 1: ARCHAIC/REACTIVE. From birth to about age two, human personality consists primarily of physical sensations, an amazing growth of language, and a blossoming sense of our own body and the world around us. Our brain functions only with what has been labeled the “reptilian complex” (R-Complex), the systems that control our autonomic nervous system (respiration, circulation, digestion, etc.) and other very basic survival mechanisms. Even though our cognitive and language skills are still very limited, we come to understand certain signs, “yes/no,” and simple sentences (“Where’s Daddy?” “Do you want some milk?”). However, we have the beginnings of self image and only a limited sense of others. Hence, no moral development is present or possible. We may have sexual and spiritual experiences, but our memory system and ego are not sufficiently developed to maintain our awareness of them. Even instances of brilliance that parents and others may interpret as wisdom or deep understanding are flashes that cannot be maintained, duplicated, nor yet consciously built upon.

STAGE 2: MAGIC/NAIVE. In this stage, typically experienced from ages two to four, we start to differentiate between ourselves and others, and we learn others have their own feelings. We develop the capacity to control our bodies and to repeat pleasurable movements and sensations. Despite our vague efforts to create pleasure or avoid pain, however, the stimuli for both appear to be outside ourselves, not primarily generated by internal impulses. They are not directed by our own sense of self, for no cohesive “self” has yet developed.

We learn to move from signs to symbols, for we gain the capacity to understand that one thing can stand for another, even if we don’t see it. We learn spiritual songs, words, gestures, and prayers. But our worldview is magical: Someone out there creates everything that happens. Feelings come and go away. They happen to us; they are not in us, or part of us. God or a

magical force makes things happen—God is happy with me, God is mad at me.

Our language is still limited, so our linguistic expressions of sexual feelings would, at best, be chants and limericks—the *body* and the *bawdy* are one. Spiritual expression is similar. Our prayers are short, repeated phrases intended to produce an immediate, practical effect. Since we cannot yet tell time, everything is immediate. Almost always our pleas are urgent, and the results are unambiguous: We either get what we want immediately, or we don’t.

STAGE 3: EGOCENTRIC. From ages four to seven, we learn that we have not only our own body and emotions that are separate yet connected to others, but we also have our own minds, thoughts, and wishes. And they are all focused on us. The limbic system, which controls emotions, is fully developed. This emotional center delivers up intense feelings, which we can easily confuse with external realities, with other people’s feelings, or even truth. Yet at this stage, our thinking skills allow us only to formulate simple concepts, and we cannot yet truly discriminate between right and wrong. Authority figures train us to observe such codes of behavior as sharing, but the behavior easily disappears when the authority leaves the room. Any wish for the well-being of others or any help we extend to others is a behavior that we have learned and repeated. We do not yet have the moral maturity to behave in a loving or ethical way. If an action would conflict with our own wishes, we would not perform it.

As we gain a rudimentary sense of time and the ability to form more abstract concepts, we learn that there is a world beyond signs and symbols. We do not need to see God to believe. We believe because others we trust believe. Because we are children, our view of God is modeled on our own parents. If we are fortunate, our parents—and hence our view of God—are benevolent; but we can all supply examples of God-images that are arbitrary and punitive. In either case, our relationship with God is simple: He rewards us when we are good and punishes us when we are bad. We and others are good or bad. Actions are clearly good or bad, not ambiguous. Our world is black and white.

Some people retain this view of their spiritual life even when they are adults. And, at times, even someone at the egocentric stage of development can experience a compelling peaceful or beatific vision of how the world can become one or happy. Thus enlightened, this person may feel enormously motivated to live in that vision and to attempt to reproduce it for others. He may even preach, set up social structures such as ministries and foundations, and labor sincerely to convert others to his vision. However, this person has not gone through the stages of moral and social development necessary for him to consider others’ rights and needs as equal to his own and also to recognize that each person has his or her own worldview that might be just as compelling. This enlightened one may become so convinced that *his* view is the whole view that he ignores others’ rights, behaves irresponsibly in terms of

managing his own affairs, or becomes enmeshed in conflict with others. Such a person may remain isolated, eventually becoming bitter or disheartened. Even his vision loses its power to bring peace and communion with the divine. Equally possible, if he is able to win adherents to his views, he may feel justified in limiting the rights of others, or schisms will develop as those converts exercise their own agency. Many small groups which quickly begin to operate as “closed” societies—sometimes unified by drastic predictions of the ending of the world—are led by persons at this developmental level. And in truth, many at this stage also fit, more or less marginally, in a larger church organization which may take a wider attitude.

When we are in this stage, we organize our sexual impulses and actions around our immediate needs. We do not yet have good impulse control. The predominant reasons we stay in our seats, keep our clothes on, or take daily baths are fear of punishment and the hope for reward. Still, when grown-ups or a larger authority figure, such as the police, are not around, impulses frequently overpower the rewards/punishments system. Should we remain in this stage into adulthood, as many do, we will easily get into sexual, moral, or social trouble because we have no governing vision, no developed moral ideas that might help us control our impulses.

During the egocentric stage, sex and spirit have little or no relationship to each other in a person’s consciousness. Sexuality and spirituality occur in different parts of the self. Indeed, if we are taught (as is often the case) that one is good and the other bad, this split may endure into maturity, hindering our later development.

The following poem illustrating how things seem at this level of development, “Children of Our Heavenly Father,” communicates a desire for safety—the wish that everything will be all right. (Although this poem, and the next one, “I Want You,” give an “inside” view of this stage, it would be unusual for a person at the egocentric level of development to be able to write with this much complexity.)

CHILDREN OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

*Children of our Heavenly Father
Safely in his bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e’er was given.*

*Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord his children sever;
Unto them his grace he showeth,
And their sorrows all he knoweth.*

*Though he giveth or he taketh,
God his children ne’er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.*
—Caroline V. Sandell-Berg²⁶

The second poem, “I Want You,” is characterized by heavy repetition of the same language, a focus on self, and a lack of awareness about the person who is wanted. The poem’s persona has a powerful wish which must be granted immediately, or he will quickly be engulfed by grief, loss, and pain. The “you” being addressed is an instrument to bring his well-being into balance, not from his own efforts.

I WANT YOU

*I want you when the shades of eve are falling
And purpling shadows drift across the land;
When sleepy birds to loving mates are calling—
I want the soothing softness of your hand.*

*I want you when the stars shine up above me,
And Heaven’s flooded with the bright moonlight;
I want you with your arms and lips to love me
Throughout the wonder watches of the night . . .*

*I want you when my soul is thrilled with passion;
I want you when I’m weary and depressed;
I want you when in lazy, slumbrous fashion
My senses need the haven of your breast . . .*

*I want you, dear, through every changing season;
I want you with a tear or smile;
I want you more than any rhyme or reason—
I want you, want you, want you—all the while.*

—Arthur L. Gillom²⁷

STAGE 4: MYTHIC-MEMBERSHIP/CONFORMIST. We generally arrive at this stage, the first of the three “personal” stages, during elementary school years, and the majority of us never truly leave it. We may from time to time be elevated to new heights—experiencing greater love or increased awareness—but we then return to our home in the everyday world. At this stage, our limbic system (the emotional center of the brain) is in full sway, and we are primarily capable of dichotomized thinking. Our world is still mostly black and white, but it assumes some external order because we now learn, by rote at first, the rules of fairness, that others have rights, and that we should love others even if we don’t always get our way. Our frontal cortex, which is the seat of reasoning skills and impulse control, is starting to develop greater complexity and becomes more influential.

This stage is characterized by conformity. We define ourselves by our social roles, even though we know we only partially fit them. We show others that we love them through correct action and, at times, experience great intensity of feeling. As we internalize these rules for relationships, we begin to live by a moral code. It is usually a concrete, easy-to-understand map of behaviors. We do not yet understand that principles are abstractions that can be interpreted in various correct ways, so we place great stress on sorting our world

into clear categories and behaving in ways that observably match the rules. In return, we then expect to feel certain feelings.

The world's major religions train us to reach this stage. Civilization cannot be maintained unless the majority of us achieve this level of development. The workhorses of the world are the parents, citizens, church members, soldiers, and employees who are responsible, consistent, and dutiful. In this stage, we become civilized, cooperative, take turns, and even create rules for fair fighting. According to most religions, sex and spirit occupy separate compartments—so they can meet only under authorized circumstances. The lyrics of some of our most popular Mormon hymns communicate this stage: “Do what is right; let the consequence follow,” and “Redeemer of Israel, our only delight . . . our shadow by day and our pillar by night.”

Notice in the following poem, “Crazy Quilt,” how the thinking has become noticeably more complex than in the earlier poems. It communicates the nascent understanding that God must undertake a process in our behalf, not just grant a wish, and that people do not simply occupy categories of good and bad but must somehow be knit together in love.

CRAZY QUILT

*The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia
is cracked. California is splitting
off. There is no East and West, no rhyme,
no reason to it. We are scattered.*

*Dear Lord, lest we all be somewhere
else, patch this work. Quilt us
together, feather-stitching piece
by piece our tag-ends of living,
our individual scraps of love.*

—Jane Wilson Joyce²⁸

During this stage, the rules governing intimate relationships start to come into focus. We stress congeniality. We learn our culture's conventions for romance and intimacy. Sexual impulses are still intense, only slowly coming under our control. Our view of our sexual partner(s) is still very simplistic. The moral code is frequently seen as being at war with sexual impulses. At times, morality and sexuality occupy the uneasy peace of separate compartments. At other times, we use the cultural taboos surrounding sexual morality to suppress or resist sexual “temptation.” At other times, our sexual impulses override the dictates of conventional morality. Through their conventional phrasing and tone, the following two poems show these dichotomies:

ANY WIFE OR HUSBAND

*Let us be guests in one another's house
With deferential “No” and courteous “Yes”;*

*Let us take care to hide our foolish moods
Behind a certain show of cheerfulness.*

*Let us avoid all sullen silences;
We should find fresh and sprightly things to say;
I must be fearful lest you find me dull,
And you must dread to bore me any way.*

*Let us knock gently at each other's heart,
Glad of a chance to look within—and yet
Let us remember that to force one's way
Is the unpardoned breach of etiquette.*

*So shall I be hostess—you, the host—
Until all need for entertainment ends;
We shall be lovers when the last door shuts,
But what is better still—we shall be friends.
—Carol Haynes²⁹*

THE WANT OF YOU

*The want of you is like no other thing;
It smites my soul with sudden sickening;
It binds my being with a wreath of rue—
This want of you.*

*It flashes on me with the waking sun;
It creeps upon me when the day is done;
It hammers at my heart the long night through—
This want of you.*

*It sighs within me with the misting skies;
Oh, all the day within my heart it cries,
Old as your absence, yet each moment new—
This want of you.*

*Mad with demand and aching with despair,
It leaps within my heart and you are—where?
God has forgotten, or he never knew—
This want of you.*

—Ivan Leonard Wright³⁰

STAGE 5: RATIONAL/ACHIEVEMENT OR AFFILIATIVE. This stage may be achieved any time from adolescence onward. At this level of development, we attain what I referred to earlier as “the continental divide” of maturity: we are finally capable of seeing our own interests as equally important as the interests of others. We may evaluate another's perspective sympathetically without feeling our own sense of security is threatened. We develop critical-thinking skills. We learn to discriminate. In our brains, the neocortex, the seat of reasoning, is becoming dominant, making us capable of dialectical and abstract reasoning. We acquire this neurological capability in later adolescence, but few of us employ it fully, and when we do, we are often in middle or late adulthood because

we must slowly train our emotions to follow our fair and heartfelt reasoning.

Our capacity to love now can grow exponentially because we can really value another for his or her individual self and individual preferences, while at the same time valuing our own. In this stage, paradoxically, we also become more of an individual with our own interests and reflexive thoughts, while simultaneously becoming less egocentric for we see how we relate to everyone and everything else in our larger world. Our autonomy *and* our connections increase in breadth and depth. Our minds and hearts start to play together.

Wilber calls this stage the rational stage while Wade differentiates between men and women in this stage. Men, she argues, incline toward achievement in this phase, becoming increasingly at home in a competitive world. They use their growing capacity for reflexive thinking and options for action in that sphere. In contrast, women move into affiliation, honing their perceptivity and collaborative skills in relationships. Although both genders often categorize *their* preference as intellectually and morally superior, Wade maintains that both preferences require the same brain capability, level of abstraction, and practical options for action. The gender trajectories are neither higher nor lower, but different. In fact, neither approach is capable of producing the higher-level mental skills of synthetic thinking and consensus building, so each path is necessarily limited. Interestingly, moving from either trajectory to the next stage of maturity requires that we learn the awareness and skills of the other.

Spiritually, Stage 5 is a period of reflection and often of doubt for many. In this stage, we feel the need to undergird our faith with rational and objective data. We start to engage God in a discussion, even a debate. Those of us who remain spiritually identified with a particular religious tradition begin a long discourse with ourselves and others, often lasting for decades. Because we feel the need to explore areas of tension and silence, we found publications such as *Dialogue*, *SUNSTONE*, and *Exponent II* and establish publishing houses such as Signature Books. As Stage 5 adults, we become aware of our own rigidity and judgmentalness, and search for a broader faith. We incorporate doubt and skepticism as part of our corrective, maturing views. We may identify with President Hugh B. Brown: "No man deserves to believe until he has served an apprenticeship of doubt."³¹ Others among us pursue different paths, declaring that God is a construct and rejecting spiritual realities as improbable or impossible. However, Wilber maintains that this stage of reason is still more spiritual than earlier stages:

The very depth of reason, its capacity for universal-pluralism, its insistence on universal tolerance, its grasp of global-planetary perspectivism, its insistence on universal benevolence and compassion: these are the manifestations of its genuine depth, its *genuine* spirituality. These capacities are not *revealed* to reason from *without*.... They issue from *within* its own structure, its own *inherent* depth.³²

The following two poems reflect the mental reflexiveness, mingling of doubt and belief, and the robust sense of self characteristic of this stage.

REVOLUTIONARY PATIENCE (excerpt)

*I don't as they put it believe in god
but to him I cannot say no hard as I try
take a look at him in the garden
when his friends ran out on him
his face wet with fear
and with the spit of his enemies
him I have to believe*

*Him I can't bear to abandon
to the great disregard for life
to the monotonous passing of millions of years
to the moronic rhythm of work leisure and work
to the boredom we fail to dispel
in cars in beds in stores*

*That's how it is they say, what do you want
uncertain and not uncritically
I subscribe to the other hypothesis
which is his story
that's not how it is he said for god is
and he staked his life on this claim*

*Thinking about it I find
one can't let him pay alone
for his hypothesis
so I believe him about
god*

*The way one believes another's laughter
his tears
or marriage or no for an answer
that's how you'll learn
to believe him about life
promised to all*

—Dorothy Soelle³³

HOLY THE FIRM (excerpt)

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? There is no one but us. There is no one to send, nor a clean hand, nor a pure heart on the face of the earth, nor in the earth, but only us, a generation comforting ourselves with the notion that we have come at an awkward time, that our innocent fathers are all dead—as if innocence had ever been—and our children busy and troubled, and we ourselves unfit, not yet ready, having each of us chosen wrongly, made a false start, failed, yielded to impulse and

the tangled comfort of pleasures, and grown exhausted, unable to seek the thread, weak, and involved. But there is no one but us. There never has been.

—Annie Dillard³⁴

Sexuality also comes into fuller flowering at Stage 5. Our increases in mental and feeling capabilities allow us to have more complex and rich relational experiences. Reflexive mental and emotional skills allow us to analyze, understand, and heal from shame, trauma, or restrictive past learning. New ways of enjoying sex and love come within the context of keen and more mature moral capabilities.

To be sure, not all people become more morally reflexive as they grow. And many who acquire new mental and sexual awareness have not invested equal effort in moral development, so their lives may seem less, rather than more, mature. But for those who continue the effort towards deeper growth, remarkable new awareness in body and mind will ensue. The two poems that follow capture dimensions of this kind of mental and physical maturing.

MIDNIGHT

*After making love
beneath the wings of the ceiling fan,
we will rappel,
make our unnatural descent,
step off the sheer cliff of waketime.*

*Soon we will let go
of the muslin drapes and high, white walls
and you will slip
into rhythmic breathing, your limbs
trembling down the length of sleep.*

*You will use your arms
to control the downward slide; your knees
wedged inside mine,
your hand bracing me in this cocoon.*

*And breath after breath,
we will let the reliable cues
swallow us down
like gravity, until we fall
untied in our naked safety.*

—Alison Kolodinsky³⁵

MANON REASSURES HER LOVER

*When I cannot sleep, I stroke you,
and like a napping cat that purrs
and stretches when touched, you linger
with pleasure on the edge of waking,
curling far into slumber. You know*

*that I am watching, you are safe.
Your skin is soft, smells fresh.*

*I love how your face is sculpted,
the drapes and furrows, how your cheek
laps over your forearm as you sleep.
I love how your skin moves under my hand,
the way it sags on the muscle and bone,
as the skin of a ripe peach
slips loose almost without the knife.*

*I have no hunger for young flesh,
unripe, firm but tasteless by comparison
You are still at the very peak
of ripeness, sweet, with the tang
that quenches thirst. I would like
to take a gentle bite from your shoulder,
golden in the faint light from the window.*

—Martha Elizabeth³⁶

At this stage, sex and spirit become acquainted. They dialogue. They relate. Their underlying similarities come to our view at times, but not yet continuously. After a rich time of lovemaking, love often spills over to include everyone in our lives. A sense of vibrancy emerges, and we may become consciously aware of the spirituality in affectionate and sexual experience.

STAGE 6: VISION-LOGIC/AUTHENTIC. In Stage 6, the individual self finally becomes mature, most often occurring, when it does, in middle to late adulthood. In this stage, we become world-focused, taking our individual place as one citizen of the large, delightful, and suffering world. For most personality theorists, this stage is the ultimate level of development. However, I agree with the transpersonal theorists that our moral sense, our spirituality, and our sexuality can continue to develop.

At Stage 6, our neurological abilities are entering full flower. The brain transcends the earlier hemispheric period, in which one hemisphere of the brain dominates the other. Now both spheres begin to coordinate, possibly forming new lateral connections and allowing a three-dimensional vision of the world, of ideas, and of people. Synthetic thinking—or the ability to see and integrate ideas, facts, and behavior from many perspectives—emerges as a result of this new neurological capacity. In seeing many others' views, synthesizing them, and empathizing with them, we can also see where their (and our!) views may be partial, only a piece of the larger truth.

With these new skills and insights, Stage 6 thinkers can resolve most of their internal conflicts or at least find ways to reconcile them without suppression. At this stage, we are no longer paralyzed by paradoxes. At times, our ordinary experiences spontaneously generate quite extraordinary insights and syntheses. We integrate opposites, value ambiguity, accept uncertainty as the norm, and value a life fully lived over ultimate

answers. Indeed, we live out these paradoxes, note incongruities with serenity, not judgment, and tolerantly view conflicts in cultural scripts or in the mysteries of life and death as valuable learning experiences. Even death can lose its terrors at this stage, to be seen as another adventure.³⁷

Abraham Maslow identified this stage as “self-actualization.” It is characterized by a great jump in our ability to love. We can now enjoy others, including their differences—even differences that compete with ours—with greater compassion. Competition and debate decrease; consensus and understanding increase. Maslow, who studied self-actualizing people, wrote at length on love among those with authentic selves. He concluded that they love more fully and enjoy life precisely because they could see reality more clearly and were less invested in their own way.³⁸ James Hillman, a noted psychologist, though without using Maslow’s term, also found that, for some, the capacity to love accompanies the aging process:

A certain love for the world deepens recognition of its beauty. . . . There seems to be more acceptance in the love between old people, more respect for the other person and their foibles. We learn to appreciate our partner’s oddities, and to realize what a miracle it is that we’re still together. . . . We learn to give one another more space, to take more interest in what’s going on in each other’s life. Not what medications we’re taking, or what our pulse rates might be, but what we’re reading and dreaming about, what memories are returning to us, what peculiar reflection just turned in our minds—something we haven’t thought of for years. We become more interested in each other’s souls; that’s the interesting part.³⁹

Sexuality and spirituality find common ground as never before. They become fascinating aspects of integrated experience. Both are seen as rooted in loving others, loving self, and loving the world. Those who do not claim spiritual experience, or see spirit as an important element in their lives, still have a vibrant sense of life and often an inner sense of mission or service to others.⁴⁰

Since ideas and language flow more fluidly than ever before, we make new connections and networks of connections between ideas, peoples, and positions. The poems that follow celebrate life’s fluent and vibrant qualities. Life, even in its simplest expressions, sings.

WELCOME MORNING

*There is joy
in all:
in the hair I brush each morning,
in the Cannon towel, newly washed,
that I rub my body with each morning,
in the chapel of eggs I cook
each morning,
in the outcry from the kettle*

*that heats my coffee
each morning,
in the spoon and the chair
that cry “hello there, Anne.”*

*All this is God,
right here in my pea-green house
each morning
and I mean
though I often forget,
to give thanks,
to faint down by the kitchen table
in a prayer of rejoicing
as the holy birds at the kitchen window
peck into their marriage of seeds.*

*So while I think of it,
let me paint a thank-you on my palm
for this God, this laughter of the morning,
lest it go unspoken.*

*The Joy that isn’t shared, I’ve heard
dies young.*

—Anne Sexton⁴¹

PSALM 1

*Blessed are the man and the woman
who have grown beyond their greed
and have put an end to their hatred
and no longer nourish illusions.
But they delight in the way things are
and keep their hearts open, day and night.
They are like trees planted near flowing rivers,
which bear fruit when they are ready.
Their leaves will not fall or wither.
Everything they do will succeed.*

—Translated by Stephen Mitchell⁴²

THE IMAGE OF ME FLOWING THROUGH YOU

*The image of me flowing through you
everywhere,
all the membranes gone transparent,
the holding released
and so a washing.
I felt me pouring, and you.*

*You knew then all that I knew,
arms and legs circling,
the core enclosed,
the two/one of us
balanced and still.*

*Oh the welcome, the ease,
the walls saturated,*

*slithering into soft mounds.
We breathed,
we drank,
taking care not to tear the lace.*

—David Steinberg⁴³

STAGES 7, 8, 9: THE TRANSPERSONAL STAGES. Wilber, Wade, and many others have mapped these next three stages after comparing representations and descriptions of stages of spiritual development in major world religions and mystical traditions.⁴⁴ Interestingly, those stages usually begin where normal ego-functioning generally ends, that point which most theorists call the highest developmental stage.

When we achieve these stages, we find that transcendent or spiritual experiences are not rare and transitory. We genuinely start to live “in” these experiences more continuously, changing “altered states to permanent traits.”⁴⁵ Not only do we have more intense and more continuous spiritual experiences; but when we reach these stages, deeper and richer personality characteristics begin to emerge. Indeed, we come to value dramatic or striking experiences less. They are simply side effects of living the devoted life, which is valued for its own rich textures and deep harmonies. Generally those who achieve transpersonal stages have practiced spiritual disciplines over a long period of time and have also lived a long, responsible, and loving life. As we might guess, very few people attain these stages. The price of admission is high, requiring decades of mental, emotional, relational, and spiritual discipline.

According to Wade, the brain continues to acquire neurological capacity during the transpersonal stages. Both hemispheres become fully interactive with each other. At the highest stages, we might even acquire conscious control over the lower brain structures.⁴⁶ Empirical evidence for this hypothesis is found in studies of experienced meditators who can move quickly and easily between deep states of meditation, with accompanying slow delta brain wave frequencies, to everyday, waking states of consciousness, which has much faster beta brain wave frequencies, while having full control over their brain states at all times.⁴⁷

Although these three stages share a great deal in common, each also has its own differences. Wilber describes the psychic/transcendent stage (Stage 7) as being in *communion* with God or Spirit. It generally involves a sense of oneness with the natural world. The subtle/transcendent stage (Stage 8) is typically experienced as *union* with God. (See the poem “We Awaken in Christ’s Body” below.) The causal/unity stage (Stage 9) is experienced as *identity* with God and all that is. James Fowler sees Jesus’ statement that he is “the way, the truth, and the life” and the statements of mystics who claim they are an exact mirror of God as potent examples of the sense of identity with God or Spirit that characterizes very advanced levels of development.

Far from becoming detached from reality, individuals in these three stages function very well in everyday activities. In fact, their competence may increase, despite the usually in-

creasing age of the individual. People in these stages live life for the larger human family. Their lives are not self-centered or focused just on personal, internal spiritual experiences.

Sex and spirit are now fully integrated, along with most of life’s experiences, including pain and suffering. No human experience is excluded. All are a part of all that is. Many mystical texts describe both sex and spirit simultaneously. Body and soul are one.

The poems that follow can be read both as prayers to God and also as expressions of sexual experience. In fact, reading and holding both concepts in mind simultaneously provide an extraordinarily rich literary experience.

FOLDED INTO THE RIVER

*Your face is the light in here that makes
my arms full of gentleness.
The beginning of a month-long holiday, the disc
of the full moon, the shade of your hair,
these draw me in. I dive
into the deep pool of a mountain river,
folded into union,
as the split-second when the bat meets the ball,
and there is one cry between us.*

—Rumi (1207–1273)⁴⁸

wild nights! wild nights!

*Wild Nights—Wild Nights!
Were I with thee
Wild nights should be
Our luxury!
Futile—the Winds—
To a Heart in port—
Done with the Compass—
Done with the Chart!
Rowing in Eden—
Ah, the Sea!
Might I but moor—Tonight—
In Thee!*

—Emily Dickinson⁴⁹

spring song

*the green of Jesus
is breaking the ground
and the sweet
smell of delicious Jesus
is opening the house and
the dance of Jesus music
has hold of the air and
the world is turning
the body of Jesus and
the future is possible.*

—Lucille Clifton⁵⁰

OUT BEYOND IDEAS

*Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase each other
doesn't make any sense.*

—Rumi⁵¹

THE LOVERS

*See how in their veins all becomes spirit:
into each other they mature and grow.
Like axles, their forms tremblingly orbit,
round which it whirls, bewitching, aglow.
Thirsters, they receive drink,
watchers, they receive sight.
Let them into each other sink,
around each other a constant light.*

—translated and adapted from
Rainer Maria Rilke⁵²

THE HOLY LONGING

*Tell a wise person, or else keep silent,
because the massman will mock it right away.
I praise what is truly alive,
what longs to be burned to death.
In the calm water of the love-nights,
where you were begotten, where you have begotten,
a strange feeling comes over you
when you see the silent candle burning.
Now you are no longer caught
in the obsession with darkness,
and a desire for higher love-making
sweeps you upward.
Distance does not make you falter,
now, arriving in magic, flying,
and, finally, insane for the light,
you are the butterfly and you are gone.
And so long as you haven't experienced
this: to die and so to grow,
you are only a troubled guest
on the dark earth.*

—Goethe, translated by Robert Bly⁵³

WE AWAKEN IN CHRIST'S BODY

*We awaken in Christ's body
as Christ awakens in our bodies,
and my poor hand is Christ, He enters
my foot and is infinitely me.
I move my hand, and wonderfully
my hand becomes Christ, becomes all of Him
(for God is indivisibly*

*whole, seamless in His Godhood).
I move my foot, and at once
He appears like a flash of lightning,
Do my words seem blasphemous?—Then
open your heart to Him.
and let yourself receive the one
who is opening to you so deeply.
For if we genuinely love Him,
we wake up inside Christ's body
where all our body, all over,
every most hidden part of it,
is realized in joy as Him,
and he makes us, utterly real,
and everything that is hurt, everything
that seemed to us dark, harsh, shameful,
maimed, ugly, irreparably
damaged, is in Him transformed
and recognized as whole, as lovely,
and radiant in His light
we awaken as the Beloved
in every last part of our body.*
—Symeon the New Theologian (940–1022 A.D.)⁵⁴

GOD SPEAKS TO THE SOUL

*And God said to the soul:
I desired you before the world began.
I desire you now
As you desire me,
And where the desires of two come together
There love is perfected.*
—Mechthild of Magdeburg⁵⁵

HOW THE SOUL SPEAKS TO GOD

*Lord, you are my lover,
My longing,
My flowing stream,
My sun,
And I am your reflection.*
—Mechthild of Magdeburg⁵⁶

MEDITATIONS OF JULIAN OF NORWICH (excerpt)

*I understood that
our sensuality is grounded
in Nature, in Compassion
and in Grace
This enables us to receive
gifts that lead to everlasting life
For I saw that in our sensuality
God is
For God is never out of
the soul.*

—Julian of Norwich⁵⁷

BUDDHA IN GLORY

*Center of all centers, core of cores,
almond self-enclosed and growing sweet—
all this universe, to the furthest stars
and beyond them, is your flesh, your fruit.*

*Now you feel how nothing clings to you;
your vast shell reaches into endless space,
and there the rich, thick fluids rise and flow,
Illuminated in your infinite peace,*

*a billion stars go spinning through the night,
blazing high above your head.
But in you is the presence that
will be, when all the stars are dead.*
—Rainer Maria Rilke⁵⁸

IT SEEMS PERSPECTIVE is everything. We are both limited and broadened by our views of life and our capacities to live it. Hopefully, this sample of the broadest and deepest viewpoints of many thinkers will enable and challenge us to integrate all facets of life—including sex and spirit—within ourselves and with others beyond our current imaginings in a sea of ever-deepening love.

NOTES

1. Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Thomas Johnson (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1960), 917.

2. For instance, mystics within the world's major religions assert this as truth. Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism each have major masters and writers who describe the deepest reaches of spiritual realities as a direct experience with love. For one example, see Ken Wilber, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), 338.

3. Paul Tillich, in Ken Wilber, *The Eye of Spirit: An Integral Vision for a World Gone Slightly Mad* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997), 221. See also, William Reese, ed., *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*, Expanded ed. (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 1999), 771.

4. Audre Lorde, "The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," (excerpt), *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality*, ed. Marilyn Sewell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 210.

5. Jenny Wade, "Mysticism and Sexual Experience," *Conference: Transpersonal Perspectives at the Millennium, Association for Transpersonal Psychology* (San Francisco, 1998). Recording in personal possession, available from Conference Recording Service (800) 647-1110. Wade describes examples of how orgasmic sexual experience and transcendent experiences are similar and at times linked.

6. Jean Latz Griffin, "The Paradox of Self" (an interview with Mark Epstein), *Common Boundary: A Journal of Psychotherapy and Spirituality* 16 (November/December, 1998): 32. See also, Mark Epstein, *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart: A Buddhist Perspective on Wholeness* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999).

7. This notion has been discussed by many personality theorists from Carl Jung forward. Good discussions can be found in John Rowan, *Subpersonalities* (New York: Routledge, 1990); John G. Watkins and Helen H. Watkins, *Ego States* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997); Ken Wilber, *Integral Psychology* (Boston: Shambhala, 2000), 100-02; Robert Kegan, *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 313, 316.

8. A line of development denotes a particular area that grows in complexity and capability through time, such as intellectual and physical maturity, musician-ship, etc.

9. In developing these tools, I have relied on Ken Wilber, Mark Epstein, and Jenny Wade, cited elsewhere in these notes, as well as my own observations. Many of these ideas have been drawn from Ken Wilber's "Twenty Tenets" of evolution articulated in his work, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*, and later made more readable in Ken Wilber, *A Brief History of Everything* (Boston: Shambhala, 1996).

10. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd Edition, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1993), 1435, 455.

11. Wilber, *Sex Ecology, Spirituality*, 51.

12. For a good discussion of this, see Jenny Wade, *Changes of Mind: A Holonomic Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 159-174. Wade synthesizes all major personality and developmental theorists to provide an extensive overview of each stage of development. The holonomic paradigm (from *holos* [wholeness] and *nomos* [law]) holds the view that "the ultimate nature of physical reality is an undivided whole in perpetual flux. . . . Every portion of the flow (i.e., flux) contains the entire flow, just as each small part of a hologram contains information about the entire image. . . ." There is a "simultaneous interrelatedness and interpenetration of all phenomena." Wade, 7-8.

13. Wilber, *Integral Psychology*, 15.

14. Mark Epstein, *Paths Beyond Ego: The Transpersonal Vision* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 1993), 121; Ken Wilber, *The Eye of Spirit*, 228.

15. Reason and feeling are often seen as opposites, when in reality they are intertwined. For us to identify, name, and describe the physical sensations in our bodies as emotions that have richness and meaning we must have reached a certain threshold of cognitive development. The more language we have to identify our emotions, the more skilled we become at feeling them and, simultaneously, we become better assessors of value and meaning. Likewise, those who say they are "thinking" people, yet have little emotion, often fail to identify the sensations and emotions they experience and so do not include them in their worldview. To progress toward full development, however, we must include both facets.

16. Jean Baker Miller, "Development of Women's Sense of Self," *Women's Growth in Connection: Writings from the Stone Center*, eds. Judith V. Jordan, et al. (New York: The Guilford Press, 1991), 11-26. Miller uses the term "being-in-relationship" and quotes others who use "agency-in-community" to illustrate how a self is formed with both factors being present simultaneously all the time.

17. The totals in the column add up to more than 100%. See Wilber, *Integral Psychology*, 48-53.

18. Joseph Campbell, with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 31.

19. Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1981).

20. Lawrence Kohlberg, *Essays on Moral Development*, vol. 1 (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).

21. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982).

22. James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).

23. The number of stages varies, but six is the best average. For a summary chart of many major personality theorists, the number of stages each uses, and how they compare with each other, see Wilber, *Integral Psychology*, 201-08 and Wade, *Changes of Mind*, 272.

24. Ken Wilber, *A Brief History of Everything* is the briefest synopsis of his work, which includes more than a dozen books. At least two others are required for the serious reader: *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* and Ken Wilber, Jack Engler, and Daniel P. Brown, *Transformations of Consciousness: Conventional and Contemplative Perspectives on Development* (Boston: Shambhala, 1986).

25. Wade, 1997.

26. Carolyn V. Sandell-Berg, "Children of Our Heavenly Father," *Eloquent Woman*, ed. Sidney B. Smith (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1990), 169; also in *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 299.

27. Arthur L. Gillom, "I Want You," *Best-Loved Poems of the American People*, ed. Hazel Felleman (New York: Doubleday, 1936), 45.

28. Jane Wilson Joyce, "Crazy Quilt," *Cries of the Spirit*, 135.

29. Carol Haynes, "Any Wife or Husband," *Best-Loved Poems*, 23.

30. Ivan Leonard Wright, "The Want of You," *Best-Loved Poems*, 56-7.

31. As remembered by his daughter, Mary Brown Firmage Woodward. This quote was likely in a speech and may or may not be in print.

32. Wilber, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*, 250-51.

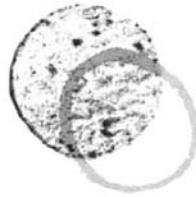
33. Dorothy Soelle, "Revolutionary Patience," *Cries of the Spirit*, 198.

34. Annie Dillard, *Holy the Firm* (excerpt), *Cries of the Spirit*, 254.

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FOR THE END OF TIME

. . . *the harmonious silence of heaven.*
Olivier Messiaen

Here in the North there is no night:
vapors of Dusk blur time and space,
I wait for Dawn's half light
to streak the sky emerging.

Silence. All creation blinks:
Aurora Borealis blitzes the heavens,
sea-shades bounce off blueberries,
earth sings in a blaze of silver.

—CHARLOTTE F. OTTEN

AFTER MY WIFE LEFT FOR WORK

and I, reclining still in bed
under a checkerboard afghan
and sometimes-works electric blanket,
know the trees are tattooed with frost
and the gutters heavy with icicles.
Through heavy chintz curtains
and shuttered blinds, the morning is diluted
to a murmur. It longs to sing of cold
and snow, the geography of white.
Let me lie here and listen deep.

—RYAN G. VAN CLEAVE

A BED WITH A VIEW

THE WORLD HAS NEED OF
WILLING . . . TIRED PEOPLE

By Dian Saderup Monson



Dian Monson's seven-year-old daughter calls this original drawing, "My Mom."

I AM A TIRED PERSON. There are many of us around these days: the chronically fatigued, the depressed, the ill. Some of us may be malingerers, disguised as tired people; many of us fear we are malingerers who for unknown reasons cannot shake our tiredness and go *do* something—say, build up the Kingdom or consistently make it to Cub Scout pack planning meeting. Other people do these things. Why can't we?

Tired. We're tired, all the time, pretty much, with occasional interruptions, hours or days here and there when we're on top of the world and so decide to hack away for twenty minutes at those weeds in the garden plot out back. President Kimball's 1970s admonition to paint our barns and outbuildings and plant vegetable gardens hovers at



DIAN SADERUP MONSON is a homemaker, sometime-teacher, and writer. She lives with her family in Orem, Utah.

the perimeters of our consciousness. Surely, there is, in these relatively energetic shining moments, something we could *improve* by our efforts.

To be a Mormon and a tired person hardly makes for a seamless sense of identity. We Latter-day Saints are movers. We are definitely doers of the Word and not hearers only. In my ward, here in the heartland of Orem, the most active Saints among us could probably be called hyperactive. The extra mile? We take that for granted. If a Sunday School lesson calls for dates, forget the chalkboard. We get individually printed, fold-out time lines, complete with computer generated illustrations of particularly significant events! You can imagine how a tired person feels among such workhorses.

I often find myself wondering if there are tired people hidden all over my ward but they're just better disciplined than I am. Yet it's hard to imagine that many of these movers and shakers have a secret life in bed,

asleep. It's difficult to believe that make-up can actually give a woman's face that special vital gleam—the irrepressible “joy in the gospel” look—which radiates from the faces of the apparently not-overwhelmingly-tired during Primary music practice when all you have to do is keep fifty kids under the age of eight focused on forty-five minutes of sermons disguised as songs. The truly tired know: there is tired, and then there is *tired*. Ordinary tired goes away after a good seven and a half hours of sleep. Ordinary tired knows that tomorrow really is another day, a chance to do things quite differently if one so chooses. Ordinary tired sometimes has a hard week or a difficult month: *We're all just so busy these days. I never seem to stop running.*

Truly tired, on the other hand, realizes that seven hours or seventy—she'll still be tired, maybe just slightly less so. Truly tired is not so busy. Truly tired doesn't run anywhere at all, if such running can possibly be avoided. Truly tired avoids busy-producing commitments such as, “Yes, kids, we can go to the grocery store this afternoon for ice cream,” knowing that such wild promises come back, quite quickly, to haunt: *But you promised. Liar! Liar!* And truly tired is often too tired to reprove said kids for such slanderous back talk. Truly tired naps religiously, has innumerable lie downs each day, gives her eyelids frequent breaks. No matter where truly tired is, bed will never be far from mind. During these apparently stuporous periods, however, truly tired may actually be engaged in various worthy causes, such as gearing up to lay out cereal bowls and spoons for supper.

DON'T mistake me. I poke only the gentlest fun at truly tired people. I am, after all, one of them. I have had to find my own ways of coping with this embarrassing predicament: I hardly ever want to get out of bed, and there are times—fortunately none too recently—when I just flat out *can't* do it. I could digress into a lengthy and convoluted discussion of my health, but . . . let's just not, if you don't mind. My health hardly seems the issue anymore; the only relevant feature of my physical condition is that I have been, for years now, and remain—a tired person. (This designation reminds me ever-so-uncomfortably of David Foster Wallace's short story, “The Depressed Person,” which depicts its title character as monstrously self-involved. The story is, alas, monstrously hilarious.)

And so, I've had to look for meaning—What could Heavenly Father possibly have in mind? What on earth am I supposed to

do?—right here in my queen-sized, quite comfortable bed. All around me I sense people rushing about on the Lord's errands. I do undertake errands myself, although with trepidation. I have a great fear of being stranded by exhaustion at Super Target while purchasing wedding or baby shower gifts, or in the middle of reorganizing my disastrous kitchen shelves, or on a day trip to Salt Lake to visit my elderly mother. It's not that I'm an invalid, just a very hesitant Doer. I get things done. At least some things. I'm slow, a sort of tortoise amidst hares who never stop to rest up and eat lunch.

My ward boasts, at last count, over twenty full-time missionaries. My neighbors all appear to be teaching their children the Value of Work. Ten-year-olds mow lawns; preschoolers pull weeds; toddlers remove pebbles from garden beds. During summer, on Saturday mornings, I lie in bed listening to the distant humming and nearby roar of lawn mowers. There have been times when my own yard has been so weedy and untended I've felt a need to slip from the house—on those occasions when I actually left the house—in dark glasses and a trench coat.

Today! Today! Work with a will. Today! Today! Your duty fulfill. . . . We Latter-day Saints are not big on tomorrow, let alone the day after that. Whether we be thrusting in our sickles with our might; preparing every needful thing, for he who is prepared shall not fear; oiling our literal and figurative lamps—let's get it done. Just Do It. (President Kimball did live long enough, I think, to reformulate that quote with the youth in mind: Don't do it!) Generally, though, Do It (just not *it*) remains our motto. We like to be able to measure our successes. We enjoy objective evidence of our worthiness: 100% visiting teaching. 67% home teaching. We really like to keep score, and the competition is—ourselves. Even, I'm genuinely pained to say, the temple recommends we carry may serve for some of us mainly as a measure of performance. Another visible indicator of achievement.

Work is what we Mormons tend to do best. And it shows. It's how we've gotten where we are today. I remember once landing a live-in position in Boston's wealthiest suburb when I arrived, nearly penniless, for graduate school. The teenaged daughter

whom I was to occasionally chaperone and cook dinner for, as well as teach to drive, later told me I'd gotten the job because I was a Mormon. Nearly everybody on the east coast is familiar with the Mormon nanny phenomenon. People like to hire Mormons to care for their children, not to mention take care of their company books and pretty

LATER

on in the lesson, I found an opportunity to admit that lying in bed reading magazines and books was practically all I ever did and it hadn't occurred to me, at least not in some while, to consider those activities . . . a cause for repentance.

much any other job you can think of requiring honesty and hard work, because, well, on average we're honest and hardworking. *We do our jobs.* My sister, who no longer claims any affiliation with Mormonism, nevertheless called and asked me to enlist the aid of her best friend's bishop last year when that friend, also entirely inactive, was in personal crisis. As I said at the time to my class of BYU freshman writing students (I enjoy a rather leisurely teaching schedule, about one course per eighteen months): "Who better to call than a Mormon if you've got a catastrophe going on? It's what we do best." If my own house were flooded, burned, or destroyed by earthquake I can't think of anybody I'd rather have on hand than a squadron of Mormons.

So we do have a reputation, certainly not unjustified, for hardworking dependability. We're not boomers—we certainly weren't during the great westward migration of the 1800s; we believe in the slow, steady production of abundance through effort and prudence. As Wallace Stegner noted in his numerous commentaries on the development of the American West, the Mormons constituted an exception to the rule: we came not to make a killing and move on, but to

settle in and providently expand. We've been doing so ever since. We're the epitome of the American Dream made good on its promise. And now our expansion has truly assumed worldwide proportions. People who watch these sorts of things have noticed. The Mormons are not only coming. We're here. Rich. Powerful. Dedicated. And persevering.

We're like a steadily building wave constituted of faithful workers. Doers. We're the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, destined to fill the whole earth, one determined step at a time, or rather, as the case now stands, millions of determined steps at a time.

SO where does that leave a tired person such as myself? It became clear to me some time ago that surely the Kingdom must have a place for all kinds. Even tired kinds. While a capacity for rigorous self-discipline and hard work may characterize the Latter-day Saints as a people, that very capacity can, I think, sometimes undermine aspects of our individual spirituality. I've been surprised by how many women in my current ward tell me privately how grateful they are to me for speaking up in Relief Society

about my difficulties in, er, actually doing stuff. Are they tired, too? Or do they long, amidst a relentlessly-moving sea of activity, to find themselves afloat, if only for a moment, within a comfortable and comforting doldrum? I remember one sister confessing at the beginning of her lesson on work that one day recently she'd been tempted to forego her daily chores and actually sit in an easy chair and read a magazine! Later on in the lesson, I found an opportunity to admit that lying in bed reading magazines and books was practically all I ever did and it hadn't occurred to me, at least not in some while, to consider those activities a matter of giving in to temptation, a cause for repentance.

Perhaps I'm wrong about that, but I choose not to think so, and I haven't felt particularly impressed that the Lord thinks so either. If it takes all kinds, then my kind is the sort whose chief labor could be said to be mental or even, during rare periods of particular elevation, spiritual. Lying in bed affords one lots of time to think and read, to read and think, and sometimes to write one's thoughts down. In Mormonism, we don't have a contemplative tradition. We have no monasteries or nunneries where men and

women take vows of perpetual silence and retreat into lives of prayer and contemplation. For one thing, we simply haven't had time for a contemplative tradition. You don't launch a new religious tradition in the face of massive persecution, establish a lasting kingdom in a desert and expand worldwide in little over 150 years and have much time or energy left over for sitting still and thinking.

I remember studying New Testament Greek with an elderly Episcopal monk in Cambridge years ago (tiredness hadn't yet completely overtaken my life); at the monastery, I was interested in the stark, usually empty rooms—a bed, a desk and chair, a wardrobe, hardwood floor—that I had to pass to get to our meeting place in the library. When I finally asked Fr. Dalby what those rooms were used for—sometimes a door would be closed or a suitcase resting discretely next to a bed—he answered, “Oh, for people on retreat.” Then he had to explain the idea of a retreat to me. It was utterly foreign, and I was, frankly, incredulous: These people come here for a week and don't do anything but pray or talk to anybody except their spiritual counselor the whole time? Fr. Dalby couldn't understand my consternation. Hadn't the Mormons retreats? It was a lovely way to refresh the soul, he explained.

Well, to say the least, I think I've come to understand a bit better the retreat mentality, having found myself on a modified one that's lasted years and still counting. I believe the idea of the retreat is to achieve, if possible, a state of contemplation and in that state communion with the Divine. Suffice it to say, I rarely get very close to real contemplation, but I do manage to think quite a bit. Very occasionally my thoughts seem actually inspired. As a Latter-day Saint, I've been conditioned to expect revelation through activity: nothing brings the Spirit in quite the way as a good deed accomplished. But we also endorse the still small voice that speaks to our hearts and our minds in the solitude of prayer. Our children are encouraged in song to search, ponder, and pray. If we have trouble as adults finding the time to do these things, nearly every *Ensign* seems to contain the story of a harried young mother who obtains spiritual succor by rising thirty minutes before the rest of her family each day for a private devotional. It's not that Mormons decline contemplation; we just like to see it in its place—another activity among the many

that a fruitful day might contain.

Moderation in all things. For the Latter-day Saint, that certainly applies to contemplation, or rather the impulse toward contemplation. As I've indicated, I don't think true contemplation an easy thing to attain or find. I suspect some people are gifted with the capacity for it; most of us muddle

I T'S not that Mormons decline contemplation; we just like to see it in its place—another activity among the many that a fruitful day might contain.

along. Catholic writer Andre Dubus felt that this inability on the part of good-willed people to achieve contemplation explained “the necessity and wonder of ritual. For ritual allows those who cannot will themselves out of the secular to perform the spiritual, as dancing allows the tongue-tied man a ceremony of love.” Perhaps that is why, when burdened by cares requiring focused thought and attention to quiet spiritual promptings, Mormons retreat to the temple when possible. The ritual acts in a sacred setting do seem to lift the LDS seeker into a higher, altered realm, a realm characterized by a certain spiritual alertness coupled with peace.

Contemplation as a habit of being (to borrow Sally Fitzgerald's phrase describing Flannery O'Connor's “excellence not only of action but of interior disposition”) may not be something we Latter-day Saints can expect to encounter a lot of among ourselves, but then I suspect it is rare among any religious people. The difference for us is that members of other faiths can find ways to legitimately devote themselves to contemplation as an occupation, if necessary, whereas we Mormons may appreciate the fruits of the contemplative souls in our midst, but nevertheless haven't room at this historical moment for allowing such souls to flourish on anything but their own time, if, given the demands of the faith, such time can indeed be found. We would like to be a thoughtful people, a re-

flective people, a people full of spiritual understanding. But we are also, simply, unavoidably, very very busy. At least many of us are.

It seems possible that intractable tiredness may not be all bad, in individuals scattered here and there among us. There may be actual advantages—not just personal advantages, but communal as well—to taking to one's bed. Perhaps, given the proper mindset, we tired people have a duty to fill. A job. A worthy task—unfortunately, though, a task that often bears little visible, quantifiable fruit. That's just how it is, though. Let us remember that Jesus cared little for the getting of credit. The near invisibility of a tired person's possible virtues—well, that's nothing a bit of humility can't render tolerable.

AS SUNSTONE'S readers and contributors undoubtedly know, we are viewed with a certain suspicion by some of the Brethren and many mainstream Church members, the hardworking, dutiful, *Ensign*-reading populace whom we all want at our sides during an earthquake. Our problem is that we are prone to thinking, and not just thinking, but to exploring nooks and crannies in our history, theology, and tradition that perhaps, some say, are better left untouched. Those some have a point. From my observation, it's fairly easy to think one's way out of the Church, and has been since the earliest days of Christianity. Look around: surely you have friends, or perhaps even yourself, who have done that. Joseph Smith has been called everything from a charlatan to a spiritual genius by those who've thought about him and reject him as an actual prophet with a specific mission. The Apostle Paul noted that to the Greeks, those notorious seekers of wisdom, the idea of Christ crucified constituted pure folly, even silliness.

So dangers exist even for those of us tucked safely abed. The Lord says he will destroy the wisdom of the wise and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. God save me from too much of the wrong kind of wisdom; from too much poorly-tempered understanding. And with that prayer in my heart, I'll carry on, carry on, carry on. Resting. And as I rest, reading. Thinking. Occasionally writing. ☺



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I N T E R V I E W

WELCOMING THE WORLD

A Conversation with Ed Hula on the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City



ED HULA is the editor of Around the Rings, the premier publication covering the international Olympic movement. Begun in 1992, it is primarily an e-journal whose subscribers are mostly professionals with interests in the Olympics: broadcasters and other members of the media, leaders of sports federations, sponsors, and business leaders in major cities with ties to the Olympic movement. (Visit: www.aroundtherings.com.) In addition to Around the Rings, Hula has had a long career as a journalist, including work in Florida radio and television, as a producer and writer at CNN, and as a news director for a public radio network in Georgia.

Sunstone was very fortunate to discover Ed in time to have him moderate the opening plenary session at our 2001 Sunstone Symposium, a panel discussion, "Covering the Mormons: Challenges in Reporting on the Church in the Heart of Zion." This interview was conducted by Dan Wotherspoon in the Sunstone offices, 8 August 2001.

What is the Olympics? Sports, politics, business?

Well, it really is sport. If you lose the sport, you lose the Olympics. Above all, it is sport and spectacle. The Olympics are grand entertainment. They are about athletic accomplishment, about succeeding, about being the best at what you do.

The business and politics and the rest intrigue me and others who cover the movement closely, but I think we get too serious about this. Whether it's about the scandal, or how the International Olympic Committee (IOC) conducts itself, or whether there's too much commercialism, the bottom line is that the Olympic Games are for the enjoyment and pleasure of hundreds of thousands of spectators in attendance and the billions around the world who will watch it on television. They are drawn to it by the sport. And that must remain at the heart of it all.

Let's talk about the 2002 games in Salt Lake City. Will they be successful?

Salt Lake City has wonderful qualities for

the games. The logistics—just the ease of coming to the city with such a close airport—that's unheard of in Winter Olympics. It didn't happen in Nagano [Japan] or Lillehammer [Norway]. The fact that we are really in a valley here, and everything is flat and the width and wonderful grid system of the streets—all of this is going to make it easy for the crowds to negotiate the streets here. Also, the venues themselves are much closer than they traditionally are for winter sports. Mitt Romney [chair of the Salt Lake Organizing Committee] was referring to recent talk about having the Summer Olympics in one place every year so we don't have to reinvent the wheel every four years. He implied that Salt Lake could be the perfect permanent place for the winter games. That's not the way it goes, of course, but there has got to be a perfect setting every once in while for the games, and that's Salt Lake City.

Is the Salt Lake bid scandal over?

I think it is. If the games were in a different set of circumstances right now, if they

were 300 million dollars in the red, or if there was a ski jump plagued with design problems that they still couldn't fix, or if the ice kept melting at the speed skating oval, you might find more enthusiasm for a vigorous prosecution. But as it stands now, I don't think it would be easy to find a jury with the stomach to convict the people who brought something good to Salt Lake City.

The current state of these games is also very impressive when you recall the prognosis because of the scandal two-and-a-half years ago. I was at Olympic headquarters in 1998 when all of this started unraveling. It didn't look good. When you see the shape Salt Lake's games are in now, basically in a break-even position with a chance to deliver a surplus, when you see all the venues ready, when you hear organizers talk about having all the temporary venues ready a few months before the games, when there seems to be good cooperation between the city and the organizing committee, I don't know what could go wrong. Plenty of things could, of course, but right now it looks really, really good.

Was there any Mormon tinge to the Salt Lake bid and scandal?

I don't think so. It was always the Salt Lake City bid, and I didn't find any overtures about the faith, any preaching, any Mormon moralizing involved in Salt Lake City's bid for the games. Salt Lake City was already well known as the headquarters of the Mormon church, and leaders properly kept out of the thing. And that fact has helped protect the faith from any tinges from the scandal.

Although the scandal did start out as a Salt Lake City story, in the circles I run in it shifted quite quickly to an IOC story. Salt Lake was just a manifestation of the unethical practices that went on at that time involving cities bidding for the games. Once we realized that Sydney, Atlanta, and other cities had done this, Salt Lake City ended up looking more like a scapegoat than anything else. True, Tom Welch and Dave Johnson probably did bring gifting to a higher level than in these other places, but they were just riding the curve upwards.

Because we still hear strange rumors about what others think life in Utah is like, we in the Sunstone office have been joking that all the men in town should grow a "Brigham Young beard" for the Olympics. When you first came to Salt Lake City, how did your experience match your preconceptions?

I didn't know what I'd find. I stepped off the plane and said to myself, "Well, no, they don't look different. They don't look like the Amish. They don't look like pioneers." There are a lot of minivans here, but that is a little harder to spot.

I first came here in 1996, a year after Salt Lake City had won the games. I was really impressed with the orderliness of the city, that it wasn't high-strung, that it was big enough but not too big. We had just come through the winter games in Lillehammer, which was very much the small-village experience, so it was quite a contrast. My first impression was: "This is a great place."

As I looked a little harder, I did begin to notice that this is a more homogenous society than Atlanta, where I am based. I got off of the plane here in Salt Lake City, and I saw mostly white faces. Returning to Atlanta, I stepped off the plane and was back in a multi-cultural world. Still, this is a much more multi-cultural place than Beijing, China. Salt Lake is more diverse than Nagano was and even Lillehammer. So, this isn't a criticism. It is primarily interesting because this is a city in the United States, and for a city of its size in this country, it is quite homogenous.

A common criticism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that it is too image-conscious, that it tries to control media stories. Can you compare Salt Lake City, Mormonism, and other cities with regard to image-consciousness?

Well, image is everything. That's why cities bid for the games. They want others to see them for reasons of economic development, tourism, some sort of validation on the world stage, and so forth. That's why cities are in this game.

I don't think Salt Lake City has to try very hard to project a positive image. If they start pushing it, or if the Church starts pushing it, it will come off as too much. Let this place speak for itself, and it will win people over. Attempts to manage, to manipulate, to do that sort of thing would not ring true with reporters. What they want is the ability to find an authority, to ask a question and get an answer, and to follow up and get their story. This is just as true with the religion as with the city.

Journalists are going to write first

from their own perceptions—from what they see. What is really happening out there? Are the people Martians? Does every man have a Brigham Young beard? Where are the bars? Where is the liquor? Where are the polygamists? And you and I know they are going to find places to drink, and they will not easily spot polygamists. They are going to see this huge temple downtown and big buildings next to it, and maybe if they get inside Temple Square, they will be accosted by some of the earnest young folk there, and that will be, maybe, where the real connection with Mormonism will take place.

Depending on who the reporter is and who the young person is, this meeting may be a positive experience, one where there is a bit of intellectual discourse between the two. So it will be interesting to see how that works out.

The Mormons are different, however, for if you visit grand cathedrals in Olympic cities like Barcelona, nobody comes up to you to try to tell you about Catholicism. If you go to a Japanese temple, no one tries to proselytize you into Shintoism. I am a practicing Catholic. I am interested in how other people follow their faiths. I am not offended, except when people try to convince me that mine is not the right way, that their's is the real path. I think the Temple Square missionaries will do fine. What will be interesting is to see how the really devoted, the really pious Latter-day

Saints take it upon themselves to try that sort of proselyting.

What would be the right balance between the Salt Lake games and Mormonism? Is there anything wrong with the Church thinking this is an opportunity to put its best forward?

It is wrong to make any direct connection between the Church and the Salt Lake organization and the staging of the games. And, again, the Church shouldn't have to work very hard. It is such a big deal here, it is an important denomination around the world, and Salt Lake City is a nice place to live and visit. And part of the reason it is nice is because of the sort of values and quality of life that the Mormon church advocates. Reporters should make those connections without much help.

It will be interesting to see how NBC deals with the connection between the games and the Church, because that network is the only media anyone really has to worry about. What is NBC going to do with it? My sense is it will be a minor thing. NBC typically portrays the Olympics as about sport and spectacle and personal stories. The network didn't feature Shintoism when in Nagano or the Calvinists in Norway.



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*"My name is Levi, and I'll be your waiter.
May I recommend the green punch with the fish."*

UPDATE



11 SEPTEMBER 2001

CHURCH REACTS TO TERRORIST ATTACKS

LEADERS OF THE Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint reacted promptly to the 11 September 2001 attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City and part of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The First Presidency released statements, held services, and increased security on Temple Square. President Gordon B. Hinckley made a number of public and private appearances in Salt Lake City, Washington, D.C., and on CNN. By suggestion of the First Presidency, many LDS wards changed their 16 September sacrament meetings into memorial services.

On the day of the attacks, the First Presidency stepped up security at Church headquarters and ordered the closure of administration facilities in Salt Lake City and of temples from Ogden to Provo, as well as the Washington, D.C., Temple. All Church-owned facilities reopened the following day.

In Provo, Brigham Young University officials canceled the usual devotional and held a prayer meeting instead. In Salt Lake City, a scheduled concert by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir became a memorial service that included words from President Hinckley: "Today has been a day that will be remembered always in the annals of our beloved nation. . . . Many have been wounded, and this, our nation, has been seriously injured and insulted."

Within hours of the attacks, the First Presidency also released a statement. "In this hour of sorrow, the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints expresses profound sympathy to those whose loved ones, friends and associates were lost or injured in today's senseless acts of violence. . . . We offer our prayers in behalf of the innocent victims of these vicious attacks. We ask our Heavenly Father to guide President Bush and his advisors as they respond to these devastating incidents."

Two days after the attack, President Hinckley flew by private jet to

Washington, D.C., where he joined other religious leaders in a White House meeting with President Bush. "I just want you to know, Mr. President, that we are behind you," said President Hinckley. "We pray for you. We love this 'nation under God.'"

On Friday, 14 September, the Church held two memorial services in the Mormon Tabernacle. The identical services were aired live on KSL-TV and broadcast to stake centers across the country. The services, which began with the Nauvoo Bell ringing for three minutes, included remarks by President Hinckley. Elders Boyd K. Packer and Henry B. Eyring read Bible passages, and breaking with traditional Mormon practice, Presidents Thomas S. Monson and James E. Faust offered previously written prayers.

That evening, President Hinckley appeared on CNN's "Larry King Live." His comments on the tragedy were aired live via satellite from KSL-TV studios in Salt Lake City. This was President Hinckley's third appearance on the show. In his conversation with King, President Hinckley declared, "I believe [God is] all powerful . . . [but] I don't know His will. . . . I don't know how He operates. . . . But I have confidence, overwhelming confidence, in the fact that He, in [the] true and eternal sense, will provide for those who suffer."

On 21 September, the Church released the following statement:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has enjoyed a long and mutually respectful relationship with many of the leaders and followers of Islam. We recognize that those responsible for the reprehensible actions of September 11 in no way represent the views of millions of Muslims throughout the world. We are grieved to hear of instances where innocent members of this and other faiths have been singled out for retribution. We condemn such acts as wrong and immoral. The Church urges its members and people everywhere to extend kindness and love to all sons and daughters of God.

Pontius' Puddle





CAL GRONDAHL, COURTESY OF THE STANDARD EXAMINER

CHURCH SETTLES LAWSUIT FOR \$3 MILLION

THE CHURCH HAS agreed to pay \$3 million to an Oregon man who was the victim of sexual abuse at age eleven. Jeremiah Scott, now twenty-two, and his mother, Sandra Scott, claim their LDS bishop knew ward member Franklin Richard Curtis had a history of sexually abusing children but failed to warn the Scotts when they asked his advice about inviting Curtis to move into their home. Curtis repeatedly abused the boy in the early 1990s.

Although the Church has settled similar lawsuits in recent years, this is the first settlement amount ever disclosed publicly. Ms. Scott and the attorneys for her son said they agreed to settle only on the condition they be allowed to freely discuss the evidence they would have presented at trial. Had the case moved forward, the Church may have been forced to release records of its financial holdings—information LDS officials have kept confidential since 1959.

According to Church attorney Von Keetch, the current LDS record-keeping system safeguards children from sexual abuse. “If today I confess child abuse to priesthood leaders, my membership record will be annotated,” said Keetch. “I may be forgiven and may be able to repent and come back and be a member of the Church, but what I can’t do is ever work with children again.”

Shortly after the settlement announcement, the plaintiff’s mother and three lawyers flew to Salt Lake City. “We cannot put our children at the mercy of the Church’s sense of judgment,” said Ms. Scott during a press conference. “People need to know when there are severe criminals in their church; that’s not something you conceal.”

Marion Smith, former director of the Intermountain Specialized Abuse Treatment Center, author of *Riptide*, and co-author of *Healing*

from *Sexual Abuse in Mormon Neighborhoods*, agrees that this settlement is important. In an interview with SUNSTONE, she stated, “I know personally of at least twenty-five cases where a perpetrator of child sexual abuse has been protected [by the Church]. . . . Harm would never have happened if the bishop had acted according to the law.”

According to Smith, leaders can protect children without invading the sacred nature of the confessional relationship. “It is the law that if any person other than the perpetrator reports abuse to the bishop, including the victim or the perpetrator’s family, the bishop must report it. If the law were followed, the number of cases like these would be greatly reduced.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF HUGO OLAIZ

Flanked by two of the family’s lawyers, Sandra Scott addresses the media.

All-Seeing Eye



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEREMY HARMON/DAILY UTAH CHRONICLE

With stylish cane in hand, President Hinckley gets out and about. Here, he previews an exhibit, "The Nazi Olympics: Berlin 1936," at the University of Utah's Marriott Library.

BACK-UP SYSTEM

SINCE APRIL, PRESIDENT Hinckley has been seen sporting a cane. "Well, I saw that Brigham Young used a cane. John Taylor had a cane, and Wilford Woodruff had a cane, and President Grant had a cane in his old age. And I've seen President McKay with a cane and Spencer Kimball with a cane, and I'm just trying to get in style," joked President Hinckley as he closed the April 2001 conference. "I have a little vertigo," he explained. Between sessions of the same conference, President Hinckley reportedly provoked laughter from those assembled by taking a few mock swings at members of the Twelve.

SERVE YE CLEAN-SHAVEN

DID YOU NOTICE a jump in Gillette stock? If so, it might have been due to a recent policy change that now requires all temple workers to serve clean shaven or not at all. Newly outlawed are beards as well as mustaches for workers at all hundred-plus temples worldwide.

This new mandate further complicates the already historically hairy issue of the relationship between whiskers and the perception of one's righteousness. Church spokespersons refuse to comment on reasons for the new regulation or even when it was issued. (Letters announcing the policy seem to have gone out in March and April 2001.) In the absence of official statements, Church members have been left to speculate for themselves. In a 5 May *Salt Lake Tribune* article, former Logan Temple president Jack Kidd is quoted as saying he suspects the shift might have been motivated by "young folks [who] justify their bizarre kinds of [facial hair] by looking at some of the elderly people who have beards." In the same article, Mormon sociologist Armand Mauss wonders if the change "may suggest that in order to enjoy the increased spiritual prestige of being a temple

worker, you have to give up one of the few remaining signs and symbols of individuality."

In the 1960s, facial hair was seen as a sign of rebellion, leading Church leaders to issue a 1969 policy disallowing beards at Church-owned colleges. However, then, as now, students and faculty on these campuses could sport neatly trimmed mustaches. This new policy for temple workers is even stricter than the honor code of Church schools.

GROUP HELPS MEET SOCIAL NEEDS FOR GAY LDS YOUTH

A NEW GROUP has recently been launched to meet the social needs of gay Mormons ages eighteen to thirty. The group, called "Gay LDS Youth," was created in March 2001 by Aaron Cloward, a Salt Lake City returned missionary. The group has a website (www.gaylds-youth.com) and a mailing list of 270 subscribers.

Gay LDS Youth meets weekly for social purposes and upholds LDS standards during the meetings. Attendance at activities averages twenty people. Even though events are attended mostly by young men, the group is open also to lesbian and transgendered youth. Cloward estimates 30 to 40 percent of those who participate are active or semi-active in the Church.

"One of the main points of the Gay LDS Youth group is to be able to have a place where people can go and not get involved with alcohol, tobacco, and things like that," says Cloward. "After we started this group, a lot of my friends were very happy about that. They said, 'It's so nice to meet somebody who is not drunk or high on drugs.'"



Returned missionary Aaron Cloward is providing a Word-of-Wisdom-friendly haven for gay LDS young adults.

DESERT DISSENT

*Some now say the folk in La Verkin
Have turned sotted and sour as a gherkin.
With the stroke of a pen,
They have banned the U.N.
And claim Communist kooks keep on lurkin.'*

THE PROPHESED DAY when the U.S. Constitution will hang by a thread is closer than many Latter-day Saints think. At least that's what many in the small, Mormon-dominated, southwestern Utah town of La Verkin seem to believe. The city council, in taking upon itself the task of preserving American freedoms while hindering "liberal" evildoers, passed a city ordinance this past 4 July making their town a "United Nations-free Zone." The move, a largely symbolic act against the notion of a "one-world government," prohibits the display of U.N. symbols, quartering of the U.N.'s blue-helmeted troops, the drafting of any townfolk into U.N. peacekeeping activities, and any aid from town funds to the U.N.

In a letter signed in late June, the La Verkin City Council wrote, "While the council doesn't believe the United Nations poses a direct threat to La Verkin, the political entity fosters a liberal agenda counter to most of the residents living in this rural community. . . . Primarily Republicans, the majority of residents living in southern Utah embrace conservative values, such as family, property rights and the right to bear arms." In contrast, they declare, "the U.N. supports population control, radical environmentalism including the taking of private property and the disarmament of Americans."

This statement, especially its final two points, illustrates attitudes that prompted the new law. Residents in Southern Utah still feel the effects of President Clinton's unilateral 1996 creation of the 1.9-million acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, and they fear similar "land-grabs" in the future. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reports Jay Willard Lee, mayor of nearby Virgin, Utah, as declaring: "The U.N. wants the Virgin River. The global elite are using the United Nations and organizations that were set up to help the environment to lock up private property. It is time to fight back."

However, not everyone in the area sympathizes with these sentiments. Mayor Phillip Bimstein of Springdale, Utah, is disgusted with the issue. In a *Tribune* article, he calls the affair an "incredible but creepy southern Utah BirchFest," referring to the anti-communist John Birch Society. Eliot Hill, a seven-year resident, says, "All this does is make us look like a bunch of kooks." And as a protest over the new ordinance, two part-time La Verkin police officers have resigned.

But Virgin, too, just as La Verkin, has made national, even international, headline news in its campaign to enforce American freedoms: last year, Virgin's city council passed a law requiring all households to own a gun.

Said Andy Anderson, who moved to the area eight years ago: "The last place I would want to go is someplace that has declared war on the U.N. at the same time they are arming themselves."

In Our Sites...



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAX G. KEARSE

I SAW ANOTHER ANGEL FLY

WORK IS STEADILY progressing on the Nauvoo Temple, which is scheduled to be dedicated in June 2002. On 21 September 2001, crews placed the *vertical* Angel Moroni. (The nineteenth-century Nauvoo Moroni flew horizontally, of course, as a weather vane, with, ahem, compass and square.)

In Memoriam



Charlotte England helps granddaughter Amelia at UVSC tree-planting ceremony. Memorial plaque (inset).

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich presented the first "England lecture." As she began, she noted similarities between "Gene" England and the beautiful tree planted earlier. Both are deeply rooted with branches that always reach upward and outward. And like leaves continually turning toward light and energy, Gene was someone continually drawn to new ideas and a search for new ways to express them.

REACHING TOWARD HEAVEN

IN HONOR OF former professor Eugene England (see pages 5-7), officials at Utah Valley State College have renamed a lecture series that he had started. The series' new name is the "Eugene England Religious Studies Lecture Series: Knowing Ourselves and Each Other," and is a tribute to England's many efforts to promote religious tolerance and understanding of others.

On 3 October 2001, in celebration of the change, UVSC held a tree-planting ceremony attended by about fifty England family members, colleagues, and invited guests. Participants took turns shoveling soil around the base of a London Plane (sycamore), one of England's favorite trees.

Later that evening, Harvard professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian



Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

A “TENANT” OF OUR FAITH

IN AUGUST, CONTROVERSY about LDS views and the treatment of blacks flared in Harlem where the Church plans to build a four-story chapel. Problem: one of the buildings they plan to tear down has one, just-found, tenant—Victor Parker, a 56-year-old, Black handyman.

According to the *New York Times*, Parker has been living in the building alone since 1993 when all the other tenants were evicted for not paying rent. Changes in building ownership over the next few years then caused Parker to lose track of who to pay the \$215 rent to, and no landlord has since asked for it. The Church bought the buildings in February and, believing them to be empty, asked the utility companies to shut off water and power. The power company said it could not shut it off—one tenant was faithfully paying his bill.

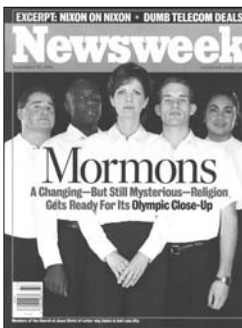
The Church has agreed to do only asbestos removal from the building until Mr. Parker has a new place to live—although with an income of only about \$300 per month, he may have difficulty finding a place he can afford.

This episode is relatively minor, yet some have used it to raise questions about why a “white” church like the Mormons would want to establish such a large presence in Harlem. The *Times* quotes Harlem community board chairman Stanley Gleaton: “Historically, [the LDS Church is] not known to embrace black and Latino populations, so I am surprised they want to come here.”

Further fueling the issue is the fact that Federal programs are allowing inner-city land to be bought at fire sale prices. And whites are buying. Real estate prices are rising and, if they continue, will gradually eliminate low-rent housing for people like Parker.

Mormon Media Image

COVERED



ANTICIPATING INCREASED ATTENTION to the Church with the approach of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Newsweek sent its long-time religion editor Kenneth Woodward to write a cover story for its 10 September 2001 issue. The result is an eight-page examination of LDS theology and history, and a focus on recent Church efforts to alter its public image. Woodward is especially interested in its push to be seen as a “Christian” denomination. This catches his attention, for “Mormons still inhabit a very different religious world. . . . [The Church] has doctrines about God, salvation and the priesthood that differ radically from traditional Christianity.”

Except for one issue, reactions to the article have mostly been neutral or positive. In a letter to Newsweek editors issued the Sunday the story was posted on the Internet, LDS church spokesman Michael Otterson decried Woodward’s implied message that the new emphasis on Jesus Christ is driven primarily by image concerns. “To support his thesis that the Church has a new emphasis on Jesus Christ and is courting public favor, Woodward wonders why the huge new Conference Center and many of our chapels depict Christ rather than Joseph Smith. . . . Could it be for the simple reason

that these are buildings of worship for a church that has borne the name of Jesus Christ since its founding 170 years ago?”

During Woodward’s research visit to Salt Lake City, which included dropping in on a few Salt Lake symposium sessions and interviewing some of the attendees, several of us at Sunstone enjoyed visiting with “Ken.” We were very grateful when, several weeks after the release of the story, he agreed to respond via e-mail to a few of our questions.

When you met with us, you mentioned you were hoping to discover the internal logic of LDS theology. Do you feel you were able to find it and, if so, what are the key features of this logic?

I don’t think it wise for me to go into second thoughts on a published article. That said, I do think there were places where I was able to write at least somewhat from “inside” the faith—or at least the culture. One was by showing the way that the Book of Mormon answered questions many people had on their minds at the time it came forth—an approach I took from Leonard Arrington’s book, *Great Basin Kingdom*. Another was to point out how Joseph Smith appropriated and fleshed out for himself and his followers the twin promises God gave to Abraham of land and progeny, especially how he translated the latter into plural wives. And again, I was able to cite Anne Wilde, a current-day plural wife, to show how this was a cherished belief and practice that was difficult to jettison.

But while I try to report from “inside” the religion I am writing about—this is a tricky business. Every religion makes sense and is

coherent when you get inside it. But first I had to show—rightly or wrongly—how the religion is seen by outsiders and had to indicate what specifically makes Mormonism in this case radically different from traditional Christianity. That in itself may have made some Mormon readers upset since they do not normally see themselves as others see them. This is the reverse of writing in order to better communicate a religion’s own understanding of itself and the world. Obviously with more space, I could have done more of the latter.

You close your article with: “. . . there’ll be reporters wondering what lies behind the church’s many veils. It could be Mormonism’s moment of truth.” In your opinion, how “veiled” is Mormonism in comparison to most other world faiths?

This question reminds me of the Mormon who wrote to me to say that I should have used the word “sacred” instead “secret” when talking about temple rituals. Obviously they are both. All religions have their sacred time and space, but what makes Mormons different

is that outsiders are not allowed to see that space—i.e., the temple during sacred times for Mormons. In that, I think they are unique. It comes to this: a non-Mormon invited to a Mormon wedding in the temple cannot really attend the ceremony (as several non-Mormons mentioned anecdotally to me while I was preparing the story). I venture to guess this has something to do with the Masonic influence on Mormonism. Masons were and are big on secret ceremonies, and in both cases, I think there is a mistaken connection between the sacred and the secret. It all feels very 19th century to me.

In general, Mormons more than most other believers have an inside/outside attitude. They talk one way among themselves, another in public. That's the sort of thing outsiders—especially journalists—are quick to notice. That's why I think it was important for *Newsweek* to explain what Mormons believe and how that belief developed, rather than talk about money and empire and the rest, which others have done too much of already. Had I thought of it, I might have shown the similarity between what Muhammad did for the Arabs—giving them a revealed book and a lineage back to Abraham—and what Joseph Smith did for the religious seekers of his era.

Armand Mauss has written: “If . . . Mormonism [is] the beginning of a new world religion, then sooner or later, the Mormons will have to acknowledge their separateness from the Christian family, rather than merely their distinctiveness in that family.” In your opinion, how well is the current Church message about Mormon Christianity working in walking this delicate line?

Well, the thing is that the people who called or wrote in criticisms want to have it as the Church wants to have it: both ways. They want to be different from, but not “other” than Christian. But which form of traditional Christianity do they want to be different from?

This question raises in my mind a question: How much do Mormons know about traditional Christianity? I do think the Church's official spokespersons spend more time positioning themselves *vis a vis* Protestantism than Catholicism. Maybe because Smith was born into a Protestant America or maybe because he was so insistent that the great “apostasy” began at the beginning of the Catholicizing of early Christianity. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is very much a part of the old Reformation polemics against anything Catholic. On that point, I decided from reading LDS literature that Mormons really are very wrong about the Greek influence and hence the falling away from early Christian teachings. It is of the essence of Hebraic religion that God is wholly other than His creation. So one cannot say that it was Greek thought that made the separation between the two. Had I the space in the article, I would have liked to note that where traditional Christianity says with the Jews that man is made in the image of God, Mormon doctrine says the opposite is also true. I would also have liked to point out how literalistic, pedestrian, how unmoving and unimaginative, many, perhaps most, outsiders find Mormon sacred art.

“Mormons, more than most other believers, have an inside/outside attitude. They talk one way among themselves, another in public. That's the sort of thing outsiders—especially journalists—are quick to notice.”

Through that art one can see how the Mormon imagination buttresses the doctrine that the next life is essentially more of the same.

Had you been given a chance to sit down with President Hinckley for an interview, what would you have done to try to convince him that it was in the Church's best interest for him to speak candidly with you?

I guess I would have said that he could trust me not to misunderstand or misrepresent him in my effort to tell others what Mormons believe and why they believe it.

I believe the Church's PR department tried very hard to get a General Authority to speak to me, but since none of the General Authorities have to agree to such requests, I had to take what I was given. If I could have sat down with one of the apostles or the prophet, however, I would have asked him to answer the theological questions by speaking from his heart as well as his head. Had I been able to interview one or more of them, we might have been able to publish quotes that spoke to both the hearts and heads of readers.

It seems to me that most of the General Authorities are not accustomed to talking to outsiders, much less the press, but it would have been useful for the story and the Church if someone like Elder Dallin A. Oaks had spoken to me and—this is essential—talked about his faith in the candid, personal way that I know he did with his non-Mormon colleagues at the University of Chicago. You cannot communicate at a distance.

Besides the few you have mentioned, what other criticisms of your article have you received from Church spokespersons or members?

Mostly they claim I said the Church was changing its doctrine, when in fact I never said that. They have assumed, I guess, that a shift in emphasis is the same as a change of doctrine. I'd say that if there was one weakness in the article it was the possibility that people could read it as saying the new public emphasis on Jesus Christ was driven primarily by image concerns. I do think this is a real shift in emphasis, but I don't blame the Church PR department person for objecting to how that might be read. Still, as the story indicates, Mormon history reveals many shifts in emphasis. Mormons have a prophet whose job it is to receive new revelations, so why should anyone be so concerned about changes since that is what the office provides for?

I suppose most criticisms go back to the old observation that Mormons cannot decide whether they want to be loved or hated—and when the chips are down, they opt for the latter. (That is a view that is not by any means limited to Mormons; it's inherent in any religion, I think.)



Kenneth Woodward



SUNSTONE SY

SALT LAKE CITY WESTCOA

COMMUNING

1. AWAITING THE START OF A PLENARY SESSION
2. DAN WOTHERSPOON, WAYNE C. BOOTH, AND MARK D. THOMAS CHAT AFTER A SESSION
3. (L-R) HOLLY WELKER, DOE DAUGHTREY, MAXINE HANKS (ON CHAIR), SUZANNE WERNER, JANET KINCAID (WITH PHONE), AND VALERIE ANAYA DECONSTRUCT BETWEEN SESSIONS



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LEARNING

4. D. MICHAEL QUINN SPEAKS ON LDS INFLUENCE ON NATIONAL POLITICS
5. PANEL: "HOW BIG IS THE MORMON TENT?" (L-R) ARMAND MAUSS, JAN SHIPPS, WILLIAM CALL, LEVI PETERSON, ANNE WILDE, MARTIN TANNER, MARK D. THOMAS
6. PANEL: "FUNDAMENTALIST MORMONS IN THE NEWS" (L-R) LINDA GREEN, TOM GREEN, CAROLYN CAMPBELL, OGDEN KRAUT, KIRK TORGENSEN, JOHN LLEWELLYN



4

GOODBYE-ING

7. BOB VERNON AND ELBERT PECK AT THE SYMPOSIUM BANQUET CELEBRATING ELBERT'S FIFTEEN YEARS WITH SUNSTONE
8. ELBERT PECK AND CURT BENCH SHARE A LAUGH
9. ELBERT PECK!



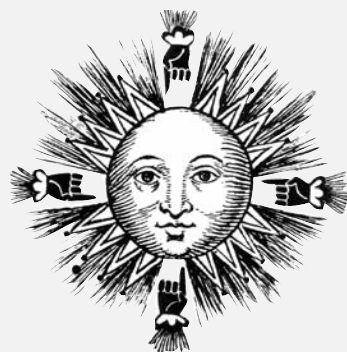
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SYMPOSIUM 2001

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Ed Hula, Rod Decker, Renai Bodley, Brooke Adams, Jerry Johnston
101. **DEVOTIONAL. EMMA SMITH, A PROPHET'S PARTNER**
Jean Parkin
111. **TRANSITIONS: SUNSTONE LOOKS FORWARD**
Sunstone Foundation Board of Trustees
112. **RLDS DEFECTIONS TO THE LDS CHURCH IN THE WAKE OF WOMEN'S ORDINATION, 1985**
William D. Russell
113. **COUNTERING CYNICISM**
Michael E. Nielsen
114. **BLINDING OURSELVES TO WHAT RODIN WOULD SEE**
Robert Christensen
121. **OUR HANDS ARE CLEAN, OUR HEARTS ARE PURE: ARE WE TOO ANAL-RETENTIVE TO CARE FOR THE POOR?**
Elouise M. Bell, Kathryn Shirts
123. **MORMON WOMEN IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**
Lynn Matthews Anderson, Molly Bennion
124. **TELLING STORIES: SPENCER W. KIMBALL AND THE SERVICE STATION GUY**
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125. **THE FOURTEEN ARTICLES OF FAITH**
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131. **A NEW "LOST GENERATION"?: THE FUTURE OF MORMON SCHOLARSHIP**
Panel: Armand L. Mauss, Janet Kincaid, Mary Ellen Robertson, Allen Roberts
132. **CONTEMPORARY MORMON FILMMAKING: DOES JOHNNY LINGO LIVE IN BRIGHAM CITY?**
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151. **EXPORTING UTAH'S THEOCRACY SINCE 1975: MORMON ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND AMERICA'S CULTURE WARS**
D. Michael Quinn (tape re-recorded)
152. Did not record
153. **HOW MANY ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A HIERARCHY?: OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT, LEADERSHIP, AND CULTURE**
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211. **POETRY READING. ELEMENTALS**
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212. **"ONLY YOUR HEARTS KNOW": SUNSTONE DURING THE RECTOR/STEPHENSON/PECK YEARS-PART 2: THE ELBERT PECK YEARS**
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235. **WHAT A LONG, STRANGE TRIP IT'S BEEN: THE SEVENTH EAST PRESS--TWENTY YEARS LATER**
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AN OLIVE LEAF

LOVING, TALKING, HEALING

By Eugene England

Since 1994, most *SUNSTONE* issues have closed with a short passage we call “An Olive Leaf,” Joseph Smith’s term for D&C, section 88, “. . . the Lord’s message of peace to us.” Who among us has been a more eloquent example, through his words and deeds, of a true peacemaker than Eugene England? The following is excerpted from his collection of essays, *Making Peace* (Signature Books, 1995), 16–19.

HOW THEN CAN WE BE HEALERS?

One way is to create and repeat stories, dramas of the imagination, that enable us to imagine new possibilities for ourselves. Levi Peterson, one of our finest Mormon storytellers, does this. Rather than preaching, he tells us stories that dramatize the consequences of believing in a harsh God as opposed to a God of tender mercy. . . .

There are other practical means. We can *all* try to practice, even when others do not, the fundamental counsel of the scriptures for handling differences or perceived offenses: Go to thy brother or sister alone and talk it through, in prayer, in love, with a song, with apologies, with whatever it takes. This means we do not write to higher authority or go to the press with adversarial, escalating responses. We work it out, between each other and in a spirit of mercy. In church circles of all places we should be able to confront each other truthfully and kindly.

But we must be *willing*. Kenneth Godfrey, a fine Mormon historian and Seminaries and Institutes area supervisor in northern Utah, relates that when he was about five he would walk out each night to meet his father, who drove a school bus and had to park it a mile from their home, which was on a small farm. One night, just as Ken ran the last few yards to his father’s arms, a large high school senior came up out of hiding in the weeds near the road and started calling Ken’s father names. He had kicked the young man off the bus that evening for causing trouble, and now he was intent on revenge. He threatened Ken’s father, who first held him down and tried to talk quietly and quell his anger, but then let him up. Suddenly the boy hit him in the face. Ken remembers how terrified he was and then how amazed when his father simply stood and let himself be hit in the face again before the boy turned and ran away. He remembers his dad, with the blood drying on his face, taking him by the hand and walking home. He remem-



bers hearing for a long time the gossip that spread through town about his father’s cowardice, and he remembers feeling ashamed for him. For years, as he passed the house where the boy lived after he married, he felt helpless rage, hoping that some day he could grow large and strong enough to avenge his father, but he never did.

When Ken was a high school senior himself, eating in a cafe with his date after a dance, the man who had hit his father long before came into the cafe drunk. He went to Ken’s booth and sat by him and began to cry. “Your father gave me the worst beating of my life twelve years ago,” he said “and some day, when I am

sober, I am going to be man enough to tell him how sorry I am for what I did and ask him to forgive me.” However, it was Ken’s father, ten years after that, when he was called as a patriarch and felt he could not function in his office until he had completely forgiven and been forgiven, who went to the man who had hit him, asked to be forgiven, and was reconciled. . . .

IN THE FALL of 1990, shortly after attending our stake conference, I received a letter from a BYU faculty member who lives in my stake. He reminded me of the powerful spiritual presence that was in our Saturday evening session and then told of a particular impression that had come to him when he saw me there. He had felt simultaneously scolded and blessed: scolded because he had let his differences from me in doctrinal perception keep him from feeling and expressing the kind of gospel love we ought to have for each other; blessed to feel that love for me right then, along with a desire to express it and put other things in perspective. He reported to me that he first thought, “But Gene believes and teaches doctrines which I think have serious, even dangerous implications for those with tender or unsettled spiritual roots,” and then felt a quick response to that thought: “That is not the issue here. The issue is love. All people have doctrinal misperceptions that will some day need correcting.” He told of pondering that experience again and again and finally deciding to share it with me—“acknowledging my own inadequacies, and seeking to do what is right.” I say, God give us all the courage to be as honest and pure as this dear colleague and thus to make the church a place of healing and peacemaking, not by ignoring differences or errors, but by loving and talking despite them. ☺

THE EUGENE ENGLAND MEMORIAL PERSONAL ESSAY CONTEST

THE SUNSTONE FOUNDATION invites writers to enter the first Personal Essay Contest, made possible by the Eugene and Charlotte England Education Fund. In the spirit of Gene's writings, entries should relate to Latter-day Saint experience, theology, or worldview. Essays, without author identification, will be judged by noted Mormon authors and professors of writing. The winner(s) will be announced in *SUNSTONE* and read at the 2002 AML conference (March 2002); only the winners will be notified of the results. After the contest ends, all non-winning entrants will be free to submit their essays elsewhere.

PRIZES A total of \$400 will be shared among the winning entries

RULES: 1. Up to *three entries* may be submitted by a single author. *Four copies of each entry* must be delivered (or post-marked) to Sunstone by 14 January 2002. Entries will not be returned. A \$5 fee must accompany *each* entry.

2. Each essay must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of white paper and be stapled in the upper left corner. All essays must be 3000 words or less. The author's name should not appear on any page of the essay.

3. Each entry must be accompanied by a cover letter that states the essay's title and the author's name, address, and telephone number. Each cover letter must be signed and attest that the entry is the author's work, that it has not been previously published, that it is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere and will not be submitted to other forums until after the contest, and that, if the entry wins, *SUNSTONE* magazine has one-time, first-publication rights.



“MAKING PEACE,
CONTINUING
DIALOGUE”

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Loving ourselves and others is learned in a long apprenticeship of reciprocal actions, much as an intricate dance requires both the separate and combined learning of each limb, each body, and each partner in an every increasingly complex duet.