CHANGED FACES:
THE OFFICIAL LDS POSITION ON POLYGAMY
1890-1990

MARTHA S. BRADLEY
SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM XII
22 - 25 August 1990, University Park Hotel, Salt Lake City

CALL FOR PAPERS

THE SUNSTONE FOUNDATION announces the twelfth annual Salt Lake Symposium. Proposals are now being accepted for papers, panels and other sessions. The final selection of program participants will depend on the quality of research, thought, and expression in the finished product.

DEADLINE
Proposals: 1 May 1990

TOPICS

PROPOSALS should deal with a topic which has some general relevance to Mormonism or other related religious issues. Topics may include the following areas, but are not limited to them:

- HISTORY OF RELIGION
- COMPARATIVE STUDIES
- ETHICS
- PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION
- DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS
- RELIGION AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
- THE SOCIAL GOSPEL
- CHRISTIAN LIVING
- MORMON ARTS
- WOMEN'S STUDIES
- MORMON HUMOR
- CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
- SCIENCE AND RELIGION
- ORGANIZATION STUDIES

PROPOSALS

PROPOSALS for individual papers, or complete sessions of papers or a panel discussion, must be no more than two pages and must include:

1. Title or topic with a one-paragraph description of the content of the presentation.
2. Research methods, sources, significance of the study.
3. Biographical paragraph or one-page vita of participant(s).

If possible, a complete paper or preliminary draft should be attached to the proposal.

PAPERS

FINAL PAPERS must be submitted in advance to allow the commentor to have time to develop his or her response. Papers, with a one-paragraph abstract and a vita, must be submitted in duplicate and be between 15-20 double-spaced typewritten pages, capable of being read comfortably in about thirty minutes.

Sunstone appreciates the right to publish at some time in the future all papers presented at the symposium (unless otherwise agreed in advance).

PURPOSE

THIS SYMPOSIUM is dedicated to the idea that the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ are better understood and, as a consequence, better lived when they are freely and frankly explored within the society of the Saints. We recognize that the search for things that are, have been, and are to be, is a sifting process in which much chaff will have to be inspected and threshed before wheat can be harvested. In sponsoring this symposium we welcome the honest ponderings of Latter-day Saints and their friends and expect that everyone will approach all issues, no matter how difficult, with intelligence and good will.

Send all proposals and other symposium related matters, including names of individuals to be added to the symposium mailing list to:

Lynne Kanavel Whitesides
Sunstone Foundation
331 South Rio Grande Street, Suite 30
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101-1136
801/355-5926
NO LIGHTMINDEDNESS . . .

I WAS BOthered by the tone of your humor column, "Boobs for the 1989 Christmas Season" (Sunstone 13:5). Satire is a difficult and subtle art, the more so when the subject is religious. The use of scripture in satire is particularly perilous. I, for one, do not like to see scriptures which have a deep sacred import used in frivolous or humorous ways. Thus, I do not think it is ever appropriate to turn "We speak of Christ, we rejoice in Christ" (II Nephi 25:26) or "I am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10) into jokes. I also think that jokes about general authorities are difficult to pull off. There are good jokes about general authorities that most people, including general authorities themselves, enjoy, but I was bothered by several of your satirical titles. President Hinckley may have had to incorporate by Mark Hofmann, but then so was almost everyone else and I think your attempt at humor at President Hinckley's expense misses the mark. The same could be said for your titles "Latter-day Prophets Sleep" and "Why the Prophet is as True as the Church.

Jonathan Swift, perhaps the greatest English satirist, in speaking about himself, said:

"Yet malice never was his aim; he lash'd the vice but spar'd the name. No individual could resent, his satire points at no defect; but what all mortals may correct, for he abhor'd that senseless tribe who call it humor when they gibc. ("Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift")

I value Sunstone and appreciate the thought, imagination, and labor that go into it. I want its pages to be taken seriously, even those that contain humor. I don't want you as editors to make it easy for people to dismiss Sunstone or to think of you as anti-Church (or pro-Church either, for that matter). Keeping the balance and finding the right tone is always a challenge.

Robert A. Rees
Los Angeles, CA

WHERE IS ZION?
A MIDWEST VIEW

I HAVE ACCESS to a few acres of undeveloped land in the Missouri Ozarks. The time is right to start a rural, living/learning center with a Mormon focus on human ecology and the understanding of what Zion means. The specifics of such a center has yet to be drafted by those participating in its creation. Some of the guidelines could be:

1. What does the concept of "Zion" mean in a political, psychological, and sociological sense?
2. What is a Zion society like? How is it organized? How does it function?
3. How do I live a Zion lifestyle in today's world? A lot of academic work needs to be done. Have people in the past, present, and future tried to create a Zion Society? What was their experience? Can we learn from them?
4. Can we relate the concepts of voluntary simplicity to building a Zion Society? How about self-reliant lifestyles? Can we use the results of current research like at BYU's Benzon Institute to create low technology, simple, ecologic lifestyles?
5. What is a theological basis for a Zion society?

These are a few of the possible study themes at such a center. I arranged for the land. I cannot do more. I seek assistance in this project. Inquiries sent to the address below will be handled in strict confidence.

Robert R. Hubble
861 Featherstone Pl
Red Wing, MN

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Reading David Knowlton's thoughtful article, "Missionaries and Terror: The Assassination of Two Elders in Bolivia" (Sunstone 13:4), I was struck by the analogy between modern persecution of the Church in Latin America and similar persecution in the American South, from the Missouri era of the Church through the 1930s. In both cases, indigenous people apparently felt so threatened by what they perceived to be "Yankee" inroads into their society that many felt justified in acting out murderous brutality.
against innocent victims, including LDS missionaries and Church members. Unfortunately, I believe this analogy extends to the facts that at least part of the reason that Mormons were and are targeted for attack is that this persecution has been supported or condoned by advocates of competing churches. About two years ago, I read a wire service interview with a U.S. citizen and protestant minister who was a bureaucrat in Daniel Ortega's Sandinista government in Nicaragua. He proudly described the actions of the Nicaraguan communists in forcibly closing down Mormon and Jehovah's Witness congregations and appropriating their buildings. He felt that such “non-Christian” sects were receiving their just desserts. Such blatant religious discrimination has not harmed Ortega's administration in the eyes of many protestant congregations who enthusiastically send money to support that regime.

Anti-Mormon terrorism in both the American South and South America has existed in cultures where “mobocracy” and “vigilante” violence had been widely accepted as a legitimate expression of popular will. White American southerners were reacting against an “oppressive” legal regime, first threatened by pre-war abolitionists and eventually imposed on the South by a conquering “Yankee” army which overthrew the traditional ante-bellum relationship between whites and blacks. Their rationale for the murder of Mormons was given its clearest expression by Thomas Sharp in defending the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith:

There is an uncontrollable impulse in the human bosom, which prompted every man to prefer his own safety and property before the law of the land... True he violates the law of the land by so doing; but nature teaches every one that he commits no crime by preferring his own safety to its provisions. (Quoted in Dallin Oaks and Marvin Hill's Carthage Conspiracy, 210.)

It is worthwhile to obtain insight into the reasoning of our persecutors. However, I sincerely doubt that anything we can do, short of denouncing the fundamental doctrines and organization of the Church, will ever satisfy those who justify murder in the cause of advancing their version of society. I fear that we will only look devious if we enter into a one-sided negotiation with the assassins, attempting to assuage their paranoid antipathy toward us through “lowering our profile” in Latin America.

RAYMOND TAKASHI SWENSON
Concord, CA

LOVE AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In Richard Max Andrews' letter (Sunstone 13:4) he chose freedom of speech as the first and great weapon of choice for clubbing Scott Card's view of the Rushdie affair. Khomeini chose Rushdie's freedom of speech as the first and great weapon of choice for eradicating the moderates in Iran, who with far greater courage than Rushdie and as poor a sense of timing, criticized the excesses and mistakes of the Iran-Iraqi war. If either the moderates or Rushdie had had the sense to wait for Khomeini to die before publishing, all the trouble, death, and repression could have been avoided. Treating the Rushdie affair without discussing the political context of Khomeini's action, as both Card and Andrews do, distorts the meaning of the episode.
PREJUDICE IN THE CHURCH

As a non-Mormon, I read with interest the article by Kate L. Kirkham entitled "Can Whites 'Do' Integration?" (Sunstone 13:3). Prejudice unfortunately exists everywhere. I'm glad to see the LDS community addressing it in a serious manner.

Unfortunately, Kirkham did not specifically address racism within the Mormon church. In 1989 the doctrines that were publicly preached before the so-called 'priesthood revelation' have been forgotten by many. However, in announcing that the priesthood and its attendant blessings would be available to all worthy male members without regard to race the general authorities said nothing about the doctrines behind the original ban.

Although thes doctrines were never officially sustained by an assembled general conference, they were declared with apparent authority by recognized Mormon theologians. President Brigham Young, President Joseph Fielding Smith, and Elder Bruce R. McConkie are three of the propounders of black inferiority.

Attitudes of a lifetime are not changed overnight. After being told for years that blacks are black because they were "less valiant" in the pre-existence, can Mormons suddenly cast aside the attitudes engendered by such teaching? After hearing for years that the color of one's skin is lighter or darker as a direct result of one's worthiness and spiritual advancement in the pre-existence, can Mormons suddenly switch their thinking to a method of personal assessment based on character rather than color?

First, the Church needs to state its position on the question of why blacks (and other dark-skinned people) have the color they do.

Second, and this is applicable to Saints and gentiles alike, the heart of the bigot must be changed. Anti-discrimination laws are good but they do not and cannot address the inward prejudice that leads to outward acts of discrimination. The heart of man must be changed, renewed. Jesus called it the new birth, Paul called it being made a new creature, Alma the Younger called it receiving the image of God in one's countenance. By whatever name, this change must occur before the bigot will abandon his prejudice.

I sincerely hope that more and more Mormons will tackle the issue of prejudice. Until such things happen, however, we need people like Kate Kirkham to continue speaking out.

Robert McKay
Marlow, OK
SEPARATE BUT EQUAL?

I SEE MANY articles in SUNSTONE that seem intended to appease feminist-leaning individuals who would attempt to give women the male advantage. Have these women and some men not come to realize that women also have advantages that must be considered in the equation? Women have distinct and definite advantages in sexual and familial things that men can never obtain. And yes, men have the economic and authoritarian advantage. Underlying all of the rhetoric I sense an understanding of the part of all that men are and will remain in charge of human activity on this earth and if pushed too far will re-emphasize that control with whatever force is necessary. Women should be grateful for that control and most undoubtedly are grateful.

Desires on the part of either sex to assume the advantages of the other are motivated by selfishness and can only bring frustration, division, and unhappiness. There is an obvious lack of understanding on the part of feminists of what women must give up to gain their demands.

Men and women are simply equal and yet how grateful we should be for the comforting differences. The happiest people are those who have graciously and humbly given to others their positions of advantage while trying not to flaunt their own advantage.

HAL PIERCE
Norman, OK

THE VEIL

Sheared away from the thinning cloud in my hand.
They fall to my lap like ragged fragments of snow—
Holy marks of creation and redemption sewn
Into the fabric of the veil I've borne upon my body.

The veil is a raiment adorned with cardinal points and lines,
A firmament incised with celestial lights
The weave scarred by the sacred arithmetic of bearings
Hand-stitched by God when he drove our parents from the garden
To shelter and to cover their glory and their sorrow,
And to bring them home.

I received this garment whole, white without blemish,
An unmarked page waiting for the imprint of a tale.
Tarnished now, unravelling, darned at the crotch, worn smooth,
The years of wandering, worship and work
Have burnished in this vestment a recitation,
A chronicle in stains and stitches
An off-white text in limpid cloth:

Sweat stained by gestures of labor and loving
Ink stained by the traces of errant scribbling
Ragged welts of thread, mends in the rent fabric
Of this holy, earthly veil,
A priestly mantle a winding shroud.

The weave of revelation
Concealing
Like the veils of Moses and Muhammed;
Revealing,
Not only in marks of orientation,
But shed eternally for the glory of conjoined intimacy.

The earthly texts gather around
The primordial, sacred embroidery of signs
Until the gossamer threads of the whole cloth
Can no longer carry the burden, the blessing
Of our tales and the signs that bid them on.

So the marks drop from the diaphanous firmament
Like old stars,
And now the veil is a rag—
Holey, wholly, holy.

We then take up another garment
Whole, without blemish,
An unmarked page expectant . . .

We dare even dream
To take the worn and hallowed threads
Of our many veils
And stitch a mantle

For the naked shoulders of our mother earth
And with her ascend
The ladder of the firmaments.

—STEVEN EPPERSON
MANY MEN LIVE in cages—however gilded—at great costs to themselves and others. While women have grown in their awareness and asserted their freedom to leave restrictive sex roles, many men have lagged behind. This is illustrated by statements I heard recently from two friends. The first was a woman who spent twenty minutes criticizing her successful but unemotional husband. Then later she shared with me the object of her fantasy male—Sylvester Stallone as Rambo. The second was a depressed male in his thirties who, expressing his pain in appropriately masculine guarded terms (which meant he said very little), suddenly confessed: “I didn’t know males had issues.”

The first example shows the paradox for men trying to balance success, control, and societal images of manhood, which they are pushed toward with the personal tug of human needs in which they receive little training. The second illustrates the pervasive lack of awareness regarding the stifling nature of the harness men wear, as well as the lack of attention paid by both men and society to men’s emotional lives. Women are made sex objects, men success objects. This game of role definition has hurtful consequences, and men as well as women are losers.

Awareness is the first step in dealing with this problem. What do we as men, after all, have to lose? We tend to be repressed emotionally, terrorized by fear of failure, isolated from intimate relationships, and afraid to ask for help. When something goes wrong, we discover that we are shadows to ourselves and others. We hide behind facades as we spend a lifetime playing out the roles of manhood. What makes the future seem fearful, too, is that society reaffirms our self-definitions of maleness, and we fear losing our manhood. What is at stake, of course, is not our biological manhood but our socially constructed notion of masculinity. We confuse maleness with masculinity. It is possible to free ourselves, to condemn some negative masculine qualities while celebrating the positive qualities, and to realize that they are indeed within the range of possibility.

Men have been taught to conform to certain images of masculine behavior in order to be loved, to gain salvation, to be successful, or to be sexually appealing. As long as we only play our roles instead of pursuing our collective and personal journeys, we never fully know ourselves, feel loved for ourselves, truly connect with others, or know the freedom and growth that comes from exploring our possibilities.

What does it mean to be a man? The definitions vary and can be amazingly at odds with each other. My drill sergeant once told me that men were killers to keep the peace. In my first priesthood interview, I was told that men were carnal and lustful and, by the way, had I done anything carnal and lustful? Despite these ambiguous role definitions, society does convey some constant rules. Psychologist Robert Brauman has classified four:

1. No sissy stuff. This means no behavior appearing even vaguely feminine. Skip the feelings and human connections that women feel. Never mind that in doing so you suppress a wide range of human needs and restrict your identity as a human being. Indeed, society seems to tolerate masculinity in females more than it tolerates femininity in males. Little girls can be tomboys, but being a tomgirl is suspect in males. Women can wear pants, men can’t wear dresses. A woman smoking a Marlboro can be sexy, but a man smoking Virginia Slims isn’t. I’ve seen numerous male patients who have either destroyed themselves or others by their need to become a man.

2. Be a big wheel. You must succeed and gain status which is given by society to those who earn big, win big, hold position, or show physical prowess. Male identity is tied to performance. Several years ago, I met an old girlfriend at a wedding. At a convenient time she came over to me and told me her husband was a bishop, a president of something, and they lived in a particular neighborhood which, I surmised, required a big house. A part of me wanted to respond by saying that I had been kicked out of the Church, that I was unemployed and supported by my Relief Society president wife. But still another part of me wanted to reassure her that I, too, was a success.

3. Be a Sturdy Oak. Exude a manly air of toughness, self-reliance, and confidence. Be a person people rely on. Suppress feelings that all humans have such as dependency, helplessness, and spontaneity. Be powerful and strong. Be superhero. Of course, all of these postures have their flip side.

4. Give ’em hell. Have an aura of aggression and daring. Be a man of action. Masculinity must be tested and proved in all arenas including society, nature, and sports. Win and be wild. This seems to be a combination of the American cowboy myth and the assumption that men are inherently evil. From pirates to cowboys to Clint Eastwood, the popular media relentlessly shows us our male role models. We even lament our modern situation and wish to bring back these heros. An early Boy Scout manual states:

FROM A TRUSTEE

MALES, MORMONS, AND MYTHS: ISSUES MEN FACE

By Glen Lambert

GLEN LAMBERT, a member of the Sunstone Foundation board of trustees, has a private practice in psychotherapy, is an assistant clinical professor at the University of Utah, and is the executive director of Odyssey House, which provides treatment programs for substance abuse adolescents.
"The wilderness is gone, the Buckskin man is gone, the painted Indian has hit the trail over the Great Divide, the hardship and privations of pioneer life which did so much to develop sterling manhood are now but a legend in history, and we must depend upon the Boy Scout movement to produce men of the future."

The darker side of this issue is the underlying belief that men are constitutionally weak and bad. This belief both excuses men for misbehavior and denies their ability for transcendence and love. In some ways a seminary teacher of mine used this assumption when he told us the "real" reason for polygamy. He said that men were much more evil than women and that women were naturally more righteous and loving. Therefore, many more women than men would make the Celestial Kingdom. Sexism works both ways. This theme is also alluded to in Allen Bloom's *The Closing of The American Mind* in a way I find offensive to both men and women. He states that it is "indeed possible to soften men" but "to make them care is another thing and a project that must inevitably fail." Bloom further argues that an older wisdom encouraged a man to regard his family as property so that he could care for the former as he would instinctively care for the latter. Since that view has changed, the problem now comes when women and children, who no longer are considered property, desire the same care and concern as before. Bloom then argues that weak, dependent, and vulnerable females help make men be responsible. This suggestion lies at the very heart of destructive sexism. Women and children are not property, nor should women have to beguile and manipulate men to overcome their nature in order get support. This approach carries the insidious message that men are incapable of love, responsibility, growth, or equality: that they need to be forced or tricked into it. I resist and resent that belief. This soothe-the-wild-beast mentality holds everyone hostage. Tragically, it works as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Granted, much of today's male socialization works against it, but by their own initiative men can be caring and responsible and transcend their own problems.

These four rules of manhood are taught and reinforced constantly by our society, our families and friends, and even by our religious culture. Indeed, Mormon cultural socialization for men is powerful and includes segregated priesthood, Scouts, and sports. While many of the results are positive, we rarely look at the less favorable consequences. Since spirituality is about growth, it behooves us to examine these issues. I am particularly concerned about several recurring issues of male socialization patterns that I feel create difficulties. I have repeatedly seen this conditioning among my patients, in myself, and in others, too.

First, males are expected to be aggressive, violent, and by extension the ones who kill or get killed by others in the name of country, justice, and manhood. Indeed, men have been rewarded for this. Society and mythology honor the best killers. We look to men to protect, to win honor, to conquer, and to be our warriors. We fail to recognize the politics of power inherent in the flip side: rage, hatred, and violence against others and one's self. Societies have institutionalized violence as a way of solving conflict, forcing ideology, and shaping men to do their bidding. Indeed, men killing other men for some cause is more acceptable than men loving other men. This conditioning around violence has cost us all.

Second, males are expected to be providers at all times and are rated on how well they do. This creates a condition in which one's self-concept is built on one's performance in relation to others. This can be illustrated by a conversation I had with my sister-in-law concerning my wife working. She asked me if I wouldn't feel terrible if she out-earned me. I answered that that would be great. She sternly responded that women could work for many reasons, but that the most important role any man has is to work hard enough to earn enough money so that his wife and children could enjoy life. I reacted by wondering aloud what if I wanted to be a good father first. The response was that earning comes first.

This stress on performance sets up status based on economics and position, thus breeding competition, workaholism, isolation, and images of failure. It colors everything. Women are discriminated against economically, but men are discriminated against emotionally. Performance outweighs any reinforcement for being a good mate, father, or friend. External rewards take precedence over the more intrinsic and personal rewards of learning and communication. Men are taught to win, and we often join the modern polygamy of being married to wife, job, church, and community. If men could give up the need and the societal pressure to be "better than," they could stop feeling that they have to prove themselves, and they could take time just to be.

Third, men's capacity to feel and know their emotional lives is systematically degraded and filtered. As stated earlier, masculinity requires suppression of a whole range of human feelings. Two of the Ten Commandments of masculinity are: "Thou shalt not cry or expose feelings of emotions such as fear or weakness before thy neighbor" and "Thou shalt not be vulnerable, but honor and respect the logical, practical, and intellectual." The internal lives of men are not socially reinforced, resulting in men being out of touch with themselves. This creates a bind: men are criticized for being distant, but emotional men are seen as unstable. Feeling hurt is a good example. Male ability to recognize and show hurt and, therefore, allow a healing process is devalued. Male and female infants cry equally when hurt but soon little boys are taught that "to be a man" they should not cry or seek as much nurturance as the girls. Women build supporting networks, allow emotion, give and receive support, accept and feel hurt. Men rigidly and quietly conceal hurt. They have not been given socially approved ways of grieving since they are to be strong. That is why so many men act out their hurt in destructive ways such as drinking, withdrawal, and sometimes violence.

Fourth, male ability in relationships often is not developed or encouraged. Men need intimacy as much as women, but often go around half-starved and don't understand what they are missing. Emotional communication is not modeled or taught and self-examination is feared. Required productive behavior stressing aggressiveness and competition might be great for performing and winning but are enormous barriers to developing and enriching intimate relationships. Love is replaced by the drive to accomplish and relationships, therefore, become relationships of power with others being potential competitors, allies, enemies, and humiliators. The rules of male friendships are rigidly and tightly controlled out of the need to preserve the rules of masculinity and the fear of male intimacy. Sadly, this lack of modeling often begins early when boys experience a loving and concerned mother and an absent and less emotional father. "Just wait till your father gets home" is a common tradition that sets the father up to be disciplinarian and judge rather than friend and support system. This continues as the adolescent male gets his priesthood interviews often consisting of a series of questions surrounding his worthiness or lack of it. One clear example of this deficit is society's lack of reinforcement for the role of fatherhood. This role
needs to be valued more. The first Father’s Day program at church I ever experienced was one I put on in my elder’s quorum a couple of years ago to some tear-y-eyed fathers complete with children’s presentations and cookies. We prepare men for jobs, not fatherhood. They are honored for worldly performance, not fatherhood. They are likewise hindered in the relationship with their spouses by a lack of emotional language and by a system that creates inequality. All people, including men, need love, friendship, and the modeling and permission to obtain them.

These issues cut two ways and both males and females are often hurt as a result of them. Recently, women have been more willing to look at their cultural confines, now men need to join the process. Both the traditional masculine and feminine qualities have much in them to honor and celebrate as well as much to discard. Why should half of each of us be cut off from the other positive half in order to be accepted in our societal role? Recently a male patient of mine was going on about his pain and self-loathing from his perceived inability to live up to the American Mormon male role expectations. I asked him to describe instead his humanness and what qualities that entailed. His demeanor changed to one of peace and acceptance as he described his own humanity which he treasured. I thought how many of us perceive the fact of our humanness—our inherent strengths and weaknesses—as freeing and caring, yet when we consider our gender roles we often feel disappointment, anger, conflict, and confinement. Surprisingly, the concept of humanness doesn’t seem to carry the same confining baggage as gender roles. Maybe we should expend more energy in discovering and developing our humanity rather than fighting to reach our flawed conceptions of maleness and femaleness.

In Lisa Campbell Ernst’s children’s book Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt a man discovers a beautiful design. He asks some women if he can join their quilting group to develop his new found interest. They turn him down because men aren’t supposed to quilt. Hurt, he goes to the men and appeals to their competitiveness and they form their own quilting group to compete with the women at the fair. Both groups work secretly and exclusively. Then, as fate would have it, the two groups literally run into each other in a mad rush to get to the fair. Both quilts blow into the mud and become soiled. After protestations, they work together combining the unsoiled parts of both quilts. They later win the blue ribbon because the combined quilt was the most beautiful one of all. Maybe in real life we can also pool our efforts, allow for new possibilities, challenge limitations, accept potentials, and honestly question and grow. Then maybe, too, both our individual and collective life quilts will become more beautiful. 🌟

FOR MY DEAD

It’s nights below the faceless, circling moon circling a necessity so driven it becomes me to listen in the salty light, when memories become golden quince, semblance of order, the moon’s face as fingerprint of God.

And if he drinks, she’s in the orchard picking apples as if they were fists, she’s in church—o smooth hell rolling its way from the pulpit—but she understands damnation as a patience of the earth, of the birds that lift incessant from the flooded grey fields, over black earth falling into night.

—ELLEN KARTCHNER

DANCING IN THE FINITE SUN

The mountains are the motion of a soul and in the purple mountains an imprint of the sea—someone is keeping time—canyon walls as seamless, white-weave sheets and on them, the gloss of bodies, warp worn to a shine.

When their surface is soul, all soul lives pass me through as the pueblos evolved, room from room from golden-lunged rooms of light. Distance poisons us to slow motion, and how many cars, how much motion to solve this problem, how much motion to move through our tourist bodies, planes overhead in the now-freighted skies.

—ELLEN KARTCHNER
The following essay shares the painful journey of an LDS father who struggles with the theological implications of his son's homosexuality and subsequent death from AIDS. While most of our readers do not agree with his revised theology, all can empathize with his struggle. We present this essay only to enhance understanding of a growing challenge for the Church.

**HOMOSEXUALITY, MORMON DOCTRINE, AND CHRISTIANITY: A FATHER'S PERSPECTIVE**

By H. Wayne Schow

The following essay shares the painful journey of an LDS father who struggles with the theological implications of his son's homosexuality and subsequent death from AIDS. While most of our readers do not agree with his revised theology, all can empathize with his struggle. We present this essay only to enhance understanding of a growing challenge for the Church.

**MINE IS A Latter-day Saint family whose Church roots go back for generations. I served a mission to Denmark, my wife and I were married in the Logan Temple, and we raised four sons in the Church, participating in its programs and trying diligently as parents to create a vision and an example of the Christian life. Our boys were obedient and faithful to Church standards as they grew up; they were good students, good citizens. As young men, three of them carried the gospel message into the mission field. As a family we have enjoyed positive fellowship with our LDS brothers and sisters in various wards and stakes.

Ten years ago, when he was twenty, our eldest son Brad came to his mother and me and told us he was homosexual. We were caught by surprise, for neither his appearance nor behavior would have suggested this sexual orientation: he was a muscular, sturdy youth, not effeminate, and his social life had seemed normal enough. His friends included boys and girls equally, he spent many hours in mixed company and dated girls after he turned sixteen, though not frequently. The only unusual trait we had noted was a more pronounced interest in serious music, art, and literature than characterized others in his peer group. There was, however, one sign that something was wrong (easier to recognize after the fact): he had experienced periods of depression, which concerned us at the time but which we attributed to the general difficulties of adolescence.

We responded to his declaration with incredulity and predictable dismay (I had always had visceral negative feelings about homosexual people). Surely he was mistaken: since he had had no actual homosexual encounters, he couldn't be sure. We counseled him not to act on his "supposed" feelings, to date young women seriously, to wait and see. Possibly, we conceded, he could be bisexual and might still opt for a wife, a family, and a life acceptable to Church and society, a life less problematic and more fulfilling. "Choose otherwise," we urged him.

We accepted the Church's view that homosexuality is an acquired behavior, a perverse—or at best, mistaken—choice of lifestyle. Our decent, loving son had not been reared for such a course.

Nevertheless he was convinced that the orientation of his sexual feelings was not voluntary, and he produced a folder full of articles whose authors, some of them homosexual, some of them Latter-day Saints, concurred with him. (These were the first of many books and articles we would sift through, trying to make sense of the chaos of theories about sexual orientation.) Theories aside, we had to confront the reality of Brad's unequivocal sexual feelings for males, feelings he had known since his early years in grade school and which had become clearer in adolescence.

In retrospect, we realize that Brad's periods of depression reflected the identity crisis he was experiencing. He told us he had prayed fervently over a long period that God would help him to reorient his sexual feelings, and in return he promised God extraordinary devotion. (His personal journals from this period reveal a religious youth caught up in seminary instruction, who concluded from all the implicit messages of home, church, and society, that he was flawed and sinful—cursed, as it seemed to him—in spite of his wish to be otherwise.) Our immediate sorrow was all the greater because we realized how deeply he had suffered alone, while we, unaware, had done nothing to help him.

Following Brad's declaration, we understood why he had finally decided not to fill a Church mission. Though he had not engaged in homosexual relations and was presumably worthy to serve, he could not square his troubled self-image with his understanding of what a missionary should be. He knew he could only represent the Church by denying the legitimacy of his inner self, which seemed to him to be unfair both to the Church, because it was hypocritical, and to himself, because it violated his very identity. There had been much personal integrity evidenced in that decision.

Meanwhile, his mother and I wrestled with demons of our own. What had we done wrong? Was she dominating or overly protective? No. Had I overpowered him, had I been distant, absent, had he and I failed to relate well to each other? No, no, no. Had he been Oedipally attracted to his mother? No. Did real love exist in our family? Yes. Had we shared quality time together? Yes. Had his parents' marriage been a good one? Better than average. Ultimately, we concluded that Brad's homosexuality was not a result of failed parenting or inadequate family relationships.

After finishing his sophomore year at college, Brad returned from Salt Lake City and discussed his situation with us. He had made contact with the gay "underground," and was planning to move with a close friend to Los Angeles. Moreover, he had virtually dropped out of the Church. Since gay people could not live openly in Idaho and Utah, he had to go where he could feel his essential identity was acceptable.

These decisions were deeply upsetting to his mother and me. We feared the dangers of that city; we knew that the ballast he needed for stability was now lessened considerably. But from my present vantage point, I see it was a risk he had to take: for the sake of his own self-esteem he had to discover and test the truth of his unique identity. He had emerged from his teen years with his self-worth severely undermined. Our culture had encouraged him to hate himself, and the
Church's attitude toward homosexuality had contributed substantially to that despair. When Brad left for California, we were concerned about what we could do to help him. Clearly, he had to establish his independence and we had to allow him to determine his own course. We tried not to be intrusive while keeping our lines of communication open—we did not want to jeopardize the good relationship we had always had with him.

In Los Angeles Brad had to rely on his own resources, earning a living, making his own decisions. Inevitably the values of his Idaho upbringing clashed with the aesthetic hedonism of West Hollywood. He wanted the best of both lives, but could not reconcile them. To us he raised his new world, yet it seemed he protested too much. His relationship with a lover came to an end. After two years, he began to sense the desperation that lay beneath the frenzied life he was participating in. After the third year he saw how self-destructive many of his gay friends were. Their was the behavior of people who do not accept themselves because society does not, who have little joy or hope in contemplating the future.

It was not easy to leave an accepting community, but Brad knew he needed to orient himself in a more positive direction. He felt a need to escape the isolation of the gay ghetto and renew contact with the mainstream. He realized he must pursue an education for a meaningful career. But where to go? A return to Idaho or Utah would renew his earlier experience of cultural alienation and revive the tension between himself and the Latter-day Saints. On the other hand, he felt that his deeply-loved mountain environment and nearness to his family might steady him. His decision to enroll in a nationally recognized program at a university in Utah was a calculated risk: would he be saved by the moral influence of his cultural roots, or would he succumb in a closed environment?

Brad returned and for two years pursued this experiment in personal growth and professional education. On the positive side, he left behind the promiscuity that had become part of his life in Los Angeles, and he was advancing toward a career. On the other hand, he felt terribly isolated in that Utah community, angry at the smugly religious people surrounding him, concerned lest his homosexual identity be discovered, fearful of the price if it were.

At this stage Brad contemplated the future with great ambivalence. There were so many things in life he loved—the beauty of the natural world, great achievements in human arts and culture. Yet those deep pleasures were undermined by the ever present awareness of being an outsider, permanently cut off from what his religion had taught him to desire. The family and children he had always wanted were inaccessible, for he now felt he could never in good conscience ask a woman to marry him. With reduced possibilities before him, he sometimes wondered if clinging to life was really worth the effort. Nevertheless, he was coping; he had separated himself from the extremes of nihilism and self-destructive behavior.

WHAT happened next seems a cruel irony. When he came home in the summer of 1985 to help build our new family home, he was clearly not well. Apparently incubating in his blood since his time in Los Angeles, the AIDS virus had now begun its deadly work. His homecoming would last for the remainder of his life. His condition worsened over the summer and fall; in November he nearly died from pneumocystis pneumonia. A brief period of remission, during which he gamely attempted to continue studying part time at our local university, was followed by inexorable decline. He died 5 December 1986.

AIDS is a devastating antagonist. It dismantles a person ounce by ounce, nerve by nerve. Brad fought this horrible disease courageously, with the independent, self-reliant spirit he always had, and he never attempted to evade responsibility for what was happening to him. At the same time he sought some deeper religious significance in his physical and spiritual suffering (as we did). To the end of his life he struggled to find a faith that could comfort him—the last stage in his spiritual odyssey. After rejecting fellowship in the LDS church, believing it had left him, Brad looked at oriental religions, born-again Christianity, and pantheism. But he could not accept easy explanations that were incompatible with reality as he perceived it. We will never forget our conversations with him during that last year, conversations in which we shared our convictions and our uncertainties.

The final year of Brad's life was the most difficult our family has known, a year of perplexity and grieving. Paradoxically, it was also the most profoundly meaningful year of our lives. Sharing his ordeal enlarged our awareness of the human condition. We learned so much from the way he faced his illness and his life. We are grateful to him; we are proud of him. He was such a fine young man. At this point we can say we feel blessed to have had a son who was homosexual.

I have lingered over these narrative details partly because they are engraved so indelibly in my mind, but also to make a point: the meaning and morality of homosexuality cannot be assessed in the abstract. It involves more than theology. It requires that we confront real people, their uniqueness, their fundamental integrity, their hopes and dreams; it requires that in the process we accept, not distort, their unique reality. An encounter with homosexuality jars us out of our complacency because we find that conventional explanations don't adequately account for what is really happening to people.

I suppose many of our LDS friends, in extending their sympathies, have grieved for us, thinking we have lost a son for eternity; they see Brad as disobedient to God's law and thereby cut off from any celestial reward. But to us who knew Brad well, who knew the intensity of his quest and the honesty of his response, that conclusion is unthinkable. We find his life to have been lived well; it was a life of great value for us and others. We conclude that it must have value also in God's eyes, and that the possibility for a renewal of progress now lies open before him.

The unavoidable challenge that we faced during the past ten years has been to understand our son (and others like him) and evaluate his life experience fairly—all in the context of our religious philosophy. This has been difficult, indeed, for our acceptance of LDS moral authority on the one hand and our loyalty to our son and respect for his integrity on the other seemed irreconcilable.

As we understood it, the LDS church's position in regard to homosexuality was (and is) as follows: 1) The practice of homosexuality is held to be unnatural because it is biologically unfruitful; 2) Only within heterosexual marriage may sexual desires be expressed with full intimacy; 3) Homosexual inclination must be suppressed, either through celibacy or through reorientation of sexual feelings within heterosexual marriage; 4) Suppression or reorientation is possible because homosexual inclination and practice are learned behaviors and lie within the control of personal choice; 5) Indulgence in homosexual acts is a grave sin, punished by excommunication. This position has been reiterated by modern prophets. Confronted with these teachings, how were we to account for what had happened to Brad—and to us—when it seemed he had pursued his life with such honesty and courage? We gradually
realized we would have to be open to the lessons of experience and would have to sort out a great many intricacies in the light of the central tenets of Christianity as we understood them.

The crux of any humane assessment of homosexuality is the question of whether such homosexual preference is learned behavior, and therefore alterable, or whether it is deeply, indelibly imprinted in the physiological inheritance of the individual. We began with the assumption that it lies within the realm of free choice, that to choose it is at best unwise, at worst sinful. But gradually our view changed. For eight years we studied the scholarly literature, we learned to know more homosexual people than we previously knew existed; we listened carefully to their personal accounts. Above all, we watched our son to learn what we could of the sources of his feelings. From these observations we are persuaded that for many, probably the majority of gay people, it is not a choice—a conclusion consistent with recent scientific work which suggests that sexual inclination is a matter of biochemistry and therefore originates outside the arena of moral choice.

More compelling than the scientific research, however, are the pragmatic arguments that homosexuality is not freely determined. Because our culture and our church are so predominantly opposed to homosexuality I doubt anyone would voluntarily choose such a painful situation. Like our son, many gays of LDS upbringing truly wish to be other than what they are, we can no longer believe that for them it is simply a matter of misdirected agency.

Once we accept the likelihood that homosexuality is an involuntary, biologically imprinted dimension of personal identity, suddenly the ontological implications of the condition shift dramatically, and we must see it in a different moral perspective. Suddenly, we must acknowledge that to be homosexual is not ipso facto to be unnatural but rather part of a natural minority with some distinctively separate possibilities and challenges. Not to allow that difference may be to violate the present framework within which members of this natural minority must work out their salvation and progression. If homosexuality is not learned behavior, we must give up attempting to "cure" the "illness" and instead concentrate on helping the gay person express his or her natural sexuality in positive ways.

There remains, of course, the point of view that whether chosen or not, this condition—most certainly its expression—is necessarily condemned by most religions. According to this view, the biblical denunciations of homosexuality are undeniable, and it must therefore be sinful. I see two issues to be dealt with here: 1) What kind of moral authority is represented by those scriptural passages and pronouncements based upon them? and 2) What precisely in the essence of homosexuality would make it sinful?

The scriptures record the spiritual history of important groups within the human family. They demonstrate clearly a gradual growth in spiritual stature among the "chosen peoples" as higher principles have been revealed and understood. In the Bible we encounter numerous examples of attitudes (and commandments associated with them) that have been altered as humankind progressed on its quest for higher truth. The Mosaic law became outdated in many respects; its cruel punishments and retributions were no longer seen as compatible with Christian love. Gradually it became clear that Jehovah was more than a tribal god, and that the gospel was essential for all humankind, not just the Hebrews. Paul's disparaging attitude toward marriage has been revised. In the contemporary LDS church, Blacks enjoy the equal status formerly denied them. Continuing revelation and spiritual evolution have accomplished these changes.

Might not homosexuality be an analogous case, an issue which because of its complexity is as yet inadequately understood? Isn't it possible that the biblical passages relating to homosexuality are rooted in cultural biases rather than eternal truth, that they derive from homophobia based on ignorance and fear of nonconformity, which in turn produce intolerance. I don't believe biblical cultures were—nor are we today—exempt from this kind of injustice. Clearly, the continual perfection of God's revelation is accessible only as we develop the capacity to receive it perfectly. In the Church we learn line upon line, precept upon precept. Even prophets, whom we regard as neither infallible nor omniscient, feel the influence of cultural contexts. The Church does not lose credibility by acknowledging that we are even now in the process of seeking a more perfect perception of meanings and applications of divine love.

It follows that to condemn homosexuality as sinful simply on the basis of appeal to biblical authority is insufficient. We must undertake a more painstaking moral assessment based on its effects. The highest criteria against which Latter-day Saint Christians should measure behavior (including homosexual behavior) were given us by Christ. He taught us to evaluate attitudes and actions not by their conformity to the letter of a generalized law, but rather according to their compatibility with the spirit of love and the degree to which they promote self-development. In this light, sin is behavior that weakens our capacity for love, impedes our growth toward divine characteristics, and undermines our worth and dignity as offspring of God.

Homosexual expression should be evaluated according to this Christian teaching. I believe Christ would not condemn gay people abstracly for a condition that, from no fault of their own, places them outside the majority and its establishment standards. Rather, I believe he would recognize that they, too, have been given God's gift of sexuality for their potential benefit. To that end, he would judge the expression of homosexuality by standards similar to those we apply to heterosexuals: is it committed and loving in a larger context rather than promiscuous, selfish, and merely sensual? "By their fruits ye shall know them," he taught, and the fruits of homosexual life vary considerably, even as do the fruits of heterosexuality. Perhaps the appropriate question is not whether but how one is homosexual.

Would Christ find homosexuality sinful because it is biologically innate? I think not. Conceiving, bearing, and rearing children in this life may be a blessing, but it is not a sine qua non for salvation and continuing growth. Many married people do not produce offspring, and we do not regard this as evidence of moral failure. If homosexuals are biochemically unsuited for the psychological demands of heterosexual cohabitation, that is sufficient reason not to marry.

Would Christ find homosexual expression sinful on the premise that sexual intimacy outside marriage is forbidden? I doubt he would look at the matter that simplistically. The Godman who said that "the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath" would probably say something similar about marriage. He would recognize that for most of us, whatever our sexual preference, a fulfilled life is more likely if an individual is sustained by the love of another person within the bonds of caring, committed intimacy. He would recognize that marriage, through sharing and commitment, provides stability and mutual support conducive to maximum growth of the part-
ners. What sanctifies marriage is not its legal formality but rather the holy enterprise of bonding and complementing which is intrinsic to it. I believe that Christ would recognize that homosexuals have the same righteous needs for loving commitment to realize this kind of human progress. Would he deny them opportunities for growth that are compatible with their nature and with righteous love? I think not. That means, of course, that gays would enter into monogamous, faithful relationships analogous to our ideal of heterosexual marriage. Ultimately, Christ would, I believe, judge each human relationship on its own merits.

It is a painful irony that Christ's church, which ought to assist all individuals in realizing their maximum development, offers no positive support for gays. Instead of helping heal those troubled in spirit, thereby contributing to their growth and self-acceptance, the church is itself one powerful cause of the condition that requires a physician. Without self-acceptance there can be no self-love, and without a true love of self as God's creature, there can be no true love of God and thus no fruitful progression toward divine perfection.

Consider the psychological burden borne by Mormon homosexuals in particular. From their youth they hear from both adults and peers the deprecating epithets, the scornful aspersions, the biased misinformation about gays which cause them to feel contemptible. They struggle to understand their difference in a setting which demands conformity. They hide their feelings, even from loved ones, and hate themselves for this deception. They discover that there are laws against homosexual intimacy. They read books confirming their fear that they are flawed or mentally ill. And when they desperately need to turn to the Church for comfort and assurance, it proclaims its "love for the sinner" and its "condemnation of the sin" by counseling them to deny their own nature. Ironically, the more orthodox the individual, the more he believes he is wicked, and the more he suffers from this institutional repudiation of his identity. How compatible is such a mental state with the self-love essential for spiritual progress?

If my critical assessment is correct, the Church not only fails to comfort many of its own members who need a particular kind of assistance, it also fails to promote tolerant understanding in the greater society. Think how many are adversely affected in that greater society—perhaps as many as ten percent of the human family, and no fewer than five percent by the most conservative estimates. Within the Church alone, there could be as many as 500,000 homosexual people who are struggling to overcome self-hatred and accept themselves against the grain of the Church's moral authority. This estimate does not include the many families of gays whose self-esteem and peace of mind are sorely troubled by prevailing attitudes.

As I contemplate Brad's short life, I am haunted by awareness of lost opportunities and by a vision of what might have been. How much happier his teenage years could have been, how much more productive his young manhood, had he not been burdened with an engraving ambivalence about the value of his life. I think of how much more his parents and teachers could have supported and assisted him if only their vision of homosexual potential had been freer, more informed, less fearful. I wonder, had he experienced in Idaho or Utah a community that accepted and encouraged a Christian expression of homosexual love, would he have found a loving companion with a shared cultural background and thus avoided the extremes of life in the gay ghetto that finally destroyed his health and took his life? How might the Church have helped all of us, his family and friends, to cope with the challenge of difference, if it had emphasized more the positive, liberating side of its doctrines instead of the negative, constricting side.

Indeed, I believe Latter-day Saint theology can accommodate the phenomenon of homosexuality in a positive, harmonious way. For example, I see possibilities of compatibility under the doctrine of eternal progression. We Latter-day Saints believe that individual development is ongoing, that it will continue over a very long period, much longer than can be contained within a brief mortal lifetime. Could it be that we are not all learning in a lockstep sequence, that God's children may vary in their personal approaches to eternal progression? Some may learn one discipline or gain certain experiences now, while others may choose to defer the same experiences, or learn the same truths by a different set of mortal conditions. Or perhaps not all of us experience this mortal life at the same stage of eternal development. From this perspective, isn't it possible that some may have chosen to encounter the challenges of homosexuality in this mortal life, perhaps because its demands are great and its potential rewards valuable or even, at some point, indispensable. From such a perspective, homosexuality might actually be based on agency and not mistaken choice at all. There is so much possible under our general philosophy, and yet so much we don't understand, that I think we must withhold judgment and remain open-minded.

Undoubtedly Brad grew from his suffering, and we that knew him have similarly benefitted from the challenging circumstances of his life. I suppose we all can profit from adversity if determined to do so. But that fact should not be interpreted as a justification for our causing pain to others, failing to ease their burdens when we can, failing to lift up and encourage and speed them along the path of their learning. It is perverse to cause suffering needlessly.

When I multiply Brad's experience, and ours, many times over, and think of all those who need consolation, love, a chance to overcome alienation, a chance to talk openly without being condemned—needs that exist in so many among us—then I sincerely hope the future will not continue to find Latter-day Saints and their church deficient in openness and charity toward this significant minority. Certainly, it seems to me, if we err as a church on this particular issue, it would be better to err on the side of love, acceptance, and positive encouragement to those of our brothers and sisters whose identities and experiences fall outside the typical pattern.

I trust it is clear that I am neither scientifically expert on the causes of homosexuality nor able to speak with confident certainty about God's will. I only know that elements of my life that matter greatly to me—my son, my responsibility as a parent, my commitment to the Church, my faith in the moral vision of Christianity—have been thrust into confrontation in a way that challenges my deeply held convictions about life and its meaning. Ultimately, it seems to me, one's belief and the lessons of one's experience cannot exist in separate compartments. One must bring both into a compatible, complementary relationship—or face absurdity. What I have written here, unorthodox as it may seem, is an unavoidable attempt at such a reconciliation.

REFERENCES

The following sources describe in laymen's language the thrust of some recent scientific research into the physiological influences on homosexual orientation. Most of them contain extensive bibliographies.


James E. Wytenich, Sexual Landscapes: Why We Are What We Are, Why We Love Whom We Love (New York: Scribner's, Macmillan, 1987).
INTERVIEW

PASTORING THE FARSIDE
MAKING A PLACE FOR BELIEVING HOMOSEXUALS

A conversation with Stan Roberts
Former bishop of the San Francisco Single Adult Ward

STAN ROBERTS is a retired businessman in Belmont, California, where he served as bishop of the Belmont Ward from 1964 to 1970. In 1989 he was called to be bishop of the San Francisco Single Adult Ward. He was released from that calling in 1989. Currently, he and his wife are planning on serving a mission. This interview was conducted by Elbert Peck in March 1989 five weeks after he was released.

FIRST, DO WE NEED SINGLE ADULT WARDS?

When I was a high councilman assigned to singles I struggled with the bishops to give attention to singles. If a bishop wasn’t committed to the need to service the singles, he wouldn’t call two people to serve on the stake single adult council because it wasn’t a priority. He was preoccupied with other things such as Young Women and Young Men programs. I have no fault with that, except that as a pastor he should be concerned about everybody in his ward.

I was a single adult bishop less than one year, and was really enthusiastic about my new ward family, when suddenly I got a threat to disband the ward. My two counselors and I really did some soul searching about the value of single adult wards. All three of us felt that the best thing that could happen to the whole Church would be for its members to become sensitive to individuals, regardless of their marital status, their color, their economic background, or their cultural background. I think that sometimes we put up barriers by saying this is going to be a cultural ward, like Tongan, Samoan, Chinese, or Philippine. Sometimes when we put up a barrier it becomes a long-term barrier, even though the idea is to bless the lives of those people in that culture for the short term. The same thing is true with singles. Yet, unless the Church as a whole is willing to bring singles into the mainstream of the Church in a married ward then certainly they’re better off in a single adult ward.

In order to not have single adult wards, bishops need to feel that there’s value in the lives of single people—that they can make a contribution. The first criteria in extending a calling should not be that they have to be married.

We had a woman who was a street person who, according to her, had two attempted rapes in her life. She’s had a pistol pulled on her and fired at her. If we’re willing to baptize her then we need to pastor her needs. And that means to get her off the street and that costs money. It was interesting to see the resources and the cross-section of people that were willing to give. The people who were just getting off the street themselves were as willing to give as the people who were the most wealthy in our ward, not only funds but time and energy and effort. The scars of the street really stay with people a long time. We have people who because of drug abuse will never be normal, and they’re treated with great love. They’re tough to deal with but they’re loved. I don’t think a regular ward would tolerate them or have the time to attend to them.

I’ve known single women who were asked by their bishop in a married ward not to talk to so-and-so because his wife was threatened. If there’s anything going on in that relationship, the bishop ought to bring both of them in and say, “Knock off whatever you’re doing.”

But what if the man is a Sunday School president and this is a teacher and they’re talking about Sunday School and all he says is, “Well how are you doing in your work.” If that’s not allowed then that makes it hard because then we’ve separated the single person from the body of that ward. I don’t know how you overcome those things. But that sensitivity needs to be addressed in the Church.

On the other hand, in single adult wards singles miss a lot by being separated from other age groups. They don’t have the opportunity of being around little children and being exposed to the problems of adolescents. They’re not exposed on a regular basis to healthy marriages. They don’t have the opportunity of seeing how the infirmities of old age overtake people and how that’s an okay experience. The single woman who gets set in her mind on waiting for the perfect man needs to visit teach a mother with a bunch of young children and a house that’s not perfect. A lot of single people live in a perfect order and when they start courting somebody, unless that person is in perfect order, they don’t nurture the relationship. That’s a tragedy. So, I think, living around that whole spectrum of family life is healthy. It’s not absolutely necessary but all other things being equal if singles have the opportunity to serve and be a part of family wards then it would be healthy to disband single adult wards.

HOW HAS YOUR VIEW OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP CHANGED SINCE YOU BECAME A SINGLE ADULT BISHOP.

I had been on the San Francisco Stake High Council for about eight years and for the whole time my assignment was advisor to the young adults and then to the single adult ward when it was organized. Then when the Church closed down the institute program at the College of San Mateo they asked me if I would teach an institute class in conjunction with my duties as a high councilman. So when I finally became bishop I had some familiarity with young adults but I was not aware of the dynamics of the ward even though I was there at least once a month and taught institute. But I wasn’t a judge in Israel. I didn’t deal with any of the personal problems. Looking back, when the stake president set me apart as bishop, one of the most significant things he said was that if I would prayerfully listen to the people’s problems I would find solutions.

As a result of the kind of people who move to San Francisco there is a wide cross section...
of people in the ward, including homosexuals. We not only have business people, blue collar workers, and people who own their own business, but there is a great variety of cultural backgrounds. And everyone brings cultural baggage with them to church. I began to understand that sometimes we let culture get in the way of the gospel. It doesn't matter that you're from the Philippines; but if you bring that culture in and it interferes with the teachings of the Savior, then it does matter. It's hard to push the culture back and let the gospel come to the forefront. That was an interesting challenge.

As a bishop because I would have empathy for a person's cultural needs and would try to administer to those needs and all of a sudden the Spirit would say, "Hey, this doesn't have anything to do with the gospel, you're spinning your wheels, teach the correct principles of the gospel and let him deal with his culture." That discovery was a very subtle thing. It didn't come all at once, but initially I felt a lot of energy going out that was not really producing any kind of a result as far as gospel standards in that person's life.

**DID THE DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE OF LIFESTYLES IN YOUR WARD MAKE IT EASIER TO EMBRACE THE GAY COMMUNITY?**

Initially, I didn't think too much about the stake president's counsel to prayerfully listen because I hadn't yet listened. But as soon as I started listening and started relating what I heard from homosexuals with what I read in some books by the Brethren I thought that isn't what I am hearing. For example, I was reading about the dominant-mother/passive-father families but I was hearing different things from these children and, on occasion, their parents. I didn't say, "Well, the Brethren are wrong," because I really believe in sustaining a living prophet. So I started to search what the living prophet had said while he was the living prophet about some issues, and I felt okay about what I read there. As I started to study the issues, I concluded that sexual behavior is very vital to the Church and to God. The Savior and Heavenly Father set us in families so that children will come into loving and caring homes where they can be nurtured and strengthened. Unfortunately, that doesn't happen all of the time. Some children don't get a lot of care because their parents are not experts in the areas in which their children have needs. How do you deal with these children who are now grown?

As a Church administrator in this unique ward I felt that I was cut off a little bit from the administrators of the gospel who are over me. My stake president was very supportive. When we'd have a bishops' meeting he and the other bishops would say, "Oh, Bishop Roberts, you have a tough job." But they didn't understand why it was a tough job. The challenges and actual issues were not discussed.

Once, the stake president asked me to speak to the bishoprics and the high council. It was an interesting experience because I was born and raised here and I knew most of the men fairly well. I stood up and addressed issues that two years before I had had no experience with. But as a pastor to a congregation that was dealing with homosexuality, I had to deal with it if I was going stay in that calling. I told them about the cross section of my ward. I told them that 22 percent of my active priesthood were homosexual men. I asked them, "What do we do with people who are homosexual in the Church?" One person said, "They ought to kick them out of the Church." And I said, "Well, that's an alternative. Some of the gay people I've talked to say the same thing. You're right on with how some of the people in the gay community feel—that they'd be better off out of the Church." I let them just think about that and then I asked, "But what do you do with a fourteen-year-old-girl? Do you want to kick her out of the Church? Or a twelve-year-old-boy? What do you want me to tell him? Do you really want to kick them out of the Church?" Of course they didn't. So I suggested to them that we would better serve the gay members when they're twelve so that when they're twenty-eight they'll have some self worth and feel that God loves them. "Because I believe that God does love them," I said, "it's easy to love a twelve-year-old and it's easy for me to love a eighteen-year-old, a twenty-eight-year-old, or one over thirty." I tried to get across that Heavenly Father loves all of us even though he doesn't like some of our behavior patterns. All of us need to change our behavior. That meeting was a good experience, it brought understanding. I don't think I changed anybody, but I think in the future when they deal with somebody who is an adult homosexual they might think, "I wonder what the Church is doing to kids like this. What would this kid's life be like if somebody would have dealt lovingly with him when he was twelve?"

Initially, dealing with this issue really made me feel uncomfortable, but because of my setting apart I was willing to take the risk. My stake president really became supportive of what was going on. The scriptures are clear about sexual indiscretions: there's no place in the Church where a man and a woman can go out and have sexual relationships and not have to go through the process of repentance. The same is true for two women or two men. But it's the same law and repentance works exactly the same way in each of those incidents. When I was a bishop before, it was the requirement to hold a court if a person committed adultery or fornication or was involved with homosexuality. In 1985, the Church changed its stance on courts (of course, they changed again recently). If somebody comes in with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and says, "I've done this and my heart is broken, and then they are exposed to a court and kicked out, where's the motivation for them to confess their sins? Now the bishop has the discretion to forgive them for the Church and have them go and work it out between themselves and God, or he can put them on informal or formal probation or they can be disfellowshipped or excommunicated. But it's the bishop's discretion, and it allows for the influence of the Holy Ghost instead of simply opening a handbook and saying, "this is what I do..." Until the change, confession had became a very impersonal experience and people were hurt and driven away. And ten years later that person may have three or four children who may never know about the gospel of Jesus Christ. I think it's far more important to be a pastor than an administrator because pastoring is really what touches people's lives. We need to be trained to be better pastors. It's interesting, if you have a pastoring problem it takes a long time to get help. But if there's a mistake on your tithing report you get faster reaction. We need immediate reactions on pastoring people, too.

**DID YOU GIVE SEXUALLY ACTIVE HOMOSEXUALS CALLINGS?**

Not to my knowledge. Of course, I could have been deceived. But I got to know them fairly well. If somebody had a lover or they were sleeping with somebody I didn't give them a calling. I think in the eyes of many in the Church anybody who says that they are homosexual is an "active homosexual"—sexually—but that's not the case. I had homosexuals who were active members of the Church who were not in any kind of relationship because I was willing to acknowledge
that they were homosexual men and homosexual women.

**Did you try to change sexual orientation?**

No, absolutely not. I told them, I didn't care if they're a sinner, that's why they should be here. When someone got upset with me I asked them why they were here in the first place. "I believe!" they'd say. I'd tell them that if they believed, they have to fit into this ward, but in any case they were welcome to attend anytime because this is not a country club for people who are perfect.

**What about gays who were active in the church and also sexually active?**

I've had a lot of gays ask me if they could move their membership to the ward, meaning, "Will you allow me to have my membership?" I replied that it's not a matter of me allowing you to do anything. I'm an administrator in the spirit, and these are my parameters. I asked them, "How would it be if I allowed unmarried heterosexuals to live together?" They responded that it's not equal since heterosexuals have the opportunity to get married. That's an issue that's unresolvable for me as an administrator of the spirit. I deal with what I have to deal with, and I try to put the teachings of the spirit into those administrative instructions. I can't change the commandments and I still have to go by the handbook. I need to be tempered by the spirit, but I have never been willing to say, "It's all right if you have that kind of a relationship."

People who were involved in mutual masturbation, either orally or manually, would come to me. When I first arrived, the gay community didn't trust me. They didn't trust anybody who was a Church administrator because, historically, just the admission of having some homosexual feelings could bring on a court. If a man had a current recommend and he expressed those feelings, often his recommend was taken away or he was released from his calling. Eventually, I had people come in and talk to me. Initially they were people from my institute class who had known me for four or five years. That made it a lot easier for them. So when some finally came in and talked to me they were open and I didn't take their recommendations away. I didn't discipline them in any way simply because they felt that they might be homosexual. When people came in and confessed that they were presently or had been involved in a homosexual activity and now wanted to change, I tried to give them all the support that they were entitled to as members of the Church so that they could have the underpinning they needed to break away.

**What kind of support?**

When they finally started to trust me, I had a lot of appointments. We would talk about the issues—confession, repentance, and Church discipline. In most cases there was some discipline but usually it was, "I want to meet you every week and talk about the scriptures." I asked them to read the scriptures, to do their home teaching, and really try to be sensitive to the spirit when they home taught. If somebody was involved in mutual masturbation, I met with them once a week for three months. I never said, "I demand." I would say, "What do you want to do about this situation?" "I want to get out of it," they would usually reply. "Then let's do such-and-such for the next three or four months and see if we can get you through it." I gave them permission to call me any time. If they felt a need to go dancing at a gay place, I wanted to know, even if it was two o'clock in the morning! I got some phone calls and I'd listen, and we would try to have them bring out the ultimate result of that behavior. We'd discuss whether it really was just the music that they were going to listen to or whether they were looking for a sexual outlet. I tried to let them know that I was really concerned about their personal welfare. Of course, some fell; but most of them made it through just by talking. I'd always try to meet them in the next two or three days after that phone call even if it was just for twenty minutes, just to get a report.

We had a couple of spiritual homosexual men in the ward who were assigned as home teachers to around sixteen men. I would call and tell them, "You need to go visit this person and you need to do it this week." And they would go visit, they would have a word of prayer and the person would say, "You mean you're homosexual and you're here administering to my needs in a gospel-like way?" "Yeah," they'd say. "How do you resolve it? How do you come to grips with it?" And there was discussion and understanding. I didn't understand everything about homosexuals. I didn't understand a lot of things I heard. But these guys did and they really blessed lives. This arrangement blessed the person who was having difficulty and it blessed the home teacher, because they both felt the gifts of the spirit—that's the thing that strengthens us. Then you see the result—those home teachers struggled with all their hearts wanting to help because they know the hurt that's out there more than I do.

I listen to the hurt and I try to relate to it as a father of six children. But I haven't experienced it. I probably interviewed over forty gay men and six gay women—good, wholesome beautiful experiences—and I've never had one person say, "I'm glad I'm a homosexual." They're in sorrow and feel sorrow about their sexuality, not once in awhile but twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We need to give them some tools to help them work with it. So, that's how we deal with individuals who were homosexual.

If people were blatant in their sexuality and were unwilling to repent, I would talk to them any time they wanted to. But if, month after month after month, they were unwilling to do everything that I'd asked them to do, then I would say, "Hey, how do you feel about not being a home teacher? How would you feel about not participating in the sacrament?" Most of them would say, "I haven't been home teaching because I don't feel good about it." "I haven't been taking the sacrament." The Spirit teaches that, too. The Spirit gives light to people. And I tried to get the spirit in them, to give them even a slight opportunity to have a spiritual experience, because that's what strengthens us. In the high council meeting we talked about kicking them out of the Church. We got in a discussion about what the most grievous sin was. It was interesting, they were willing to grade everything—this is the most serious, then this is the next, and so on. "The Savior says that the least degree of sinners aren't acceptable in God's kingdom. And that's why Jesus died for our sins. So which sin is the most grievous?" It's the 'least degree of sin' that is going to keep me out of the kingdom of God until I'm willing to repent of it. That's the mentality we need to give to people, that we're all sinners.

**Wasn't all this counselling burdensome?**

Eventually, I started dealing with a fairly large number of men and women who had a sexual orientation problem. They were drowning. They had gone through confession, they had gone through the criteria which I set for them to get back into full fellowship in the
Church, but I was still meeting on a one-to-one basis with them because they needed the support, just somebody to talk to. Finally I said, "I can't handle this, it's killing me. I need to meet with them as a group." I prayed and fasted about it and asked five individuals if they would be interested in coming once a week to my house to talk together as a group.

Initially, I got three to agree and four showed up. Interestingly, the next week I got a call from LDS Social Services asking me if I would be willing to lead a gay support group. (Social Services had started to call me every now and then about my thoughts and actions regarding gay issues.) So with permission of my stake president I expanded the group to include individuals from the Bay area. The next week we had twelve people attend. Overall seventeen or eighteen probably participated. For about two years, we sat for three hours every Saturday in my TV room. They criticized people in the Church for being unkind and uncaring. They discussed what they believed about the gospel, how it all came down to the bottom line that they knew that Jesus was the Christ. They believed in the Restoration of his gospel. Then I said, "Why are we meeting? Why are we here? Let's talk about some things about the Church. We don't want to be critical of the Church, but from our own point of view if the Church did some things differently how it might help kids?" They recognized that there was no way the Church was going to address the issues of a thirty-five year old gay but it might address the issue of a twelve-year-old kid. So we wrote eight issue papers. We assigned topics: homosexuality, what it is, what it isn't, etc. Then we discussed them, really beat them up, and refined them to make sure that they were correct.

We talked about self-esteem: What the Church does and doesn't do to build self-esteem in someone who's homosexual, and what it could do. It was a tough paper because it meant that we became critical, but it was a non-threatening critical paper. We talked about Social Services because several of the guys in the group had had rough treatment from them. We talked about how parents feel when they suspect they have a child who's homosexual. We explored the scriptures, the myth and the reality. The papers were well done. When we finished we discussed what to do with them and decided that we needed to go through the line of authority and whatever the next person above wanted to do with the papers he could do.

Just as we were finishing, Alan Gundry, who works with homosexual concerns for LDS Social Services in Salt Lake, phoned and asked if he could come out and visit with us. He and another man visited the group and also interviewed almost everyone individually. Later both men said it was a great experience. We finally gave the papers to the stake president who asked the group to come to the high council room and present the reports to the stake presidency and the executive secretary. Initially the group was reluctant: "What's the stake president going to do?" "Is he going to take down all our names?" I said, "No, we've done the job, we've been prayerful about it, let's present it to them." And so each person who prepared the paper gave a brief overview of that paper and had an interesting conversation with the stake presidency. I had kept the stake president abreast of what we were doing and what I felt was going on.

We thanked them for accepting the papers and they in turn gave them to our regional representative who, we later found out, had been a bishop in San Francisco during the sixties. I guess he read through them, because at an area conference he asked President Monson to read them and President Monson said to talk to Elders Wirthlin and Brewerton. The following Tuesday Elder Brewerton, who was in our area presidency, phoned our stake president and asked him about the makeup of the ward. So that whole thing went full cycle.

What happened to the group?

It became a ward home evening group called the Farside. You know, you do some things that just stupid. I've sat in this room and said things and the group members look at me and say, "Bishop, don't say that." Apparently I'd used a slang word that has a significantly different meaning in the gay community. One day I said, "You know, you guys remind me of the comic strip The Farside. Sometimes I don't understand it, it just goes right by me." So when they set up the home evening group they called it the Farside home evening group. Once somebody from Salt Lake called and said, "they even have a home evening group called the 'farside,' now what else could that mean except homosexual activity?" If they would read the comic strip they would see that there was humor in the title. It's called the Farside home evening group because we had the north, south, east, and west home evening groups, and now we also have the Farside group.

How did the ward accept a gay group?

There was hostility at first. The sisters felt threatened when they heard about the group meeting at my house. Many thought that anybody who was gay ought to be out of the Church, and it certainly cut down their chances of getting married by having all those gay men in the ward. It was a trial for our ward. I went in and took a whole Relief Society meeting to discuss the issue. I said, "What do you think is happening?" And they started telling me. Then I shared my views. We classified sin from the greatest to the least, including homosexuality. I said "all these are covered by the Atonement." That really threatened people because that's the truth. I said, "you know many men who are gay in this ward, but you don't know who the gay women are." They looked around, surprised, like "there are no gay women in our ward." I said, "Yes, there are some." The truth is good for us, and so we had good meeting. The sisters really changed their attitudes toward these guys.

Later, I had eight hispanic women meet with me. They felt sorry for the caucasians because some of them were gay. They thought that since the Lamanites were going to blossom as a rose that Heavenly Father would never allow a hispanic man to be gay. They really got angry with me when I told them that there were some hispanic members of the priesthood that will probably never be married. Not that they were actively involved in a relationship with a man but their sexual orientation was not heterosexual. That was practically blasphemy in their eyes, and they struggled with it. I probably helped six of them feel okay, but several went back to the Spanish ward.

A month later the elders quorum president came and said that there were some men in the ward struggling with what I was doing, too. So I spoke with the priesthood, and we had one of the best meetings I've ever been in. It really tempered everybody. It was as helpful for the homosexual men as it was for the straight. We discussed how there are men in the ward who have really come unto Christ and how some of them are gay but will not participate in a homosexual relationship because they love the Savior. It's not an easy task and they struggle with it. When the straight men found out about their dedication to the Savior, real empathy occurred and a bridge was built.

It surprised the sisters of the ward, and some of the brethren, too, when they found
out that the gays who were visiting them had been more exact in their responsibilities as a home teacher than anybody they’d ever had. They’d see a need in the home, and the next time they’d contact me they’d tell me that the need had been met. They always had a word of prayer in the home. Many priesthood brethren don’t feel that that’s too important, but we really don’t know what’s going through a person’s mind when we go into their home and we need to leave a blessing and a prayer. If someone was sick there was a card in the mail. They were caring home teachers. Then to have them come out gay! How could that be possible? The members finally got over that, and it’s been a good example to the straight brethren that haven’t been as caring of home teachers as they should be. As a result, the quality of home teaching increased. I’m not saying that there were no straight men in the ward who weren’t as caring, loving, and kind home teachers. But the percentage of those who were gay and who were really doing their job was higher than that of the straights.

When President Hinckley said in general priesthood meeting that marriage was not to be encouraged as therapy for homosexuality, that really excited our ward because it kind of validated what we were doing. It made it okay that these gays probably shouldn’t get married and the sisters could really be a friend to them, knowing that they were not going to marry them. It helped because sometimes women would come in and wonder if they should marry their home teacher. They’d say, "Why is he serving me so well unless he loves me?” I’d say, "Now you be careful, I’m not sure that person is interested in getting married.” I wouldn’t say he was gay, but sometimes the home teacher would tell them.

HOW OPEN WERE THE GAY MEMBERS?

A lot of the gays in the ward, especially in priesthood meetings, have publicly said “I’ll probably never get married because my sexual orientation isn’t the same as yours.” That gets around in the ward. At first it was damaging, but now it’s not. I think we’re healthier emotionally and spiritually.

WHAT ABOUT THE AIDS PROJECT?

It’s called the San Francisco Singles Ward LDS AIDS Project. About three-and-a-half years ago a medical student who had been our elders quorum president and a gospel doctrine teacher found out he had leukemia two days before he graduated from medical school. It was devastating to the ward because he had served so many people so well. To have him deteriorate in a eight or nine month period of time was really a heart wrenching experience for the whole congregation. Even though he had gotten married, he stayed in our ward until he died so he wouldn’t catch diseases from little children. Our ward served him. He didn’t want to go to a hospital. He wanted a hospice to take care of him. The members of the ward sat with him so that his wife, who was also a medical student, could have time to herself for her own mental health. It brought us together as a ward family.

Later, we had a guy come to the ward who was gay and who had AIDS. He didn’t even realize that the Church was in San Francisco. When he found out he came and talked to me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Here he was with this disease that was going to take his life; he sensed that he didn’t have too many months to live. He was a delightful person, full of energy. He went through the process of repentance. Whether it was because of his disease, I don’t know; I’m not going to make that judgment. All I know is that he came in and confessed his sins and had Godly sorrow. As a pastor, I wondered how the ward was going to care for him. Here was a person that had attended our Church probably six Sundays total. Once, he stood up and bore his testimony when he was just barely able to get around. But when we sent around a sign-up sheet for eighteen hours a day service, I was amazed. The members didn’t care if it was the man who had served them so well as elders quorum president or this man, he was a son of God. They gave over 700 hours of loving care for Tom. When we had his funeral the ward was there.

In our bishopric meeting we discussed the people in our ward who we knew were infected with AIDS. What was going to happen when a dozen infected people came to us and wanted to come back to the gospel? Were we prepared? We decided to develop a pamphlet and have a series of four lessons to help us better serve people who are dying. Jim Lemmon had been giving volunteer help to support people with AIDS—taking people to the doctor, picking up dry cleaning, going to the grocery store, etc. He went and got training to also give emotional support—the spiritual support to pick people up, to listen, to help them cope with some hard times. It’s very difficult to do and you need training. My wife volunteered every week for one four-hour shift. Sometimes she would come home emotionally stressed, it’s important that people who are rendering that kind of service also be fed themselves. And so Jim trained members of the ward in a four-week course with eight students taught during Sunday School. People sign up for it and it’s always full. Among other things it teaches that when you’re caring for somebody with AIDS you need to be cautious of certain things. It’s beautiful because it’s just the plainness of the gospel of Jesus Christ—caring for people who are really in need.

The love of the ward members was unconditional for these people. They’re single, they know what heartache is, they know what loneliness is. They don’t want somebody who’s dying to be alone because they don’t like to be alone while they’re living. It’s a great thing. Our stake president has looked at the program; he’s got some concerns, and they will be addressed. I think preparation needs to be made in other metropolitan areas of the Church. I feel sure that in London, New York, and Los Angeles there’s a fairly large group of homosexual people there. It would be a blessing to a congregation to be better prepared. There are two ways you can address people with AIDS; you can say, “Go to the gay community, we don’t want anything to do with you,” or you can minister to their needs.

DID YOU SEEK OUT INACTIVE GAYS?

At a stake conference Apostle David Haight once charged the stake to find the people that were not active in the Church. “I’ll give you the resources that you need to do that,” he said. That was really a dynamic experience because everybody knew that he was talking about gays. We need to get the people out of the caves of San Francisco who are hiding from the Church. As a result for five years we’ve had missionary couples in the San Francisco single adult ward. These full-time missionary couples were great men and women, they literally went out and found the people that were hiding. Most of them are homosexual men. And most of them are still hiding. But they brought back a lot of people, it was a great blessing to our ward and to our stake.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTS OF GAYS?

Parents would notify us that their inactive gay child was living in the city. We always struggled with the request to visit them,
because it had to do with free agency, you know. Does an adult child have the right to be in San Francisco as a free agent? Does the parent have the right to phone the bishop and say, "Go visit my child!" Sure. If my child were in a strange country or a strange place, I might phone the bishop and say, "Will you go visit my child." So we were always faithful when discharging that request. But most times we were not successful, and that was hard. But that was what the Lord asked us to do, so we went. Who knows, maybe when that person really gets in a crisis he will remember that we visited him and come back or ask for help. It's always interested me when you read the bishop's handbook where it talks about welfare services, not just funds, but welfare services, the bishop's responsibility is to not just serve people who come to him but his charge is to go out and service people.

Probably one of the most difficult things I've had to deal with was a fine mother and father who would come to visit their son dying of AIDS. And the first thing they would ask me was, "When are you going to hold the court on my son?" "What do you mean?" "Well, he needs to be excommunicated from the Church." "Why?" And they would start to unravel their perception of what needed to take place. I would tell them about their son coming to me and telling me about his life, and the mighty change I witnessed take place in his life. And yet, when they would see their son in a coma before he died they wanted a court so he was out of the Church. I don't understand that. I don't understand that. I don't think they understand the power of the Atonement, the power of forgiveness and repentance.

**WHAT DOES THE CHURCH NEED TO DO TO ADDRESS HOMOSEXUALITY?**

I would hope that the Church would give to those who pastor the tools really necessary to help young homosexuals. We have all the resources in the world and out of the world to give whatever we have to people so that their lives can be better. The gay men and the gay women in this ward are good people and they are emotionally happier because they feel spiritually secure, knowing that these are the means and bounds of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We need to teach that to gays when they're young.

The youngest person that I talked to said he was seven when he felt that he was gay. When he saw his brothers and sisters interact he thought there was something wrong with him because he didn't feel the way they did. One man told me that when he was sixteen his best buddy started dating one of the Laurels and he became furious. He asked himself, "What's going on with me?" Who could he talk to about that? Who is qualified in the Church to talk to him? He tells his mother, "I'm really mad that Bruce has gone out with this girl, she shouldn't be going out with her, he should be going out with me because he's my boyfriend." What would the mother say? "You'll get over it." Sometimes they don't get over it. What do they do with those feelings? Can we give them the emotional and psychological aid to help them through? I don't know the answers. I wish I did.

A psychiatrist at Children's Hospital came up to me and said, "I have two little children, two little boys that are four that I'm working with." This man's high priest in the Church, he's a psychiatrist, he specializes in children, how does he know that they're gay? Have those four-year-olds made the choice to be gay? Not a chance. There's something there that needs to be brought out, the Church needs to invest in resources to find out really what it is and what it isn't. And then when we find out what it is, we need to give the support needed. Is 8 percent of the Church's male population gay? It probably is. Are they worth helping? Sure they are! In the next thirty years I hope that we can learn to deal with a four-year-old and a ten-year-old in a clinical and gospel way so that when the guy's fifty-five and sixty he will live in a better environment. But for the Church to start dealing with the needs of a thirty-two-year-old is pretty difficult. I think even those people who've taken the hardest stand against homosexuals would be sympathetic to dealing with the needs of a child.

**HOW DO WE CHANGE OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY?**

That's a very difficult question. I teach seminary right now, and we just discussed the first chapters of Romans. It's sad to listen to the mean responses of these high school juniors and seniors toward homosexuals. And we live in San Francisco! You'd think that that influence would temper them to some degree but, boy, there's a lot of hostility.

One man in the ward grew up in Salt Lake City. Once the guys in his priest quorum invited him to Liberty Park and he came home with a bloodied, torn, white shirt, black eye, tear in his lip, puffy ear. "What's wrong, what did you do?" asked his mother, a first-generation American--she and her husband came from the old country. He said, "The priest quorum beat me up." "Why?" "Because I'm gay." "What do you mean gay?" "They think I'm a homosexual." (Up to then, he never had had a homosexual experience, never really entertained the idea that he was homosexual, although he had a light frame and was slightly feminine.) He said, "What's homosexual?" "They think I love men more than women." "Get out of my house," she said. Fifteen-and-a-half! That should not happen, he's a child of God, too, whatever his problem. When he became an alcoholic he was willing to have sex with anything, he didn't care what he was when he was drunk. But every time he got sober, he had remorse. You know, that's not fair. Why did that happen?

I think of another person who served a fine mission. Came home from his mission, tried to do everything the Church wanted him to do. Dated, but never did get married. His mother and father suspected that he might be homosexual. Because the Church supports the thesis that homosexuality is caused by a dominate mother and a passive father, his mother was really troubled and had a nervous breakdown. He's raised a fine family, and this son is a fine person. He became angry at the Church, not because of what he's going through but because of the anguish and terror he saw his mother go through. He said, "I'm never going to go back. I'm going to separate myself from my mother so she can forget that she had me." That shouldn't happen. These are the most unkind things, I see a kid in pain like that and it breaks my heart. When they cry, I cry because I feel it. I know that this woman was not an over-dominate mother. And I know that her husband was not a passive husband or father.

Leaders would serve the Church well by saying to mothers and fathers: love your children regardless of what their problems are, and these are the helps that we can give to you to help you through any kind of a crisis with your child. If your child's in drugs, these are the things you can do, these are positive good things, resources to use. If their compulsive problem is sex, and for a lot of teenagers sex is a new toy, this is how to deal with it so that you can save your child's life. If he or she's homosexual these are the things you do. There has to be some answers to those things. I don't know what they are. I know that love, unconditional love, goes a long way. But to really help people I think you need somebody like an Alan Gundry, or like a Dr. Ferre at Children's Hospital in Salt Lake,
people that understand the gospel but also know the complications of our minds.

I talked to an LDS psychiatrist in Southern California and I got so mad. I could not believe this man's mind. He was to my way of thinking so far afield from the truth. He was still talking electric shock. He was still talking that every person can be corrected. That idea needs to be put to bed. Every person cannot be corrected. I think some can be helped so that they can even live in married life, but not everyone. What are the resources that are needed then to help people? I don't know. It almost motivates me to go back to school so I could become a psychiatrist. But I can't read well enough, I can't write well enough. But there's somebody out there that can do it. I know that there is an answer. I think if the Prophet Joseph were alive, you could probably go knock on his door and say, "Joseph, what do you think about this issue?" He probably would ponder it a long while. But I think he would probably give you a pretty good concise answer. When we sat in my TV room with the group, our prayers were that maybe at some point the prophet would get our papers and ask Heavenly Father what should happen. Not that the Church's doctrine needs to be altered or changed, but just to know what to do.

**T H I S C A L L I N G H A S C H A N G E D Y O U R L I F E.**

It's been the most unique experience I've had because I felt the spirit so often. I would literally get in my car at 10 o'clock at the church on a Sunday evening, exhausted, and the next thing it was turning off my lights in the garage and not remember driving home—really not remember. That was scary. I believe with all my heart there are ministering angels. I've had members of my bishopric—members who at one time lived in a gay relationship with a companion and who went through a court and through the process of repentance that the Church demanded of that person, but who was still a homosexual man—set people apart, and you felt the power of the priesthood through the Holy Ghost going through that person and then have the person being set apart stand up and look right into his eyes and say, "for the first time in my life I understand a section in my patriarchal blessing I've never understood." Can gay men have the gift the Holy Ghost? You bet, there's no doubt in my mind! It didn't just happen once, it happened many times because the Holy Ghost blesses those who seek it and are willing to live a Christ-like life. And this guy was doing everything he could do to do exactly what the Church required of him, except that he could not take a wife because he knew that it would hurt her.

I really cherish the experience I had as a bishop, it was a sacred experience—the whole thing. You get so intimately involved with people's lives. And you really see how a small amount of input can get such great results. That's the thing they wanted, just a little bit of love from a Church administrator. It just makes them fly. ☁️

**PSALM**

FOR MT. AIR

I awake to the songs of birds;
the sounds of thy creatures awakeneth me.
Thy skies are the blue of thy deepest waters;
deep and broad are they in their invitation
to my soul to soar.

In mine eyes are thy words;
in my heart the songs of rejoicing in thee.

Blessed, O God, be the quiverings of life
in the branches of trees, in my limbs;
and holy be the sun on the leaves and needles
and on the hair of my head
and the feeling beneath it.

I bow to the joy of thy bounty;
I raise up my voice to sing praises
for the grace of thy hand in all the world.

Here in the thickets of thy kindness
and the beauty of thy hand
thou makest me still to know
thou art indeed God.

—EMMA LOU THAYNE

---

**We need your support. Your gift is the gift of love.**

American Heart Association
WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

---

February 1990

Page 19
GOAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE CHURCH:
OR,
WHY DID THEY CARPET THE GYM?

By John Tarjan

INTRODUCTION

SOMETIMES THINGS HAPPEN WHICH SEEM CONTRADICTORY or which don't quite make sense. Wars are fought on religious grounds when the religions of both sides proclaim love for one's fellow beings. Political scandals like Watergate or the Iran-Contra affair take place when the participants involved appear to be highly patriotic and want the best for their country.

I have noticed such phenomena in almost every organization to which I have belonged. I have often wondered, "Why are we spending so much time and effort doing things that don't make sense?" Perhaps you have had similar feelings. A concept from management literature, called goal displacement, has helped me understand why these things happen. Goals are valuable tools. They help allocate resources and direct the behavior of individuals or organizational members. However, when goals are misunderstood, resources are misspent and dysfunctional behaviors occur.

JOHN TARJAN, an associate professor of information systems and management at California State University in Bakersfield, California, is a Sunstone U.S. Correspondent.
Goal displacement refers to situations in which a transcendent or high-level goal becomes replaced, or displaced, by an intermediate or low-level one. Energy and resources are focused on lower-level goals, which become ends in themselves and often detract from higher-level goals. Goal displacement most often occurs when we reward only the attainment of lower-level goals and fail to reward the accomplishment of transcendent objectives.

A classic example is the public school system (Fig. 1). Tax dollars are spent on education on the theory that a well-educated public is necessary for a successful democracy. For students to become well-educated, they need to attend school. Attendance is a lower-level but necessary objective. In the case of public schools, the main rewards offered to school administrators—budgets and promotions—are often based upon attendance. Naturally, resources and effort are directed toward increasing and maintaining attendance, sometimes resulting in a diversion away from more important educational processes. Recently we have seen increasing movements to redirect attention and rewards to the quality of the educational experience itself. These movements are an effort to replace a previously displaced high-level goal.

All organizations receive input from its environment: from money, labor, or materials (Fig. 2). These are utilized in a transformation process which results in a manufactured product or a service. Such transformations include producing steel, assembling automobiles, curing patients, and converting souls. The goods or services are then offered in exchange for more inputs such as money. For-profit enterprises receive rapid and unmistakable feedback on their success from accounting data. Measures of success can be grouped into two categories: those dealing with efficiency and those dealing with effectiveness. Examples of measures of efficiency in a for-profit manufacturing firm include manufacturing cost per unit produced or percentage of defects rejected. Measures of effectiveness focus on outside reaction to the organization or its outputs. Examples of effectiveness measures include consumer satisfaction and the quality of goods produced. All successful businesses need to have a dual focus. If they are not efficient, their outputs will not be competitively priced. On the other hand, even if they produce goods efficiently, they will not be profitable unless they can effectively meet the demands of consumers by offering quality goods and services.

However, in not-for-profit organizations there are few concrete measures of high-level goal attainment available to administrators. They do not have the luxury of using profitability as a measure of ultimate success. Thus not-for-profit organizations are forced to gauge success in other ways, some of which are discussed below.

Effectiveness, a fairly abstract concept, is usually associated with attaining higher-level goals. Since it is often hard to assess in not-for-profit organizations, goals dealing with effectiveness become subordinated to those dealing with efficiency. Attention is focused on easily quantifiable measures of production rather than on the quality of service or product. This is what happens when public schools receive resources based upon student attendance rather than on educational quality. Another example is seen in the American prison parole system. Parole officers are often rewarded for handling a high number of cases rather than for their success at helping their charges reintegrate into society.

**FIGURE 1**
Hierarchy of Goals in Public Education

- EFFECTIVE DEMOCRACY
- WELL-EDUCATED PUBLIC
- FREE, COMPULSORY PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
- DAILY ATTENDANCE

**FIGURE 2**
Open Systems Model of an Organization

**FIGURE 3**
Hierarchy of Goals in a Gospel Setting

- EXALTATION
- ENTRANCE TO THE CELESTIAL KINGDOM
- EARTHLY SPIRITUALITY
- OBEDIENCE TO LEADERS

**GOAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE CHURCH**

Mormons respond very well to goals. Many outsiders have been impressed at our ability to quickly and efficiently marshal our efforts to achieve our collective and individual objectives. We start early in the Church: Primary children are given a variety of tasks to accomplish, like memorizing the articles of faith prior to graduation; the young women's program places heavy emphasis on the continual setting and completion of goals; and the Scouting program guides young men to set and realize meaningful objectives. We pride ourselves on our success at producing eagle scouts.
The collective Church also responds well to goals. I still remember President Kimball's call for more missionaries in 1974. He set a variety of related goals; most, if not all, were thought to be overly ambitious. Yet the results were amazing; over 30,000 missionaries in the field and an explosion in the number of missions. Other examples of organizational objectives include home and visiting teaching, the family-to-family Book of Mormon program, recent exhortations to read the Book of Mormon, and fund raising to build temples and chapels or to support BYU. Almost every elders quorum I have in has at one time or another set a goal for home teaching percentage. In one Utah ward I received almost weekly updates on the number of copies of the Book of Mormon placed. Across the country I have seen Book of Mormon reading charts popping up in homes and chapels. Our success at quickly raising money is legendary.

Our willingness to expend such effort and financial resources arises from our belief that by being obedient to what the Lord requires we will obtain the ultimate reward, exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. Underlying this belief is an implied hierarchy of goals, as found in Figure 3. We accept direction from our Church leaders to become obedient members. Obedience leads to spirituality. Spirituality in this life builds the kingdom on earth and will lead to rewards in the next.

As in corporations and public agencies, efforts can be displaced in religious organizations. Examples of goal displacement I have observed in the Church can be seen in the overemphasis on measures of efficiency rather than measures of effectiveness, in the design of our buildings, in stressing doing rather than feeling, in a failure to develop local leadership abilities, in reduced emphasis on meeting local needs, and in the creation of tests of faith. I will discuss each of these in detail and suggest how intermediate goals have displaced ultimate goals, occasionally with quite serious consequences.

OVEREMPHASIS ON EFFICIENCY

We increasingly use measures of efficiency rather than measures of effectiveness in reviewing Church progress and successes. Most of these measures correspond to lower-level objectives. While the Church must utilize its resources efficiently, both efficiency and effectiveness need to be considered to balance the ultimate result. In some areas, however, measures of efficiency may be overstressed, leading to unwanted or unplanned results.

I think back to my mission. We all knew that our ultimate goal was to convert souls to Christ. Yet intermediate measures seemed to get all of the attention. We had daily time logs to record what we did in ten-minute time blocks throughout the day. The mission president read statistics in zone conferences, and missionaries were publicly humiliated or praised based on those numbers. The missionaries with the most baptisms earned a trip to the capital city, dinner with the mission president, and their picture on a plaque. With such incentives, missionaries often exercised poor judgment and baptized people who clearly were not prepared. Based on discussions I have had with others who have served missions, it appears that this is a common problem in missions throughout the world.

Church leaders, both general and local, emphasize regular attendance at Church meetings. Yet we rarely measure the quality of our Sunday experience. Like public schools, we put ourselves on the back for a job well done if attendance is up. We devote much time and effort attempting to bring inactive members through the doors of the chapel, yet we spend much less energy evaluating and improving the quality of the experience for the participants.

Several years ago a trial program was instituted in several test stakes which resulted in the consolidated meeting schedule. I heard that a major reason for adopting the new schedule on a Church-wide basis was that attendance at auxiliary meetings increased as meetings were compressed into one three-hour time block. While I enjoy the convenience of one trip to church for formal meetings (although people still drive back and forth all day Sunday anyway), I feel it is time to look at this schedule's impact on the quality of our Sunday experience. There is much less opportunity to visit with ward members and attend to the business of the Church. (Let's face it, most of the real work of the Church gets done in the foyers between, after, and during church meetings.) Official attendance may be up, but sometimes this is paper attendance only: many go months or years without attending quorum meetings, Relief Society, or Sunday school, due to callings in youth auxiliaries. My children are well-behaved as a rule, but they soon become tired and irreverent in sacrament meeting after two hours of Primary. I don't think we would last if it weren't for snacks and trips to the drinking fountain. What all this adds up to is a less spiritually nourishing experience for many adults. I usually come out of meetings tired and irritable rather than uplifted.

DESIGN OF CHURCH BUILDINGS

Another area which invites reexamination is the design of our church buildings. It seems that standardization and streamlining receive more consideration than the appropriateness of the buildings for the activities they are used for. It is incredible to me that a chapel would be constructed without windows. Natural light is symbolic of the spiritual light we seek. I think about Gothic cathedrals with their tall pillars reminiscent of groves of trees and light filtering through stained glass windows as if through leaves. Boxy, unadorned chapels with carpeted walls hold little positive symbolism for me.

Our cultural halls are a particularly sore spot with me (hence my subtitle, "Why did they Carpet the Gym?"). I visualize bureaucrats in the Church architects' office priding themselves on money saved in smaller cultural halls without wooden floors...
and without stages. That frugality is admirable. Yet I wonder if these bureaucrats have ever played basketball on carpeted cement. Only a few trips to the emergency room or an orthopedic surgeon renders these gymnasiums cost ineffective. Knees take a real beating. Ankles are easily sprained. Many of these injuries are due to the carpet's gripping action. Diving for volleysball is out of the question—unless you like carpet burns. I don't recommend it.

I have always believed that one of the great benefits of the Church is providing talented individuals the chance to perform. The absence of a stage with curtains in our newer churches prohibits the production of quality programs. This is another example of how a low-level goal—cost-savings in chapel construction—can get in the way of a higher-level goal—providing members with meeting houses which meet their needs.

And what about our newer temples? As a boy I was taught about the tremendous sacrifices made to construct temples of the finest materials and workmanship. Only the best was good enough for the Lord's house: it was a place out of the ordinary, a place as close as possible to our conception of deity's abode. We often mention the commitment of the Israelites under Moses and Solomon, and the Saints in Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Salt Lake, as examples of sacrifice and devotion. Has that commitment weakened? What happens to the symbolism and religious experience of individuals attending "generic" temples that are barely distinguishable from stake centers? We pride ourselves on the rapid increase in the number of operating temples. But are we focusing on an appropriate indicator of success?

DOING VERSUS FEELING

There is a tremendous focus in the Church on what we do rather than how we feel about the gospel. Doing is essential to the work of the Church. But without feeling we could just as well affix a list of our duties to the refrigerator door, and at the end of each week, count by the number of items checked off to see if we are bound for the celestial kingdom. Such a focus, of course, detracts from the need for inward conversion and spiritual awareness which is the essence of the gospel message.

The home teaching program is a wonderful vehicle for rendering systematic service. But constant harping on percentages and the subtle coercion practiced by many quorum leaders detracts from the spirit of the program. It becomes easy to think of home teaching as a monthly duty rather than an opportunity to freely give Christ-like service. Home teachers soon learn they will be praised or scolded based upon the completion of a monthly visit.

More emphasis could profitably be placed on the process of home teaching and on relationships with home teaching families.

Missionaries, too, are asked more often about the number of baptisms and discussions taught than whether they enjoy their experience, what they could do to improve it, or how they are progressing as an individual. By the same token, I am concerned that not nearly enough time is spent by ward leaders probing the feelings and inner needs of our youth because programs are geared toward the accomplishment of necessary, yet intermediate, goals and activities.

An experience from my mission sticks with me to this day. Mission leaders came to a zone conference to present a program which would improve our effectiveness as missionaries. One leader told us that we should be offended if local members asked us for a snack. We were to tell them that we were there only to do the Lord's work and that it was an insult to expect us to socialize. I was taken aback. When I looked over at my companion, a native missionary, his anger and resentment were revealed by flared nostrils and clenched fists. The fruit of this emphasis on programs, not people, was manifest in later conflicts between local leadership and American missionaries. We thought we knew the right way to do things and were determined to see things done that way regardless of local members' feelings.

DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP

The correlation movement has been successful in several key areas: decisions in the Church are made by the general Church leaders; programs are implemented uniformly throughout the Church; and guidelines are issued for dealing with almost any situation. However, as a result the Church must work through leaders who seem to be prepared mainly to follow rules and directives from above. Logically, promotions within the Church go to those who best adhere to policies and procedures and produce favorable statistics in monthly reports. But unfailing obedience and dedication to programs are not enough to successfully fill a pastoral role. An important part of leadership is to develop and implement ideas to meet individual needs. Leaders must develop spiritual and emotional awareness; they must learn to assess the needs of those they are serving and develop solutions to meet those needs. An overemphasis on following programs and directives from above can detract from the development of these capabilities.

IGNORING LOCAL NEEDS

Standardization can rob us of another important asset—the creativity of individual members. Our welfare program, the Primary, Mutual, Relief Society, all started with local initiatives. Standardization may be a sign of efficient organization, but it may also discourage the development of programs and materials which effectively meet the changing and diverse needs of its members.

I have enjoyed teaching lessons in Sunday School and in elders quorums in every ward I have lived in. I find that most of what I have learned and taught in school also has applica-
tion in a gospel setting. But I have seen fewer and fewer outside materials being brought in and less and less original thought expressed. Many people take comfort in knowing that the same lesson or message is being given around the world, often on the same Sunday. I feel it is absurd to teach the same material in a newly organized branch in South America and in Provo, Utah. Cultures, issues, and needs vary around the world. Homogenizing the Church experience, though a measure of success for some, can represent a failure to meet local needs.

I am constantly urged to deliver a canned message to my home teaching families. Every month we receive the Ensign magazine with a First Presidency message. On last Sunday a member of the elders quorum presidency reviewed it for us. We are then asked to take it to our families and, in turn, have it presented to us by our own home teachers. When I ask my home teachers what they think about the message, they look at me oddly and paraphrase it again, as if no independent thought should enter into the process. This type of system is far from what I see as the way of true home teaching.

When my wife attended the dedication of our new chapel the bishop told the congregation how wonderful it was that his involvement in planning the building’s design consisted of choosing a swatch of wall covering. The rest was done by Salt Lake. We members had no say in the design of a building that was supposed to meet our needs and for which we helped pay through our contributions. (A returned missionary who served in England told me this anecdote, which is just one of many about church buildings: the chapels there were built efficiently and to exacting Utah standards, but after ten years in the humid English climate the buildings were literally falling apart.)

TESTS OF FAITH

BECAUSE higher-level goals such as love and spirituality are so hard to measure, we tend to focus on less important intermediate goals. One consequence of this in the Church is the emergence of observable tests of faith by which we judge another’s worthiness—tests which are in and of themselves only intermediate goals.

One test of faith which is waning in popularity is food storage. It used to be a type of acid test by which we judged ourselves and others. Those who had a one- or two-year supply of food on hand, with water-purifying and wheat-grinding supplies, could feel assured that they were on the right track. Those who didn’t were “iffy” in their righteousness.

Home gardening has been similarly abused. I am amused to hear talk after talk about the financial benefits of home production, especially after reading an Ensign article about a $5.00 tomato: by the time the family in the article had paid for fertilizer, weed killer, seed, and other articles, home production had become a money-losing proposition. Yet the author still felt that the experience of following the program was worth the effort. But, must each of us channel our time and energy and funds into an endeavor that is not cost effective for us?

Ever since Bruce R. McConkie equated cola drinks with Section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants, this test of faith has been the subject of lively debates. For some, drinking cola is a way to be liberal while remaining basically faithful. For others it is a way to measure true conversion. I wonder when I buy decaffeinated Coke if I am guilty of not avoiding the appearance of evil.

Another enduring test has been the number of children in our families. While our fertility rates have been coming down along with national trends, Mormons still have much larger families than the national average. Opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment was also used widely in the late 1970s as an indication of individual members’ faithfulness. I know of no other issue that caused so much anguish among women in the Church. Yet it affected our beliefs and religious goals only secondarily. The issue became more one of obedience to Church leaders than of adherence to moral principles.

CONSEQUENCES OF GOAL DISPLACEMENT

BIGHAM Young seemed to feel that obedience was the most important principle in heaven. While obedience is essential to the functioning of any organization, I am concerned that we get so distracted with sub-goals and low-level measures that we frequently lose sight of our goal to become more Christ-like. I believe that the Lord is more concerned about our level of brotherly love and voluntary service than what brand of soft drink we buy or whether we grind wheat for bread.

Occasionally, the same mentality that produces tests of faith can also lead to more serious problems. The Mountain Meadows massacre comes to mind as an extreme example. Just as with the Watergate conspirators, John D. Lee and his compatriots were highly motivated, obedient individuals with high allegiance to principles. Tragedy resulted when they pursued some of those intermediate principles blindly and ignored the higher principles that should have been a guiding light for their actions.

During the late 1800s the Church was under siege. The federal government was determined to wipe out polygamy, as had been done with slavery. The faithful of the Church were just as determined to see it continue. Mormon sermons were dominated by the topic, and in many minds living polygamy became synonymous with living the gospel itself. Devotion to this intermediate principle led to many actions which were clearly not in keeping with the higher ideals of the gospel. Laws were broken, people were misled, federal authorities were disobeyed. During (and before) the Nauvoo days, the highest leaders of the Church used a type of doublespeak to conceal the practice. In retrospect, many of their actions appear not to be in keeping with the principles of the gospel. Misrepresentations and perjury continued through the Great Basin colonization period. Laws were systematically broken to avoid arrest and continue the practice. Some fundamentalist groups survive to this day to perpetuate what they believe is the true order of Mormonism. This occurs in spite of the continual urging of
Church leaders to be honest, law-abiding citizens.

More recently, a similar phenomenon occurred. I witnessed women being recruited over the pulpit in sacrament meeting to get on buses headed for Springfield, Illinois, to lobby against the ERA. They were instructed to tell people that they were not part of an organized group. I later heard high Church officials deny that this organizing had taken place. The evidence also indicates that Church funds were illegally used for political purposes and that misrepresentations were made about the extent of Salt Lake officials' involvement in lobbying activities.

In these cases we must not harshly judge the individuals involved. They were motivated by what they thought was their duty. But in terms of this paper, the problems arose when they focused too narrowly on a short-term objective which became so important it clouded their judgment and displaced their higher ideals.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

There are no miracle answers or cures to the problem of goal displacement. It occurs in the most successful and well-managed organizations, and may or may not be readily apparent. But I would offer some guidelines which may help in evaluating our success as a church.

The first is to make an on-going, concerted effort to concentrate on the attainment and measurement of higher-level goals. In the final analysis, spirituality, love, and personal and communal growth are what the Church is about. Our many programs, goals, principles, and guidelines are simply vehicles for getting us to these higher states.

Second, we must make a concerted effort to emphasize both effectiveness and efficiency when we assess our progress and success. Effectiveness is more difficult to quantify than efficiency. It is hard to reduce to descriptive statistics. But effectiveness in achieving spiritual progression is what we are striving for.

Finally, we must constantly ask ourselves if our lower-level goals are really helping us to achieve the higher-level ones. Do our actions make sense in the light of higher priorities, and are we spending our time and energy effectively? Authors in the popular management press emphasize that this is the only way for organizations to be successful in the long run. One of the surest ways for the Church to do this is to increase local involvement in setting organizational goals. We must expect Church leaders who announce new goals and objectives to also ask us for our input. In this way, commitment will be increased and assumptions will be constantly reevaluated.

The Church is an amazing organization which has accomplished a great deal over the last 160 years. One of the main reasons I began graduate studies in organizational behavior was that it helped me understand my church experience. I have found that we can use concepts from that discipline to improve ourselves and our church organization. Even in a religious organization, bureaucracy has a life of its own and we must deal with it on its own terms. We must be aware of the possibility of goal displacement in order to avoid or correct it. We should not be ashamed of our imperfections, but neither should we ignore them. It is only through each member's commitment and adherence to the higher-level goals of the Church that it will truly succeed. It is up to each of us to make sure that this happens.
LEGRAND RICHARDS EPISTEMIZED THE CONTEMPORARY Church’s attitude toward polygamy in answer to the question, “What was the most significant development in the Church during your lifetime?” when he responded, “We have finally overcome the stigma of polygamy.” In reviewing the one hundred years since the Manifesto in 1890 there is a conscious effort by Church leaders to remove the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from any association with polygamy. September 26, 1990, marks the centennial of the Manifesto ending the practice of polygamy. Yet the doctrine of polygamy remains a part of our mythic historical past and a continuing principle of the gospel. It is a subject of persistent interest to those watching the Church from inside and out. During this century the Church’s attitude has changed dramatically, from one of actively advocating the practice of polygamy to one in which polygamists are feared as a threat to the integrity of the Church. In their contempt for twentieth century polygamists, Utah Mormons have become typical of conservative middle America.

The changes in the Church’s policy and attitude have been largely reactions, reflecting changed times rather than a change in doctrine. These adjustments also reflect a sort of “changing of the guard” in which a new generation of ecclesiastical leaders met the demands of the Manifesto by emphasizing the Church’s American patriotism and loyalty to the laws and moral standards of American society. Through this transition, the Church entered the mainstream of conservative American society.

When Wilford Woodruff assumed leadership of the Latter-day Saints in 1890, the Church was in disarray. Most Church leaders were in prison or in exile. President John Taylor had died in hiding. The United States government had claimed the property of the Church and rejected five attempts at statehood. After years of resistance, in response to personal revelation, President Woodruff was willing to change.

Originally, the Manifesto sought to end both the teaching and the practice of plural marriage without specifying Church punishment for the disobedient. Successive Church presidents assumed Saints would feel obligated to obey the measure when they considered its revelatory source. The Manifesto also declared the intention of the Church to comply with the laws of the land.

Hence, the period of active civil disobedience sanctioned by John Taylor formally ended. The Manifesto created the first breach between the official Church body and the polygamist; by the mid-twentieth century that division would become both broad and deep.

Interestingly, the document raised almost as many questions as it answered. Many Saints stubbornly refused to accept it as a revelation from God. Others were confused by its vague and ambiguous instructions for the future. In the event, General Authority-sanctioned secret polygamous marriages continued to be performed 1890-1904, although in greatly reduced numbers.

In 1891, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles sent a petition to the president of the United States seeking amnesty for all violators of the federal anti-polygamy legislation. The petition, endorsed by a number of non-Mormons, including Utah territorial governor Arthur L. Thomas and Judge Charles S. Zane, was favorably received by President Benjamin Harrison. On 4 January 1893 he granted amnesty to all Saints who had been in compliance with the law since the Manifesto.

After the amnesty there followed a carefully qualified truce between the government and the Mormon church; it could not be called an era of good will. To marry polygamously or to cohabit with more than one woman continued to be a state crime, despite efforts by the Utah State Legislature in 1901 to
repeal the territorial cohabitation law which had been inadvertently codified into state statute.

The calm ended when polygamy again became the subject of heated debate during the Reed Smoot U.S. Senate confirmation hearings of 1904-1907. In response to the pressure generated by the publicity surrounding the hearings, and in an effort to re-emphasize the legitimacy of the revelations ending the practice, Church President Joseph F. Smith issued what is often called the “Second Manifesto” in April 1904. This document denied allegations that any new polygamous marriages had been sanctioned by the Church, and declared that from that time forward all violators would be excommunicated. The force of the Second Manifesto rested on the coercive power of the threat of excommunication rather than the persuasive power of divine revelation. As polygamists themselves, Joseph F. Smith and other General Authorities felt particularly strong pressure to prove their willingness to enforce the prohibition of polygamy. Both President Smith and Apostle Francis M. Lyman were chided on the witness stand at the Smoot hearings for not being firm enough with offenders.

Although the official relationship between polygamy and the Latter-day Saints had been severed, polygamy was still a major concern of Church leaders. One indicator is the hardening of official policy in public addresses, including general conference talks by the First Presidency. The Church leaders slowly moved from advising against the practice to actively using excommunication. Their remarks shifted from preaching a faithful testimony of the principle (later without advocating its practice) to a secular detachment from the issue altogether, illustrating how far and how quickly the Church moved from its nineteenth century antecedents.

In a 1907 general conference, President Joseph F. Smith gave a lengthy reiteration of the patriotic posture of the Church, emphasising the constitutional question of freedom of religion as the justification for polygamy rather than the traditional emphasis on the revelatory nature of the principle. Smith said:

What our people did in disregard of the law and the decisions of the Supreme Court affecting plural marriages was in the spirit of maintaining religious rights under constitutional guarantees, and not in any spirit of defiance or disloyalty to the government.

According to him, the period of civil disobedience had ended when “every means of constitutional defense had been exhausted.” It was only then that “the Church abandoned the controversy and announced its intention to be obedient to the laws of the land.” Citing the twelfth article of faith, he pledged loyalty to the American system. What about the revelation and loyalty to God before country? What about the fourteen years between the Reynolds vs. the United States U.S. Supreme Court ruling and the Manifesto? What about Woodruff’s personal battle with the idea? Apparently, by 1904 the Church’s perspective on polygamy had somehow altered, perhaps as a result of the pressure generated by the Smoot hearings. In any event shortly after the turn of the century the Church paraded a new aggressive patriotism before the nation.

The problem of polygamy, nevertheless, would not disappear. Twenty years after the Manifesto, some ecclesiastical leaders both in and out of the Church were still performing plural marriages without the official sanction of the president of the Church. Again President Smith felt it was necessary to clarify the Church’s position on plural marriage, to warn of the consequences of disobedience, and to increase vigilance in enforcing the policy. A October 1910 First Presidency letter directed stake presidents to actively search out those who were actually performing plural marriages and had so far evaded detection. This letter was primarily directed against those who were bringing others into the practice, although it also prescribed punishment for those who only “advise” or “counsel.” It was now very clear that continued adherence to the practice was no longer a matter of personal discretion; it had become a point of disloyalty to the Church and a failure to defer to the direction of the prophet. Disobedience was described as being “not only an individual transgression, but a dishonor to the Church as well.”

President Smith reminded Church leaders of those instructions again in 1911, and strengthened the directives by insisting that offenders be brought before Church courts. Subsequent operational instructions and policies were described as “precepts, regulations, and rules” rather than as doctrine or updated revelation. These letters of policy were precursors of the “Handbook of Instructions” which was first circulated in the 1910s.

In a conference address in 1918, Charles W. Penrose, second counselor in the First Presidency, went beyond what had become the typical approach of using threats and making
declarations of good faith and tried to explain more fully the doctrine of plural marriage to a new generation who were less familiar with the principle. Before the Manifesto, the principle was of central importance to Church doctrine and solidarity and was taught with a single-minded passion. In the thirty years since, a new generation had grown up in the Church which had at best ambiguous feelings for both the social and sacred nature of the practice. President Penrose’s discourse discussed both aspects. Divided into two main sections, it clearly delineated the issues that would have enduring significance in the Church’s future attitude toward the doctrine.

Penrose portrayed Mormon marriage—celestial marriage, or the holy patriarchal order—as a privilege through which men and women were sealed together by the holy order of God. Hence, the doctrine of celestial marriage articulated by Joseph Smith, Jr., continued to be taught after the demise of plural marriage, despite the fact that the two were so closely linked. The purpose of celestial marriage was an abundant and faithful progeny: “They shall increase, worlds without end, in their prosperity, in knowledge, in wisdom, in understanding, in dominion, in glory.”

Celestial marriage, he explained, is detailed in Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants, and is therefore sanctioned as a commandment from the Lord. This scripture defines celestial marriage as “time and all eternity and a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of the highest degree of glory in the celestial world.”

Penrose then referred to another portion of that revelation which mentioned “further orders” of the holy order of marriage that were under “special direction.” The power, authority, and keys to perform celestial marriages were located only in the hands of the president of the Church. “Read it carefully,” he said:

The keys of that power are given to one man at a time on the earth, and you will see sometime, if you cannot now, the wisdom of that law. He holds the key of that power, and when he turns it, as Brother Woodruff did, it closes the door.

The “further order” of the patriarchal order that Penrose referred to was plural marriage. In the nineteenth century the concept of plural marriage and the concept of celestial marriage or the patriarchal order were inextricably linked. This was still true in 1918. The issue in dispute between the official Church leadership and those practicing polygamy independently was the location of the power or “keys” to perform such marriages. Penrose reemphasized this point.

I want to refer to this as clearly as possible, and I find it necessary to do it because of some recent occurrences—when men go around and whisper in the ears of the people that this thing is all right if you can keep it secret; keep it from the man that holds the keys—Think of it!

He then reiterated the position of Church Presidents Lorenzo Snow and Joseph F. Smith, who both said that at that time there was no man who was authorized to perform plural marriages on the earth.

Obviously the purpose of Penrose’s message was to combat the rumors about alternate priesthood authority and to ruin the credibility of those claiming authority to continue the practice. Recognizing the vulnerability of the new generation to these claims he said:

Do not believe these stories that men who are seeking to indulge their own lust are circulating among the people, but try to guard the purity of our innocent girls, many of whom have never heard of such things, and these things are whispered in their ears by some designing person who is rebel against the Church of Christ.”

With Penrose’s address the gulf between polygamists and the Church dramatically widened.

In 1921 Church President Heber J. Grant bluntly addressed the subject of priesthood authority, making it absolutely clear that the official Latter-day Saint position was that the “keys” remained in the person of the president of the Church. Later, in an impassioned 1925 ruling, President Grant claimed that the very integrity of the Church was being impugned. He found it necessary to repeat these straightforward and candid warnings on at least four other occasions during his administration in an attempt to make his attitude so “clear, definitive, and unequivocal as to leave no possible doubt.”

In a 1931 talk, Heber J. Grant introduced a new approach that would become standard procedure after 1950: namely, sidestepping the subject of polygamy to avoid unnecessary publicity:

We have hesitated somewhat to make public statements or denials to charges and false assertions published in literature sent out by these enemies of the Church . . ., because we have felt that added publicity to their pernicious statements would be gratifying to them and probably useless in stemming their activity.

Another important reason for the change in the public dialogue on polygamy was the nature of the opposition. Beginning in the 1930s, the Church faced the more formidable power of organized fundamentalist polygamists who made alternative claims to the priesthood authority to perform plural marriages. From then on, any public discussion of polygamy by Church leaders was directed to the fundamentalists who were actively recruiting and circulating literature that criticized the Church leadership and encouraged members to ignore the Manifesto.

In 1933, because of renewed interest in the “corrupt, adulterous practices of the members of this secret, oathbound organization,” a definitive “Official Statement” from the First Presidency was drafted by second counselor J. Reuben Clark and published in the Church News section of the Deseret News. This assertion of Church policy gave a careful accounting of the history of the controversy which had raged since the 1890 Manifesto. It summarized legal action, doctrinal support of the principle, and the continued practice of polygamy outside of Mormonism—again stressing the legal contractual nature of the marriage union and the legal discontinuation of
the principle, rather than the fact that it had once been evidence of obedience to a commandment of God. With an erudite candor typical of President Clark, the document virtually eliminated the possibility of misrepresentation of the Church’s policy.

The “Official Statement” also clarified the LDS doctrine of celestial marriage. The First Presidency made a careful distinction between celestial marriage and polygamous marriage saying: “Monogamous marriages for time and eternity, solemnized in our temples in accordance with the word of the Lord and the laws of the Church, are Celestial marriages.”

The logic that had been so carefully constructed to justify plural marriage was being just as carefully dismantled.

**We do not know the private deliberations and motives of Presidents Smith, Grant or Clark which led them to heighten their pursuit of offenders of the rule. But there are at least three factors which are of obvious importance.**

First, Church leaders must have tired of the continued harassment by the government and media, with their continued base accusations and distrust of motives. They probably were embarrassed by their impotency in stopping the practice.

Second, they wanted to resolve the constant confrontation with the fundamentalists whose strident claim to priesthood authority directly challenged the position of the prophet who, according to official Church policy and doctrine, had sole possession of the “keys of the sealing.”

Finally, these men were surely affected in more personal ways as relatives and friends continued on a path that seemed to lead them from the fold. The highly publicized Church court of Alpha Higgs, President Grant’s personal friend and colleague and also the general secretary of the Church’s Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association and assistant manager of The Improvement Era, must have particularly grieved and embarrassed Grant. The Church excommunicated J. Reuben Clark’s eighty-year-old uncle, John W. Woolley, for performing plural marriages, a double-edged sword which must have both personally saddened Clark and caused him great public embarrassment in his career in the East.

Concern over internal dissension prompted one rather extraordinary gesture in the 1930s when the Church subjected selected members to a loyalty oath. Obviously, the First Presidency was willing to try anything to stop the practice of polygamy. Local leaders required suspected fundamentalists to repeat the words:

“I solemnly declare and affirm that I, without any mental reservation whatever, support the Presidency and Apostles of the Church; that I repudiate any intimation that anyone of the Presidency or the Apostles of the Church is leading a double life. . . . That I denounce the practice and advocacy of plural marriage . . . and that I myself am not living in such alleged marriage relationship.”

The concept for the loyalty oath originated in Southern Utah and Northern Arizona where clusters of polygamous Mormons had gathered to live. Zion Park Stake President Claude Hirshy excommunicated twenty-one members of the Short Creek Branch for failing to sign a similar pledge. This series of excommunications led to the arrest and conviction of three polygamists, Price W. Johnson, Carling Spencer, and Sylvia Spencer, on charges of cohabitation. County Attorney Elmo Bollinger commented that “the officials of the regular (Mormon) Church were assisting to bring about the arrest and conviction of polygamists.”

Directions to local ecclesiastical leaders included in the Handbook of Instructions for dealing with polygamists have changed very little since 1935. Instructions have always called for direct and immediate action—plural marriages are branded “adulterous relations” and are dealt with as such. In the 1934 Handbook particular attention was directed at those “teaching, encouraging, or entering into the practice” of plural marriage. If, after prompt and diligent investigation, evidence of violation was found, immediate excommunication from the Church resulted. The gentler disciplines of probation or disfellowship were disallowed for such cases. The excommunicated polygamist could be rebaptized only with special permission of the First Presidency. The new 1989 General Handbook of Instructions states that a disciplinary council (formerly Church court) is mandatory for “apostasy” by individuals who “continue to follow the teachings of apostate cults (such as those that advocate plural marriage) after being corrected by their bishops or higher authority. In such cases, excommunication may be necessary when repentance is not evident after counseling and encouragement.” As in the past individuals excommunicated for “advocating or teaching the doctrines of apostate sects that practice plural marriage, or affiliating with such groups” must obtain First Presidency permission to be rebaptized.”
Suprisingly, there was never a temple recommend question specifically about polygamy. As early as 1946, however, questions about sustaining the General Authorities, and whether the applicant had any connection or sympathy with apostate groups, were intended to weed out fundamentalists. Whether they did in fact prevent polygamists from receiving recommends is debatable. Nevertheless the instructions to the bishops were very clear: when a person was determined to be a believer in or practicing polygamy, he or she was to be uncategorically excommunicated and very definitely excluded from the Church's temples.

By 1940 the group named the Fundamentalists presented the most united threat to the Church from a schismatic group. Formed in 1929, the group still called themselves Mormons. The Fundamentalists ordained four excommunicated Mormons as leaders: J. Leslie Broadbent, John Y. Barlow, Joseph W. Musser, and Charles F. Zitting. In the 1940s the group was actively recruiting new members through public meetings and through their publication, Truth magazine. Earlier, when the group had been restrained about proselytizing their beliefs, the government and the Church ignored them. However, when they appeared to be growing and threatening the status quo, both the government and the Church took action to limit the organization.

In 1944 Federal and State law enforcement officers in Utah, Idaho, and Arizona arrested forty-six polygamists. As in the judicial crusade of the 1880s and 1890s the charges against the polygamists were severe. Aside from polygamous living itself, the accusations included Mann Act and Lindbergh Kidnapping Law violations, mailing obscene literature, conspiracy, and finally the old catchall, cohabitation, which was the most obvious charge to level against members of the cult. The cohabitation cases were grouped together for appeal.

Barlow vs. State et al. (1944) focused on the constitutional argument that cohabitation was a religious belief, and therefore protected by the freedom of religion clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Both the arguments and the proceedings had a familiar ring. They duplicated the polygamy trials of the 1880s, in which Mormon polygamists claimed protection under the U.S. Constitution. Also in the 1880s the government stretched the law in the effort to quash the practice. But this group of cases was different in a very important way. Not only did the state ostracize Barlow and his fellow defendants, but for the first time the polygamist faced prosecution without being able to claim the powerful sanction of the Mormon church. In fact, in an interesting twist of procedure, Mormon jurors seemed to pose a particular threat to the defendants in this case, and an effort was made to impeach them from service on the jury. The trial judge allowed Claude Barnes, the attorney for the defendants, to ask three questions about the juror's prior knowledge of the case:

1. That some of the defendants had been excommunicated from said church for advocating or practicing polygamy; 2. That no one is ever excommunicated without a trial at which evidence is produced, and the member charged with misconduct is given an opportunity to defend; and 3. That judgment of excommunication is based on a finding that the communicant has been guilty of "teaching" preaching or practicing polygamy.

The defense counsel believed that the trial was over before it began because of the make-up of the jury, the Mormon church's support of the prosecution (as the polygamists perceived it), and what they called the "campaign against the group." Many of these accusations were false, or at best alarmist. There is, however, evidence that the Church did supply information to the prosecution and cooperated in the government's effort against the group. In a statement to the United Press which would later become part of the case file, Apostle Mark E. Peterson remarked:

The Church has actively assisted federal and state authorities in obtaining evidence against the cultists, and helping to prosecute them under the law. . . . Among the witnesses for the prosecution are men who have been appointed by the Church to search out the cultists, turning over such information as they gather to the prosecution for their use; these men have also been appointed by the Church to do all they can to fight the spread of polygamy.

At the time the Church was supplying information from its internal surveillance activities to the state attorney general it was publicly denying any part in the action. In these public statements the Church stressed that it had already dealt with the men in Church courts with the most severe punishment—excommunication. They also reassessed the importance of the separation of church and state.

Similar procedures were used during the famous 1953 raids on the fundamentalist community of Short Creek, Arizona. Again, state and federal officials conducted the raid. At the time the Church made a firm public statement that it had no involvement in the official raid, and that it had already dealt with the fundamentalists in Church courts. The implication was, of course, that there was no connection between the Church and the raid.

However, Arizona Governor Howard Pyle did keep Church leaders informed about every step of the planning and the execution of the raid. In daily phone calls to Elder Delbert Stapley, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Pyle shared details and information to ensure that the Church would not be offended by any of the steps taken. J. Reuben Clark and other Church leaders knew of the raid at least ten days in advance.

The policies presented in the 1940 edition of the Handbook of Instructions reflected the effort to deal expeditiously with the Fundamentalist threats. The less specific attack against the individual polygamists was strengthened by directing future
efforts against the source of their support and the center of power—those claiming to have continued authority to persist in the practice.

Polygamists posed a threat to the Church in three basic ways. The Church's first concern was the question of loyalty. In many ways the Church was like a large family bound by doctrine, ordinance, and custom. But fundamentalist polygamists were openly and stridently declaring both the Church and the prophet. The schism between fundamentalists and the LDS church was like a bitter and destructive divorce in which both parties felt betrayed and misunderstood.

A second concern of the LDS leaders was the numerical growth of the fundamentalist movement. Most new recruits to the group came from the ranks of the Church itself. As fundamentalists recruited Church members they increased in both strength and influence. This growth encouraged Church leaders to stress again the importance of keeping the members informed about the threats posed by polygamy so that "no one will be in ignorance of the falsity of the doctrines or of the illegality of the practices of this group, nor in doubt as to the spiritual falling away of its members and those who follow them, nor unaware of the Church's disciplinary measures which must be taken against them."

Finally, Church leaders wanted to ensure that the polygamists could not partake of any of the rights and privileges appertaining to members, particularly entry into the temples, payment of tithes (with its subsequent blessings), participation in the activities of the priesthood quorums or auxiliary organizations of the Church, or any other ward, stake, or Church activities. This measure served to socially and spiritually ostracize the polygamist from the official Church body. This rule sought to punish and to preserve the integrity of the sacred rites and ordinances for obedient members.

It is a curious phenomenon that, while the individual fundamentalists scorned the Church for its "unrighteous" denial of the principle, at the same time many continued to believe in the importance of LDS temple work and other Church programs—taking enormous risks and making tremendous sacrifices to secure recommends to enter the temples and to continue wearing the official temple garments. An uneasy connection persists, if at no more than an unconscious psychological level, between those who practice the principle and those who believe in the doctrine but not the practice.

Starting in the 1950s, Elder Mark E. Peterson aggressively worked to eliminate the practice of plural marriage by searching out the individual believer and utilizing surveillance techniques similar to those used by private investigators. After searching for and identifying a suspected polygamist, Elder Peterson encouraged local leaders to watch their homes, to follow them to meetings or other gatherings, and to question them about their unexplainable behavior. Information would then be used in a Church court.

The most obvious and immediate result of this reactionary crusade was the excommunication of a large number of fundamentalist polygamists. An important residual result of this campaign was that it discouraged many members from having healthy dialogue on the subject of polygamy. At a time when only one-sided discussion of polygamy prevailed, when differing viewpoints were misread or seemed suspicious, the subject, in a very subtle but unmistakable way, became off limits for members.

For example, a 1976 letter from the president of the Quorum of the Twelve, Ezra Taft Benson, to his fellow General Authorities discussed how offenders were dealt with in a way that ultimately affected every member:

We have had called to our attention the recent case of a man excommunicated for polygamy who reported that he had been told by his priesthood leaders that it made no difference whether he believed in polygamy and talked about it privately as long as he did not do so in Church meetings and classes.

We suggest that the General Authorities be instructed to counsel local authorities on this subject while attending stake conferences. A member is subject to Church discipline for advocating plural marriage whether it is done in private or in public. There is a fine line between the advocacy of an idea and simply discussing its favorable aspects. For many Saints, any form of discussion about polygamy was simply too difficult to handle.

After 1950 Church leaders rarely mentioned the subject of plural marriage in general conference or in other public addresses to the Saints. When it was mentioned, as in a 1974 talk by Church President Spencer W. Kimball, another specialist in dealing with the fundamentalists, it was again to warn members not to associate with the various cults. Avoiding the
subject rather than dealing with the questions it presented was one way to prevent confusion among the members or difficulties with the doctrine.

Today, Saints no longer hear elaborations on the doctrine of a plurality of wives in conference addresses. Nor do they listen to amusing anecdotes about the intricacies of polygamist pioneer life. The polygamist Joseph Smith or Brigham Young is rarely acknowledged. It is as if the modern Church has been divorced from a large and important part of its historical past.

The official policy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints toward the polygamist is essentially the same in 1990 as during the 1930s. Despite the confused and extended period of ambiguity that followed the manifesto in which many polygamous marriages were performed, since the 1930s the Church has consistently and determinedly moved in an undeviating course of separation from both the practice and the history of Mormon polygamy.

As early as 1935 the Mormon doctrine of plural marriage no longer fit into the missionary plan for the "good life." It was relegated to a position of relative obscurity as a hypothetical condition of the afterlife that should not be questioned, or necessarily understood, until another time.

Under the Priesthood Correlation Movement of the 1970s, the trend consolidated. Correlation uniformly limited polygamy in official Church literature, lesson manuals, pamphlets, and public discourse. This omission was not backed by any written or official directive. It was more a general unspoken yet pervasive assumption that difficult doctrinal or historical topics were not to be mentioned, including polygamy. One instance of purposeful removal of the subject of polygamy from official literature was the deletion of a group picture of proud jailed pioneer polygamists from the second edition of My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth. In contrast to the fiery defense of pioneer times, this quiet movement away from the topic has resulted in almost complete neglect.

As it is taught today, the ideal of celestial marriage centers on the coupling of two righteous spirits whose ultimate destiny (in terms of paradisical glory) depends, in large part, on the success of that union. Books like Marriage and Divorce by Spencer W. Kimball make no mention of the "further order of the patriarchal order of marriage"—that is, the contingency of plural marriage in eternity (D&C 132). The concept of plural marriage is not part of the oral or written traditions of the modern day public Church. Except for descendants of pioneer polygamists with a sense of history, polygamy is as foreign to the contemporary Mormon as it might be to someone outside the Church. For some it is barely part of their mythic past.

Nevertheless, questions about plural marriage never totally disappear. They continue to be raised by investigators and other non-members. Polygamy is the one subject that universally precedes the Church's advertised public image. Despite this fact, in the last two decades important Church representatives like mission presidents have usually received no written or formal direction about how to deal with questions investigators ask about the Church and polygamy.

Potentially combative confrontations with the outside world are sometimes addressed by the Church's Public Communications Department, which when pushed would briefly acknowledge that polygamy was once practiced but now is forbidden. Understandably, the public relations policy is to present an upbeat image of the contemporary Church and to avoid difficult subjects. During the 1970s, Charles Gibbs, a Public Communications representative, used a modified approach—the frontal attack. He addressed the issue straight on, answering questions by referring to the official ending of polygamy with the Manifesto, or by stating that no more than 10 percent of the Saints ever practiced plural marriage. By providing slightly more information than requested he seized control of the discussion. Few media personalities were sufficiently schooled in Mormonism to ask him difficult and probing questions about polygamy.

Although the official Church stopped talking about plural marriage in its meetings, manuals, and other publications in the 1950s, this does not mean that the individual member forgot it. Since the Church only resurrected polygamy as an issue to warn the Saints of the dangers of associating with members of the fundamentalist cults, where then do believing Saints find answers to their questions? For many members Elder Bruce R. McConkie's Mormon Doctrine is the primary place. On the subject of plural marriage, Elder McConkie refers the reader to two definitive scriptural justifications for the practice: Isaiah 4 and Doctrine and Covenants 132. According to him, these two passages state that polygamy is accepted by the Lord when administered by those with the proper keys. The scriptures also describe polygamy as part of "the restitution of all things." Elder McConkie concludes by saying, "Obviously the holy practice will commence again after the Second Coming of the Son of Man and the ushering in of the millennium."

Hence, today's Saints are left with the same unanswered doctrinal questions as the Saints 100 years ago. The Manifesto suspended the practice of polygamy, but made no mention of the principle itself. Successive presidents of the Church struggled with this inconsistency either by trying to make the principle fit into Mormon theology or avoiding the topic altogether. However, they spent most of their energy punishing offenders and trying to halt the practice, a policy which divided the fundamentalists from official Church society and identified the Church as a mainstream group which, like most of the rest of middle America, scorned the practice. The Mormons moved from persecuted to persecutor. Ultimately, the Church's accommodation to the world—the reaching out for recognition—centered on shared Christian experiences, rather than on those practices which functioned as too severe of boundaries.

In the last decade polygamy was frequently in the news. Each time it made the headlines the Church pointed to its history of separation rather than shared tradition. Of course there was the notorious violence of the LeBaron clan. The trial of the
former Murray City, Utah, policeman and polygamist Royston Potter resurfaced the troubling questions of freedom of religion which polygamy raises. The bombing of the Kamas Stake Center by John Singer's son-in-law Adam Swapp eerily demonstrated which polygamy raises. The bombing of the Potter resurfaced the troubling questions of freedom of religion.

Former Murray City, Utah, policeman and polygamist Royston Potter, who received national attention, the Church, as it had in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, quickly denied having any connection with polygamy explaining that it had already dealt with these men and women in private Church courts.

Polygamists continue to be unilaterally excommunicated and denied both entrance into temples and into fellowship with the body of Saints. Yet at face value these facts belie the incredible distance the two groups have moved in that fifty-year time period. The lines dividing the polygamist man from his parent church are both wide and deep, and probably unbridgeable.

Yet, as the Church moves into the second century after the Manifesto, and as Utah fundamentalists become less of a concern for the growing international Church, one wonders if past is prologue. How will the Church confront the unavoidable existence of plural marriage in its doctrine? Will growing feminist values eventually repudiate the doctrine? How will the Church deal with polygamist converts in cultures where polygamy is a legal and accepted practice? (The RLDS church, which historically denied even Joseph Smith's revelations on plural marriage, baptizes African polygamists if they promise to take no new wives and teach monogamy to their children.) Although the challenge of the next century definitely ensures that Mormonism will continue to confront polygamy, still, given the current historical trend, it is likely that polygamy will become even more of a curious historical relic.

NOTES

1. The work of Kenneth Cannon II and D. Michael Quinn on post-manifesto polygamy corrects many long-held misconceptions about the period. Both men have shown that polygamous marriages continued to be performed both with and without the sanction of the General Authorities for about twenty years after the Manifesto. See Kenneth Cannon II. "Beyond the Manifesto: Polygamous Cohabitation Among LDS General Authorities after 1890." Utah Historical Quarterly 46 (Winter 1978): 24-36. and D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904." Dialogue 18 (Spring 1985): 9-105.

2. Journal History, 6 April 1904, 6.
5. Clark, 4:151.
7. Conference Reports, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Spring 1918, 16.
8. Conference Reports, 17.
10. Conference Reports, 17.
11. Conference Reports, 19.
13. Clark, 5:293.
15. Clark, 5:327.
19. Musser vs. State et al., 110 Utah Reports 534.
22. Handbook of Instructions (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1940) 139.
Honorable Mention in the 1987 D.K. Brown Fiction Contest

WHAT COMFORT THIS SWEET SENTENCE

By Margot Ellen Cheney

The single shot split the thin December air like a sharp knife. Even after all the years since Lucy's death, its trenchant crack pierced Emmeline's consciousness and stirred embers of fury which she hastened to quench, as always, with a heavenly supplication. He lives to silence all my fears, He lives to wipe away my tears, number 145, she whispered into the darkness.

If her children had been awake, such a holy intonation, coming as it did from the hymnal, would not have startled them; Mum's running conversations with God were often vocal. She might recite a hymn or a verse of scripture but she seldom neglected citing its source. Sometimes she pondered a problem in much the same tone she would use if speaking with a loving sister-friend. But when it became necessary, she spoke to the heavens with the devout fervor of a prophet.

It was 1910, and Colonia Guadalupe, in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, had grown from a single dwelling into a small village of Mormon settlers. Guadalupe was a pleasant place; fully grown trees lined the one main street and well-tended gardens and orchards had a prosperous, settled-in look.

This morning, although every rooster in town raucously proclaimed the new day, the night's blackness still lingered in Emmeline's one sleeping room. She was shivering and quickly pulled her calico dress over her long flannel petticoat and wondered what sort of game the early morning hunter had bagged.

Her terror of guns and the constant necessity of finding fresh meat posed only a little conflict. Emmeline was a practical woman.

She paused a moment at the door and listened to the quiet breathing of her youngest three children before tiptoeing into the main room of the small adobe home. At the fireplace, she stirred last night's carefully banked coals, added kindling and some small logs; the small blaze would soon begin to heat the room. At the kitchen stove, she heaped dry splinters on the previous evening's supper embers; soon the cheerful pop and snap of the fire began orchestrating Emmeline's "kitchen morning music," as it was called. A large pot of well-water, carried in the evening before by ten-year-old Joshua, would soon begin to whistle. She turned her attention to personal needs.

Slipping on her woolen cloak as she walked, she hurried out of the kitchen door. The path to the privy went through her garden. Even though the ground now lay fallow in its winter's nap, she gave each section a quick inspection as she strode past.

Ordinarily, she loved this season of the year. While her garden and small orchard rested, she had time to tend to projects saved for fall, and to prepare for Christmas. But lately she'd felt some unidentified inner prompting, a vague sense of urgency. This morning her anticipation was high; with a little bit of luck she could be finished by nightfall.

Back in the kitchen, she slipped out of the cloak, hung it on its peg next to the door, and began to roll up her sleeves. A bone-china washer set, inherited from her mother, sat on a small wash-stand against the far wall of the kitchen. Just above it hung an oval, framed mirror given to her by Thadeous on the day they were married. 1884. Almost twenty-five years ago.

She carefully fingered the hand-carved roses in the frame, their touches of gold-leaf still bright. She gazed, then, at her reflection, trying to remember what she'd looked like when she was seventeen and first saw her flushed, radiant face within this lovely garland of wood. Impossible. All she could see was a 42-year-old woman with tiny lines deepening at the corners of her eyes and mouth, and cheeks flushed by the morning's chill instead of by thoughts of having just become the second wife of Thadeous Matteson.

Well, Mother darling-in-heaven, she thought, the vale of years doesn't hang heavy yet. And, like you often said, I'll always be younger and prettier than Helena. Father, please forgive that thought, she intoned automatically, although she felt this was a private little merriment she shared with God. She even imagined he smiled at this whimsy; after all, he could see inside her heart and knew that she truly loved Lena as much or more than she loved her own sisters.

The morning's toilettries always included a sparing application of rose water and glycerine, applied carefully over her face.

MARGOT ELLEN CHENEY is a freelance writer in Huntington Beach, California.
and hands. That is, if she were lucky enough to have a bottle of the precious liquid. Not that its price was so dear; it could only be purchased in the States. El Paso and Deming, both over 100 miles away, were their closest American neighbors. When Thadeous drove a wagon load of apples to market earlier in the fall, he'd traded bushels of apples, from Emmeline's and Helena's orchards, for rose water bottles for each of them. The two women had learned early on, if Thadeous was to be their agent, to conduct their business transactions equally. He never did less for one wife or gave more to the other. He was a thoughtful, considerate man.

As she vigorously brushed her long chestnut hair, she heard a small rustle at the door to the living room and smiled. She'd anticipated Amanda's newest game: creeping up and surprising Mum with a big "Boo!" But this morning, Emmeline turned the game around. She swirled suddenly, quickly catching the four-year-old and pulled her close in a big hug.

Amanda giggled. "Oh, Mum, you scared me!"

"So! It's not all right for Mum to scare Mandy, eh? At least I didn't 'boo' at you!" She put the child on her feet and turned back to the mirror.

"Mum, why do you brush your hair like that?"

"For the same reason I brush yours, love. To keep it healthy and shiny."

"Why does it have to be healthy and shiny?"

"Just because."

Amanda began again. "Why do you braid your hair like that?"

Emmeline sighed and changed the subject. "Would you go wake Josh and tell him ol' Hildy wants to be milked and fed?"

"Oh, Mum, Josh doesn't wake up for me like he does for you!"

"Give his ears a good pull then. And tell him to hurry because I said so!"

Amanda sighed heavily and headed for the bedroom. Knowing the child would need reinforcement, Emmeline quickly finished her single braid and pinned it into a coil at the nape of her neck.

"Come along, Josh," she commanded when she saw him snuggling deeper into the heavy quilts. "And you, too, young man," she said as she gently shook the shoulder of eight-year-old Thomas. "The chickens have been waiting since sun-up for their corn. And give Josh an extra hand. Ever since Hildy freshened, just feeding the calf has doubled Josh's chore-time."

She found herself thinking of young Thad and how she missed him since he'd left for the fall semester at the Academy over in Colonia Juarez. He'd not only been dependable at chore-time, but directed the two younger boys well.

"When will I be old enough to milk Hildy?" Mandy was hopping from one foot to the other on the cold wooden floor.

"Never, lamb, never." Emmeline said firmly. "Girls have no
business learning how to milk cows."

"Aunt Lena's girls know how," Mandy replied petulantly.

"If that's the case, they'll soon be left with all the milking while the boys get into mischief."

"Why?"

"It just works that way, Mandy. Now give Mum a hand with these beds. Then you and I will do our chores: you gather eggs while I fix breakfast."

Father, please remind Thad to help Lena more than what's required for his room and board, she thought, and then began to hum. Number 151. "Do what is right, the day dawn is breaking..."

Emmeline, although well-versed in the scriptures, had never been as comfortable with them as she was with the hymns. As a child in Manchester, England, she had taken her first reading lessons in the Bible. But after she and her family had been converted to Mormonism, she'd come to love the small hymnal. She had a good ear for music, so didn't need to see musical scores which were missing from the tiny book. There were no titles for the hymns, only numbers. She also took a quiet pride in the book's origin: 1840, Manchester, England. The same collection had survived many reprintings, and although it was now published in Salt Lake City, it remained in her consciousness as uniquely hers. A small piece of a very early home.

Today, as she hurried her boys, she set out their breakfast of bread, milk and bottled peaches. Amanda, carefully standing a cup at each place, caught her mother's mood and chastened her brothers.

"Can't you see Mum's in a rush?" And then, thoughtfully, "Mum, are we going some place?"

Emmeline smiled. "No, love. I just have a lot of things to do before bedtime tonight."

"Why?"

"Just because." Firmly. "Come, boys, time for prayer!" As the family knelt by the chairs, she hesitated a moment. "I will lead the prayer this morning, children."

She usually called on one of the boys to begin the morning supplications, with each family member taking turns around the table. But on this morning, she felt prompted to break the pattern. She deliberately slowed her words. "Heavenly Father, she began, "We are very...especially...grateful to pause in our labors of the morning in order to offer up our thanks to thee for thy tender care throughout the night and for our fine home in which we find warmth, dry shelter from the elements...I am filled with gratitude this morning, Father, for my four healthy children and for the knowledge that my other four are in your tender care."

"We ask thee to bless our beloved father, husband and your willing and obedient servant Thaddeus. Please bring him safely to us on the morrow. Please guard our Thad and remind him to be earnest in his labors at the Academy and to ever remember and be proud of his fine name..." Amanda's prayer was last. She sighed; all topics and situations seemed to be well covered by then. "Heavenly Father...thank you for our house...and our chickens and help them lay more eggs for me to find...and for Mum and me to sell. And bless Mum...she is so busy today..." A long pause. "Name-of-Jesus-Amen!" Triumphantly.

Emmeline hid her smile and busied herself with the fresh eggs over which Amanda had just prayed. Brother Kingsford had promised to take their basket to market in Colonia Dublan today. As she carefully packed them on top of the eggs she'd been collecting all week, she realized again that, for such a tiny settlement, they were fortunate to have at least one man within shouting distance each night. She wondered idly if this was prearranged by the eight men who had families there. Brother Kingsford was the only man of the eight who had two of his families in Guadalupe; his third family lived up the river in Juarez.

Later, as she hurried the boys out the door to school, she lingered a moment at the doorstep. Thank you, Father, for my own small home in such a lovely part of Your vineyard. She vividly remembered the day that Thaddeus had moved them there and she had seen that the small house was right next to the one-room grade school. What luxury! But she wanted more for her children than eight grades; while she was grateful that she'd gotten seven herself, her children would all go to the Academy. She'd been putting small amounts of money into her old leather purse for years. Ever since Thad was born.

She watched her two tow-headed boys until they entered the school-house, then she quickly closed the door against the morning's cold breeze.

She'd had so many homes. Taylor, Arizona, where Lucy, her first, was born, even as she'd begun to pack for the exodus to Mexico. In the Colonies, there'd been more homes; Thaddeous Matteson and his crews were road-builders and Emmeline had often been their chief cook. Although she'd had to move with the construction, she'd loved the life because it had given her more time with Thaddeous.

But she could count almost as many cemeteries as homes. Lucy had been buried in Hidalgo the day after the accident; Owen and Stewart had been laid to rest in Dublan, and Sarah was in the family plot in Juarez.

"Mum!" Amanda interrupted the reverie. "Brother Kingsford's wagon is coming up the road!" She beat Emmeline to the kitchen to get the heavy basket. "We did real good this week, didn't we?" She felt she had a big role in egg production and had almost learned to count the pesos and centavos that Able Kingsford brought back to them by early evening.

"Yes, we did, Mandy, and so did the hens. We have to have their help, you know! Come now, help me carry in water enough to scrub the floor. Father got me a new splint broom in El Paso that's never been introduced proper-like to this wood flooring and it will look so bright and be ever so happy for having met that broom!"

Amanda giggled. "Oh, Mum, floors can't be happy!"

"Why sure they can, Mandy. Anything can be happy, just like people can always be happy if they want to bad enough."

"Why?"

But Amanda got no answer. Emmeline was staring deject-
edly into the home's one large closet.

"Just because," Mum?

"Yes, love," Emmeline answered flatly. Why hadn't Thadeous taken the gun with him? That was two weeks ago! She'd grown so weary of sweeping around the corner where it stood although the children had been forbidden to touch it, she still worried that they might. And now, in spite of all her nagging, it had only been moved to the far corner of the closet! Well, she wouldn't let it ruin her day. She'd just scrub around it—again.

Things went well until mid-afternoon. She'd moved steadily down her mental list of things to do even though neighbors had unexpectedly needed some of her time. Amanda had been at her side and underfoot all day, but the boys included heat the irons on the stove at supper and do the suit before she picked up another hot one. Oh, I guess I'm finally listening to you now... it's just come time for me to begin my understanding, isn't it? She carefully hung the trousers over the back of a kitchen chair and picked up the coat. Those youngsters may have lost a fine earthly father, but they'll never lose you, no matter what befalls them. And all of them... yes, even those women who have already strengthened their shoulders with years of heavy burdens will only grow stronger with an added one. It's just up to the rest of us to be your hands now... Placing the coat on the padded table cover, she saw and immediately recognized the lump in the right pocket: Thadeous's small hymnal. She carefully removed it and ran her fingertips over the gold engraved name: Thadeous S. Matteson. She had been able to order the book with money earned from her first spring crop two years earlier.

She smiled then, holding the small book close to her heart. And now here's this dear hymnal come to bless and comfort me and refresh me and tell me you don't mind that I was being stubborn in my understanding. Thank you, Father! So, with a freshly dampened steamcloth and another hot iron, Emmeline began, with renewed energy, to press the coat. She also sang. A great song of rejoicing. Number 145. "I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives!" Joshua, coming in with the evening's milking, caught the last lines of the verse, already spoken that morning when the grey gossamer of dawn was ripped by the hunter's blast.

"He lives to calm my troubled heart, He lives, all blessings to impart!" Josh carefully set the pail down before he gave his mother an impromptu, impulsive hug that surprised and embarrassed him so much, he turned and ran outside.

And thank you most of all for that blessing right there, Father! You just never quit sending your love our way! She'd finished the coat and was lighting the big oil lamp when the rest of the children returned from evening chores. Another quiet mental survey and she knew she was back on her schedule. She'd even have time to tell them a story before they went to bed, with plenty of evening left to bring her journal up-to-date. She'd been feeling guilty about that journal. The last few quiet evenings had been spent on a new Christmas dress for Amanda, but she'd been able to complete it that afternoon when Mandy went out to play with her brothers.

As soon as Thomas found out there would be time for
stories, he put in a request for his favorite; a flurry of other petitions followed.

"Hurry, then, and get ready for bed! Thomas shall have his choice first!" Knowing what his selection would be, she smiled. It was a tale she rather enjoyed herself.

"Mum!" It was Amanda, pulling at her skirt. "Brother Kingsford forgot to bring us our egg money!"

"So he did. I've been so busy I even forgot we were expecting him. Perhaps he's late getting back. If he hasn't appeared by morning, you and I will walk over to Aunt Susie's house and see if we can collect it ourselves."

"Just like we collect the eggs," Mandy said righteously. "Mandy counts her money before the eggs is even been sold!" Joshua teased.

"Have even been sold, Josh," Emmeline corrected. "Now you and Thomas go get the kitchen wash-bench and put it in front of the fire."

She picked up the pan of lukewarm soapy water they'd used to bathe with and tossed the contents out the back door; the splatter on the cold ground sent a cloud of steam into the night's chilled air. Then she carefully banked the fire in the kitchen for the night, picked up the oil lamp and carried it to the mantle above the big open fire. As soon as she sat down in the rocker, Amanda climbed into her lap.

"You know, Mandy? It's not going to be long until you're not going to fit on Mum's lap anymore. You're falling over the edges now!" Which made Amanda giggle and Emmeline's heart ache. She remembered keenly how empty her arms felt whenever there was no baby left to hold.

She looked at the eager up-turned faces and laughed. "Why, a body would think you'd never heard this story! You all know the ending better than I do!"

Thomas began giggling in anticipation.

"Well, Mandy here was too young to remember that old rooster that belonged to Aunt Phoebe Rasmussen, but that cocky rascal was the scourge of the neighborhood. The first spring that I set out the strawberry patch and saw that old devil strut-tin' up and down Main Street and watching me with his beady little eyes, I knew we weren't going to get along real well.

"And sure enough, first thing I saw when those berries began to ripen up a bit was that old son-of-a-gun moseying around in my garden, looking for the juiciest of the lot, you know. Nothing was too good for that fellow.

"So of course there was a bit of discussion that went on around our table at mealtimes and Thad helped me work out the damndest contraptions we hoped would frighten Mr. Rooster Rasmussen out of the strawberry patch. And nothing at all worked, nothing. We always got outsmarter by that rascal. So one morning, I picked a lovely little bowl of berries and topped them with honey and some fresh warm cream from the early milking. Then I put on my best bonnet and me and that bowl of berries went calling on Sister Phoebe." The children began to squirm and giggle; they knew the best part was coming.

"So one day, Thad was coming home from school and he happened to spy Rooster Rasmussen in the patch, but that old fellow was so busy in the berries that he couldn't hear or see anything else, and Thad had time to pick up a rock and aim right at the creature.

"Now, I'm sure Thad only meant to frighten the old fellow, but, you know, Thad's a real good shot, always was. And somehow, whether he meant to or not, he smacked that rooster right in the head and killed him dead on the spot!

"All of this happened without any of the neighbors seeing it. I was over at Susie's house, helping her tie a patchwork quilt. But Josh here was standing in the yard and saw the whole thing. And Josh, being such a wee thing then, and all, well I guess Thad figured Sister Phoebe would feel more kindly about the incident if Josh was to return the recently departed's last remains."

Joshua laughed a little sheepishly. "I never shoulda done it; I just always did whatever Thad said to do! But I tell you, when Sister Rasmussen opened her door and saw me standing there, holding that dumb chicken by the neck, she let out a screech you coulda heard a mile!"

"And Joshie turned and runned for home!" Thomas, in a paroxysm of laughter, was rolling around on the ragrug at Emmeline's feet.

She was enjoying the fun herself, but then she made her face and voice become very serious. "Now think on it: those Rasmussen kids were your best friends, and when Sister Phoebe wouldn't let them play with you anymore, it got pretty glum around here. When I told your father what had happened, he said well, Phoebe Rasmussen would make our lives miserable for awhile, but she'd get over it. He wasn't too happy with Thad, of course, but Father was missing those berries, too! I think he was glad the old bird was gone.

"But things between the two families just got worse. The whole town started choosing up sides and someone or other thought that Bishop Hale should get involved in the dispute. So one day, early, standing there in the kitchen, I decided it was time for someone to try and make peace. I put on my bonnet and went calling on Phoebe."

"And ... and ... we were all peeking out from behind the
curtains! Thomas squealed. "We couldn’t hear what Mum was saying, but we could hear Sister Rasmussen all the way across the road!"

"And the longer they stood there," Joshua chimed in, "the wider that door opened and pretty soon there was space enough for Mum to squeeze into the house! And in just a few minutes the Rasmussen kids came whooping out their back door hollering ’Hey, we can play with you again!"

Mandy looked up at her Mother. "What did you say to her, Mum?" It was a new question; nobody’d ever asked that before. "I just said things that women know how to say to each other, that’s all. We forget sometimes and have to be reminded."

"Did you make Thad ’pologize?"

"No, I didn’t. I guess I did that for him. I knew he was miserable about the whole thing. Thad knows, like the rest of us, that killing fowl, unless you need it for food, is sinful. I . . . don’t think we ought to do it, even then. I’d as soon eat vegetables."

"Is that why you don’t like Father’s gun?" Mandy asked softly. Emmeline looked down into the child’s eyes and wondered how she ought to answer.

"Mandy!" reprimanded Joshua. "Mum don’t like to talk about guns!"

"Why?"

"Oh, just shush-up, Mandy! It’s about Lucy . . . and all . . . ." His voice trailed off and there was silence.

Emmeline sighed and spoke. "If Mandy has grown old enough to ask the question, then I guess the time has come to talk . . . again . . . about Lucy." She continued to gaze into Amanda’s eyes and prayed for the ability to tell the story so that the child would get a proper understanding. Amanda, last child of Thadeous and Emmeline Matteson, she thought. Lucy had been the first.

"Well, Mandy," she began, "Lucy was born quite a long while before you were. She was even born before Thad. Your Father and I were living in Arizona back then."

"What did she look like?"

"She looked a whole lot like you, love. Same blue eyes, same blond hair. And she was happy all the time and liked to laugh, just like you!"

"Then we moved on down here to the Colonies, you know, and Thad was born next, then Owen. Owen died a month after he was born; we never knew why. Then came Stewart. And he lived only a year.

"It’s a lot better now, Mandy, but back then, all mothers lost babies. Sometimes we knew why and sometimes we didn’t. We just had to have lots of faith like we do now."

"Then while we were living in Sabinal, we finally got another little girl!"

"Sarah," Amanda said softly.

"Yes, you’ve heard us talk about baby Sarah, haven’t you?" She paused, deciding again how she should continue. "Well, the Kingsfords had moved to Sabinal by that time and Father and Brother Kingsford decided they’d like to look at some land over in the Galeana Valley. So the two families made a holiday out of it and set out in Father’s wagon. The men were riding in the seat up front, and Susie Kingsford and I, along with Lucy, Thad, and Sarah rode in the back. That was before the Kingsfords had any children.

"Father had taken his rifle, as he always did, and had placed it across his lap. Then if he spotted a rabbit, he could take aim quickly. He’d already gotten a jack or two that day, but for some reason, the last time, he stood the gun up behind the seat, between him and Brother Kingsford, instead of resting it across his lap.

"We were almost to Hidalgo, moving along through the gamma grass, when some antelope ran across the road. The men shouted for us to look and Thad and Lucy jumped up quickly to peer over the men’s heads."

She had slowed her words so she could ponder each phrase before saying it out loud. Glancing for the first time at the boys, who were both at her feet now, she realized they’d probably never heard her tell the whole story in her own words.

"It all happened so fast . . . no one could rightly remember, but Lucy, trying to get up in a hurry, probably grabbed the . . . gun to steady herself. Of course it wasn’t hooked on to anything, and as she tried to get up, she pulled it toward her and then it went . . . off. She fell backwards . . . into my arms . . . dead. . . ."

Emmeline was staring into the fire now, as she had done so many, many nights following Lucy’s death, remembering it all like it had happened yesterday. The blast had torn Lucy’s little face apart and shattered her skull. Thadeous did and said all he could; then, with tears streaming down his cheeks, he’d unhitched one of the horses from the team and headed for Hidalgo, leaving the Kingsfords to comfort her.

She had rocked Lucy for the two hours it took for Thadeous to make the round trip. She’d felt her skirts growing soppy with the child’s blood and brain tissue and she had screamed, then sobbed, and, at last, finally looked at Thad who lay on the floor of the wagon, convulsed in his own sorrow. She’d also finally felt Susie’s arm around her and Able Kingsford’s hands on her head, and he’d wept and blessed her and wept again. She’d asked them, then, to sing with her. He lives to comfort me when faint, He lives to hear my soul’s complaint. They’d sung every song she could remember and Thad cried himself to sleep and when little Sarah began to fuss, Susie rocked her and finally Thadeous returned with the Mexican authorities who conducted their investigation quickly and allowed the wagon to continue its sad journey into Hidalgo, where they buried Lucy the next morning.

When Emmeline finally roused herself from the bitter memory, she realized that Amanda had fallen asleep in her lap and the two boys, each involved in his own thoughts, were growing heavy-eyed.

"Come, boys," she said softly as she carefully rose to her feet, "it’s off to bed with all three of you." She paused a minute then, and studied Amanda’s face in the firelight. She tenderly kissed each eyelid and each rosy cheek. "Goodnight, my love."
In just a few minutes, she was back in front of the fire. She moved the oil lamp to the small table next to her rocker, then got her journal, inkwell and quill pen from the high shelf in the back of the closet where she kept the old leather purse. Her treasures. Then, settled at last in the rocking chair, she opened the journal and was dismayed to find she hadn’t written in it since Thanksgiving night. Thadeous had come home early in the day, bringing Thad with him in the buggy. She’d been up since before dawn, basting the turkey and finishing her baking so that they could eat promptly at noon. That was a labor of love, she’d have given up long ago in total frustration. It was good to have him home again.

She opened the inkwell, dipped her pen and slowly began the arduous task of catching up. Because of her limited education, she wrote slowly; because of her desire for perfection, each letter must be formed carefully. If keeping the journal was not a labor of love, she’d have given up long ago in total frustration.

She had just dipped her pen to start another line when she heard the laughter and the Spanish she knew she should not have left even a sliver of light showing. Quickly lowering the wick turned off the oil lamp, but she didn’t dare take time to bank the fire; the raucous sounds came closer every second.

She ran into the bedroom, and pulled the heavy curtain-door closed behind her, and forced herself to take a deep breath and clear her mind so that she could better assess the situation. There was an outside door in here, but no lock. She turned immediately and dashed back through the darkened house for a kitchen chair, which she used to prop against the bedroom door knob. She could hear harsh voices in the front yard; quickly she awakened the boys.

"Josh! Thomas! Sshh! Don’t say anything! Just help Mum lean very hard against this chair!"

"Who... who is it, Mum?" whispered Josh hoarsely.

"I don’t know... some of Villa’s men, I think. Don’t worry, we’ll be all right, I’m sure!"

The three of them listened together and now her worst fear was confirmed; the men were trying to get in through the locked front door. They cursed when they found it would not give and started around the house toward the bedroom.

"Lean and push very hard, boys. We have to hold this door!"

And the combined strength of the three of them kept it so tight that one of the men swore loudly and attempted to shoot through the lock. Amanda awoke and began to cry, but Emmeline felt the jolt and the numbness in her left elbow and knew that the bullet had been spent for something after all.

Although her left arm now dangled uselessly from her shoulder, she gave it no attention. "Hush, Mandy, hush. Be very, very quiet. Boys," she whispered, "keep up the good work! I’m going to try to speak to them."

Father, please continue to bless our efforts here and help me now to reason with these men.

"¡Amigos! ¡Amigos!" They were talking loudly between themselves and could not hear her. She leaned closer to the door.

"¡Alto, jalo!" They began to grow quiet; they’d finally heard her.

"¡Amigos! ¡Senores! ¡Quienest están allí?" She was certain the words were coming out wrong and began again. "¡Amigos! ¿Qué tiene ustedes? ¿Donde está Thad?" Thad! Why would they ask about Thad?

"Mum," whispered Thomas, "if they know Thad maybe they just want to see him."

"What if they don’t like Thad... and they want him!" Joshua’s whisper could hardly be heard, but the two boys had
vocalized the possibilities that plagued her now.

"¡Mujer! ¿Donde esta Thad?" "¡Mi... hijo... Thad... es en Juarez!" For better or worse, they now knew she was a lone woman. She could hear their discussion, but could understand none of it. She cursed herself for learning so little Spanish.

"¡Mujer! ¿Tiene usted dinero?" She answered quickly. "¡Yo no tengo dinero!" They would not get the education money!

Her visitors laughed derisively.

"¡No hay nada en la casa! ¡Nosotros nada!" she shouted. Now the laughter was gone; anger filled its place.

"¡Es mentira! ¡Calle la boca!" said one, in disgust. "¡Vamos!"

The children were horrified; they'd never heard their mother called a liar or told to shut up. Emmeline had no time to think of insults. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked.

"Joshua, I'm leaving you in charge in here. None of you are to leave this room, no matter what happens. Is that understood?"

They nodded solemnly.

"Amanda, you crawl into bed with the boys. Keep covered and keep each other warm!" She left the room, pulling the curtain closed again behind her and ran to the kitchen; she rounded the corner just as the men entered.

As soon as she saw them, she understood more about the nature of their visit and began to entertain a bit of hope. There were only two men, boys, actually. Thadeous had employed them several times in the last couple of years. She also saw that they were drunk. She followed them into the living room and called out to the children.

"Don't be afraid! It's the Rodriguez boys who have worked for Father! Now go back to sleep!" That also explained how they happened to know Thad.

She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

When they got to the closet door, she spoke.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!"

They appeared not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire.

Emmeline got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" They appeared not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire. The children were horrified; they'd never heard their mother called a liar or told to shut up. Emmeline had no time to think of insults. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked.

"Joshua, I'm leaving you in charge in here. None of you are to leave this room, no matter what happens. Is that understood?"

They nodded solemnly.

"Amanda, you crawl into bed with the boys. Keep covered and keep each other warm!" She left the room, pulling the curtain closed again behind her and ran to the kitchen; she rounded the corner just as the men entered.

As soon as she saw them, she understood more about the nature of their visit and began to entertain a bit of hope. There were only two men, boys, actually. Thadeous had employed them several times in the last couple of years. She also saw that they were drunk. She followed them into the living room and called out to the children.

"Don't be afraid! It's the Rodriguez boys who have worked for Father! Now go back to sleep!" That also explained how they happened to know Thad.

She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

When they got to the closet door, she spoke.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!"

They seemed not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire. The children were horrified; they'd never heard their mother called a liar or told to shut up. Emmeline had no time to think of insults. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked. She'd just remembered that the kitchen door was unlocked.

"Joshua, I'm leaving you in charge in here. None of you are to leave this room, no matter what happens. Is that understood?"

They nodded solemnly.

"Amanda, you crawl into bed with the boys. Keep covered and keep each other warm!" She left the room, pulling the curtain closed again behind her and ran to the kitchen; she rounded the corner just as the men entered.

As soon as she saw them, she understood more about the nature of their visit and began to entertain a bit of hope. There were only two men, boys, actually. Thadeous had employed them several times in the last couple of years. She also saw that they were drunk. She followed them into the living room and called out to the children.

"Don't be afraid! It's the Rodriguez boys who have worked for Father! Now go back to sleep!" That also explained how they happened to know Thad.

She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

When they got to the closet door, she spoke.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!"

They appeared not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire.

Emmeline got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" They appeared not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire.

Emmeline got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" She watched them warily as they poked around the room.

"Come, boys, sit by the fire while I make you some coffee!" They appeared not to have heard her. One watched from the closet door while the other used the barrel of his gun to knock the open fire.

Emmeline got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet. She got her best cups and saucers from the kitchen cabinet.
during this night of terror, just as you will now calm my own Joshua and Thomas and Amanda. I was very foolish in my pride to think I was the one to do the reassuring in that bedroom. And, Father, I can go with the comfort of knowing that my children have dear Lena now. They'll get to be with Thad. They'll like that.

Strange . . . I didn't know this rough floor could get to feeling so comfortable . . . did You know when you put me to scrubbing these boards just this morning that I was preparing my deathbed . . . is that the way you go about preparing us? I'm getting a bit drowsy now . . . and I know why . . . but I'll not . . . sleep . . . before I thank you, Father, for all you blessed me with . . . I lived a rich, full life . . .

. . . You'll tell all this to Thadeous . . . and the children, won't you . . .?

Authors Note: Elizabeth Mears Hawkins Mortensen died 22 January 1911 in Colonia Guadalupe, Chihuahua, Mexico. My father, Leland, was age nine at the time of her death, and was the oldest child at home that night. She left no diary or journal; no memory of the day or evening exists except for the accounts of the children and the bloodstain on the floor in front of the hearth that today stands only as a ruin in the desert just outside Nuevos Casas Grandes. All of the names, as well as many of the events, depicted in this story are fictitious.

ON VISITING EZRA POUND'S BIRTHPLACE: HAILEY, IDAHO

Pilgrims for a poet's words
Go forthright singing—Anthes, Cembelins
We rode three hours west
Born of a Jongleur's tongue, freely to pass
Expecting signs and monuments,
In scaled invention or true artistry
But finding only photographs and clippings
I have seen what I have seen
Of mental wards and fascist broadcasts.
Oh, there is precedent, legal tradition
No word of poetry. What thou art swift to lose
I thought of prophets and their honor:

The graveyard held no Pounds,
O thou unmindful? How should I forget
The sexton thought all Pounds moved east.
The ten good miles from there to Maent's castle
One old reporter knew the house: "Some people ask"
If a rational soul should stir, perchance
We took three pictures; were not let inside.
May I inter beneath the hummock
Of some as yet uncatalogued sand;
I shall not have my epitaph in a high road.
No matter. What thou lovest well remains
Why had we asked for columns and for signs?

—M. SHAYNE BELL
When he comes back, I find myself choking on the commitment pattern. Building relationships of trust, resolving concerns, presenting the message, all go out the window; Elder Ballard wants us to go straight for the invitation. After some awkward introductions, we extend the invitation in an undiluted form. “Will you let us come to your house and teach you the gospel?”

“Sure.” He accepts.

Elder Ballard looks on intently, waiting for a translation. I tell him that the man has accepted, and Elder Setlow takes down his phone number and makes arrangements for the discussion. The apostle doesn’t say anything, just slightly nods his head.

FIVE months later I am sitting in front of my new mission president with tears in my eyes. Stories have come from the new missionaries about Elder Ballard’s MTC talks and have become part of a motivating story that inspires missionaries to open their mouths, giving everyone the opportunity to hear the gospel. The catch is that Elder Setlow and I are used as bad examples.

From the reports, I understand Elder Ballard to be saying, “They looked at me as if to say, ‘Here? Now?!’ And as it turned out, the man accepted the invitation for the first discussion.”

I’m hurt. I have been working my heart out for twenty months on an island in the South China Sea, dealing with people who have foreign beliefs, eating habits, and driving courtesy, and one of the Lord’s anointed holds me up as a bad example. Some of the missionaries even know my name. He mentioned it as he told the story to the Taichung Mission only a few days after the restaurant encounter. The story has been told to the last five groups of new missionaries coming over to Taiwan. “You were the ones he was talking about?!” they would realize. It’s funny for them.

“Nothing.” The word sounds garbled.

I feel like calling him up right now and saying, “Russ, let’s just talk like friends for a minute. I have an elder in my office that is very hurt by the restaurant referral story.” I know he would apologize, Elder Armstrong. He would feel awful.

“What can I do for you, Elder Armstrong?” asks President Price after a painful silence.

“Nothing.” The word sounds garbled.

“I feel like calling him up right now and saying, ‘Russ, let’s just talk like friends for a minute. I have an elder in my office that is very hurt by the restaurant referral story.’ I know he would apologize, Elder Armstrong. He would feel awful.”

“I don’t want him to feel awful, I just want him to stop telling the story.”

“What have you learned from this experience?” inquires President Price.

**John Armstrong** is the religion editor of the *Student Review*, an independent student magazine at Brigham Young University.
A CHANGED MAN

THE HYPOCRITES OF HOMOSEXUALITY

By Orson Scott Card

WHEN I WAS an undergraduate theatre student, I was aware, and not happily so, how pervasive was the reach of the underculture of homosexuality among my friends and acquaintances. After a while I stopped being shocked to discover that someone I had known well, or whose talent I admired, was either moving into or already a part of the not-so-clandestine network of gay relationships. I learned that being homosexual does not destroy a person's talent or deny those aspects of their character that I had already come to love and admire. I did learn that for most of them their highest allegiance was to their membership in the community that gave them access to sex. As a not-particularly-pure-minded heterosexual adolescent, I understood the intensity of sexual desire; as a student of human communities, I have since come to understand how character is shaped by—or surrendered to—one's allegiances.

One thing is certain: one cannot serve two masters. And when one's life is given over to one community that demands utter allegiance, it cannot be given to another. The LDS church is one such community. The homosexual community seems to be another. And when I read the statements of those who claim to be both LDS and homosexual, trying to persuade the former community to cease making their membership contingent upon abandoning the latter, I wonder if they realize that the price of such "tolerance" would be, in the long run, the destruction of the Church.

We Latter-day Saints know that we are eternal beings who must gain control of our bodies and direct our lives toward the good of others in order to be worthy of an adult role in the hereafter. So the regulation of sexual drives is designed not just to preserve the community of the Saints but also to improve and educate the individuals within it. The Lord asks no less of its members who are tempted toward homosexuality than it does of its unmarried adolescents, its widows and widowers, its divorced members, and its members who never marry. Furthermore, the Lord even guides the sexual behavior of those who are married, expecting them to use their sexual powers responsibly and in a proportionate role within the marriage.

The argument by the hypocrites of homosexuality that homosexual tendencies are genetically ingrained in some individuals is almost laughably irrelevant. We are all genetically predisposed toward some sin or another; we are all expected to control those genetic predispositions when it is possible. It is for God to judge which individuals are tempted beyond their ability to bear or beyond their ability to resist. But it is the responsibility of the Church and the Saints never to lose sight of the goal of perfect obedience to laws designed for our happiness.

The average fifteen-year-old teenage boy is genetically predisposed to copulate with anything that moves. We are compassionate and forgiving of those who cannot resist this temptation, but we do not regard as adult anyone who has not overcome it; and we can only help others overcome these "genetic predispositions" by teaching them that we expect them to meet a higher standard of behavior than the one their own body teaches them. Are we somehow cruel and over-dominating when we teach young men and young women that their lives will be better and happier if they have no memory of sexual intercourse with others to deal with when they finally are married? On the contrary, we would be heartless and cruel if we did not.

The hypocrites of homosexuality are, of course, already preparing to answer these statements by accusing me of homophobia, gay-bashing, bigotry, intolerance; but nothing that I have said here—and nothing that has been said by any of the prophets or any of the Church leaders who have dealt with this
issue—can be construed as advocating, encouraging, or even allowing harsh personal treatment of individuals who are unable to resist the temptation to have sexual relations with persons of the same sex. On the contrary, the teachings of the Lord are clear in regard to the way we must deal with sinners. Christ treated them with compassion—as long as they confessed that their sin was a sin. Only when they attempted to pretend that their sin was righteousness did he harshly name them for what they were: fools, hypocrites, sinners. Hypocrites because they were unwilling to change their behavior and instead attempted to change the law to fit it; fools because they thought that deceiving an easily deceived society would achieve the impossible goal of also deceiving God.

The Church has plenty of room for individuals who are struggling to overcome their temptation toward homosexual behavior. But for the protection of the Saints and the good of the persons themselves, the Church has no room for those who, instead of repenting of homosexuality, wish to become an acceptable behavior in the society of the Saints. They are wolves in sheep’s clothing, preying on the flock. No act of violence is ever appropriate to protect Christianity from those who would rob it of its meaning. None of us are without sin—the casting of stones is not our duty or our privilege. All that must ever be done to answer them is to declare the truth, and to deny them the right to call themselves Latter-day Saints while proclaiming their false doctrine. Even as Christ freed from her accusers the woman taken in adultery, he told her, Go and sin no more.

No community can endure that does not hold its members responsible for their own actions. Being human, we try from childhood on to put the blame for the bad things we do on someone or something else. And to one degree or another, we do accept plausible excuses—enough, at least, to allow us to temper our judgment. The American polity defines the crime of second degree murder to allow for those whose anger was greatly provoked, as distinguished from those who coldly kill for gain. Also, we are willing to alter the terms of confinement of those whose unacceptable behavior clearly derived from mental illness. In short, we recognize the principle that those who have as little control over their own behavior as small children should be treated with compassionately—yet firmly—as we treat small children.

What we do with small children is to establish clear boundaries and offer swift but mild punishment for crossing them. As their capacity to understand and obey increases, the boundaries broaden but the consequences of crossing them become more severe.

Within the Church, the young person who experiments with homosexual behavior should be counseled with, not excommunicated. But as the adolescent moves into adulthood and continues to engage in sinful practices far beyond the level of experimentation, then the consequences within the Church must grow more severe and more long-lasting; unfortunately, they may also be more public as well.

This applies also to the polity, the community of citizens at large. Laws against homosexual behavior should remain on the books, not to be indiscriminately enforced against anyone who happens to be caught violating them, but to be used when necessary to send a clear message that those who flagrantly violate society’s regulation of sexual behavior cannot be permitted to remain as acceptable, equal citizens within that society.

The goal of the polity is not to put homosexuals in jail. The goal is to discourage people from engaging in homosexual practices in the first place, and, when they nevertheless proceed in their homosexual behavior, to encourage them to do so discreetly, so as not to shake the confidence of the community in the polity’s ability to provide rules for safe, stable, dependable marriage and family relationships.

Those who would be members of a community must sacrifice the satisfaction of some of their individual desires in order to maintain the existence of that community. They must, in other words, obey the rules that define what that community is. Those who are not willing or able to obey the rules should honestly admit the fact and withdraw from membership.

Thus, just as America, a democratic society, is under no obligation to preserve some imagined “right” of citizens who wish to use their freedom to overthrow that democracy and institute tyranny, so likewise the LDS church, which is founded on the idea that the word of God as revealed through his prophets should determine the behavior of the Saints, is under no obligation to protect some supposed “right” of those members who would like to persuade us that neither God nor the prophets has the authority to regulate them.

If the Church has not the authority to tell its members that they may not engage in homosexual practices, then it has no authority at all. And if we accept the argument of the hypocrites of homosexuality that their sin is not a sin, we have destroyed ourselves.

Furthermore, if we allow ourselves to be intimidated by our fear of the world’s censure into silence in the face of attempts by homosexuals to make their sin acceptable under the laws of the polity, then we have abandoned our role as teachers of righteousness.

The repentant homosexual must be met with forgiveness. Even hypocritical homosexuals must be treated individually with compassion. But the collective behavior of the hypocrites of homosexuality must be met with our most forceful arguments and our complete intolerance of their lies. To act otherwise is to give more respect to the opinions of men than to the judgments of God.

Tolerance is not the fundamental virtue, to which all others must give way. The fundamental virtue is to love the Lord with all our heart, might, mind, and strength; and then to love our neighbor as ourself. Despite all the rhetoric of the hypocrites of homosexuality about how if we were true Christians, we would accept them fully without expecting them to change their behavior, we know that the Lord looks upon sin without the least degree of tolerance, and that he expects us to strive for perfection.

That we must treat sinners kindly is true; that we must courageously and firmly reject sin is also true. Those whose “kindness” causes them to wink at sin are not being kind at all, for the only hope of joy that these people have is to recognize their sin and repent of it. True kindness is to be ever courteous and warm toward individuals, while confronting them always with our rejection of any arguments justifying their self-gratification. That will earn us their love and gratitude in the day of their repentance, even if during the time they still embrace their sins they lash out at us as if we were their enemies.

And if it happens that they never repent, then in the day of their grief they cannot blame us for helping them deceive and destroy themselves. That is how we keep ourselves unspotted by the blood of this generation, even as we labor to help our brothers and sisters free themselves from the tyranny of sin.
PEOPLE ARE ASKING a lot of questions about Carol Lynn Pearson's new one-woman play, *Mother Wove the Morning*. Some ask questions before they have seen the play; still more ask questions afterwards. It is the latter questions that are the most thought-provoking, of course. They provoke thought because the play does.

But let's deal with some of the easier questions first. How's the play doing? Very well indeed, thank you. Pearson has performed the play in several locales in California and Utah, before diverse groups including Roman Catholic nuns and Mormon ward members, to enthusiastic, sold-out houses and for runs that have been extended (in every case) by popular demand. When an unadvertised performance was scheduled for a few popular demand. When an unadvertised performance was scheduled for a few townsfolk, tickets vanished like Snelgrove's ice cream on a hot July day, and rumors of scalping were heard in the land.

*Is she a good actress?* Absolutely. Pearson was a recognized actress before anyone ever paid much attention to her writing (except perhaps Bruce B. Clark, her freshman English teacher at BYU, who urged her to defect from her drama major.) She twice walked off with Best Actress of the Year Award at BW; those who saw her as Joan of Arc still talk about the experience twenty-five years later. In *Mother Wove the Morning*, she portrays sixteen women, from Bruen, a Stone Age woman circa 20,000 B.C., to Helah, a little Midianite virgin, to Phoebe, a freed slave-become-deaconess in nineteenth-century America, to the aging, sharp-tongued Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Many of the characterizations are truly remarkable. Genevieve the Witch comes alive with an excellent, distinctive voice quality and a barely-controlled rage that differentiates her from any of the others. Paula, a Christian homemaker living in Ephesus about four hundred years after Christ, sparkles with simple cunning. Phoebe, the black Shaker, sings and rejoices movingly over her discovery, with Ann Lee's help, of the female presence in Deity (the quest for which is the unifying thread of the play). As the pulp-it-thumping Mrs. Stanton, Pearson assumes a strong cracked voice and a stiff-legged walk that creates a heavy-set older woman before our eyes, where only seconds before there was the lithe youthful Carol Lynn.

*Now for a harder question. Is the play good?* Not so absolutely. To begin with, it would benefit from cutting. There are many in her audience who are so engrossed, so predisposed to hear her message, that they barely notice the length of the work. But if she is to reach many of the "less converted," the playwright will be wise to pare down the work, painful as that might be. A two-hour production featuring a cast of one reaches a point of diminishing returns with all but the most compelling scripts. And this script has some problems. Three are rather serious.

TO begin with, Pearson's most memorable characters all come in the first half of the play. After Bruen, the Paleolithic woman, speaks what amounts to a brief prologue, we get a vivid, fast-paced enactment of the Biblical Rachel stealing her father's teraphim, or idols, and avoiding detection by using the patriarchy's own misogynistic rules as a shield against paternal wrath and violence. This is a lively, pointed vignette. (To compare with the Biblical account, read Genesis 31: 19ff.) The play quickly reaches its apex with the haunting, powerful portrayal of Lydia and "The Rape of the Levite's Concubine." This is drama at its best. As scriptwriter and actress, Pearson had me right with her each time I saw this sketch, hiding at "the high place" with young Lydia and her mother while men perform unspeakable horrors before their eyes. We need comic relief after this purgation, and we get it in "Io, the Greek." But that is followed by "Julia, the Gnostic," rather a pale interlude at this point. The first part of the play ends with "Paula, Christian at Ephesus," which again gives us some humor, laced with a few shudders and much poignancy; it's a rich characterization that is well-placed right before intermission. Unfortunately, nothing that happens after intermission moves us as much as what we have already experienced.

A second problem comes at a place where no playwright can afford problems: the ending. The difficulty is more than just the challenge of equaling the power of "Lydia." "Marie, Therapist," is among the weakest of the vignettes. Marie, a contemporary psychiatrist, tells us about one of her male clients, who is sleeping on the therapeutic couch even as she speaks. Now a sleeping male, especially a male sleeping under the watchful eye of a female shrink, might have been a wonderful satiric touch, had Pearson played it for satire. But she plays her straight. Dramatically, Marie is nothing at all in this sketch except a narrator. The bit evokes zero emotion because Marie reveals no emotion of her own beyond a touch of professional compassion; and the emotion her client is supposed to have felt—emotion which, we are asked to believe, led him to spend half a night with a gun poised in his mouth—is never dramatized, never really created. The potential here is great: women (and men) therapists feel deep anguish as they work with female and male clients tortured to agony because of the absence of the feminine principle in modern society. Pearson shows us (no, tells us about) a man who shudders in horror at his life when he sees a dolphin die because of industrial waste. No one is more fierce on his life when he sees a dolphin die because of industrial waste. No one is more fierce on
but surely the scene would have more power if Daniel wrestled with an issue like wife beating, emotional abuse of family members, sexual harassment, child molestation, infidelity. Yes, our raping of the environment and our fellow and sister animal creatures is indeed a manifestation of the imbalance of our age, of the absence of the feminine principle in our lives. But if this scene is supposed to be the balance of what has gone before, if it is designed to tell "the rest of the story," then surely we need to see a man who has diminished, thwarted, crippled or otherwise damaged a woman, or a child, and to understand, or at least glimpse, both the causes and the effects of being a perpetrator.

The third difficulty is that the play does not build. Except for the chronological sequence, there is no reason for any one of the vignettes to be where it is rather than somewhere else in the play. Now, some might say that this is the point: that we have not progressed in our vision of the female face of Deity in more than three thousand years; that we have, in fact, lost enormous ground since the prehistoric days of Bruen, who knew the Mother intimately. (Perhaps, a wag might say, Pearson is writing her own version of Waiting for Godot, this one subtitled Waiting for Goddess.) Such a point could well be made. But even if this historical dilemma has not ameliorated in three thousand years, the audience's insight and emotional involvement should deepen and grow in the course of two hours. But in effect, we get variations on a single theme, without development or progression.

Having said all this, I must reaffirm that for most viewers, the play is a moving, affecting experience. The problems may weaken the play, but it retains a powerful impact. (Such a situation is not unusual in the annals of theater: most of Eugene O'Neill's work falls into this category.)

On to a still harder question: What does this play mean for a Mormon audience? Pearson views the work as her most important creative effort so far in her life. That's quite a claim, from someone whose poetry has been carried around by certain admirers like a fifth Standard Work for years, whose musicals are the core of the contemporary Mormon repertoire, and whose autobiography (Good-bye I Love You) has been an international success. All of these publications, especially the last, have changed lives. Will Mother do the same?

The play itself certainly does not have a "Mormon" theme, any more than it has a Jewish, pagan, or Shaker theme. (Emma Smith, "Mormon First Lady," does put in an appearance, staunchly defending her beloved Joseph and revealing at the same time the grief of marriage to a polygamist. "I would like to speak with God's first wife!" she cries out in despair.) But if, as suggested above, the dramatic structure of the play needs some pointing, the argument of the play is perfectly clear. And the argument is as relevant to Mormons as to any other group on the planet today. Some would assert that it is particularly relevant to us.

The argument goes like this: Anciently, the female principle in Deity was equally present, equally powerful, equally adored. There were even cultures in which the female principle predominated, cultures which worshipped "the Goddess." In time, however, human males began to use economic blackmail, brainwashing, force, and violence to subjugate and hobble human females. To do this, it was necessary to minimize and eventually eradicate the female principle in Deity as mankind understood Deity. (One could not convincingly teach that women had no souls as long as one also taught of the Goddess.) With the subverting of the feminine principle, humankind became increasingly violent and increasingly fragmented, both as communities, as families, and as individuals. And, to put it simply, both men and women mourned the loss of the Mother. Both suffered from her absence. In recent decades, there has been a renewed search for the Mother among peoples of the Western world. The children of "the motherless house" have discovered that they do indeed have a Mother, and they are inviting her to return to them. (Another question I had about the play was why Pearson did not show a single example of a twentieth-century woman who has rediscovered the Goddess. Examples abound, as Pearson knows.)

Now, the concept of a Mother in Heaven does not startling Mormons as it might some other Christians. The image has existed in Mormon religious thought for almost as long as the Church has been around in this dispensation. (Pearson at one point sings a few lines from "0 My Father": "Truth is reason, truth eternal/ tells me I've a Mother there."). But the image, the theory has been a reality for relatively few Latter-day Saints, and no such reality has ever been codified or "correlated." Mormons do not pray to the Mother, sing hymns to her (except in the line or two mentioned), worship her, rejoice and testify to each other upon seeing her hand in all things, have no scripture that begins, "Thus saith your heavenly Mother." As one result of Pearson's play, still more Mormons may wonder why these things are so, may muse to themselves, "If we do believe in Mother, then why...?" Specious, transparent answers such as Mormon folklore offers may be less readily accepted.

(After Pearson did the play for her BYU audience, students and others asked her questions for forty-five minutes. All participants seemed to accept her premises; their questions had to do with solutions and particulars: "How can we...?" It seemed to this reviewer that Pearson would not have had the same response in the same setting ten years ago. Many sound questions were asked, many good answers given, on both sides. Perhaps the wisest comment I heard came from a woman who said, "I have found personally that when I start to wrestle with these questions, I feel a lot of fear. I have learned not to be afraid of the fear, but to keep on despite it.

The impact of this play will depend on many things, few of them institutional in nature, nearly all of them individual. One determinant will be whether any persons seeing the play thinks of the perpetrators in this long line of injustice as Them, or as Us.

In terms of the outcome, the victims here are not the real issue. Of course the play centers on them, and it is they we think about first. Some women and men who view the play will see the tragic characters (and not all the characters are tragic, by the way) as Them, wretched people to whom these terrible things happened historically. Some, perhaps many, viewers will see the victims as Us, will identify with the victims, knowing that they themselves, or people that they know and love, are even now living lives that are less than they might be because of sins committed against the feminine principle in human life. Some playwrights will even have the upsetting and illuminating experience that used to be called "consciousness raising," a realization for the first time, or for the first time to such an intense degree, that the victims are, indeed, Us - Oneself.

But the question I am most interested in to has to do with the perpetrators. Most viewers, I believe, will think of the guilty as Them: the ancient Hebrews, the ancient Egyptians, the ancient Romans, the Greeks, the early Christians, the early Catholics, the medieval witch-hunters, the eighteenth-century slave-holders, the twelfth-century Nazis. All those who drove Mother from her throne on high and have persecuted her daughters ever since.

But some who see Mother Wove the Morn-
Fiction and the Free Imagination

Mr. Wahlquist in Yellowstone and Other Stories
by Douglas H. Thayer

Windows on the Sea and Other Stories
by Linda Sillitoe

Reviewed by Helen B. Cannon

To start a serious book review by quoting dust jacket blurbs hardly seems an avenue to in-depth analysis, yet, asked to do a comparative review of two new story collections by Mormon authors, I find jacket blurbs to be precisely the springboard that I require.

Of Douglas Thayer's collection, Mr. Wahlquist in Yellowstone, William Kittredge writes, "Douglas Thayer has written a tough-minded, vivid book of stories about the American West." And Levi Peterson writes of Linda Sillitoe's Windows on the Sea, "no one teaches us so intensely, so emphatically, that women think and feel differently from men. No one else sets forth so authentically the cages, dilemmas, and nascent freedoms of contemporary Mormon women."

It's true. If I had read these two collections "blind," without knowing their respective authors, I would have known that Mr. Wahlquist could only have been written by a man, and with somewhat less surety that Windows on the Sea was written by a woman. The question is, would this classification deserve censure or praise for the authors? Furthermore, is there any pertinence to observing or even granting the possibility of a distinction between male and female writing?

If we were to accept Virginia Woolf's ideal of the androgynous writer, and if it is true that Thayer and Sillitoe write from single sexual perspectives, then we would have to admit that their stories have been inhibited in a fundamental way.

Certainly Woolf's theory of the androgynous mind is attractive—the idea that two sexual aspects reside within us all and that in the best of writers "the two live in harmony together, spiritually cooperating."

For years I've bought that assertion, assuming that the truly fertile imagination can only come from a marriage of male and female aspects of consciousness. Yet Sillitoe's collection causes me to think again. Suppose Sillitoe had diluted her female sensibilities by looking constantly for male perspectives with which to conjoin her thinking. Would her stories have been more luminous, as Woolf projected androgynous writing would be, or
would the stories have lost a certain daring, revelatory, inside perspective of the distinctiveness of female experience and sensibility? And just as importantly, would they, diluted with masculine writing, have lost certain female insights about the Church? This is after all, not just a woman writing. It is a Mormon woman cognoscente writing.

Why then do I object to the "tough-minded" malepassion of Thayer's stories? I go back to Woolf's androgynous vision for an answer; in fact I go back to Coleridge, who provides Woolf's list of requisites for the happy condition of androgyny. The writing product of such a mind should be, says Woolf via Coleridge, "resonant and porous. . . transmitting emotion without impedi-

... naturally creative, incandescent and undivided." (A Room of One's Own, 102). Such writing would evidence a mind well-educated and free, "which had never been thwarted or opposed, but had full liberty at birth to stretch itself in whatever way it liked" (103). By her own adopted definition, then, for Woolf androgyny in the writer is less a question of male versus female than it is of multiplicity and freedom of vision rather than single-mindedness or constraining duality.

Thayer has set himself a theme. Call it male tough-mindedness if you will, but the result is characters who are obsessed and transparent. By contrast, Sillitoe's stories range freely and her characters have flesh and blood dimension, even in their private obsessions. Here instead of masculine emphasis on polarity and justice, we find feminine emphasis of connections between characters. The first story in the collection, "A String of Intersections," is a case in point. Yet, though Sillitoe writes from a female perspective, she also records a multiplicity of human views. Adopting the window metaphor from her title story, it is as if a woman brushes aside a curtain from the window in order to better observe those who pass by, in all their male and female diversity.

Consider two stories, one from each collection, that present Anglo views of Indian ways. There's Mr. Wahlquist from Thayer's title story, obsessed with the West and with Indians—a man who romanticizes and a character who has no dimension. Though he can name all of the wild Indian tribes and has an encyclopedic knowledge of their ways, though he collects their artifacts and mourns their passing, though he comes from Omaha each summer with his wife to fantasize and romanticize Yellowstone's Indian past, now vanished, he has no first-hand knowledge at all. His information is bookish, his character one-dimensional. Moreover, his psychic vision is myopic, as though the thick gold rimmed glasses he wears provide the wrong visual correction, distorting rather than clarifying. The message—and Thayer's stories do have messages—is that the real West has no patience with such romantic, sentimental, clouded vision. Mr. Wahlquist, in trying to embrace romanticized wildness, dies in a grizzly's savage embrace.

The West will not lend itself to bookishness. It is nature, tooth and claw, and as Thayer says of his theme, "If you make a mistake, you pays." (Interview, KUSU-FM, Logan, Utah, September 25, 1989). That theme holds in the long (tiresomely long) story "Doll" and in "The Gold Mine." It is true in Thayer's earlier, finely-crafted "The Red-Tailed Hawk" as well. That's the formula.

But in Sillitoe's " Coyote Tracks" there is more unfolding than formula. Shannon, a young Mormon woman estranged from her philandering husband, has come with her daughter to the furthest outreach of Utah's border—to San Juan County—where she teaches high school English to Navajo teens. Shannon has her own romanticized notions. In fleeing a marriage gone sour, she reasons that the scenery would be "spectacular" and that living in the Navajo nation would seem "almost like foreign travel." (40). But she moves beyond this touristy notion. Stanley Yazzie, the school's Navajo football coach and counselor, son and grandson of medicine men and former BYU football player, is himself between two cultures. Shannon's lover and shaman, he leads her to learn things about the land and Navajo culture. In this process she learns things about herself and about the culture she comes from. Mr. Wahlquist tried to forcibly enter a culture and land not his own. By contrast Shannon is receptive to the culture's entering her. As female is receptive to male, she is open, and in consummation learns something of her own sexuality as well. Here is woman writing certainlly, but it is writing that moves from femaleness to a deeper, flesh and blood humanity— androgynous vision after all.

To give an indication of Sillitoe's writing that is strong, trusting, unselecting (stereotypical male qualities), but that is also sensitive, introspective, mother-tongue telling, consider the passage where Shannon reads the Navajo myth of the birth of sensual pleasure.

A rare male rain beat on the windows of Shannon's classroom during lunch hour. . . . She was not even a hundred pages into the complicated tale before she had to stop and think. "What happened to the girl's parents? Why didn't she have a father?" Shannon thinks, not of her "poor fatherless" Nevada, but of her own Mormon ward. They made only a rare, veiled allusion to sexual pleasure. . . . But Navajo girls grew up with female and male gods stationed on every mountain, with misty female rain and driving
male rain, even with male and female hogans (48-49).

I quote this passage at length because it illustrates the point I wish to make. Here is a writer able to enter the mind of her character—a mind in the process of coming to greater awareness and understanding. Here is a writer able to use symbol, myth, and dream as revelatory. Here is woman writing, yes, but it is also poet writing. It is androgynous mind, "well nourished, well-educated, free mind" at liberty "to stretch itself in whatever way it likes" (Woolf, 103).

It is not so much a question of how Thayer, as a man, portrays a woman (and he does this really only once, and unsuccessfully, in "The Gold Mine," where the loquacious Mrs. Miller monopolizes the story with her talk, becoming not woman character but caricature of woman), or of how Sillitoe as a woman writer portrays male characters. It's not a question of sexist language either. It is, rather, a question of the free imagination. In this story collection Thayer seems locked into writing that is self-consciously male. Even though his declared stance as author is anti-macho, Thayer seems unable to draw characters or to write in language that is free from uni-sexuality. In "The Rooster," for example, Thayer obviously intends to draw an unflattering portrait of a macho type. Beer-bellied, crass and insensitive, this husband beds his wife in as loveless a way as he had earlier stalked a pheasant. The unconvincing thing to me is how capitulating and complicitous is the wife—a character drawn only in this final bedroom scene:

He pushed the door back quietly, stepped silently in. He closed it again and pushed the bolt, fingered it to make sure. He stood waiting for his eyes to get used to the pale light of the moonlit room. He didn't want to turn the light on. She lay on the far side of the bed, her face hidden by shadow. He couldn't tell whether she was awake or not. He stepped closer. He saw his reflection in the mirror. He didn't have a head, only a body.

"Honey," she said whispery.

He paused. His throat tightened again.

"I been waiting," she said. She pushed back the covers, exposing a heavy white arm cut off at the shoulder by a pink nightgown. "I been waiting" (75).

Clipped, male, imitative of Hemingway, this writing has no subtlety. It is heavy-handed and stereotypically male. The husband fingered the bolt as he would finger a trigger. His wife's body is drawn as mutilated victim, her "white arm cut off at the shoulder." Yet inexplicably she is waiting. Where is the motive, the unfolding? Where is the dimension and possibility for change? Where is an harmonious blend of male and female making up credible human characterization? Thayer found that blend successfully in the stories of his earlier collection, Under the Cottonwoods, where he drew characters I still remember and believe in, characters who grappled with their Mormonness and with their human frailties rather than with formless, free-floating concepts of Nature and the West.

It is as much a mistake to lock oneself into a critical construct as it is to be locked into a fictional one. There are many critical tasks that could be taken into these story collections besides the question of male and female perspectives. Thayer and Sillitoe, as talented Mormon writers, both have strengths and weaknesses.

Sillitoe's collection is certainly not without flaws. I had to make a considerable effort, for instance, to keep her different characters, with their improbable names (or maybe for Utah, hilariously probable) firmly in mind. I also felt annoyed by her often curious choice of words and turns of phrase, to say nothing of a few grammatical errors that no editor should have let pass.

And while objecting to Thayer's self-consciously virile locus, I admire descriptive passages throughout that show his marvelous awareness of the harsh beauty of the western landscape as well as certain passages dealing with the psyche that are resonant of his earlier, stronger writing.

REFERENCE

HANS KÜNG, professor of dogmatic and ecumenical theology at the University of Tübingen, is a distinguished theologian having written thirty-three or more books ranging from works on comparative religion to marianology and from the infallibility of the Pope to the relation of psychoanalysis and theology. In the United States, Küng's best known works are On Being a Christian (Doubleday, 1976) and Does God Exist? (Doubleday, 1980). But Küng's reputation here is, perhaps, not a consequence of his books, but of his controversial relationship with the Catholic Church, a relationship which earned him Pope John Paul's censure and cost him his license as a Catholic theologian. He is considered by many to be a forward-looking Catholic thinker, someone confronting the problems of Catholicism head on and offering non-traditional answers. He is considered by others to be a heretic, and probably a publicity-seeking one at that.

In this book Küng says he offers a postmodern theology (xiv). As a forward-looking thinker, that is no surprise, since postmodernism has become a buzz word of intellectual circles, both in Europe and in the Anglo-American world. Nearly everyone in academic circles is going post-modern, in spite of the violent reactions of the more intellectually conservative—or perhaps because of those reactions. It takes little reading of academic journals and few sessions at academic conferences to know that many make the move to post-modernism because it's trendy. (For some reason literature, not theology, departments are most often afflicted with these people, though the disease seems to be spreading.) The trendiness of postmodernism has given it a bad name, for as a trend it gets reduced to schmaltzy relativism on the one hand, or rebellious, simple-minded, nihilism on the other. Many who call themselves post-modernist today are merely cardboard cutout romantics with a new name.

If the discussions of postmodernism found among the trendy were anything close to the truth, post-modernism's bad name would be well-deserved. But the relation between the postmodernism of the trendy and the postmodernism of people like Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Jean-François Lyotard, to name a few, is anything but a matter of betting on a trend. In fact, it is not too much to say that the word postmodernism, as it is used among the trendy, has little more than a homonymic relation to postmodernism as it is used by such thinkers. For thinkers such as these, the move toward postmodernism results from a genuine and deep dissatisfaction with and disaffection from modernism, and a commitment to go beyond it in some way.

Postmodernism begins in the recognition that modern thought, which arose after the Renaissance and ended in about 1900 (though its remnants and effects are still very much with us), had particular characteristics, characteristics that can be called into question. For example, among other things, modern thinking insists on some presence behind the world of our experience to account for that world. That presence can be God, but it need not be. It can also be Law. It can be Reason. It can be something else. But modernism assumes that if the human world is to have any meaning at all, there must be such a presence, the general name for which is the theos. (This presence is called the theos because of its assumed parallel to the Divine in religious understandings of the world, a parallel that logically need not be an identity, though many modernists and postmodernists assume it is.)

In addition, modern thinking demands that reality be amenable to some systematic exposition of reality. That exposition can take any number of forms—Kant or Hegel, empiricism or rationalism, this or that—but some systematic exposition is required. Modernism assumes that, whatever the presence, it can be captured in systematic language and only in systematic language. Here, too, postmodernists use the parallel with religion to describe modernism: modern thinking is "theological," not because it is necessarily religious, but because it insists on a systematic account, a logos of some theos. (To distinguish them, I will use "theology" to refer to theology in the usual, narrower sense and theo-logy to describe the wider, cultural sense.)

Modern thought demands method. The demand begins with Descartes in his Discourse on the Method for Rightly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences (1637) and Rules for the Direction of the Mind (1684). After that, the demand for method is obvious at every point of modern philosophy and science and can be said to be the thing that made pre-twentieth-century science (modern science) what it was. In the twentieth century, the demand for method continues in, among other things, the demand that every graduate thesis spend considerable time discussing methodology. The modernist assumption is that the right method will give one the truth. Presence, system, method; all are rejected in postmodernism; all are intertwined in modernism; all are rejected in postmodernism.

But the rejection of presence, system, and method in postmodernism is not a romantic rebellion. Postmodernists don't argue for feeling and intuition instead of reason (i.e. presence). They don't argue for paradox instead of systematicity. They don't argue for aimlessness instead of method. From the postmodernist's point of view, such a

JAMES E. FAULCONER is the chair of the philosophy department at Brigham Young University.
rebellion against modernism is only another form of modernism created by placing a negation sign in front of the categories, demands, and values of modernism. But romantic negation accepts the values and structures of modernism, even though it reverses them. Post-modernism seeks to "go beyond" modernism without simply negating it.

I assume that Künig intends to offer us a genuine post-modernism. I assume he is dissatisfied with modernism and not merely caving in on his own trenchlessness and that of the word post-modern. And I assume Künig intends to look for and point a way out of the morass of subjectivity, science, and technology with their romantic counterparts of objectivism, sensationalism, and yeaming for a never-existent golden age, the morass we inherit as children of modernism and the Enlightenment, a morass that assimilates itself into everything, including, and sometimes especially, religion.

Unfortunately, although Künig may be looking for a way out of that morass, he doesn't point a way. Though his book is fine on particulars, overall it is confused and self-contradictory, and it is certainly not post-modern. Künig posits that his is a post-modern theology. He also says the theology he offers is a "coherent systematic whole" (xiii; and he devotes most of the book to an explication of that whole). But these two claims contradict each other. In spite of the various divergences among and arguments between the thinkers of post-modernism, they agree in their opposition to the notion of a coherent, systematic whole and the claim to finality—and authority—which necessarily accompany such a whole.

At least two problems emerge from Künig's contradiction between his aims and his means. First, Künig thinks the theological question is to be approached by clearing up doctrines and problems. He says that "without clarifying the classical conflicts, there can also be no future perspectives, no departure for new shores" (xiv). He then spends the first third of his book clarifying those conflicts and the second two-thirds offering us future perspectives and a departure for new shores. But post-modernists think theology (and, therefore, theology) is itself the problem, not the problems which occur within it. Theology itself is in question, both as the specific theology of religion and as the broader theologies of Western culture.

Post-modernism is unalterably opposed to the notion of the theos—the theological and philosophical concept of God, the coherent and systematic whole—though it is not necessarily opposed to the possibility of religion or divinity. Erich Heller says Nietzsche's attack on the theos, the origin of post-modernism's antipathy to the theos, reduced "the whole story of atheism and agnosticism before and after him to the level of respectable mediocrity and [made] it sound like a collection of announcements by bankers who regret they are unable to invest in an unsafe proposition." But if atheism has been reduced, then so has its opposite, theism. They are mutually defining. In fact, as Ricoeur, a committed believer, argues, genuine religion begins in atheism, in giving up the theological project with regard to religion.

The mediocrity of theism has made the thought-bankers lose confidence. Instead of trying to get back their confidence by bolstering the supposedly unsafe propositions, these bankers must rethink the very nature of the business in which they are engaged. They must give up banking. If theology is the problem, clarifying the conflicts which occur within theology will do nothing to get us beyond the real problem. And Künig seems unwilling to give up theo-logical banking. He disagrees with other bankers about whether one should invest in God, but he doesn't disagree that investment and banking are "where it's at." From a post-modernist point of view, therefore, Künig's theology is a theology, not for the third millennium, but for the end of the second, a last gasp rather than a first breath. (Or, if you prefer Künig's metaphor, his ship turns out to be going in circles; the "new shores" to which he would depart are the same shores as those from which he would leave.)

Mimicking Nietzsche, we might call Künig the last theologian, though the last theologian differs from the last man in that no one has yet seen an instance of Nietzsche's overman. But there may well now be at least one "over-theologian," someone who has come to a new vision of what theology is, a way of talking about God and religion that is not modernist, that is a-theo-logical instead of theo-logical. There are a variety of examples of the possibility of such a vision, but for the most obvious possibility of such an a-theo-logical re-vision of thought about the Divine for Latter-day Saints, consider the scriptures themselves. If we do not insist on imputing some theology to them as an underpinning, the stories and sermons of the scriptures serve admirably well, as do the words of inspired prophets and the testimonies of all believers.

The second problem of Künig's confusion is a consequence of the first. Unwilling to give up the standard of the coherent whole, Künig is unable to solve the dilemma of authority. He sees the problem well. He has insightful things to say about the ways in which authority shows itself and is abused. From within the framework of traditional theology, he may even have useful things to say in response. But Künig does not see that his discussion is vitiated by his claim to a unified, coherent theology.

In The Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche argues quite convincingly that the point of a theos is to suppress difference and otherness. Fearing the difference of violence, and confusing that difference with all difference, human beings constitute a theos and demand that everything be brought under the sway of that theos as a unified, coherent whole, in a theo-logy. (In religion, we confuse all difference with heresy and, therefore, demand theology.) We buy the possibility of avoiding, or at least controlling violence, but we buy it with oppression, with what we think is the only possible option. The oppression of violence brings with it oppression in general. Consequently, theo-logy, whether religious or secular, cannot avoid being oppressive since its very purpose is to oppress. (The protestation that the only difference suppressed is undesirable difference is question begging; what is undesirable within a theo-logical system is defined by the order dictated by one's theos.)

Given the authoritative function of theology, unified, coherent theology continues the demand of authority, even when it criticizes existing authority, even when it is demure in its demand. This can easily be seen in the case of politics. For medievalists, the monarch provided the link between the theos and those below the monarch. His job was to keep order, an order which made itself known through him. Modern politics rejects the oppression of the monarch—the monarch's method of keeping order—because it rejects the monarch's theos, replacing it with one which is available to each person, not only to the monarch. In modernism, Reason replaces God as the theos, even for believers. Now Reason, as it manifests itself in the individual, maintains order. But maintaining order is still essential, and maintaining order is still a matter of oppression, even when rights are guaranteed by a constitution or a bill of rights. Though the two approaches to political theory differ greatly, they agree completely on the need for a theos and the need for the theos to maintain order by suppress-
ing difference through some theology and its ministers.

In sum, every unified, coherent theology is implicitly also a claim to authority. It is a claim to the vision of order dictated by the theos. Therefore, it is also a claim to the right to suppress undesirable difference. And because, by definition, theologies are also totalizing—unified and comprehensive—nothing is excluded from their claim to authority. Because they are theologies, theologies are always a demand for the authority of their authors.

Thus, Kung's theology changes the question from what authority is and whether it should be exercised to who should exercise it and how. But because it relies upon the intellectual authority of the unified, coherent whole (modeled on the traditional notion of the authoritative god-theos, beyond the world and all becoming), unified theology cannot give up the problem of authority. Because Kung offers a theology from within theology, his book cannot get beyond the question of who should do the oppressing—and it implicitly always argues (as any alternative theology must) that the one offering the unified and coherent theology is the one who has or should have the authority. If one works within the theological tradition and assumes the necessity of some theos, the question is always one of who should oppress whom, not a question of whether there should be oppression.

But Joseph Smith's understanding of authority was anything but that of necessary oppression. Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–44 makes that quite clear. Implicit in that revelation is a notion of priesthood that is a-theological and non-authoritarian, that avoids oppression and doesn't assume that oppression is necessary to avoid violence—or heresy. Whatever authority means for genuine priesthood, it is not the authority of a theos, religious or secular. Using Ricoeur's terms, we might say that genuine priesthood is necessarily a-theistic.

In spite of its intentions, Kung's work is a subtle re-instantiation of the very problem he wants to avoid. He is another in a long line of revolutionaries who seek only to replace the old authority with a new one, their own. But post-modernism is not only a questioning of the establishment, it is also a questioning of revolution. Post-modernism is not itself a revolution, for revolution is not enough. Restoration—healing, salvation—is necessary. Kung offers only revolution. Post-modernism demands more, and the Restoration already offers something more than revolution.

The promise of the Restoration is seldom fulfilled in the work of LDS intellectuals, whether "conservative" or "liberal," because our work is almost universally theo-logical, even when it is not explicitly theological. As we move into the third millennium, rather than aiding us in a search for a non-theological way to speak of the Divine, Kung's book tempts us to re-enter the theological and theological tradition. It tempts us to remain in apostasy.

NOTES

3. In Nietzsche, the overman is the person whose being goes beyond the being of the last person. The last person is the final version of humanity under the sway of some theos, even an already "dead" one.

TCHAU, SENHOR

I take your obrigado for a threat:
"Come back," you say, "venha, Venha outra vez" for what?
For bacalhada made with trash-fish heads?
For feijoada filled with pigs' ears and feet?
I found your pig's fat tail
last Quarta-feira almoco—
Lunch for cães, seu rabo de porco.
I threw that tail to your three-legged caô
Which choked it down without a bite;
You didn't watch. You thought I ate it,
Never looking for the bones.
It must have pleased your one-eyed soul
To cut that tail from the pig's red corpse—
I hear your pious, "waste nada Deus me deu;"
See you squeeze the soggy, bloody flesh—
Meant for only your "rich" Americano's plate.
May Deus te dou all fat pig's tails, senhor,
But nada, nada will you get from me,
Not after today's fine bacalhada:
Fish heads and tails—olha aqui—
No meat: fish heads and tails over rice.
Your speckled caô smelled this
And walked away. I'm leaving, too.
Tchau, senhor. I'll eat at Black Maria's—
Stomp her baratas, not yours.
Pig's tail? Fish heads and tails?
Nada, senhor, nada mais de mim!

M. SHAYNE BELL
NEWS

WIDTSEOE "PROPHECY" MAKES THE MORMON FOLKLORE CIRCUIT

By Dennis L. Lythgoe
Adjunct Professor of History
University of Utah

"FAITH PROMOTING rumors" have a way of spreading very quickly in Mormon country. The latest one that is making its rounds in Sunday School classes, sacrament meetings, stake conferences, and numerous private meetings around Utah is called the "Widtsoe Prophecy."

Over the past several months, various Mormons have publicly read this so called "prophecy" and promoted it as "gospel." The reason for its popularity is the steady demise of communism in various parts of the world, now affecting the Soviet Union. As convenient as that seems, all the existing evidence suggests that the "Widtsoe Prophecy" is nothing more than an urban legend.

The background is this: LDS Apostle John A. Widtsoe was President of the European Mission of the Church in 1932. In July he spoke to a group of missionaries in Czechoslovakia and expressed his feelings about missionary work among Czechs and Russians. Allegedly, eleven missionaries heard him, along with Arthur Gaeth, the mission president.

According to a letter purportedly written on 30 March 1965 by one of those young missionaries, T.R. Holt, the substance of the prophecy is being fulfilled now. According to Holt's account, Widtsoe said, "Communism is the work of the devil. The Lord is using it to break down the hold of the Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches over the minds of men."

Elder Widtsoe allegedly continued: "When communism has completed its task of breaking this hold, it will pass out of existence almost over night. And then the church will send missionaries by the hundreds into the Slavic lands of Europe, including the mother land of Russia."

Claiming that there is "more of the blood of Israel in Western Russia than all the rest of Europe put together," Elder Widtsoe allegedly predicted that people will come into the Church "by the thousands. Whole villages and towns will join the Church in groups."

The Czech mission was said to be "opening the door to the Slavic nations," and the missionaries were told "some of you in this room will be called to do missionary work in Russia."

According to the written version now in circulation, Holt also made an additional comment about the experience in June 1961, remembering that Widtsoe had "instructed the missionaries to record what he was going to say."

Although this may sound like exciting and highly relevant news to Mormons, there are several problems. In the first place, Holt is not alive to talk about the account, and anything written over thirty years after the fact must be regarded with suspicion. People's memories are notoriously unreliable after the passage of many years, especially when asked to quote someone else's words. Besides, the letter itself has been re-typed, and is of uncertain origin. It was said to have been based on Holt's journal account, but his family has been unable to locate a journal.

It seems safe to conclude that Holt, or whoever wrote the letter, was using the interpretation of Russian Communism currents in the 1960s—or even in 1990—to remember the events of thirty-three years earlier. There are at least five more of the original missionaries still alive who are willing to talk about it. Martin Birie's version parallels the Holt account almost verbatim, except for the addition of the words "evil empire" to Widtsoe's alleged description of communism. Since Ronald Reagan used that term to describe communism in the 1980s, this sounds like a Reagan term artificially placed in Elder Widtsoe's mouth.

In a conversation with me, the eighty-year-old Birie, now living in St. George, said that he and other missionaries had a "feeling that some of the people we had met we had seen before. Elder Widtsoe said, 'You brethren volunteered in the pre-existence to serve a mission among the Slavic people.'" Birie remembers Widtsoe saying that "communism was needed for at least one generation to clear the minds of people of the false religious teachings." Then Birie added, "I think Gorbachev must have been raised up by the Lord to accomplish this."

When I asked him why he had used the term "evil empire" in his version, he said, "Ronald Reagan called it the 'evil empire,' and I remember growing up in Cache Valley that church leaders called communism an 'evil empire.'" I asked him if he had written

AS A TEENAGER:
I HOPE MY FRIENDS REALIZE THAT MORMONS ARE JUST NORMAL PEOPLE. I HOPE THEY DON'T THINK WE'RE WEIRD LIKE THE PURITANS OR AMISH.

AS AN ADULT:
I WISH UTAH/MORMON CULTURE WOULDN'T BE SO MODERN AND TACKY. I WISH WE WERE A PURER AND SIMpler PEOPLE—LIKE THE AMISH.
THE BROOKIE AND D.K. BROWN MEMORIAL FICTION CONTEST deadline for short stories dealing with LDS issues is 15 June 1990. Authors may submit a total of three stories in two categories: short stories (6,000 word limit) and short short stories (1,000 word limit). See the October or December 1989 issues of SUNSTONE for the complete announcement or contact the Sunstone Foundation, 331 Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1136 (801)355-5926.

THE CANADIAN MORMON STUDIES ASSOCIATION will be holding a conference in Lethbridge, Alberta, at the University of Lethbridge, June 20-24. The theme of the conference is "Mormons in Canada: Local and Comparative Perspectives." The conference will include scholarly and folk components, with academic contributors being drawn from various disciplines and professions, and local and comparative perspectives will be highlighted in four keynote lectures that will consider the Mormon community from the viewpoints of anthropology, geography, history, and sociology. Another plenary lecture will illuminate the Mormon experience in Canada through an examination of the life histories of four generations of women in a prominent Canadian Mormon family. Clusters of papers will focus on topics as diverse as the Canadian organizational structures of churches of American origin and Mormons in the history of Upper Canada. Other sessions will include papers on such disparate subjects as Mormons and the Alberta sugar beet industry, perceptions of Mormons in a small Alberta town, Mormon polygyny in Canada, and the Alberta Temple's symbolism. Roundtable sessions will also examine Mormon relations with southern Alberta's Indians, and the scholarly use of the diaries of G.O. Card, the founder of Canada's first Mormon settlement. Lay and academic authorities will draw upon their expertise as participants in the culture as they discuss selected aspects of Canadian Mormon art, writing, drama, film, music, and sport, as well as the creation of family and community histories.

The public is cordially invited to participate in the conference, and may register for the duration by or by the day. Enquiries concerning the conference should be addressed to: Conference Services, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, T1K 3M4, or (403)329-2244.

THE LDS AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL AWARENESS GROUP publishes Let's Talk, a newsletter addressing racial issues in the Church. It aims "to assist in resolving concerns that African-American investigators may have regarding the Church; to assist African-Americans with the transition into the gospel; to enhance our African-American culture; to educate Latter-day Saints about African Americans." U.S. subscriptions are $7.50 per year (six issues); Canada and overseas, $9.00. Single copies are $1.25; back issues, $2.00. Editorial and subscription mailing address: PO Box 50573, Provo, UT 84605-0573.

THE MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION will hold its annual meetings at the BYU-Hawaii campus on 10-17 June 1990. For further information contact program chair Martha Sonntag Bradley, 4611 Belmore Way, Salt Lake City, UT 84117. Larry Gelwix of Morris Travel has arranged for a package which will cost approximately $825 for six nights and seven days. This includes air travel from Salt Lake City, housing, all meals, and several additional activities. An optional side trip to Maui costs extra. For reservations and information write: Larry Gelwix, Morris Travel, 260 East Morris Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT.

MORMON WOMEN'S FORUM will present Eliza R. Snow, a play by Mary Bell, on 26 April 1990 at 7:00 PM at the Fine Arts Auditorium, University of Utah. A $2.00 donation is requested.

THE MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART has announced an international art competition and exhibition to encourage LDS artists to depict scriptural themes in quality works of art. Artists may submit one recent work in any artistic medium. Juried by a panel of six persons will take place in two stages. Slides for the first round are due at the museum no later than 30 November 1990. The jury will later review a smaller group of actual works selected in the first screening. Up to $13,000 will be awarded in cash prizes. Up to $30,000 will be used to purchase art for the museum. Winners will be announced and exhibited on 29 March 1991 and will be exhibited through 2 September 1991. Entry forms containing additional information on submission requirements are available from the Museum of Church History and Art, 45 North West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150 (801)240-2299.

PLOTTING ZION, a symposium on communal societies, will be sponsored by the Sunstone Foundation on 3-5 May 1990 at the Excelsior Hotel in Provo, UT. Proposals are now being accepted.

WASHINGTON D.C.: SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held 7-8 April 1990. For more information or to submit proposals contact Donald Gustason, 413 Clearfield Avenue, Torrington, CT 06790 (203)496-7090.

The Sunstone Calendar reports events and notices of Mormon-related organizations. Submissions are requested.

---

Liberating  Heartfelt  insightful
Amusing  Thought-provoking  Tender
Thrilling  Irresistible  Passionate
Perceptive  Sincere  Outrageous
Ingenious  Savvy  Probing
Empathetic  Emotional  Humorous

All of these words describe just one thing:

network®

A Utah publication for women and adventurous men.
Subscribe today!
Mail this coupon to us today with your check for $12 and your first issue will be in the mail immediately!

NAME: ____________________________
ADDRESS: _______________________
CITY/ST/ZIP: ______________________

() BILL ME  () PAYMENT ENCLOSED (THANKS!)
network'155 East 4905 South/SLC, UT 84107/(801)262-6682
this account in his journal, and he said, "Well, I think I do have it." Why, then, did his account com-
pare almost word for word with Holt's account? Ririe said that Holt had been his companion, and
Holt's account was much more complete than his own, and so he had used the Holt account to write his
own.

A third missionary, Joseph Toronto, Provo, read to me from his journal, and it seems the most cre-
dible source. He says the cor-
rect day was 11 July 1932, and that Elder Widtsoe claimed there was "more of the blood of Israel
in Russia and the Slavic countries
then in all of Europe put together,
and thousands will come into the
city," the phrase common to the
other two accounts. That is
where the similarity ends. Mr.
Toronto recalls no mention of
communism, nor the Catholic or Russian
Orthodox Churches. In fact,
 neither his journal nor an existing
leter he wrote home include
those terms.

Another missionary, Spencer
Taggart, Logan, recalls nothing at
all of the Widtsoe statement and
is convinced that it is not legitimate. Allen Olsen, also of
Logan, said, "T. R. Holt said to me a few years ago, 'Do you remember
when Elder Widtsoe talked about communism?' and I said, 'No, I don't'; and he said, 'Well, I do, because I wrote it down,' and that's all I remember about it." Heber E. Hansen of Spanish Fork
admits to having been "kinda lax
about keeping a journal," but also
has no recollection of the
prophecy.

The bottom line is that of the
five missionaries I could track
down, only one supports the pro-
phesy (Ririe) and his credibility
is low, because he essentially copied it from the Holt account and inserted Ronald Reagan's modern
day phrase into it.

Actually, LDS Apostle Melvin J.
Ballard also talked of this same
subject in a conference address in
April 1930. He said, "I am sure also that God is moving in Russia.

Much as we are disturbed over the
whimsy and the oppression that is
waged against religion in that land
today, it is not a new thing, for that
has been the order for ages. But I
can see God moving also in
preparing the way for other events
that are to come. The field that has
gone to wild oats needs to be
plowed up and harrowed and
prepared for a new seed. So in
Russia it may seem appalling to
us, but it is God breaking up and
destroying an older order of things, and the process will be
the accomplishment of God's pur-
poses within a very short period of
time, which normally may have
taken generations. But that people
will come back, for I bear witness
that there are thousands of the
blood of Israel in that land, and
God is preparing the way for
them."

Ballard's reference to "a very
short period of time, which nor-
maIly may have taken genera-
tions," could be used by apologists
for the prophecy to explain the
Widtsoe reference to communism
passing out of existence "almost
over night."

It's true that John A. Widtsoe
was in Czechoslovakia in 1932,
because he referred to it in his
autobiography, In a Sunlit Land,
published in 1952. He spoke of
the Czech mission and the calling
of Arthur Gaeth as president. He
said, "if the gospel could be
brought to the Czechs, a Slavic
people, it seemed as if it might be
a door to the mighty Slavic na-
tions. Russia, with its great
population, must some day hear
the gospel."

Widtsoe also recorded in his
own journal that he spoke to the
missionaries, but he only listed
topics he intended to cover, in-cluding "proselytizing" and
"socialism," without elaboration. In
another account did Elder Widtsoe
indicate any strong feelings about
communism nor repeat the pro-
phesy related by Holt and Ririe.

Historically, it would seem that
if there were any truth to the "Widtsoe Prophecy" that the man
who uttered it would have thought
it important enough to mention it
in his own journal, especially if he
had instructed the missionaries to
record it in theirs. It must be con-
cluded then that current evidence
provides no credence at all to this
improbable story.

So from now on, anyone who is
tempted to read the "prophecy"
over a pulpit and announce it as
an exciting new discovery would
be better off to cool it.

VOICE FROM ABROAD

AUSTRALIAN MORMON
STUDIES ASSOCIATION

By Marjorie Newton
Sunstone Correspondent

AUSTRALIA—-I thought you might
be interested to know that with
encouragement from Leonard Arr-
nington and Bingham Card, a group
of us finally got together and on
27 October 1989 organized the
Australian Mormon Studies Associa-
tion, largely modeled on the
Canadian Mormon Studies Associa-
tion.

The first meeting was an
interesting experience. About
twenty (all LDS) attended for the
purpose of formally organizing.

When the proposal was put to the
vote (I was chairing the meetings)
I expected a unanimous vote see-
ing that as was why we had met.

So I was somewhat taken aback
when two negative votes were
cast. These two were horrified at
the idea of papers being given and
possibly, wait out for light,ing,
circulated. They took notes
assiduously throughout the
meeting. Some felt they were going
to rush off and "tell on us; we are
not quite sure to whom. I'm not
too worried since our stake presi-
dent wished us well and wished
he had time to be involved.

They have come back and seem to
enjoy themselves.

Anyway, the organization
exists and those who attend our
monthly meetings are enjoying it.

William H. (Bill) Delves, former
president of the Sydney Stake, was
elected president, with young
Sydney solicitor and mother-of-
three Kim Rosser as president-
elect. Kim's husband Doug is
secretary. Because we have so few
LDS academics in Australia, we are
covering general LDS topics, but in
the Australian context, with the
hope of encouraging more
research and scholarship on
aspects of the Church in Australia.

Our meetings are held the first Fri-
day of each month, and everyone is
welcome—LDS, RLDS, non-LDS.

February's meeting was a
historic occasion—three leading
brethren form the RLDS church
attended, including the RLDS
region president, Jack Irmie. There
has been a long history of bit-
terness between the two groups in
Australia, and we felt this was a
landmark occasion. One from the
RLDS group, Eric Selden, was
involved for years in the process
which led to the ordination of
RLDS women—his wife is now an
elder. They agreed to present a
paper in April on this topic and its
effects on the Church and their
lives.

One interesting phenomenon
I have noticed is that the Church
Education System people, whom
I though would be keenly
interested in the organization, are
all too busy. I think they may be
frightened of being associated with
us. Time will either allay the fears
of the nervous or convince them
they were right to remain aloof.

Anyway, the organization
exists and those who attend our
monthly meetings are enjoying it.
William H. (Bill) Delves, former
president of the Sydney Stake, was
elected president, with young
Sydney solicitor and mother-of-
three Kim Rosser as president-
elect. Kim's husband Doug is
secretary. Because we have so few
LDS academics in Australia, we are
covering general LDS topics, but in
the Australian context, with the
hope of encouraging more
research and scholarship on
aspects of the Church in Australia.

Our meetings are held the first Fri-
day of each month, and everyone is
welcome—LDS, RLDS, non-LDS.

February's meeting was a
historic occasion—three leading
brethren from the RLDS church
attended, including the RLDS
region president, Jack Irmie. There
has been a long history of bit-
terness between the two groups in
Australia, and we felt this was a
landmark occasion. One from the
RLDS group, Eric Selden, was
involved for years in the process
which led to the ordination of
RLDS women—his wife is now an
elder. They agreed to present a
paper in April on this topic and its
effects on the Church and their
lives.

One interesting phenomenon
I have noticed is that the Church
Education System people, whom
I thought would be keenly
interested in the organization, are
all too busy. I think they may be
frightened of being associated with
us. Time will either allay the fears
of the nervous or convince them
they were right to remain aloof.

Anyway, the organization
exists and those who attend our
monthly meetings are enjoying it.
THE ASSOCIATION FOR MORMON LETTERS
Given at the Annual Symposium, Salt Lake City, Utah 27 January 1990.

Special Recognition in 1990
To Sunstone
for continuing support of Mormon drama
In the beginning [Wright 1975] was "Fires of the Mind," followed by "A Summer in the Country" (1976), which led inevitably to "Father, Mother, Mother, Mom" [Summer 1977]—and Sunstone stood alone in its support of this impudent handwriting.

When in November, 1987, Sunstone published "Burdens of Earth" by Susan Howe, the magazine made the drama of its origins an integral part of its future, instituting with that issue the annual publication of a Mormon play. Robert Elliott, David Wright, Orson Scott Card, and Susan Howe have now been joined by Robert Frederick Lauer in 1988 with "Digger" and again in 1989 with "The Beehive State."

As the only LDS publication regularly printing Mormon drama, Sunstone performs a valuable service for the advancement of Mormon letters. For this Quixotic, heroic and generously undertaking, the Association for Mormon Letters wishes to honor Sunstone and its editors: Scott Kerney, Allen Roberts, Peggy Fletcher, and Elbert Peck, themselves characters in the continuing drama of Mormon literature.

Special Recognition in 1990
Signature Books
for continuing support of Mormon literature
Over the years, Signature Books has been a strong and generous friend to the Association for Mormon Letters, by donating to the Association's awards and by publishing so many books to which those awards have gone—and more, a friend to all writers and readers of all forms of Mormon literature, by publishing and reprinting much, but not most, of the best we now have: pioneer diaries and letters; bibliographies and indexes; historical and doctrinal studies; novels including Douglas Thayer's Summer Fire, Levi Peterson's The Backslider, Linda Sillitoe's Sideways to the Sun, and Larry Morris's The Edge of the Sun; cartoon collections like the works of Calvin Grondahl and Pat Bagley; and most thought-provoking, the poems of language she has stolen from us—of language that was once our only way of speaking. And, without making us "mourn our sister," the Association congratulates and thanks Signature Books, its publisher, and its editors, for their good service to the community of Mormon readers and their persistent dedication to bringing forth so much that is informative, entertaining, thoughtful, and thought-provoking.

An Award In Criticism For 1989
Michael Hicks
Mormonism and Music: A History

During the 1980s, Michael Hicks's curiosity about Mormonism's musical roots, which he pursued while in graduate school in Illinois, emerged in several articles in a variety of journals and magazines on topics ranging from the provenance of hymn texts to the record the settlement straight on just who really requested John Taylor to sing "A Poor Wayfarin Man of Grief" in Carthage Jail. Now in his new book, Mormonism and Music, Hicks propels him to the forefront of LDS scholarship: somewhere along the way, Michael Hicks's voice has learned to speak with authority. This book is an authoritative, essential guide to proving of permanent value. Mormon poems are lucky to have found a critic at once so understanding, careful, and aware of the high seriousness of his task.

An Award In The Essay For 1989
Emma Lou Thayne
As for Me and My House

In a tradition of the personal essay going back to Montaigne, emphasizing the scrutiny of highly individual, sometimes commonplace thoughts and experiences in order to draw out their wider meaning, these "sustained meditations on household keeping and homemaking" (xxv) evoke an intensely lived life in a simple yet richly suggestive style. "Keeping house" becomes a powerful metaphor for the bond between generations, as the author looks back to the experience of her grandparents and forward to the individual households established by her five daughters. The collection rings several different chords from the brief "On Learning by Being There," "As Housekeeping Was Being Saved from Domestic Tranquility" to the moving account of the death of a newborn grandson in "On Learning by Being There." But the essays possess a remarkably unique tone of beauty, as well, a result of the author's capacity to see her life whole while still retaining a strong sense of its multiplicity.

And Award In Poetry For 1989
Susan Howe
"Things in the Night Sky"

In language she has stolen from us when we weren't listening, and worked so sparingly and mercilessly the only trace she left is how the poems fit our mouths like things we've not owned for a long time. The achievements include another novel; the challenge of a new world, formed after the old one we used to live in; the movement of self-conscious about saying so, gives us the words to smash our world.

While she cannot deliver us "from the little narrow prison almost as we see it today," she can deliver us "from the small, broken prison our pens and ink and crooked broken scattered and imperfect language." She gives us at last the words we may use to help us from here to there across a window, whether we sit upon what will be or might be at all our words were verse.

Recalling scattered thought in words disciplined by love and by skill, she helps us to perform the play of language that was once only our and our chief delight--before the burdens of Earth became our occupation.

A Howe poem gives us thought for food.

An Award in The Short Story For 1989
Pauline Mortensen
Back Before the World Turned Nasty

Pauline Mortensen's collection Back before the World Turned Nasty contains the stories she wrote in her personal essays. They are dramatic meditations, explorations into vocation, personal dominion, and the powers of narrative to transform perception into purest form and to incantations, accomplished because Mortensen limits her range and consideration, focusing not on the entire universe but on the specific conditions of blood and inheritance. The voice of the first person narrator, as she struggles to clear philosophical space for herself, is one of the most fully realized in Mormon fiction. Mortensen has established a narrative position which transcends cultural limitations. The narrator is complex—at once ironic, loving, cynical, compassionate, and coldly introspective; she exists outside of the consciousness of others instead of illusion the forces which impinge on her. Mortensen's other characters are full as well, never caricatures; they speak and work without traces of authorial contrivance. This is accomplished because Mortensen possesses an empathy toward her own roots which goes beyond both apologia and condescension and because she carefully controls the narrative moment. Despite this control, she relinquishes power to her intuition, allowing the stories to deepen beyond rationality. Because her prose is both highly crafted and exploratory, it is as if she invites readers to create with her, to look over her shoulder as she uses language to shape her unique perceptions, to construct a solitary place to stand. Discovering Mortensen's voice is like finding an arrowhead, carefully formed that it seems an aspect of nature, as rough and fine-hard as reality.

An Award In The Novel For 1989
Judith Freeman
The Chinchilla Farm

The Chinchilla Farm, a first novel that follows a well-received collection of stories, Family Attractions (New York: Viking, 1988), is the story of Verna, a gentle-souled blue-collar woman, who first leaves the Church and then finally Utah, as she embarks on a journey of self-discovery that takes her not only through the American West but also through the landscape of her own memory. Central to those memories is the image of a chinchilla farm run by her old neighbor in northern Utah. As a child, and even later as an adult, Verna is fascinated by the notion that chinchillas mate for life, a behavior that contradicts the way she uses language to shape her unique perceptions. Verna's memory of the farm and the old neighbor who ran it seems an aspect of nature, both innocent and hard as reality.

The Association for Mormon Letters congratulates Judith Freeman on this strong, vivid debut for her art as a novelist.

AML CELEBRATES MORMON WRITERS

By Jessie Embry

HAVING RECENTLY DONE some research on the literary images of polygamy in The Giant Joshua, I decided to present my conclusions to those who regularly critique Mormon works of fiction, the Association for Mormon Letters. The day was a delightful chance to talk to old friends, meet new people, and share reactions to Mormon studies.

The first two papers about the characters in Virginia Sorensen's novels were especially interesting to me since I just read five of her books, including all of the novels that were discussed. LuDene F. Dallimore, a professor of English at Weber State, and Grant T. Smith, a Ph.D. candidate from the University of Iowa, described some of Sorensen's female characters. Dallimore argues that Mercy in A Little Lower than the Angels, Zina in Many Heavens, and Kate in The Evening and Mormonism represent not just three women in a closed society but are examples of all women who struggle to find meaning in a patriarchal society. Smith looked at the communities that Kate rejected and relationships she formed with her daughter and granddaughter during her visit to Sanpete County. Smith commented that many of the remarks were in response to an article Bruce Jorgensen wrote in the 1970s about The Evening and Morning. In the question and answer period, Jorgensen explained that with his research on self he had changed some of his views of Kate, but he felt everyone took the last chapter of the novel too symbolically. Having just read the novels for pure enjoyment with an eye for historical accuracy, it was especially interesting to hear discussions of symbolism and details that I had missed. I didn't realize having heroines die in plural marriage novels was a pattern or that Kate's six-day trip was drawn from the six creation days, for example.

The next two papers were on Maurine Whipple. I talked about the "overworked stereotypes" in The Giant Joshua. I especially enjoyed the comments afterwards. I was arguing that the Macintyre family had many of the stereotypes that we cherish about polygamy that I had attempted to disprove in Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle. Linda Sillitoe pointed out that Joshua's strength is its ability to deal with the emotionalism that so many people have not been able to talk about in polygamy. John Sillito said that many of the objections I made about Joshua were true of histories written during the same time period. Bruce Jorgensen asked if Whipple, like Nathaniel Hawthorne, had used the stereotypes to make a statement about the time, an idea which I had not considered. Katherine Ashton, a graduate of Westminster College (where the conference was held) had written a paper called "Whatever Happened to Maurine Whipple?" Weaving information from Whipple's papers at BYU and an interview she conducted with Maurine in 1988, Ashton described some of Whipple's life experiences. At the time Whipple was living in a retirement complex with her cat Kitty and spent most of her time reading.

In his presidential address, Levi Peterson commented about how much smaller AML was than the Mormon History Association (MHA), but then explained AML was the "Unlikely Skirmisher in the Battle of Books." He divided into two arenas: the marketplace and the forum. While books are published in the marketplace based on a supply and demand, books for the forum are necessary for looking deeper into the Mormon experience. AML helps to encourage these books by giving awards and providing opportunities for authors to share ideas.

In the afternoon, Patricia Aikins, an English professor at Westminster College, talked about the stories in Neal Chandler's Benediction. Her personal experiences and her reaction to the book had the same effect on me that my paper had on some people. I wanted to read Benediction and it sounded like the perfect gift for me to give my sister for Christmas!

John Sillito and Constance Lieber have just published Letters from Exile, the letters of Martha Hughes Cannon to her husband Agnes Cannon while she was "on the underground" in England. With excerpts of the Cannon letters, Sillito explained the effects of polygamy on Cannon and pointed out the importance of using letters like hers to better understand Mormon polygamy.

Jean Waterstradt, a retired BYU English professor, noted how gender-exclusive language is increasingly offensive to younger ears and lamented that the Church was not more sensitive to de-sexing its new hymnal. She identified every gender-exclusive item in the songbook and noted which ones should not be changed for various reasons (tradition, being one) but showed how most could be unobtrusively corrected, such as changing "a brother" to "another."

After spending the day with these lettered Mormons, I regret that I could not hear the award winners (see adjoining page) read from the works at a dinner that evening. But as one of the members of that larger organization that Levi Peterson talked about (MHA), I came away with a desire to be involved in AML as well.

RESEARCH REQUESTS

IRENE BATES is doing a study on the office of the Patriarch to the Church and for her chapter on themes contained in patriarchal blessings needs copies of blessings given by the Church Patriarch, especially in the twentieth century. She, of course, will maintain confidentiality and will only quote from them with permission of the receiver or his or her descendant. Contact: Irene Bates, 17727 Tramonto Drive, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 (213/454-3996).

AML award winners: Dennis Clark, Emma Lou Thayne, Susan Howe, Pauline Mortensen and, Michael Hicks.
VATICAN WARNS AGAINST YOGA, ZEN

A RECENT Vatican document approved by Pope John Paul II cautions that Eastern meditation such as Zen and yoga 'can degenerate into a cult of the body' that debases Christian prayer.

Although 'the movement toward openness and exchanges' between religious cultures was not condemned, the use of prescribed techniques for posture and breathing and 'concentrating on oneself ... can create a kind of rut, imprisoning the person praying in a kind of spiritual privatism,' the document said.

It warned that 'some physical exercises automatically produce a feeling of quiet and relaxing, pleasing sensations, perhaps even into a cult of the body' that debases Christian prayer.

To take such feeling for the authentic consolations of the Holy Spirit would be a totally erroneous way of conceiving the spiritual life.

Having such an experience, 'when the moral condition of the person concerned does not correspond to such an experience ... would represent a kind of mental schizophrenia which would also lead to psychic disturbance and, at times, moral deviations.'

Since many of the initial press reports cited the more harshly-phrased passages, much of the reaction to the letter was negative. But in a New York Times column Peter Steinfels, former editor of the Catholic magazine Commonweal, said the wording was much more measured than assumed. As an example, he quoted the document's insistence that Eastern approaches should not 'be rejected out of hand simply because they are not Christian.'

"Union with God is a grace, not something that can be mastered by any spiritual technique" said Steinfels, explaining the content of the document. "Euphoric states must not be confused with prayer or assumed to be signs of the presence of God, a state that should always result in loving service to others. Without these truths ... meditation, which should be a flight from the self, can degenerate into a form of self-absorption."

Steinfels quoted several clergymen, including Trappist monk Thomas Keating, founder of the Catholic Contemplative Outreach movement, that "Eastern mystics are just as cautious as this document" about mistaking psychological states resulting from meditation "for some great enlightenment."

The document, issued by Vatican orthodox watchdog the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, did not name any individuals or movements that had strayed in the use of Eastern meditation practices.

GOD OF LIGHT AND CELLULOID

CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIAN movie company Jeremiah Films, which presented The God Makers as an "expose of what the Mormon church really believes," is distributing a new film called Gods of the New Age.

Jeremiah Films' promotional materials claim the picture reveals "how the paganism that has all but paralyzed India is quickly being absorbed into Western culture ... why yoga, meditation, psychological therapy and self-help are turning millions to a pagan worldview while being taught in our seminaries, churches and schoolrooms."

The film contains "interviews with mystical teachers and ... international authorities on religious movements" to clarify the differences between evangelical Christianity and New Age beliefs, and to enumerate the "alarmingly similar similarities between today's society and the Europe that brought forth Adolf Hitler's Third Reich a generation ago," and sees a "one-world religion that is all too quickly emerging ... fulfilling Biblical prophecy in the most astounding detail!"

Like The God Makers, which drew considerable response (Gilbert Scharff's The Truth About The God Makers), Gods of the New Age is eliciting protest from many who feel targeted by it. U.S.-based Hinduism Today has received "numerous complaints" about the movie, says managing editor Swami Arumagam Katir, who calls it a "viciously anti-Hindu video"

Although The God Makers co-author Dave Hunt calls the film a "gripping and accurate expose of an incredible deception," Katir claims that many of the movie's assertions are "totally false, misleading and inflammatory statements about Hinduism ... Were this a film about the Jews, it would be roundly condemned as anti-Semitic"

AMERICANS STILL WATCH TELEVANGELISTS

DESpite widespread skepticism toward TV evangelists, many Americans continue to tune in to religious programs. According to a recent Gallup survey, 78 percent of 1,238 respondents said televangelists were untrustworthy, and 71 percent called them dishonest, but 21 percent—down 4 points from 1987—said they had watched some religious programming in the past seven days. Evangelicals, southerners, and individuals over 50 who either do not have a high school diploma or whose annual income was $20,000 each, comprised between 30 and 38 percent of the continued viewers. As in 1988, 5 percent of the respondents had donated money to a TV minister in the past 13 months. (Religion Watch)

BATMAN IN PHILIPPINES RATINGS WAR

SEVERAL THEATER owners in Manila are expecting sellout crowds for the movie Batman, but 22 of the city's theaters have forgone the opportunity to cash in on the film's popularity in order to provide another show—church services.

"Church services are becoming increasingly popular because a revival is sweeping the country," says Fred Maghanu, managing director of Far East Broadcasting Company in the Philippines. In other parts of the world, you have churches converted into restaurants or discos. But here we have theaters converted into church buildings."

The charismatic movement has altered Filipino evangelical Christianity significantly, giving impetus to its spread into the middle and upper classes, and apparently influencing the form of the worship in traditional meetings. "Baptists never used to raise their hands or spend thirty minutes singing praise," Maghanu says. Now such charismatic elements are a regular part of the services, which have even lengthened from one to two hours to accommodate more singing, praying, and hour-long sermons.
SHORTLY AFTER the Church announced that it was building a temple in the Salt Lake City suburb of Bountiful, land speculation near the site bottle-rocked. The city renamed the street to Temple View Drive, and developers rushed to sell inspirational lots to the faithful. Granada Hills Subdivision, which was already under construction, was no exception, even though Bountiful natives doubt whether one can actually see the new temple from the houses a half-mile away.

LATTER-DAY PROFITS

TWO RECENT commercial transactions for three historic LDS volumes have the Mormon rare books community buzzing about a dramatic increase in prices and the possibility of a resurgence in collecting rare LDS books.

Reports that a first edition Hawaiian Book of Mormon (1835) was sold to dealers Lyndon and Nathaniel Cook for $15,000 and resold to a private buyer for $20,000 circulated this January; the same buyer reportedly also purchased a Book of Commandments and Emma Smith's A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter-day Saints together for $100,000 from a different source. The latter transaction represents a major rise in prices from the last known sale of either item: a Book of Commandments last sold for $33,000; the last Emma Smith Hymnal (in which Mark Hofmann forged an inscription on the flyleaf) went for $18,000.

THE TIMES ARE A CHANGING

In recent Student Review editorial, Associate Publisher Eric Wilson listed some evidences of the new winds blowing at BYU. "Just think, women are wearing jeans; men are going unshaven and sockless with reckless abandon; the Peace Corps is recruiting on campus (which was forbidden under President Wilkinson); The Daily Universe has defended the right of someone not to salute the flag; Miss BYU, once the embodiment of feminine virtue, has been branded an exploitation of women; and the attempt to guard against the plague of R-rated video parties and coed jacuzzis with off-campus R.A.s has been squelched by student uprisings. It appears that the boys and girls of the "B.Y." are starting to think they are adults."
1990 SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM WEST

MARCH 1990 PASADENA, CALIF.

AUDIO TAPES

#1 PERSPECTIVES ON RACE AND RELIGION
   Panel: Stokes, Mauss, Johnson, Leung, Jackson

#2 JOSEPH SMITH VISITS REDWOOD FIRST WARD
   Samuel W. Taylor

#3 THE CUTLERITES: Microcosm of Early Mormon Folk Magic
   Michael S. Rigg
   SALT LAKE TEMPLE DEDICATION: 6-24 April 1899
   Brian H. Stuy

#4 EFFECTS OF SEXISM ON MEN
   Jennifer Rees Stanfield, J. Mayer

#5 THE VALUE CRISIS
   Eugene Kovalenko

#8 THE BOOK OF MORMON AND PROVIDENTIAL VIEW OF HISTORY
   Dan Vogel

#10 MONOLOGUES AND DIALOGUES, 4TH SERIES
   Robert A. Rees

#11 MODERN DAY PARALLELS IN FORGERY
   Cole R. Capener

#12 MASCULINITY? FEMINITY?
   Insights into roles and Responsibilities
   Alison Walker

#13 THE CHURCH AND WAR
   Mark S. Lee
   MORRONS IN THE MILITARY
   Raymond Takashi Swenson

#15 CLINICAL TREATMENT OF SEXUAL SELF-DEFINITION
   David R. Shepherd
   THE MEDICAL DOCTOR AND GAIETY
   Victor J. Bumer

#16 THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORMON NEO-ORTHOODOXY
   Olsen, E. Silva, D. Rector

#17 FAITHFUL VS UNFAITHFUL HISTORY
   Panel: Bates, Lyman, Nielsen, Hardy

#18 WHATS THE MATTER WITH KIDS TODAY?
   Langlois, Downey, Von Wagonen, R & D Miller

#19 SCHOLARS EVALUATE THE WORKS OF HUGH NIBLEY: Compton, Greaves, Dundas & Ashment

#20 MORMONS IN THE ARTS
   A Kinder, Gentler World?
   Littke, Davidson, Rohrer, C. L. Pearson, Burton

#21 CARING FOR THE CHRONICALLY ILL AND ELDERLY
   Lang, Hodge, Frandsen, Edwards, G. Littke

#22 OLD AGE AIN'T FOR SISSYS
   PANEL: Mortensen, McIntyre, Jones

#24 MORMON PERSPECTIVES ON REGIONAL CONFLICTS
   Congressman Wayne Owens
   Scott Smith

#25 TOLERANCE
   Dennis Prager

ORDERING INFORMATION

INDIVIDUAL TAPES
1-5 TAPES PURCHASED...$6.00 EA.
6-15 TAPES PURCHASED...$5.50 EA.
16-+ TAPES PURCHASED $5.00 EA

FULL SET OF TAPES..........$95.00 PLUS TAX
(6.75% Calif.)
Please add appropriate shipping charges
(.50 PER TAPE $6.00 MAX --FULL SET $6.00)

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO:

CONFERENCE AUDIO SERVICES
806 LOMBARD STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94133
415-775-TAPE