

MORMONS FARMS BATTLING THE ANTIMORMONOIDS

Many of our readers may be puzzled by the title of this article. When speaking of FARMS we are not referring to places where people cultivate the soil or milk cows, but rather to an organization known as the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies. This Foundation goes by the acronym **FARMS**. It is a non-profit organization that claims to be independent of the Mormon Church yet vigorously defends its teachings. The term "antimormonoid" will be explained below.

"SHADOWS OF REALITY"

It is obvious that many of those who write for FARMS view us and others who question Mormon doctrine with contempt. Professor Louis Midgley, of Brigham Young University, refers to us as, "the Tanners (those **shadows of reality** who operate the anti-Mormon Utah Lighthouse Ministry)." (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 5, page 152)

In a footnote on page 139 of the same book, Professor Midgley refers to Mormon critics as "antimormonoids": "This is typical of the exaggerations of the extremist faction of **antimormonoids** . . . The more moderate faction of **antimormonoids** is best illustrated by the late Reverend Wesley P. Walters, who generally tended to be more circumspect on such matters." On the following page, Midgley admits that the term "antimormonoids" is "a somewhat **contemptuous label** formulated by BYU Professor Daniel C. Peterson." Interestingly, Peterson serves as editor of the FARMS publication, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*.

Professor Midgley says he is amused by the actions of "antimormonoids" and is "hooked" on the practice of observing their odd behavior:

. . . The dreadful formulaic and pedestrian character of anti-Mormon literature, the prosaic business of **incompetents** endlessly quoting each other and hence erecting an ever more rickety house of cards, the constant repetition of borrowed bromides . . . is all **entertaining**, at least to me. . . One might even say I am **hooked on the stuff**. I have even corresponded with some of those "**antimormonoids**." My wife warns me about the utter futility of such behavior. And she is not mollified by my descriptions of the amusing side of anti-Mormon literature. . . . I occasionally resolve to leave the stuff alone. But . . . like one who cannot pass the swinging doors of a bar, I am back into it again. (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, pp. 139-140)

For the most part Mormon leaders have quietly tried to avoid dealing with those who have raised questions regarding such things as the practice of polygamy in early Mormonism, the authenticity of the Book of Mormon, and other problems.

While two Mormon apostles sent letters stating that they would sue us, both of them backed off when they found that we would not acquiesce to their threats to cease publishing certain information they did not want their people to know about (see photographs of their letters in our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 12-13). A student at the church's Brigham Young University did file a lawsuit against us, and even though he was supported in his endeavor by the university's Religious Studies Center the suit was unsuccessful.

Notwithstanding the intimidation that was used to keep us from revealing the truth, Mormon leaders have **never** put forth

SOME SPECIAL OFFERS

OFFERS GOOD UNTIL AUGUST 31, 1996
(Mail orders add 10% - Minimum postage \$1.50)

ANSWERING MORMON SCHOLARS, VOL. 2

By Jerald and Sandra Tanner

Shows that the Book of Mormon is not an historical record. Also reveals that there is no evidence for either Book of Mormon archeology or geography.

Regular Price: \$6.00 — **Special Price: \$5.00**

Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?

*** NOW ON CD-ROM ***

This PC compatible disc also contains the original editions of the standard works of the Mormon church, *View of the Hebrews* and other books. Sells for \$50.00 in bookstores, but is available from Utah Lighthouse Ministry for **only \$40.00** plus shipping.

ANOTHER FREE BOOK!

With every order of **\$25.00 or more** we will send a free copy of ***Major Problems of Mormonism***, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. This book normally sells for \$6.95. A returned Mormon missionary recently read this book and decided to leave Mormonsim and become a youth pastor.

NOTICE: You must tell us if you want the free book.

Extra Newsletters Free at the Bookstore – By Mail: 5 for \$1.00 - 25 for \$3.00

any official rebuttal. While we have waited in vain for some type of response, they have maintained **a conspiracy of silence for thirty-seven years.**

In 1982, Apostle Marvin J. Ashton pleaded with his people to simply ignore those who find fault with the church:

Whether accusations, innuendoes, aspersions, or falsehoods are whispered or **blatantly shouted**, the gospel of Jesus Christ reminds us that we are **not to retaliate nor contend**. . . . we declare **there is no time for contention**. . . . Probably we will never be free of those who are openly anti-Mormon. Therefore, we encourage **all our members to refuse to become anti-anti-Mormon.** (*The Ensign*, November 1982, page 63)

FARMS TO THE RESCUE

Some Mormons could not go along with the silent treatment that the church was using against us and other critics. They were disturbed about the failure of the Mormon leaders to openly discuss the issues. In the September-October 1981 issue of *The Sunstone Review* the following advertisement appeared:

FOR SOME time there has been concern about the impact of Sandra and Jerald Tanner's *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality* (and its recent Moody Press version, *The Changing World of Mormonism*). **No thorough, formal, direct response has been published**, though a number of articles have been written dealing with specific aspects of their criticism. A project is now being organized to formulate an answer to the Tanners and to other prominent critics of Mormonism. . . . Anyone interested in contributing to this effort should outline his or her specialty and send the information to: The Tanner Project, P.O. Box 191, Calabasas, Cal. 91302-0191.

The reader will notice that only a number for a post office box was given for "**The Tanner Project.**" This clandestine move to destroy our work was carried on with great secrecy. At first we could not learn from the Post Office who had rented the box, but we were told that a "pen name" was apparently being used. Later, however, we were informed that a man by the name of Scott S. Smith was involved, and that he was using the alias "Steven Scott" to carry on his activities.

When we told a man who had previously corresponded with Scott Smith that we believed Smith was using an alias, he decided to do some investigating on his own. Surprisingly, Mr. Smith did not try to deny the charge, and the man who interviewed him sent us a report on the matter:

This night (Aug. 1, 1982) I personally talked to Scott Smith on the telephone about the Tanner project. . . . He says he was part of the first working group of people who started the project and opened the P.O. Box.

LDS CLAIMS
Under the Search Light
Recorded Message (801) 485-4262
(Message is three to five minutes)

Smith told me he **did not want to say who was the main coordinator** of the project. . . . Smith says there are **about three dozen people who have access to the P.O. Box** . . .

When asked if he used the name **Steven Scott**, he said: "**I used the name, but so did others.**" . . . He says **there is a lot of switching and barrowing [sic], of names, and admits to using other peoples' names. He says others have used his name.** The reason for all this? **To confuse the Tanners!** He says they want to make the Tanners go off on wild goose chases [sic] trying to figure out who is who and who is doing what. . . . I hope this helps. (Letter dated August 1, 1982)

On August 19, 1982, we had a very interesting conversation with Scott Smith concerning "The Tanner Project." Mr. Smith confirmed the admissions he had made on August 1, 1982. Later, in a letter to us Scott Smith wrote:

Your March *SLCM* just arrived. Its account of The Tanner Project is essentially accurate for what it covers. . . . pseudonyms were used for the logical reasons you cited and a few of the participants were people you would know and respect. . . . inevitably a "definitive response" to your work will be published. . . . In any event, while I heartily disagree with your conclusions I do appreciate the generally civil way you go about your work, which distinguishes it from some of your allies. (Letter from Scott S. Smith, dated April 22, 1983)

Like the people involved in "The Tanner Project," John L. Sorenson, who is emeritus professor of anthropology at the church's Brigham Young University, was also convinced that something had to be done to counter our work. Dr. Sorenson has served as a director at FARMS, and is probably the most well-known defender of "Book of Mormon Archeology." Sorenson seemed deeply concerned with the effect our work was having upon members of the church. In a handwritten note made before "The Tanner Project" was exposed, Professor Sorenson boasted:

Some of us here are talking about holding a conference with **enough experts taking on the Tanners' garbage to blow them out of the water.**

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March, 1983, we wrote:

Now that we have exposed the dubious foundation of "The Tanner Project," we doubt that any respectable Mormon scholars will want to associate their names with it. The Tanner Project seems doomed to failure. The Mormon leaders, of course, are trying to prevent a confrontation because they know a discussion of the issues will hurt the Church.

For some time after this debacle Mormon scholars backed away from dealing with the issues. In fact, almost a decade passed before FARMS entered into the fray. Prior to the publication of our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, church scholars at Brigham Young University and FARMS carefully followed the church leaders' advice and studiously avoided dealing with our publications.

With the appearance of our work on the "black hole," however, they decided that something had to be done. After

remaining virtually silent for over thirty years, Mormon scholars came out like an army to attack us. The plan was like that envisioned by Professor Sorenson—i.e., to have a number of scholars simultaneously tear into our work. Between 1991 and 1996 there were **ten** critical reviews directed against our work in FARMS publications!

Fortunately, our work was carefully done and we easily survived the torpedoes directed against our ship. Professor Sorenson's belief that we could be blown "**out of the water**" certainly has not come to pass. In fact, Utah Lighthouse Ministry has expanded its operations. Those who are interested in our response to FARMS should read our books, *Answering Mormon Scholars*, Volumes 1 and 2. We just finished the second volume and are now working on the third (see special offer on the front page). Actually, the additional research we did in our rebuttal to the charges directed against us has led us to uncover many other problems in the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's other works which we had not been aware of when FARMS launched its attack.

Brigham Young University professor Daniel C. Peterson, editor of the publication, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, made it clear that as far as ministries to Mormons are concerned we are the primary target of FARMS. In a review of a book written by John Ankerberg and John Weldon, Peterson made this caustic comment: "But among all the apostates and **scandal-mongers** and professional enemies of the Latter-day Saints who are their sources, one name looms far above the rest. That **name is 'Tanner'**" (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 5, page 20).

Speaking of his decision to accept an article written against us, Dr. Peterson wrote: "I accepted it because I thought it made a number of important points, and because most contemporary anti-Mormon writers depend heavily upon the Tanners. Attending to the roots seemed an efficient way of dealing with the branches" (*Review of Books*, vol. 4, page lxxiv, footnote 186).

In this statement Peterson is obviously suggesting that it is necessary to try to destroy our work ("**the roots**") so that it will not be spread abroad by other "anti-Mormon writers," whom he refers to as "the branches."

Although FARMS is very concerned about our work, it is even more worried about a movement that is developing within the Mormon Church itself. Professor Daniel Peterson has admitted that there is a significant problem **in** the church itself. Peterson is exceptionally worried about the publications being distributed by Signature Books:

We have seen that George D. Smith and Signature Books reject the title "anti-Mormons." . . .

In the past, anti-Mormon attacks almost invariably came from outside the Church; for the most part, they still do. For the first time since the Godbeite movement, however, we may today be dealing with a more-or-less **organized "anti-Mormon" movement within the Church**. With "**anti-Mormon Mormons**," as Robert McKay puts it. . . . (*Review of Books*, vol. 4, pp. liv-lvi)

In 1993, Signature Books came out with a book which caused great consternation among Mormon Church leaders and

defenders of the faith. It is entitled, *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon, Explorations in Critical Methodology*. It was edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe who was eventually excommunicated for questioning the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. In addition, David P. Wright, one of ten authors who wrote articles in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, was also excommunicated from the church. Wright holds a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies and was on the faculty at Brigham Young University. Dr. Wright is now a professor of Biblical Studies and Hebrew at Brandeis University. Interestingly, before he was fired from Brigham Young University, Wright wrote a review of a book for FARMS (see *Review of Books*, vol. 1, pages 10-17).

After *New Approaches* was published, FARMS produced a 566-page book in an attempt to refute the book (see *Review of Books*, vol. 6, number 1). In vol. 6, number 2, Daniel C. Peterson acknowledged that the previous issue was "wholly dedicated to commenting upon *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*." Moreover, since that time writers for FARMS have continued to attack Brent Metcalfe and others who had a part in writing the book. The assault has continued right up to the 1996 publication of *Review of Books*, vol. 8, number 1.

In our newsletter, *The Salt Lake City Messenger*, June 1994, we reported that one noted writer for FARMS, Professor William Hamblin, was so angry with Metcalfe that he created an acrostic reading "**METCALFE IS BUTTHEAD**." The encrypted message was to appear in the massive attack on *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*. Fortunately for FARMS, someone discovered what was about to appear and cooler heads prevailed. According to an article in the March 9, 1994, issue of the Provo paper, *The Daily Herald*, "Metcalfe said that according to the, er, scuttlebutt, FARMS learned about the encryption just as the volume was going into print, quickly halted the press run and **rewrote and reprinted the offending pages**."

FARMS is obviously deeply concerned that there may be a significant erosion of faith among Mormon scholars. Brigham Young University professor Louis Midgley, who previously expressed that he was "hooked" on observing "antimormonoids," was very displeased with both Brent Metcalfe and *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*. Nevertheless, he made a revealing comment about the book:

The most imposing attack on the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon has been assembled by Brent Lee Metcalfe. . . . the publication of *New Approaches* is **an**

THE BEACON

MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP

FOR THOSE LEAVING OR QUESTIONING MORMONISM

2nd Sunday of the Month at 7:00 pm

Utah Lighthouse Ministry
1358 S. West Temple, SLC

important event. It marks the **most sophisticated attack on the truth of the Book of Mormon** currently available either from standard sectarian or more secularized anti-Mormon sources, or from the fringes of Mormon culture and intellectual life. (*Review of Books*, vol. 6, no. 1, pages 211-214)

Associated Press writer Vern Anderson described the situation very plainly in an article he wrote:

But if the so-called “apologists” and “revisionists” are merely at odds on the field of Mormon history, they are **locked in a relative death grip** over what most church members see as the cornerstones of Mormon doctrine. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 22, 1991)

There can be no doubt that FARMS is intent on undermining the expanding influence of Signature Books. In addition, FARMS wishes to destroy the work of Utah Lighthouse Ministry and that of other ministries working with Mormon people. Furthermore, as we will show below, they are willing to spend **a great deal of money** to accomplish their goals.

Utah Lighthouse Ministry is actually a small organization that has only four people who work full time. Most of our time is spent on such things as waiting on customers, receiving phone calls from throughout the world, printing and collating books, processing mail orders, answering letters and many other mundane operations. This, of course, leaves us with little time to do original research. Nevertheless, we are confident that our work will stand the test of time. We stand on the promise of Apostle Paul:

What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)

While FARMS has a great deal of money and many professors who give their time and support to the Foundation we do not fear its power. We believe that truth will eventually prevail.

SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS!

According to a catalog published by FARMS for the years 1988-89, the organization was incorporated in the state of California in 1979. It is “an independent, non-profit, tax-exempt organization.” FARMS claims that it “does not speak on behalf of any other organization. The opinions expressed in the articles and books it distributes are not necessarily the opinions of anyone except the authors.” The Foundation’s publication, *Insights: An Ancient Window*, May 1991, indicates that for a donation of “\$500 to **\$100,000** per year” a person can become a member of the organization’s “Liahona Club.”

FARMS undoubtedly receives a great deal of support from affluent members of the church. For example, on page 6 of the FARMS publication *Insights*, June 1995, we find the following:

Karen and Alan Ashton of Orem, Utah, have established **a significant FARMS endowment** to support the timely implementation of new projects. Their generous gift will ensure that important new research opportunities are not missed while waiting for funding to become available . . . This new funding and the increased amount of research it will support both necessitate and make possible the creation of new projects and the supervision of ongoing projects . . .

Brother Ashton is president of the BYU 14th Stake and is recently retired as **chairman of the board of WordPerfect Corporation.** . . .

Brother and Sister Ashton have long been enthusiastic supporters of scholarly research on the Book of Mormon. This new gift combined with gifts from other FARMS donors raises support for such efforts in the LDS community to an exciting new level.

While the foundation claims that it is not in any way controlled by the Mormon Church, it acknowledges that it has offices at the church’s Brigham Young University: “The Foundation’s funds come from private donations, **with the exception of the use of five offices** in the Amanda Knight Hall kindly **provided by Brigham Young University.**” In addition, FARMS has worked closely with the church’s Deseret Book Company: “The Foundation is co-publisher with Deseret Book Company of a series of scholarly studies on the Book of Mormon, including the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley.” FARMS also worked with the church’s Deseret Book Company in producing John L. Sorenson’s book, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*.

The publication, *Insights*, August 1995, had an article entitled, “Upgrading the FARMS-BYU Connection.” This article indicated that the bond between FARMS and BYU is growing even stronger:

The unique and productive **relationship that Brigham Young University and the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies have enjoyed for nearly fifteen years has recently been elevated to a new level of cooperation.** . . . the BYU Board of Trustees has now endorsed a protocol between BYU and FARMS that expands the range of opportunities for cooperation on scholarly work on the Book of Mormon and related topics.

The active involvement of almost **a hundred BYU scholars** in a wide range of FARMS projects demonstrated the need for a university policy regarding these kinds of faculty activities. . . .

This new agreement extends to FARMS an invitation to use **a full range of campus facilities.** . . . And it indicates that **BYU will cooperate with the Foundation** in its efforts to obtain better space to house the rapidly expanding FARMS activities, perhaps **even allowing FARMS to build a new building on campus:** “BYU and Farms will work together in locating—and possibly building suitable space on or near the campus.” . . . the enhanced level of cooperation between BYU and FARMS mean that more faculty members from more departments will likely be involved in scriptural research in the future.

It is interesting to note that “the BYU Board of Trustees” was agreeable to helping out FARMS. According to the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, vol. 1, pages 220-221, “BYU functions under the direction of the Church through a board of trustees that includes the First Presidency, the general presidents of the women’s auxiliary organizations and selected General Authorities.” Obviously, then, the link between FARMS and BYU could never be approved without the consent of the highest leaders of the church.

On November 20, 1995, F.A.R.M.S sent out a letter informing its supporters that they needed a great deal of money to build a research center. The following is taken from that letter:

In the last newsletter we announced the campaign to raise the funds to build the Book of Mormon Research Center. . . . Your help is needed. Many of you have already responded with generous contributions for which we are grateful, but more is needed. Local building costs are escalating rapidly. Presently the architects estimate the project will cost **some seven million dollars**. . . . We invite those of you who have abundant means to be very generous. . . . Please don't delay.

A very impressive brochure was sent with the letter soliciting donations:

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies is pleased to announce the construction of its new Book of Mormon Research Center. . . . FARMS scholars approach their research with a firm conviction of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . They publicize their findings for the benefit of serious students of the scriptures, as well as those who are investigating the Book of Mormon **or who may be questioning its authenticity**. . . . The library will be a resource center containing computers, books, and help for students working on papers and projects about the Book of Mormon. . . . The lecture hall . . . will be used for lectures on the Book of Mormon and other scriptural topics . . . The area will also be designed as a studio for filming lectures and presentations for broadcast and video production. . . . FARMS also maintains a site on the Internet, where users worldwide can go for answers. . . . Located on the southern periphery of Brigham Young University, the building will be a house "set on a hill" . . . the Book of Mormon Research Center is intended to be a landmark that draws attention to our rich scriptural heritage and invites all to come unto Christ. (FARMS brochure)

One portion of the brochure that is especially interesting to us acknowledges that the Foundation is actively involved in countering critics of the church:

A significant portion of FARMS's work is devoted to setting the record straight with regard to anti-Mormon literature.

It appears that FARMS has vast resources that will be used to criticize our work and the work of other critics of the church. We, of course, do not have millions of dollars to fight off such an attack. Nevertheless, we will do our best to counter their assault.

As we pointed out above, for a long period of time Mormon Church leaders tried to discourage their people from attempting to answer our work or the work of other critics of the church.

A magazine article written by David Merrill pointed out that the Mormon leaders tried to restrain the church's scholars from dealing with our publications: "The official attitude of the Mormon hierarchy towards the Tanners has been **one of silence** and apparent unconcern. They have, however, **actively discouraged LDS scholars and intellectuals from jousting with the Tanners**. . ." (*Utah Holiday*, February 1978, page 7).

A spokesman from the church's Deseret Book Store wrote: "We do not have a specific response to the Tanner book. Perhaps

it does not deserve the dignity of a response" (Letter written Jan. 19, 1977).

A man who talked to a leading Mormon authority, Apostle LeGrand Richards, claimed that Richards, "told me to **quit studying materials put out by the Tanner's**. . . . I told him 'surely some day there will be an answer to these questions.' He told me **there never would be an answer and I should stop my inquiries**" (Letter dated August 13, 1978).

Interestingly, while Apostle Richards said there never would be a rebuttal, and a spokesman for the church's Deseret Book Store maintained that, "Perhaps **it does not deserve the dignity of a response**," when the scholars for FARMS first attacked our work it became clear that things had changed. FARMS writer Matthew Roper showed deep concern over the matter when he reviewed a small portion of our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* In fact, Roper frankly acknowledged that the book did merit review:

There are several reasons why **this book merits review**. First, the Tanners are considered by their fellow critics to be among the foremost authorities on Mormonism and the Book of Mormon. Their arguments are central to most anti-Mormon attacks on the Book of Mormon today. One recent critic describes *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* as "**the heavyweight of all books on Mormonism**." (*Review of Books*, vol. 4, pages 169-170)

It appears, then, that Mormon Church leaders have finally come to see the utter futility of a conspiracy of silence. Unfortunately, however, instead of coming forth to directly deal with the issues and publishing a rebuttal under the church's own name they seem to have dropped the ball into the hands of FARMS. This was a very clever move indeed.

Since the church owns Brigham Young University, it could have easily stopped the "anti-anti-Mormon" work of FARMS which is taking place on the BYU campus. The church leaders, then, must be in agreement with what FARMS is attempting to do. The fact that there is a plan to build a **seven million dollar** building on the campus certainly points to a close alliance with FARMS.

In addition to the support given by BYU, there are many faithful members of the church who would be willing to give money to FARMS if they thought it would silence the antimormonoids.

The Mormon Church is apparently very happy with the work done by FARMS. The church seems to be in a no-lose situation. If, on the one hand, the Foundation should make serious mistakes, the church would not be held responsible. On the other hand, if Mormon scholars present material that convinces people of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, the church will benefit from the work.

In any case, the scholars involved with FARMS take great pride in their Foundation. They strongly believe that no other organization on earth can compete with their knowledge of the Book of Mormon. They are convinced that as far as human wisdom is concerned they are the ultimate experts on the subject. Consequently, they are very offended if anyone ignores or is ignorant of the research emanating from FARMS.

ROPERS UNFAIR ATTACK

In their attempt to discredit our work the FARMS-BYU scholars have used statements made by Dr. Lawrence Foster, a non-Mormon scholar who is very upset with us. As we will demonstrate below, the use of Foster as a witness against us is very unfair.

FARMS writer Matthew Roper seems to take a great deal of pleasure in quoting Foster's negative comments regarding our work. Foster's work is also cited against us by FARMS writers Professor William J. Hamblin and L. Ara Norwood. Dr. Gilbert Scharffs, who has served as director of an LDS Institute of Religion, and Richard I. Winwood, a former Mission President, also use Foster's work against us. In a letter from FARMS, dated November 20, 1995, we find that Richard Winwood is now the Chairman of the Building Committee.

Foster first attacked us in a speech given at the Mormon History Association, May 6, 1983. Later he published an article in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1984. In 1994, Foster published a revised version of the *Dialogue* article in the book, *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History*.

Lawrence Foster cannot believe that our work is motivated by our desire to please God and help Mormons find the truth. Instead, he speaks of "the intensity and **bitterness** of the Tanners' feelings." The following are some samples of the expressions he uses in the two articles and the Mormon History Association speech when speaking of us: "Jerald's . . . **deep bitterness**," "Jerald's disillusionment and **bitterness**," "**harsh rhetoric** of their attacks;" "long quotations interspersed **with purple prose**;" "the Tanners clearly are a party **to unethical activity themselves**;" "The Tanners seem to be playing a **skillful shell game**;" "**abrasive and offensive methods**;" "the Tanners . . . own confusion and thin skin;" "the Tanners' naive view;" "their abrasive writing style;" "their **hostility**;" and "Their own **bitterness** and sense of **outrage**."

It is clear from the language that Lawrence Foster uses when speaking of us that he believes that we are driven by a very deep sense of anger. He seems to see animosity in almost everything we do. In our opinion, however, Foster is projecting his own anger upon us.

In any case, in an article published by FARMS, Matthew Roper seemed to be elated that Foster attacked us:

Reading their rebuttal, I was reminded of several observations made by non-LDS historian Lawrence Foster a few years ago. With the Tanners, "Every bit of evidence, even if it could be most plausibly presented in a positive way, is represented as yet another nail in the coffin being prepared for the Mormon Church. . . . Even when they backhandedly praise objective Mormon historical scholarship, they do so primarily as a means of twisting that scholarship for use as yet another debater's ploy to attack the remaining—and in their eyes insurmountable—Mormon deficiencies." Speaking of the Tanners' reaction to an earlier critique of their work by an anonymous historian, Foster reflects, "One is amused at the exaggerated sense of self importance that the Tanners' rejoinder reveals. . . . The Tanners' own response would seem to be the best possible vindication of the argument . . . that they lack a sense of balance and perspective." . . .

Concerning the Tanners' allegation that there has been a conspiracy of silence, "what accounts for this reluctance [among both conservative and liberal scholars] to discuss the Tanners," asks Foster in his most recent evaluation of the Tanners' work.

"The Tanners' answer is simple: The Mormon church is *afraid of them*. In their view, it has been engaged in a "*conspiracy of silence*" because it *cannot answer their objections*. The Tanners argue that if the church were to try systematically to answer their objections, it would realize the error of its ways and collapse. By failing to deal with them directly, the church, in the Tanners' opinion, is providing yet another proof of its underlying fraudulence and repressive mind control. This interpretation fails to deal with many complex factors that have contributed to Mormon reticence about discussing the Tanners in print. The most obvious point is that neither conservative nor liberal Mormons think that the Tanners are really serious about wanting a truly open discussion or considering approaches that differ from their own chip-on-shoulder, anti-Mormon mindset. On the other hand, the Tanners have repeatedly demanded that Mormonism live up to standards of rectitude impossible for any human organization to achieve or else give up its truth claims. On the other hand, the Tanners simultaneously tell the Mormon church that even if it were somehow able to live up to its impossibly high standards, it would still be false because it is not normative Christianity as they understand it. . . . Faced with such resolute unwillingness to consider anything Mormonism does in a positive light or to engage in a constructive dialogue about differing approaches, **the Mormon Church, as an organization, has understandably chosen to ignore the Tanners as much as possible**. . . . The Church sees no advantage in engaging in vitriolic polemic with virtual unknowns and thereby giving them publicity." (*Review of Books*, vol. 6, no. 2, pages 156-157, 159)

While we find many objectionable things in Professor Foster's comments cited above, there is only item thing we will mention here. Foster states: "The Tanners argue that if the church were to try systematically to answer their objections, it would realize the error of its ways **and collapse**." Those who take the time to read Foster's statements will notice that he gives no reference for his statement. We do not know where Foster obtained this idea. We certainly do not believe that our arguments could cause the "collapse" of the Mormon Church. The church is **far too large to crumble**. We do believe, however, that the material we have printed could have a significant affect on many Mormons.

Matthew Roper's article in *Review of Books* is a shortened version of his original paper. FARMS, however, printed it in its entirety in a 71-page report. We will refer to it, therefore, as the Longer Review. Roper quoted the following statement by Foster in that review:

"The Tanners have reacted to serious scholarly efforts to analyze their work in much the same way that they criticize the Mormon church for reacting to them—by trying to ignore criticisms that they cannot answer effectively. For instance, in 1982 the Tanners **did not respond at all** to my request for an interview with them as background for a scholarly paper I was writing on them. **After more than a month of waiting**—and

sending a second, follow-up letter—I learned through a mutual acquaintance that **the Tanners were uneasy** about meeting with me and **had not decided whether they would agree to an interview**. I then **drafted a press release to go out to every radio and television station** in the Salt Lake City area, noting that the anti-Mormon writers Jerald and Sandra Tanner, who had repeatedly criticized the Mormon church for not responding to [their] inquiries, **had themselves not been willing to meet with a prominent non-Mormon scholar** attempting to make an objective study of their life and work. Only **after I passed word of this proposed press release to a mutual contact did the Tanners promptly agree to an interview**. Subsequently to the publication of my article “Career Apostates,” **the Tanners have never directly alluded to it in print**, nor have they ever written to me to express approval or disapproval of any aspect of it. Just as the Mormon church’s interests are not served by telling its more insular members about the Tanners’ criticisms of Mormon weaknesses, so too the Tanners’ interests are not served by alerting their own somewhat insular readers to scholarship critical of the serious weaknesses inherent in the Tanners’ approach” (*Ibid.*, 362 n. 20). (Statement in Roper’s Longer Review, as cited from *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History*, page 362)

This statement came as a total surprise to us. We had never heard one word concerning such “**a press release**” before we were informed of Foster’s article published in *Differing Visions*. In his article in *Dialogue*, published ten years earlier, **Foster did not refer to threatening us with an unfavorable press release** if we did not meet with him. As we will demonstrate below, the idea that Foster forced us into agreeing to an interview is absolutely false.

In the first place, we had no reason to fear his work. In fact, his letter to us seemed to be very positive and led us to believe that he would be fair with us:

I am writing to ask for your help and suggestions on a project that may be of considerable interest. . . . I plan to propose a paper for the 1983 session of the Mormon History Association which would deal with your life and work. To date I have not seen any objective scholarly assessments of your research and writing which appear fully satisfying. **Yet your writings, reprints, and other activities certainly have been of the utmost importance to the development of new approaches to Mormon history** during the past two decades. As neither a Mormon nor an anti-Mormon, I believe that I am in an unusually good position to provide an independent assessment of your work and its significance. (Letter from Lawrence Foster, dated February 15, 1982)

Everything in this letter led us to believe that Foster was going to make a fair assessment of our work and that it would be to our advantage to meet with him. Furthermore, we received a telephone call from a member of the Mormon History Association indicating that such a presentation would help promote our work.

While it would not be accurate to say that we have responded to everyone who has sought an interview, in this case we were excited about the offer. The Mormon History Association had studiously disregarded our work since its inception. In his article published later in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Foster acknowledged that this was the case:

Despite the Tanners’ extensive publication record . . . to date virtually no serious public analyses of their work have appeared. When the Tanners’ arguments have been attacked in Mormon publications, as has occurred on many occasions, **their names and the titles of their writings have almost never been cited**. Indeed, until very recently even independent Mormon scholarly journals such as *Dialogue* and *Sunstone*, which discuss all manner of controversial issues, have largely avoided mentioning the Tanners by name, much less analyzing their work explicitly. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1984, page 48.)

We were certainly pleased to learn that the Mormon History Association was finally going to discuss the research we had spent years compiling. Therefore, one of the authors of this newsletter (Sandra) wrote to Foster and told him that we were agreeable to the interview.

Unfortunately, however, the letter Foster sent to us contained two addresses—one for the Georgia Institute of Technology and another for Yellow Springs, Ohio, where he would apparently be spending most of his time. The Yellow Springs address was on the backside of the letter, and Sandra most likely used the address found on the letterhead on the first page.

Foster later explained that he had used the Georgia Institute of Technology letterhead to convince us that he was a responsible scholar. Sandra seems to recall that the post office was unable to deliver the letter and that it was eventually returned to us. In any case, the date for the interview was agreed upon and we were looking forward to Foster’s visit.

When Foster finally came for the interview in May, 1982, one of the first things he asked was why we had not answered his letter. Sandra explained what had happened, and we both remember that at that time Mr. Foster seemed completely satisfied with the explanation.

What we did not know at the time we received Foster’s letter was that he had been deeply involved with a number of prominent Mormon historians and was very sympathetic to the problems these historians were facing. Some of the Mormon leaders had become extremely upset with Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington because he and other members of the Church Historical Department were attempting to tell the truth about Mormon history.

Dr. Arrington was eventually removed from his position and sent to Brigham Young University. Assistant Church Historian Davis Bitton later discussed “the series of experiences that led to the demise of the History Division,” and indicated that our work helped to contribute to “the demise”:

It did not help that the decade of our existence was a time when Jerald and Sandra Tanner were publishing a variety of works . . . We did not sympathize with the Tanners. But in a very vague and general way one can imagine how “the troubles of our Church history” could be seen in terms of both fronts. I was dismayed when an honor’s thesis . . . lumped the work of the historians of the History Division . . . together with the publications of the Tanners. For him, it was all “the New Mormon History.” Guilt by association is a devastating thing, as we discovered. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1983, pages 16-17)

It is doubtful that the liberal historians who had gained a foothold in the Church Historical Department could have survived even if we had not been publishing at that time. Nevertheless, because of these problems some of the Mormon historians became very antagonistic toward us and wanted to blame us for their troubles.

In 1977, the Church Historical Department made one serious attempt to destroy our credibility when it secretly published a booklet entitled, *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* Interestingly, D. Michael Quinn was designated to write the response. Quinn was a promising young Mormon historian at that time.

The publication of the pamphlet turned out to be a real disaster because those involved did not dare reveal that the Church Historical Department was responsible for its publication. Consequently, neither the name of the author nor the publisher was mentioned anywhere in the book. As we have explained in a rebuttal to the pamphlet, the publication was distributed in a clandestine fashion. Wilfrid Clark, who was working for Zion Bookstore, told us he received **an anonymous letter containing a key to a room in a self storage company**. He went to that location and picked up **1,800 free copies of the booklet!**

Our response to this work appeared in a publication entitled, *Answering Dr. Clandestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*. In this booklet we identified Quinn as the author. Even Lawrence Foster had to admit that “The Tanners **convincingly link the anonymous critique to D. Michael Quinn and the LDS Church Historical Department . . .**” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1984, p. 51).

As it turned out, Dr. Quinn later became a powerful spokesman for those advocating truthful Mormon history. His willingness to stand up against the highest church leaders who wanted to suppress church history eventually led those in authority to put so much pressure upon him that he felt that he had to leave his position at Brigham Young University. Finally, Dr. Quinn suffered the ultimate disgrace: he was **excommunicated** from the church!

Some of the FARMS-BYU scholars turned on Quinn and viciously attacked him and his work. Strange as it may seem, however, Mormon writers like Matthew Roper continue to use Quinn's anonymous rebuttal in an attempt to refute us. They are careful, of course, not to reveal that Quinn is the author of that pamphlet.

At any rate, our rebuttal to the pamphlet obviously caused both Michael Quinn and Leonard Arrington a good deal of embarrassment. Although we felt we did a good job in handling the issue, Lawrence Foster thought that we had been too hard on Dr. Quinn and was very angry about the matter.

Significantly, in 1981, long before D. Michael Quinn was excommunicated, he gave a speech entitled, *On Being a Mormon Historian*. In his lecture he courageously criticized the Mormon leaders for suppressing the true history of the church, and was planning on publishing the speech in *Sunstone* magazine. Church officials, however, warned him against printing the address. When we learned that the church was trying to suppress publication of the speech, we decided to publish it ourselves. The *Seventh East Press* had already printed some of the most damaging portions of the speech. The only reason we published

the speech was that we felt that it was extremely important and should be made available to members of the church.

Unfortunately, Foster was convinced that our publication of the document was an act of hostility and that we were actually seeking to get Quinn excommunicated or in serious trouble. Nothing could be further from the truth. While Foster is correct in saying that we were originally upset with Quinn when we learned that he had written the rebuttal, about four years had passed.

By that time the anonymous rebuttal had turned out to be a complete fiasco, and we were much more disturbed by the suppressive policies of the Mormon Church, than we were with D. Michael Quinn. In fact, we were elated that he had the courage to speak out. His work on the anonymous rebuttal proved to be of little value to devout Mormons, since it was published anonymously and since he had to concede that there were many problems in Mormon history.

Unfortunately, when Foster arrived at our house we soon learned that he had a deep animosity towards us because he felt we had mistreated Dr. Quinn. Although we were kind to Foster during the interview, he was rather hostile towards us and there was nothing that we could say to him that would change his opinion.

After reading Foster's inaccurate comments concerning us in *Differing Visions*, we asked him if he would consent to a tape-recorded telephone interview. Foster agreed and the interview took place on March 21, 1995.

When we asked him why he had never mentioned the so-called “press release” when his article was published in *Dialogue*, he responded: “I was really trying to avoid polemicalizing the issue . . . I didn't bring up the issue because I didn't think it was terribly germane at that point . . .”

If it was irrelevant in 1984, one would wonder why it became so important in 1994. We felt that it was an *ad hominem* attack on us influenced by his own anger towards us and doubted that it would serve any useful purpose to answer his attack. We felt that we had more than enough arguments with Mormons and that it would be foolish to get side-tracked into an argument with a non-Mormon who professes to be neutral. If he had claimed that we made serious textual errors in our work, we certainly would have responded at the time.

In any case, the fact that we did not give Foster any publicity must have festered in his mind for a long time. In the 1994 version of his article he wrote: “Subsequent to the publication of my article . . . the Tanners have never directly alluded to it in print, nor have they ever written to me to express approval or disapproval of any aspect of it” (*Differing Visions*, page 362, n. 20).

Actually, we did tell Foster we were displeased with his article when he asked us about it, and he, in turn, sent us a number of demeaning letters. Foster's long-suppressed anger over the fact that he had not received the attention he had expected seems to have finally surfaced.

The reader will remember that in his printed statement, Foster claimed that it was “After **more than a month** of waiting” that he began to be concerned that we might not meet with him. However, in a letter to us, dated Feb. 15, 1995, Foster acknowledged that it may have been even less than a month: “I . . . waited, if my memory is correct, for **three** to four weeks.”

Foster admitted that he had not found his original correspondence: “I still don't have . . . the direct correspondence located but there is no question that it is somewhere . . . it

probably will surface before I die . . .” In another conversation with Foster, however, he indicated that he may not have saved any of his correspondence with us. We, in fact, had to provide him with a photocopy of his first letter to us which was written in 1982.

Since so much time had elapsed, it was hard for us to remember all the details about what had happened in 1982, and Foster’s mind seemed to be just as fuzzy. He asked Jerald some questions about how the interview was eventually set up:

Do you have any indication of when you actually responded to me? . . . we made some sort of contact. **Did you call me?** I don’t think you did. I thought you must have sent me something, but **I don’t remember.**

We discussed the possibility that Sandra’s letter to Foster may have been delivered to Georgia Tech instead of Yellow Springs, Ohio: **Lawrence Foster:** “You think you could have sent something off to Georgia Tech and not gotten to me?” **Jerald Tanner:** “Oh, yeah, I think we sent it to Georgia Tech . . . and I think the letter was returned.” **Lawrence Foster:** “Oh, really. Well that’s too bad. . . . **I apologize if . . . I’ve made more of this than it was.**”

Foster acknowledged that he “was back and forth between Georgia Tech and . . . southern Ohio” and that he “came back a couple of times briefly” to Georgia Tech. This whole situation regarding the two addresses, may have led to the letter being returned to us.

However this may be, Mr. Foster could have corrected the whole situation by simply making a phone call to us. Within just a few minutes we could have told him exactly when we could meet with him. Instead of doing this, he resorted to a very bizarre way of dealing with the problem—he began to call other individuals. For instance, he first called H. Michael Marquardt in Sandy, Utah. In his letter to us Foster said, “I called Michael Marquardt . . . and asked him **if he knew why I was getting no response from you.**”

In his article in *Differing Visions* Foster claims that Mr. Marquardt told him that we were afraid to meet with him: “I learned through a mutual acquaintance [identified in Foster’s letter as Michael Marquardt] that **the Tanners were uneasy** about meeting with me and **had not decided whether they would agree to an interview.**”

We were certain that Mr. Marquardt would not tell Foster such a thing because we had **never** indicated that we were “uneasy” about meeting with him. Significantly, **Marquardt claims that he did not make such a statement to Mr. Foster.** He had absolutely no reason to believe that we were running from Foster. Mr. Marquardt, however, did call us and inform us that Foster had called him, and he indicated that he thought it was very strange that Foster would call him about the interview instead of us.

Lawrence Foster then made another unusual move; instead of calling us, he called George D. Smith, who later presided over the session of the Mormon History Association in which Foster read his paper regarding our work. According to Smith, Foster spoke very rapidly and displayed a good deal of hostility toward us. He claimed that he was having a great deal of difficulty getting us to consent to have an interview with him. Smith then

asked Foster why he didn’t do “the obvious thing”—i.e., pick up the telephone and call us about the matter.

In our taped-recorded interview with Lawrence Foster, Jerald asked him this question: “If the answer was delayed in the mail—you didn’t get it—**did you ever attempt . . . to call us on the phone?**” Foster answered:

Well, I was . . . in a residence in . . . southern Ohio, doing research . . . I did not have as good access as I would have liked to that. . . . **I probably should have called you,** but I guess quite frankly I believed in putting everything in writing so that I could . . . verify it because of **your propensity** for making capital issues out of very minor things. . . . Perhaps in retrospect I should have called you earlier . . .

Significantly, in his letter to us in 1982, Dr. Foster did not indicate that he was in any rush to receive an answer to his letter. He, in fact, wrote that he would not be in Salt Lake City until “May 9 through . . . May 14.” Since his letter was dated Feb. 15, there was well over two months to set up the exact date of the interview. In the tape-recorded interview, however, Foster indicated that he thought he was coming to Salt Lake City in April. After we pointed out that he had made a mistake, he commented as follows:

. . . maybe . . . I was jumping the gun there, but, anyhow you’re right that **I should have called you on the phone.** . . . I’ve always been a little bit shy on the phone myself, and I prefer—especially if I have something that is controversial—to do it by correspondence. . . . almost anything that is connected with you is controversial by either you make it controversial or other people make it controversial.

It is obvious that he had a great deal of fear that we would not consent to an interview. His concern was not justified. Even if we had known he was hostile, we would have met with him to find out why a non-Mormon scholar, who professes to be neutral, would hold so much resentment against us.

In his tape-recorded interview with us, Lawrence Foster stated:

Well, I would have called you eventually, but it did seem to me that I was used to working with correspondence . . . especially on . . . potentially sensitive topics . . . I really **did not feel** that I wanted to get into a **premature exchange with you at that point.**

THE ABORTED PRESS RELEASE

On February 15, 1995, Mr. Foster finally sent us the copy of the press release which he says he wrote himself:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The controversial anti-Mormon writers, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, have repeatedly attacked the Mormon Church for its alleged secrecy and refusal to answer their letters. Recently, however, the Tanners themselves **refused to be interviewed by the noted non-Mormon scholar,** Lawrence Foster, of the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Foster is currently working on a major study analyzing the Tanners’ life and work.

He requested that they meet with him during his week-long visit to Utah, May 6-14, but **they refused**.

“The situation is really ironical,” Foster comments. “For years the Tanners have been constantly attacking the Mormon Church for its supposed secrecy. Now when they have the opportunity of presenting their case to a **recognized scholar** who is preparing a thorough treatment of their life and work, **they won’t even agree to be interviewed**. I can only conclude that if one uses the Tanners’ own standards of judgment, they must be afraid that they have something to hide or else that in a candid interview they would be unable to state their case persuasive[ly]. I still hope, of course, that the Tanners will change their minds and agree to be interviewed. But their actions so far don’t speak very highly for their confidence in the correctness of their own cause.”

Foster is the author of the **highly acclaimed recent book**, *Religion and Sexuality*, published by Oxford University Press. In that book, he provides the first detailed study of the origin and development of Mormon polygamy that has been written by a non-Mormon who had full access to the LDS archival holdings on polygamy in Salt Lake City. **Praise for the study** has come from LDS, non-Mormon, and RLDS scholars alike, who have described it as **the first truly objective treatment** of this controversial subject. Foster hopes to do a similarly objective treatment of the Tanners. “It is hard, though,” he concludes, “when **they won’t even agree to meet with me or cooperate in any way**. I just can’t see how they can hope to maintain any credibility **when they are so secretive about themselves and what they are doing**.”

In our opinion it seems highly unlikely that people in the news media would have paid any attention to this self-serving “press release.” They certainly were not very interested in our work in 1982. However this may be, in our telephone interview with Foster he related the following:

I don’t believe that I ever gave him [George Smith] a copy of it [i.e. the press release], no . . . this was sort of an exercise. I figured, look, if the Tanners are not going to meet with me, if they’re not even going to respond to me, and they’ve been complaining all these years about other people not responding to them, well, **I’m going to hit them back and give them a little taste of their own medicine**. And if I have to do that . . . **I’ll get quite a bit of . . . publicity out of it**, if I have to do that, but . . . my goal all along was to get an interview with you.

We were absolutely stunned when we learned that Lawrence Foster was claiming that we had only agreed to meet with him **after** he had threatened to release a statement to the news media attacking our credibility. Neither one of us had ever heard about such a “press release.” Foster made it very clear in the tape-recorded interview that **he never told us about the press release**.

Michael Marquardt was also disturbed by the statement and claimed he did not know anything about the matter until he looked at the book, *Differing Visions*. We asked Foster about this and he responded that although he had called Marquardt on the phone, “I certainly **didn’t** tell him that I was thinking of . . . drafting a press release . . .”

In his letter of Feb. 15, 1995, Foster mentioned that George Smith was the one who could have conveyed the message concerning the press release to us. When we checked with Mr. Smith, he remembered Foster was very angry with us, but had no recollection of the press release. Furthermore, and even more important, Smith does not remember informing us about the so-called press release. It is obvious that unless someone informed us about the press release it could not possibly have anything to do with our agreement to meet with Foster.

In any case, in the interview with us Foster admitted that he probably didn’t give Smith a copy of the press release and was not even certain that he had mentioned it to him:

. . . I **don’t** think I sent him a press release. **I think I talked** with him about it, and I think I asked him if he . . . knew . . . if there was some reason why you wouldn’t want to meet with me, or something. But . . . again . . . **I can’t document** [it]—look, peoples’ memories are often fallible after a matter of months or a year . . . and I can’t—I was . . . in a very different environment doing research, in a very different location, and as you can see I have trouble even locating . . . the original written correspondence, which I am sure I have, but I’m still trying to track it down.”

Mr. Foster also stated: “I did mention that I was thinking of doing that, as I recall, and then again **I don’t know for sure**. It’s been, again, a long time, but my recollection is that . . . I at least floated the idea of a press release to . . . George Smith.”

To Lawrence Foster’s credit, after we thoroughly explained the situation, he was willing to concede that he could have been mistaken about the matter:

I apologize then for that particular thing which **would be an error then . . . it gives the wrong impression** on that . . . I wish we could get the actual dates straight on . . . when these different things happen[ed], but it may be hard to reconstruct that unless I’ve got some notes in my files somewhere.

Mr. Foster, in fact, went so far as to acknowledge that there may have been inaccuracy in his charge against us:

Well, again, **I made a supposition then that was incorrect . . . in my note 20. I may not have mentioned the press release**. I think I talked with him about the idea of doing it, but I certainly didn’t send him the actual item . . . Well, **I’m sorry if . . . there’s been any inaccuracy in that note**.

When Foster speaks of note 20 in the book, *Differing Visions*, he is referring to the very note that Matthew Roper uses in an attempt to undermine our work.

While we are relieved that Foster acknowledged the error, we do hope that he will ask the publishers of *Differing Visions* to remove this spurious note from the book.

As noted above, a simple phone call from Lawrence Foster would have saved him a great deal of embarrassment. At any rate, we do **not** accuse Foster of lying. He seems, however, to have allowed his anger to dominate his thinking. Before we discussed the matter with him, he probably really believed that he had to force us to submit to an interview with him.

WHY USE FOSTER?

While we can understand why some Mormons might enjoy reading Lawrence Foster's attack on us, it seems absolutely incredible that the FARMS-BYU scholars would use Foster as a witness against us. Don't they realize that Foster is as opposed to some of the most important beliefs of the Mormon Church as he is to our work? In the tape-recorded interview with Foster he said: ". . . If you follow . . . my article correctly, you'll see that **I'm criticizing both you and the Mormons** in various ways."

In the same interview Foster frankly stated: "My interest in Mormonism is . . . in what really happened with Joseph Smith or with these various things, and I [it?] doesn't matter to me whether the official line is right or wrong . . . **the official line is almost always wrong** if you get down to specifics."

Interestingly, Lawrence Foster acknowledged that he found our work on Mormon polygamy to be "very useful" when he was writing his book, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community*:

By compiling most of the major published sources bearing on controversial topics in Mormonism, the Tanners have highlighted **issues which need to be resolved**. For example, I found their study of Mormon polygamy **very useful** as a compilation of **primary evidence** on that topic when I was preparing my study, *Religion and Sexuality*. . . . their prior search of the literature saved me much time and alerted me to issues I would need to resolve. **The impact of the Tanners' publication of primary Mormon printed documents also must not be underestimated.** (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1984, page 47)

On page 338 of his book, *Religion and Sexuality*, note 20, Foster wrote: "The assiduous anti-Mormon writers Jerald and Sandra Tanner have collected a few examples of slayings in Utah that were carried out in the classic blood atonement style . . . Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *The Mormon Kingdom*, 2 vols."

Professor Foster mentioned our book, *Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, a number of times in his work. He also referred to other books we had printed.

In his book, *Religion and Sexuality*, page 296, note 15, Foster said he had come "to the conclusion that the Book of Mormon is probably best understood, at least in part, as **a trance-related production**." He also said that in his opinion Joseph Smith was "acting as an unusually gifted trance figure. . ." (*Ibid.*)

In our tape-recorded interview with Foster he made it clear that he believed the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith became involved in polygamy because he, "had some sort of sex drive . . . it is probably not too hard to figure out that **he had a sex problem, too**. . . anybody who takes, let's say, arguably twenty to thirty to [or?] more women as plural wives presumably has an ample sex drive."

In his book, *Religion and Sexuality*, page 126, Foster commented: "To be sure, no serious scholar would deny that **sex drives** influenced the introduction of polygamy."

Lawrence Foster also believes that the evidence shows that Joseph Smith was an adulterer:

Finally, what accounts for the apparent discrepancies between theory and practice in the early development of

polygamy, particularly the evidence that Joseph took a number of plural wives **who already had living husbands?** . . . According to Mormon and non-Mormon accounts, Emma [Joseph Smith's wife] attempted to keep track of Joseph Smith's possible liaisons and head them off. . . .

Although admissions of unorthodox marital relations are obviously a highly personal matter, many of Joseph Smith's plural wives testified explicitly that they had full sexual relations with him. Emily D. P. Partridge said she "roomed" with Smith . . . she also admitted that she had "carnal intercourse" with him. . . .

Apparent discrepancies between belief and practice were numerous during the chaotic early days of the development of polygamous practice. Perhaps the most severe conceptual difficulties are raised by the strong evidence that Joseph Smith took as plural wives a number of women **who had living husbands** and that he asked some of his closest followers **to give him their wives as well**. . . . If one accepts Latter-day Saint sources, it seems clear that Smith had **full sexual relations** with some women who were at the same time **legally the wives of other men**. Based on such evidence, it is also clear that Smith did ask some of his followers to give him their wives, whatever his motives in such cases may have been. (*Religion and Sexuality*, pages 151, 155-156)

JOSEPH MENTALLY ILL?

A number of years ago we read in a newsletter published by people interested in Mormon history that Lawrence Foster was at a hotel in Salt Lake City arguing with Mormon scholars **about whether Joseph Smith was mentally ill**. Later, Foster called us and wanted to know if we had any information to support his hypothesis. Surprisingly, in 1993, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, published an article by Foster which set forth his belief that Joseph Smith might have been mentally ill. On page 15, Foster emphasized "that the analysis presented here about Joseph Smith's possible tendencies toward manic-depressive mental states is not intended as anything but an hypothesis."

In his article Foster suggests that Joseph Smith's involvement in polygamy may, in fact, have been the result of his having manic-depression:

To place this issue into a larger context, let us return to the perspectives of William James . . . and realize that religious prophets, including Joseph Smith, are in some sense, at least initially, "sick," "disturbed," or "abnormal." . . . Why did Joseph Smith feel so preoccupied with introducing plural marriage among his followers . . . Was there some hidden psychological key that could help make sense of this seemingly obsessive drive? . . . A variety of factors including . . . Joseph Smith's own strong sex drive all made plural marriage an idea with considerable power for the Mormon prophet . . . Was Smith, as some of his previously most loyal followers at the time asserted, **losing touch with reality** during his final months in Nauvoo?

A compelling psychological approach to explaining this and other puzzling features of the Mormon prophet's behavior during this period was suggested to me by a Mormon psychiatrist, Dr. Jess Groesbeck. . . . gradually the

explanatory power of the interpretation came to seem more and more compelling to me. Groesbeck argued that many aspects of Joseph Smith's behavior, especially during the last years of his life, appeared strikingly similar to behavior that psychiatrists associate with manic-depressive syndromes. Although one could understand that any individual under the pressures Joseph Smith faced might have experienced substantial mood swings, in the Mormon prophet's case those mood swings appear so severe that they may be clinically significant. Groesbeck also pointed out that there is substantial evidence that tendencies toward manic-depression tend to be inherited. Although many people are aware that **one of Joseph Smith's brightest and most appealing sons, David Hyrum, tragically lapsed into insanity** and spent the last years of his life in a mental institution, few realize at least six other male descendants of the Mormon prophet also have suffered from psychological disorders, including manic-depression. . . .

According to Harold I. Kaplan and Benjamin J. Sadock's *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry/IV*: . . . "The increased activity often takes the form of **sexual promiscuity, political involvement, and religious concern**. . . . **Delusions and hallucinations** are not unusual. . . . It is quite common for the person to **communicate with God** and to have it revealed that he or she has a special purpose or mission. Patients frequently describe themselves as an 'organ' of God through whom God speaks to the world."

In the various forms of manic-depressive illness, the manic highs alternate in bipolar fashion with periods of depression. . . .

How do descriptions of psychological mania square with Joseph Smith's actions during the last three years of his life . . . To anyone who has worked closely with the records of the Mormon prophet's life during those final years, the parallels are striking. . . .

Most obvious is the Mormon prophet's extraordinary expansiveness and grandiosity throughout this period. During the last year of his life . . . Smith served as mayor of Nauvoo and head of his own private army, became 'king' of his secret Kingdom of God . . . ran for president of the United States . . . and was the "husband" in some sense of dozens of wives. . . .

In no area were **Joseph Smith's manic qualities more evident than in his efforts to introduce and practice polygamy** during the last three years of his life. The point at which Joseph Smith began systematically to introduce polygamy to his closest associates has strong suggestions of mania. . . . his subsequent surge of activity [*sic*] with the sixteen or more women with whom he appears to have sustained sexual relations as plural wives (the full number may have been much greater) is even more suggestive of the hypersexuality that often accompanies manic periods. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1993, pages 4, 7, 9-13)

Lawrence Foster's hypothesis that Joseph Smith may have been mentally ill would be a very hard pill for the FARMS-BYU scholars to swallow. To many Mormons the idea that Joseph Smith was not mentally competent is far more offensive than calling him a fraud. Most people prefer to believe that they are too intelligent to be misled by someone who is mentally ill. Consequently, some Mormons would consider this to be the ultimate insult to their intelligence.

We seriously doubt that Foster was trying to offend the Mormons. In fact, he probably felt that his work would help Mormon intellectuals to replace the official story of the church with something more believable.

If the First Vision is viewed as an hallucination, and the revelation to establish polygamy as a natural result of manic-depression, then one can be more sympathetic with Joseph Smith's strange behavior. Under this hypothesis many things about Joseph Smith can be explained. For example, in our interview with Foster he stated that it could account for, "Joseph Smith's **ferocious anger** in . . . the last couple of years of his life." It could also help explain why Smith became the "head of his own private army, became 'king' of his secret Kingdom of God . . . [and] ran for president of the United States . . ."

The idea that Joseph Smith was mentally ill has been around for a long time. In discussing theories about the origin of the Book of Mormon, Francis W. Kirkham, a Mormon writer, mentioned one of the anti-Mormon theories: "The Book of Mormon was written by Joseph Smith, a person subject to epileptic fits in early life and later to other pathological mental conditions" (*A New Witness For Christ in America*, 1951, vol. 1, page 350). Dr. Kirkham then cited the following from the book, *The Founder of Mormonism*, written by Isaac Woodbridge Riley in 1902:

Thurlow Weed, when first Joseph submitted to him the Book of Mormon, said that he was either crazy or a very shallow impostor. There is no call for so harsh a judgment . . . There is a truer and, at the same time, more charitable explanation—it is, in a word, that Joseph Smith, Junior, was an epileptic.

While we have always been somewhat cautious about promoting the idea that Joseph Smith had mental problems, we must admit that Foster's work is impressive and certainly merits serious discussion. Although we do not feel competent to say that Joseph Smith was afflicted with manic-depression, it does seem that there was something seriously amiss in his life.

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith's grandfather, Solomon Mack, seemed to suffer from fits. He even wrote a book detailing some of his fits, "severe accidents," and unusual visions he received. In his book, *A Narrative [sic] of the Life of Solomon Mack*, Joseph Smith's grandfather wrote:

I afterwards was taken with a **fit**, when traveling with an axe under my arm . . . I was senseless from one until five p.m. **When I came to myself** . . . I was all covered with blood and much cut and bruised. When I came to my senses I could not tell where I had been nor where I was going. But by good luck I went right and arrived at the first house . . . (As cited in *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage*, by Richard L. Anderson, 1971, page 43)

Although Dr. Anderson mentions that, "There were also 'some fits' among his later disorders," he rejects the idea that he was "afflicted with hereditary epilepsy, which too neatly explains his grandson's visions as epileptic seizures, with flashing lights and lapses into unconsciousness. But the case of neither grandfather nor grandson fits such speculation" (*Ibid.*, page 13).

In a footnote on page 166, Anderson says that “It is even possible that Solomon used ‘fit’ in the early sense of ‘a mortal crisis, a bodily state (whether painful or not) that betokens death.”

Nevertheless, Solomon Mack described so many accidents in his book that it would make one wonder if there was something seriously wrong with the man.

In any case, in the official account of Joseph Smith’s First Vision he wrote:

... **I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me**, and had such an astonishing influence over me as **to bind my tongue** so that I could not speak. **Thick darkness gathered around me**, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History, verse 15)

Joseph Smith described the remarkable vision he saw and then went on to say:

When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up to heaven. When the light had departed, I had no strength; but soon recovering in some degree, I went home. (*Ibid.*, verse 20)

While Joseph Smith claimed that he saw an actual vision, there is a similarity to his grandfather’s experience in that both of them were overpowered and passed out. Interestingly, both Joseph and his grandfather used the expression, “**When I came to myself**” (compare verse 20 with Solomon Mack’s account cited above).

Another account of the vision appears in Joseph Smith’s 1835 dairy. This account contains some eerie material about a strange noise Joseph heard that was not published in the official version:

My **toung** [tongue] seemed to be **swoll[en] in my mouth**, so that **I could not utter. I heard a noise behind me like some person walking towards me**. I strove again to pray but could not. **The noise seemed to draw nearer**. I sprung up on my feet {page 23} and looked around, but **saw no person or thing that was calculated to produce the noise of walking**. (*An American Prophet’s Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*, edited by Scott H. Faulring, 1987, page 51)

It is interesting to note that some of those who suffer from epilepsy claim they hear “peculiar sounds” just prior to an attack (see The American Medical Association Family Medical Guide, 1987, page 289). Whatever the case may be, the fact that Joseph Smith claimed he heard the sound of “**some person walking towards**” him whom he was unable to see is certainly weird.

Some critics of the LDS Church claim that the spooky elements of the vision, such as Joseph Smith being “**seized upon by some power which entirely overcame**” him, the “**thick darkness**,” and the attempt to “**bind**” his tongue prove that the vision was demonic. Mormons, on the other hand, maintain that God thwarted an attack by Satan and gave Joseph a wonderful vision. Foster’s hypothesis gives another alternative: Joseph Smith may have suffered from an hallucination.

Joseph’s First Vision experience was not the only time that he passed out. Later, Joseph Smith claimed he was visited in the night three times by an angel who told him about the gold plates. Joseph wrote:

I shortly after arose from my bed, and, as usual, went to the necessary labors of that day; but, in attempting to

work as at other times, I found my strength so exhausted as to render me entirely unable. My father, who was laboring along with me, discovered something to be wrong with me, and told me to go home. I started with the intention of going to the house; but, in attempting to cross the fence out of the field where we were, my strength entirely failed me, and I fell helpless on the ground, and for **a long time was quite unconscious of anything**.

The first thing that I can recollect was a voice speaking unto me, calling me by name. I looked up, and beheld the same messenger . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History, verses 48-49)

It is also interesting to note that both Solomon Mack and Joseph Smith claimed they prayed for God’s forgiveness. Both maintained that they had a spiritual experience in which they saw a bright light in their house on more than one occasion. Mack wrote:

I was distressed to think how I had abused the Sabbath and had not taken warning from my wife. About midnight I saw **a light** about a foot from my face **as bright as fire**; the doors were all shut and no one stirring in the house. I thought by this that I had but a few moments to live, and oh what distress I was in. I prayed that the Lord would have mercy on my soul and deliver me from this horrible pit of sin. . . . I was in distress.

Another night soon after, **I saw another light as bright as the first**, at a small distance from my face, and I thought I had but a few moments to live. (As cited in *Joseph Smith’s New England Heritage*, page 54)

Joseph Smith wrote that after he had his First Vision, he was severely tempted:

. . . I was left to all kinds of temptations; and mingled with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth, and the foibles of human nature; which, I am sorry to say, led me into divers temptations, offensive in the sight of God. . . . on the evening of the above-mentioned twenty-first of September, after I had retired to my bed for the night, I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies . . .

While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered **a light** appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was **lighter than at noonday**, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside . . . The room was exceedingly light . . . He called me by name . . . He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates . . .

After this communication, I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around . . . the room was left as it had been before the heavenly light had made its appearance.

I lay musing on the singularity of the scene . . . when in the midst of my meditation, suddenly discovered that my room was again beginning to **get lighted**, as it were, the same heavenly messenger was again by my bedside. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History, verses 28-30, 32-34, 43-44)

Joseph Smith, of course, also asserted that when he had his first vision he “saw a pillar **of light** exactly over my head,

above the brightness of the sun . . .” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History, verse 17) While it is only a matter of speculation, if Foster is correct in his hypothesis regarding manic depression, the fact that Joseph Smith wrote, “When I came to myself again, I found myself **lying on my back**, looking up into heaven” (verse 20) could be significant. As he was lying there on the ground the rays of the sun may have seemed like a blinding light shining in his eyes. Since Smith claimed the vision occurred in the woods early in the spring, and that he was “looking up into heaven,” it is certainly possible that the sun shining down through the branches could have given him the impression he was having a vision.

In addition to these parallels, both Smith and his grandfather had an experience in which they believed they were addressed by God or Christ. Solomon Mack wrote: “. . . I was **called by my Christian name . . .**” (pages 54-55). Smith also stated: “One of them spake unto me, **calling me by name . . .**” (verse 17).

If Joseph Smith experienced hallucinations, as Foster seems to believe, it would go a long way towards explaining why his story of the First Vision contains so many glaring contradictions. In the first account, which he wrote in 1832, he said there was **only one personage present** in the vision: the Lord Jesus Christ (see *An American Prophet's Record: The Dairies and Journals of Joseph Smith*, pages 5-6).

In the version written in 1835, Smith maintained that there were two persons whom he did **not** identify. In addition, however, he also said that he “saw **many angels** in this vision . . .” (*Ibid.*, page 51) Finally, in the official account published in 1842, Smith claimed that he saw both **God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ!** This account omits the presence of angels in the vision.

Besides a number of other contradictions, Smith claimed that the vision occurred at the time of a revival in the Palmyra-Manchester area. In his official account he claimed that the First Vision took place “early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty.” Wesley P. Walters, however, demonstrated conclusively that there was no such revival in the Palmyra-Manchester area. In fact, Walters found hard evidence that the revival did not occur until **the fall of 1824!** For a great deal more about problems in the First Vision see our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 143-162-D, or *Inventing Mormonism*, by H. Michael Marquardt and Wesley P. Walters.

If Joseph Smith suffered from seizures and hallucinations, it would make it easier to understand why he could not tell a consistent story about the First Vision. As we have shown above, in Joseph's official account of the vision he said he felt that he was “**doomed to destruction.**” He also revealed that he “was ready to sink into despair and **abandon myself to destruction . . .**”

In his book, *Hearts Made Glad: The Charges of Intemperance Against Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, LaMar Petersen wrote the following:

Joseph's associates sometimes spoke of his paleness when “in vision” or when receiving a revelation. A daughter of Adaline Knight Belnap recorded her mother's impression of the Prophet in an instance of spiritual (spirituous?) passivity. “How well she remembers one day before her father died (Vinson Knight) of a little excitement in school. The children were busy when the school room door was carefully opened and two gentlemen entered, carrying the **limp form of Joseph Smith**. The children all sprang to their feet, for Brother Joseph **lay helpless in their arms**, his head resting

on his brother's shoulder, **his face pale as death, but his eyes were open**, though he seemed not to see things earthly. The teacher quieted them by telling them that Brother Joseph was **in a revelation**, and they were carrying him to his office above the schoolroom. (*Hearts Made Glad*, 1975, page 206)

While there is no question that Joseph Smith and other early Mormon leaders did use alcoholic beverages (see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* pages 405-413), This strange incident could be viewed as evidence supporting Foster's hypothesis of manic depression.

While one can only speculate on whether Joseph Smith inherited mental problems, it is certainly possible that traumatic events he experienced could have had a serious effect upon him. For example, when he was just a young boy, he had an extremely bad infection in his leg. According to his mother, it finally came to the point that the doctors were convinced that “amputation is absolutely necessary in order to save his life.” His mother, however, requested the doctors make “one more effort” to save the leg.

Joseph's mother went on to state that he refused to take any brandy or wine before the operation. Consequently, he had nothing to kill the pain. According to Mrs. Smith, the operation was horrific:

The surgeons commenced operating boring into the bone of his leg, first on one side of the bone where it was affected, and then on the other side, after which they broke it off with a pair of forceps or pincers. They thus took away large pieces of the bone. When they broke off the first piece, Joseph screamed out so loudly, that I could not forbear running to him. . . .

When the third piece was taken away, I burst into the room again—and oh, my God! what a spectacle for a mother's eye! The wound torn open, the blood still gushing from it, and the bed literally covered with blood. Joseph was as pale as a corpse . . . (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith The Prophet, and his Progenitors for Many Generations*, by Lucy Smith, 1853, pages 63-65)

Although Joseph Smith dictated his recollection of the operation for his *History of the Church*, it was never included in the published *History*. While we noticed this story in a microfilm of the *History* in the 1960s, it was not available to the public until 1970. Mormon scholar Reed Durham finally published it in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1970, pages 481-482.

Joseph Smith claimed that the illness came upon him when he “was five years old or thereabouts” and said that he “endured the most acute suffering for a long time . . .” When amputation was suggested he responded: “. . . as young as I was, I utterly refused to give my assent to the operation, but consented to their Trying an experiment by removing a large portion of the bone . . .”

Smith went on to claim that he suffered persecution at this early period of his life, which, of course, was years before he had his First Vision:

. . . I was reduced so very low that my mother could carry me with ease.

After I began to get about I went on crutches till I started for the State of New York where my father had gone

for the purpose of preparing a place for the removal of his family, which he affected by sending a man after us by the name of Caleb Howard . . . We fell in with a family by the name of Gates who were travelling west, and **Howard drove me from the waggon** and made me travel **in my weak state through the snow 40 miles per day for several days**, during which time I suffered **the most excruciating weariness and pain**, and all this that Mr. Howard might enjoy the society of two of Mr. Gates daughters which he took on the wagon where I should have [sic] Rode, and thus he continued to do day day [sic] after day through the Journey and when my brothers remonstrated with Mr. Howard for his treatment to me, he would knock them down with the butt of his whipp [sic].—When we arrived at Utica, N. York Howard threw the goods out of the waggon into the street and attempted to run away with the Horses and waggon, but my mother seized the horses by the reign . . . On the way from Utica, I was left to ride on the last sleigh . . . I was **knocked down** by the driver, one of Gate's Sons, and left to **wallow [sic] in my blood until a stranger came along, picked me up, and carried me to the Town of Palmyra.** (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer, 1970, pages 481-482)

Dr. Reed Durham noted that this “document is found in Joseph Smith, ‘History,’ Book A-1, pp. 131-132, located in the LDS Church Historian’s Office . . .” (*Ibid.*, page 480)

In her book, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, page 69, Mrs. Smith did mention the trouble she had with Mr. Howard and also stated that he mistreated “my children, especially Joseph. He would compel him to travel miles at a time on foot, notwithstanding he was still lame.”

Interestingly, however, she says nothing about her son’s incredible claim that he walked in his “**weak state through the snow 40 miles per day for several days . . .**” Moreover, Mrs. Smith is silent with regard to the fact that Joseph claimed he was “**knocked down** by the driver . . . and left to **wallow [sic] in my blood until a stranger came along, picked me up, and carried me to the Town of Palmyra.**”

The question might be raised as to whether Joseph Smith was exaggerating or hallucinating. On the other hand, although it is difficult to believe, his mother may have forgotten the incident.

It does not seem possible that Joseph Smith, who was “still lame” from the operation, could have walked “40 miles per day for several days” in the condition he was in after his operation. Mormon writers state that the operation was so severe that Joseph Smith walked with a slight limp for the rest of his life.

Joseph Smith’s statement that he “was five years old or thereabouts” when he had the operation is incorrect; he was actually just over seven years old at the time. Mormon writer LeRoy S. Wirthlin shows that Joseph’s mother places the date in “1813” and notes that Joseph’s claim of being “about ‘5 years old or thereabouts’ . . . would not have placed the family in Lebanon” at the time of the epidemic (see *Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1981, page 146).

While Lucy Smith did not write anything about her son being left in his blood, she did claim that one evening when Joseph “was passing through the door yard, a gun was fired across his pathway, with the evident intention of shooting him. He sprang to the door much frightened. We immediately went in search of the assassin . . . The next morning we found his tracks under a waggon, where he lay when he fired . . . We have not as

yet discovered the man who made this attempt to murder, neither can we discover the cause thereof” (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, page 73). While one might think that this had something to do with Joseph Smith’s work on Mormonism, Mrs. Smith made it clear that this was before his First Vision.

Besides these experiences, in 1832, Joseph Smith was actually tarred and feathered by an angry mob. Fawn Brodie stated that the mob, “dragged Joseph . . . They stripped him, scratched and beat him with savage pleasure, and smeared his bleeding body with tar from head to foot. . . . they plastered him with feathers. It is said that Eli Johnson demanded that the prophet be castrated, for he suspected Joseph of being too intimate with his sister, Nancy Marinda. But the doctor who had been persuaded to join the mob declined . . .” (*No Man Knows My History*, 1971, page 119). Interestingly, Nancy Marinda Johnson later became one of Joseph’s plural wives.

At any rate, it seems possible that the combination of the horrendous operation and the cruel mobbing could have resulted in Smith having some serious problems. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, for example, is caused by very shocking experiences. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition, page 424, gives this information:

The essential feature of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or **threatened death or serious injury** . . . Traumatic events that are experienced directly include . . . **violent personal assault** . . .

It is obvious that the mobbing of Joseph Smith was a “violent personal assault” upon him that could have affected his mental state. If he was prone to manic-depression, as Foster seems to believe, it could have had a devastating effect on his conduct.

Interestingly, Sidney Rigdon (who was later chosen to be first counselor to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency) was also tarred and feathered at the same time as Joseph Smith. Although Rigdon had some mental problems since the time he fell off a horse when he was a child, the mobbing tended to exacerbate the problem.

In Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 265, we find this statement:

The next morning I went to see Elder Rigdon, and found him crazy . . . they had dragged him by his heels . . . so high from the ground that he could not raise his head from the rough, frozen surface, which lacerated it exceedingly; and when he saw me he called to his wife to bring a razor . . . **to kill me**. Sister Rigdon left the room, and he asked me to bring his razor . . . he wanted **to kill his wife**; and he continued delirious some days.

A few years later, Sidney Rigdon was still threatening people’s lives. In the Mormon Church’s newspaper, *The Nauvoo Neighbor*, December 4, 1844, Apostle Orson Hyde reported:

Elder Rigdon has been associated with Joseph and Hyrum Smith as a counselor to the Church, and he told me in Far West that it was imperative of the Church to obey the word of Joseph Smith, or the presidency, without question or inquiry, and that if there were any that would not, **they should have their throats cut from ear [to] ear.**

After Smith's death, Rigdon was finally excommunicated from the church. In his book, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*, Richard S. Van Wagoner, presents rather convincing evidence that Rigdon was suffering from severe manic depression—the same affliction Lawrence Foster would like to link to Joseph Smith.

If the FARMS-BYU scholars are going to use Lawrence Foster as an authority against us, they should also inform their readers that Professor Foster believes that **Joseph Smith was an adulterer** and suggests that **he may have been mentally ill**.

FOSTER DISDAINS OUR BELIEFS

Mormon defenders who use Foster to criticize us should also make it clear that one of the main problems Foster has with us is that he simply does **not** like our religious beliefs. This is very important to note because some of the very things Foster objects to are found in Mormonism.

In his article in *Dialogue*, Summer 1984, page 36, Foster makes this very clear: “. . . I am equally critical of the **narrowminded Protestant fundamentalism** which the Tanners have substituted for the Mormonism that they decry.” Speaking of us, Foster also says he feels a “deep sadness that they are still largely unable to pass beyond that **narrow, pharisaical Mormon literalism** with which they grew up and which sees only the external shell of religion and not its deeper internal spirit” (Paper by Lawrence Foster, read at the Mormon History Association, May 6, 1983, typed copy, page 25).

Foster is not disturbed with us because we belong to some strange cult. Instead, we are criticized because we believe in traditional Christianity—the same religion that is embraced by many millions of people throughout the world. Because we do not go along with Foster's views on religion, he feels that our research on Mormonism is of little value.

On the last page of his article in *Differing Visions* Foster wrote: “Until the Tanners are prepared to use consistent standards of judgment for their own faith as well as that of others, their stance **cannot be taken seriously by scholars** or by the general public” (page 365). Professor Foster is very dogmatic about this matter. Foster clearly desires to pressure us into changing our beliefs about Christianity.

Professor Foster is extremely dogmatic about this matter. While he does not openly attack Christianity, he is obviously trying to get us to conform to his **disbelief** in some of the principal doctrines of Christianity.

Foster likes to use the phrase “**narrowminded Protestant fundamentalism**” when referring to our religion. This, of course, is an attempt to discredit us. While he would probably like to be referred to as a liberal Christian, he does not seem very liberal in his stance towards those who believe in orthodox Christianity. He is, in fact, more like a **fundamentalist** who simply cannot tolerate dissenting opinions.

Although some liberal Christians can sometimes be a little condescending to us, we generally get along well with them. In Foster's case, however, **there is no middle ground**. If we do not accept his conclusions regarding religion, he resorts to ridicule.

While we disagree strongly with some of Foster's opinions, we feel that he has every right to publicly express his views. In fact, we believe that both liberal Christians and non-Christians often have important things to say. For example, in the past many

orthodox Christians as well as Mormons opposed equal rights for blacks. It is obvious now that this was a serious mistake. They should have listened carefully to what non-Christians and liberals were saying about that important matter.

However this may be, Dr. Foster is convinced that he has far more mature views regarding religion than we do. He, in fact, believes that he has developed a “**distinctive sense of mission**” to make people “become better Methodists, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, Mormons, or whatever” (*Dialogue*, Autumn 1983, page 90).

Consequently, although he believes that “**narrowminded**” Protestants like us should be silent about Mormonism, he apparently feels that it is his prerogative to criticize the Mormons and to help set the church on the right course. For example, in an article printed in *Dialogue* Foster wrote:

My perspective corresponds neither to that of most Mormons nor of most anti-Mormons. . . . I shall deal briefly with one topic which constitutes the crux of my personal difference with conventional Mormonism—the Latter-day Saint concept of true religious authority. . . . Joseph Smith made the mistake of trying to set up a new religious system which would be free of all the flaws of the old imperfect systems. In my opinion, he inevitably failed . . .

Following the death of Joseph Smith . . . Mormonism gradually moved away from its prophet's powerful, albeit incomplete, vision. . . . The message has been watered down until for many it is like eating a **poor pabulum**—a pabulum characterized by the belief that simply by following Church leadership unquestioningly one will have achieved true faith. At times **Mormonism appears to be a public relations shell without substance. Like the biblical Pharisees** whom Jesus so sharply criticized, Mormons increasingly define themselves in terms of external behavior—not smoking, not drinking, and paying tithing—rather than seeking to understand the inner spirit which alone gives such actions meaning.

Perhaps the ultimate irony is that Joseph Smith, who introduced the temple ceremonies so important to Mormonism, **would today be unable to participate in those ceremonies himself because of his own behavior**. For Smith was no teetotaler; on numerous occasions throughout his life, **he drank beer and wine. Indeed, he once planned to set up a bar in his Mansion House in Nauvoo**. Only Emma's refusal to countenance the action forced him to back down. Yet today, how many Saints are piously judgmental of anyone who deviates even an iota from official Church policy. So often **Mormons do all the right things for all the wrong reasons. They strain out gnats and swallow camels**.

Today I see in Mormonism a growing fear, a loss of true confidence in the Mormon message . . . Many Mormons, even at the highest levels of the Church, have recently begun to argue that there is simply “no middle ground”—one is either 100 percent Mormon or 100 percent anti-Mormon. While such statements are palpably and demonstrably false, they are nevertheless dangerous, especially for naive Saints . . . Commitment and challenge are vital to any faith, but let us not carry commitment **to such pathological extremes** that we retreat permanently into foxholes and accuse anyone who doesn't share our curious preference of being an enemy. Such an approach makes not only **for bad religion**, but for bad history as well. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1983, pages 92, 96, 97)

In a letter to us, dated August 24, 1989, Mr. Foster wrote: “I read with interest your most recent discussion of the alleged ‘black hole’ in the Book of Mormon . . . I wonder if **orthodox Christianity** of the sort that I assume you espouse **does not have a ‘black hole’ as great as or greater than anything in Mormonism in its story of the Resurrection.**”

When the noted scholar Wesley P. Walters read Foster’s letter to us, he wrote the following in response:

The impression I carried away is that **only if one rejects orthodox Christianity is he allowed to point out falsehood in another religion.** You surely did not intend to imply that anyone, except orthodox Christians, can fault Jim Jones as a false religious leader . . . The Tanners have made their own independent study of Christianity and concluded that the position of orthodox Christianity does stand up intellectually and historically. It seems to me very arbitrary on your part for you to insist that only if they accept the conclusion of Mr. Fuller . . . conclusions that you find pleasing to your frame of mind, then alone would they be entitled to study, know or speak about material in the field of Mormonism. I hope, therefore, that in the future you can find it in your heart to deal with more charitableness in speaking of their work.

Lawrence Foster apparently thinks that we have not spent much time researching the claims of Christianity. Actually we have spent thousands of hours researching and writing about important issues like evolution, textual criticism, seeming contradictions in the Bible, and other controversial subjects. While we certainly do not claim that we have all the answers, we feel that there is sufficient evidence to place our faith in Christianity. Those who are interested in our views on the subject should read our book, *A Look at Christianity*.

Lawrence Foster wrote that his mother did not agree with the conservative views held by the Methodists, and that he “received both a thorough grounding in Mother’s literary and religious approach to the Bible and full biblical refutations for the arguments of fundamentalist Christianity. As a teenager, I participated regularly in church services, choir, and youth groups, yet my propensity for raising uncomfortable questions continually embroiled me in controversy. For example, I was such a disruptive influence for my conservative eighth-grade teacher that by mutual agreement I opted out of the class and spent my time in the church library reading *The Interpreter’s Bible* on the Book of Job. . . . It became increasingly clear to me that **no specific beliefs and practices are necessarily important in themselves**; what really matters is the meaning that they hold for the worshiper. . . . **Though I might intellectually reject a literalistic interpretation of the Christmas story**, for example, I would always feel deeply the joy of the Christmas spirit, with its message that God can work through even the most lowly and unpromising circumstances” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1983, pages 89-90).

We do not know exactly what Foster believes about Jesus. In our interview with him he stated his “faith does not rest on the Virgin Birth” and also commented: “What I’m saying is if you’re going to criticize somebody else you should apply it to yourself . . . in my paper on Joseph Smith and possible manic depression, I . . . bring in several religious figures including George Fox . . . **and Jesus Christ** as possible parallels.”

Although Foster admitted that there was very little historical evidence to go on, he wrote that, “one cannot help speculating that the most influential of all religious founding figures, **Jesus of Nazareth, called the Christ by his followers, may have been subject to manic-depressive tendencies.** . . . Jesus’ actions riding into Jerusalem on a donkey . . . or scourging the money changers from the temple, when juxtaposed with Jesus’ profound depression shortly before his final arrest . . . could raise the question of whether something more than normal mood swings may have been present during Jesus’ experience” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1993, page 20).

We feel that the hypothesis that Jesus may have suffered from manic-depressive tendencies is very flimsy indeed. If it is true that Jesus knew that he was going to be betrayed by Judas, take upon himself the sins of the world, suffer and be crucified in a very cruel manner, as the Bible asserts, then it is no wonder that he would have “profound depression” just before his death. If Foster had evidence that Jesus often suffered from deep depression, his argument would be more convincing.

Although it is true that Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the temple, there is no evidence that he hurt anyone. Jesus, in fact, is portrayed in the Bible as being against violence and revenge. In Matthew 5:44, we read: “But I say unto you, **Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you,** and pray for them which despitefully use you . . .”

Joseph Smith the Mormon prophet, on the other hand, was prone to violence. While Mormon writer John J. Stewart claimed that Joseph Smith was “perhaps the most **Christ-like man** to live upon the earth **since Jesus** himself,” this conclusion is not supported by Joseph Smith’s *History*: “I am **not so much a ‘Christian’** as many suppose I am. When a man undertakes to ride me for a horse, I feel disposed to kick up and throw him off, **and ride him**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 335).

Unlike the gentle and soft spoken man portrayed in the Mormon film, *Legacy*, Joseph Smith was without question a fighting prophet. He not only liked to wrestle and prove his strength, but he sometimes kicked people and struck them very hard. Historian D. Michael Quinn observed that Smith was a “church president who **physically assaulted both Mormons and non-Mormons** for insulting him . . .” (*The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power*, 1994, pages 261-262).

Jedediah M. Grant, a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, told of

the Baptist priest who came to see Joseph Smith. . . . the Baptist stood before him, and folding his arms said, “Is it possible that I now flash my optics upon a man who has conversed with my Savior?” “Yes,” says the Prophet, “I don’t know but you do; would not you **like to wrestle with me?**” That, you see, brought the priest **right on to the thrashing floor, and he turned a sunset right straight.** After he had whirled round a few times, **like a duck shot in the head**, he concluded that his piety had been awfully shocked . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, pp. 66-67)

Joseph Smith’s close friend, Benjamin F. Johnson, made this observation after Smith’s death:

And yet, although so social and even convivial at times, he would allow no arrogance or undue liberties.

Criticisms, even by his associates, **were rarely acceptable**. Contradictions would arouse in him **the lion at once**. By no one of his fellows would he be superseded. . . . one or another of his associates were **more than once**, for their impudence, helped from the congregation **by his foot**. . . . He **soundly thrashed his brother William** . . . While with him in such fraternal, social and sometimes convivial moods, we could not then so fully realize the greatness and majesty of his calling. (Letter by Benjamin F. Johnson to Elder George S. Gibbs, 1903, as printed in *The Testimony of Joseph Smith's Best Friend*, pages 4-5)

Mormon writer Max Parkin refers to a court case against Joseph Smith in which Calvin Stoddard, Joseph Smith's brother-in-law, testified that, "**Smith then came up and knocked him in the forehead** with his flat hand—the blow **knocked him down**, when **Smith repeated the blow four or five times, very hard**—made him blind—that Smith afterwards came to him and asked his forgiveness . . ." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, citing from the *Painesville Telegraph*, June 26, 1835).

Parkin also quotes Luke S. Johnson, who served as an apostle in the early Mormon Church, as saying that when a minister insulted Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, Smith, "**'boxed his ears with both hands**, and turning his face towards the door, **kicked him into the street**,' for the man's lack of charity" (*Ibid.*, page 268).

In the *History of the Church* for the year 1843, we read of two fights Joseph Smith had in Nauvoo:

Josiah Butterfield came to my house and insulted me so outrageously that **I kicked him out of the house, across the yard, and into the street**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 316)

Bagby called me a liar, and picked up a stone to throw at me, which **so enraged me** that I followed him a few steps, and **struck him two or three times**. Esquire Daniel H. Wells stepped between us and succeeded in separating us. . . . I rode down to Alderman Whitney . . . he imposed a fine which I paid, and then returned to the political meeting. (*Ibid.*, page 524)

On August 13, 1843, Joseph Smith admitted that he had tried to choke Walter Bagby: "I met him, and he gave me some abusive language, taking up a stone to throw at me: **I seized him by the throat to choke him off**" (*Ibid.*, page 531).

After he became president of the Mormon Church, Brigham Young commented, "if you had the Prophet Joseph to deal with, you would think that I am quite mild. . . . He would not bear the usage I have borne, and would appear as though he would **tear down all the houses in the city, and tear up trees by the roots**, if men conducted to him in the way they have to me" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, pp. 317-318).

In addition to choking, kicking people out of houses and churches, knocking them in the head, boxing their ears, and tearing their clothing, the evidence indicates that he threatened people's lives. For documentation see *The Mormon Hierarchy, Origins of Power*, pages 91-92.

FOSTER'S KINDLY REMARKS

While it is true that Lawrence Foster has slapped us down a number of times in his articles and letters, we should probably

point out that he has also made some good statements about us and indicated that our work has had a significant effect on Mormonism. Below are a few examples:

By contrast to the often-harsh rhetoric of their attacks on Mormonism, **in person they can be kind, even gentle individuals. Disciplined, hard-working, and committed, they might seem to be almost an ideal model for Mormon missionaries** . . . (*Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History*, page 349)

Yet if the Tanners' own work falls short as history, it nevertheless has helped stimulate historical studies. Jerald is a brilliant analyst of detail, with an almost uncanny ability to spot textual inconsistencies that demand explanation. His analysis showing that a pamphlet denunciation of Mormonism attributed to Oliver Cowdery was, in fact, a clever forgery, is only one example of research and analysis that would do credit to any professional historian. More recently and significantly, Jerald stood almost alone among those studying Mormon history in publicly raising doubts about the authenticity of the 'Salamander letter,' purportedly describing Joseph Smith's early experiences that led to the production of the Book of Mormon. The vast majority of Mormon scholars had accepted as genuine this and other documents that subsequently have been shown to be forged by Mark W. Hofmann. Jerald, despite his desire to find evidence discrediting the conventional Mormon story, felt that something did not ring true about the letter, and he was prepared to voice his doubts publicly. The letter seemed to him too close to expectation to be correct.

The impact of the Tanners' publication of primary printed documents also must not be underestimated. (*Ibid.*, pages 351-352)

Yet the Tanners have been more than simply gadflies; in curious and often indirect ways, their work **has also been a factor helping to stimulate serious Mormon Historical writing**. . . . their criticisms have highlighted issues that professional Mormon historians, operating from a very different perspective, have also sought to address. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1984, page 35)

Jerald and Sandra Tanner are without doubt among the most complex and multi-faceted of all the figures whom I have encountered in Mormon history, past or present . . .

From the very beginning the Tanners' concerns were not simply doctrinal but also social. Jerald's fierce opposition to Mormon racism, for example, has been a recurrent motif throughout his career . . . Although much of the motivation behind such publication appears to have been the polemical one of embarrassing present-day Mormons by showing the inconsistencies and changes in Mormonism since its earliest years, the larger impact of such efforts, **as some Mormon historians have observed, has been to give Mormons back their heritage** and to encourage serious scholarly attention to the fascinating early days of the Mormon movement. . . . Some scholars have also, at least in private, been very pleased that the Tanners have made available hard-to-find printed works from early LDS history . . . **even those scholars who are most critical of the Tanners and their methods have profited**, at least indirectly, because the Tanners' allegations have spurred them to begin their own investigations into vital and still incompletely understood topics . . . A number

of reasons lie behind the **Mormon church's decision to try to publicly ignore the Tanners**. Basically the Tanners have adopted a brilliant, two-pronged debaters ploy which is **exceedingly difficult to handle without greater knowledge and sophistication than most church leaders appear to possess**. . . .

Every organization, especially if it is highly authoritarian, is dependent for its ongoing health and vitality on its critics . . . Ralph Nader has made inestimable contributions to the health and vitality of American Business even though most businessmen cannot stand him personally. By repeatedly, effectively and with incontrovertible evidence alerting the public to illegal, shoddy and dangerous business practices, Nader has spurred many different enterprises to improve their products, making them safer and more competitive. . . .

Jerald and Sandra Tanner have functioned with regard to Mormonism in much the same way that Ralph Nader has functioned with regard to American business. The Tanners have challenged the Mormon church. If it really believes in its own ideals, to live up to those ideals. . . . If it really believes in its own history, to find out what that history really was. They have challenged the Mormon church. . . . to correct its sectarian provincialisms, such as the former policy of excluding Blacks from full church membership. Such challenges have obviously not been popular, yet through them the Tanners have prodded the church to begin, however haltingly and imperfectly to develop a more realistic sense of itself. I would imagine, for example, that much of the flowering of Mormon historical studies in the 1970s, which has helped to give at least some Mormons a richer and more vital knowledge of their own heritage, has been more than tangentially related to the desire of Latter Day Saint historians to prove the Tanners wrong by showing that a full and honest history of the Latter Day Saints can indeed be written. Much like the irritating grain of sand in the oyster, the result has been a pearl. . . .

My opinion is that the long-term interests of the Church . . . would best be served by moving as expeditiously and fearlessly as possible **to admit frankly the truth of those factual points on which Jerald and Sandra Tanner are indisputably correct**. . . .

My basic advice to Mormons who would refute the Tanners is simply this: **Take the log out of your own eye** and then you will be able to see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. . . .

Jerald and Sandra Tanner are real people. Not devils with horns, cloven hooves and tails. They have suffered much in devoting their lives to what has in so many ways often been a difficult and thankless crusade. . . . **the Tanners probably care far more for the Mormon church and [than?] do the great majority of those Saints who have never rebelled or thought seriously about their faith**. . . . would not the most constructive response be not to treat them as a tabooed and difficult subject, but rather to try to involve them and their considerable talents and dedication in constructively discovering and telling the true story of Mormonism, with both its failings and its achievements. (Paper by Lawrence Foster, read at the Mormon History Association, May 6, 1983, typed copy, pages 6, 10-11, 14-15, 20-21, 25, 28-30)

Lawrence Foster's articles concerning us fluctuate back and forth between praise and condemnation. It is almost as if they were written by two different people. If the FARMS-BYU scholars wish to use him as a witness against us, they should at least **tell the whole story about how he really feels about Joseph Smith and Mormonism**.

We plan to give Dr. Lawrence Foster a chance to respond to our criticism in the next issue of the *Messenger*.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

“Just the fact that ‘Mormons’ don’t go around raising ‘hell’ and trying to stir up problems with other religions like I have seen your organization do—repeatedly leads me more than ever to believe that the LDS Church is the **only true Church** . . . Why don’t you just **admit that you worship Satan and NOT GOD**. . . . Please take my name off your mailing list.” (Letter from Sandy, Utah)

“I joined the Mormon Church in 1978. I am now going through the process of mentally getting myself away from the church. It is very hard on me. I really, really **thought the church was true until I read *Mormon Enigma* & your book** that you’ve put together. . . . I really don’t consider your literature for the most part to be anti-Mormon because I find most of it just to be quotations of the church leaders themselves. That is what is so sad, & it is the most damning.” (Letter from Louisiana)

“Thanks (in part) to your research, I have realized that I have been deceived for the first 27 years of my life. **As a BYU graduate and returned missionary**, I’m glad that I won’t have to live the rest of my life under a veil of deception. Keep up the good work.” (Letter from California)

“Just want to say thanks for your ministry. You **helped me find the truth about Mormonism**. . . . May God’s great love continue to lift you up as it does me! Your sister in Christ.” (Letter from Idaho)

“I’ve written to you twice many years ago . . . your research work and specially ***Mormonism, Shadow or Reality?* have been instrumental in my leaving the L.D.S. Church** — You have been kind enough to send, for many years the *Salt Lake City Messenger* which I read . . . from cover to cover as soon as I get it out of the mail box. It has blessed me many times and ‘amazed me’ many times at your relentless research of Mormon history and your pursuit of historical truth — who knows how many people have seen the light through your work.” (Letter from California)

“I can’t begin to tell you how amazed I was, after writing to you just for information on a book I was interested in, (*Mormonism Shadow or Reality?*) . . . I didn’t realize that I would hit a gold mine on information on Mormonism. . . . I was studying with missionaries, then **got baptized, and then left the church** all within about 6 months. . . . I welcome any suggestions for material to help me learn. I am a seeker of truth.” (Letter from Washington)

Those who would like to help us reach the Mormon people should be aware of the fact that Utah Lighthouse Ministry is a non-profit organization. In addition to our work with Mormons, we provide support for **44 children** through World Vision, and furnish some help to a local Rescue Mission. Those who are concerned about helping this ministry can send their **tax-deductible** contributions to UTAH LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY, P. O. Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110. Both contributions and orders can be made over the phone (801-485-8894 or 801-485-0312) with Visa, MasterCard or Discover Card.

While we deeply appreciate the financial support that we receive, we strongly desire your prayers. We believe they will bring thousands of Mormons to the truth. As Apostle Paul admonished: **“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving”** (Colossians 4:2).

BOOKS AND TAPES

(Mail orders add 10% — Minimum postage \$1.50)

Occultic Ritual Abuse; Fact or Fantasy? by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. **Price: \$6.95**

The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power, by D. Michael Quinn. **Price: \$29.95**

Inventing Mormonism, by H. Michael Marquardt and Wesley P. Walters. An Important discussion of Joseph Smith's early years and the origin of Mormonism. **Special Price: \$27.00**

New Approaches to the Book of Mormon, edited by Brent Metcalfe. BYU professor Louis Midgley says this is “the most sophisticated attack on the truth of the Book of Mormon” that is currently available. **Special Price: \$25.00**

Out of the Cults and Into the Church: Understanding & Encouraging Ex-Cultists, by Janis Hutchinson. **Price: \$10.00**

Sandra Tanner Tape No. 3. Two radio interviews. Contains information about the 1990 changes in the Mormon temple ceremony and the false translation of the Book of Abraham. **Price: \$3.00**

Questions to Ask Your Mormon Friend: Challenging the Claims of Latter-day Saints in a Constructive Manner, by Bill McKeever & Eric Johnson. **Price: \$9.00**

How to Rescue Your Loved One from Mormonism, by David A. Reed & John R. Farkas. **Price: \$9.00**

Mormonism: The Christian View. A video narrated by Wesley P. Walters. Deals with Mormon history, doctrines, claim to authority, changes in doctrine and witnessing suggestions. **Price: \$24.00**

Why We Left Mormonism, edited by Latayne Scott. Personal testimonies of eight ex-Mormons, including Sandra Tanner. **Price: \$8.00**

Basic Christianity, by John R. Stott. A brief examination of the claims of Christ and our response to His call. **Price: \$5.00**

New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable? by F. F. Bruce. A well-researched book by a Greek scholar showing the reliability of the translation of the N.T. **Price: \$7.00**

Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons, by Pastor Mark Cares. Good introduction to Mormon culture and beliefs, with helpful insights on witnessing. **Price: \$11.00**

Know What You Believe—A Practical Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$8.00**

Know Why You Believe—A Clear Affirmation of the Reasonableness of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$9.00**

After Mormonism What? Reclaiming the Ex-Mormon's Worldview for Christ, by Latayne Scott. **Price: \$8.00**

MANY MORE BOOKS!!!

We have many other books which are not listed in this issue of the *Messenger*. A complete book list will be sent free upon request by writing to us at **Utah Lighthouse Ministry, PO Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.**

**UTAH LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY
PO BOX 1884
SALT LAKE CITY UT 84110**