

BYU RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

FALL 2016

REVIEW

CALENDAR ✕ COMMENTS ✕ INTERVIEWS & SPOTLIGHTS ✕ STUDENT & TEACHER UPDATES ✕ BOOKS

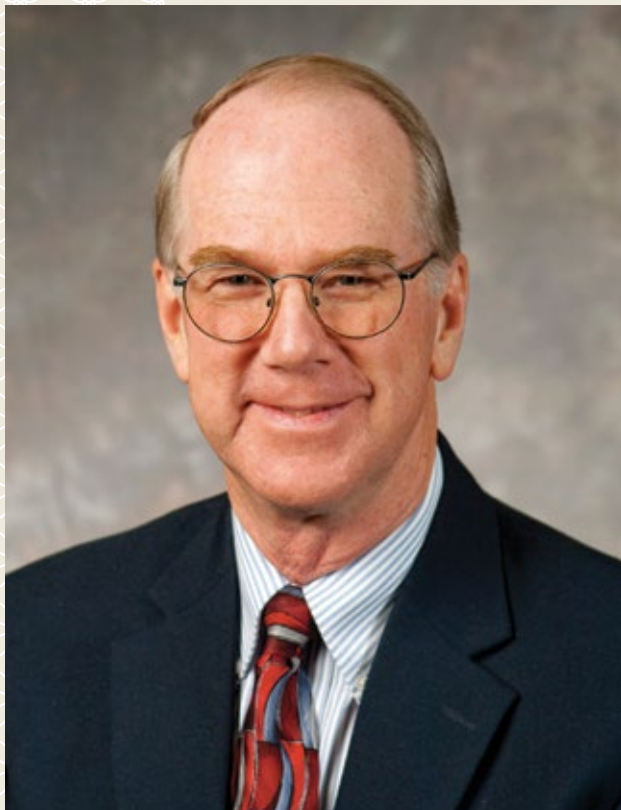


Mormon Paradigm Shifts

Joseph Smith's
Seer Stones



Enter to Learn



AS INDICATED IN SCRIPTURE, “ENTERING” IS AN essential part of progress. There are many references to people entering things. Noah and his family entered the ark (Genesis 7:13). Moses entered into the tabernacle and received revelation from Jehovah (Exodus 33:9). Joshua and the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan. More importantly, however, we read of the Israelites entering into a covenant with the Lord (Deuteronomy 29:12; Ezekiel 16:8). Likewise, Jesus entered ships, houses, towns, and cities during his ministry (e.g., Matthew 7:21; 8:5). But of greater significance, he encouraged his followers to “Enter ye in at the strait gate . . . which leadeth unto life” (Matthew 7:13–14), while warning that various sins hinder us from entering into the kingdom of heaven (e.g., Matthew 5:20; 7:21; 23:13). Jesus clearly instructed those who desired to enter heaven to “learn of me” (Matthew 11:29).

Brigham Young University unofficially employs the motto “Enter to Learn; Go Forth to Serve” to succinctly state a major purpose of the university (many other institutions use this slogan as well). As a part of Religious Education, BYU’s Religious Studies Center invites all

people to enter and to learn about the scriptures, Church history, and Jesus’s gospel through its conferences and publications. Furthermore, through the wonder of the only twenty-five-year-old Internet, people around the world can enter the Religious Studies Center’s website to learn (rsc.byu.edu). We are confident that the RSC’s numerous publications, most of which are freely available on its website, provide quality resources to assist latter-day Saints in fulfilling the Lord’s injunctions to “study my word” (D&C 11:22), to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118), and more specifically, to “learn of me” (D&C 19:23; 32:1; 58:1).

We invite you to *enter* the RSC website (rsc.byu.edu) to *learn*. And please help us share this great resource with others. ✂

Dana M. Pike

Associate Dean of Religious Education

BYU

Religious Education

REVIEW

BYU Religious Education Review
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RESEARCH UPDATE

An Ancient Treasure Is about to See the Light of Day
by Lincoln H. Blumell



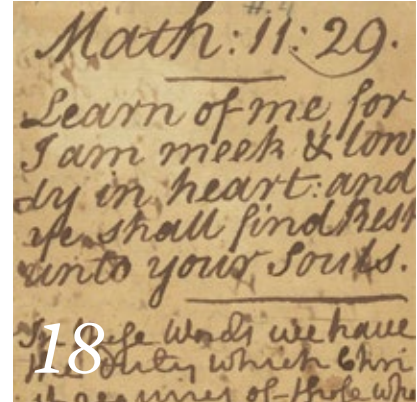
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Cover photo: Wilford Wood holding the green stone next to an egg.
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RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER Founded in 1975 by Jeffrey R. Holland	Director Brent L. Top	REVIEW MAGAZINE STAFF	Subscriptions Manager Joany O. Pinegar	RSC Student Editors Tyler Balli Leah Emal Kimball Gardner Jessica Neilson Allyson Jones Leah Welker	DESIGN & PRODUCTION Hales Creative, LLC
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BIG CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

FALL 2016 BRINGS SIGNIFICANT changes in Religious Education as we welcome seven new faculty members: two in the Department of Church History and Doctrine and five in Ancient Scripture. Biographies of the new faculty members will appear in future issues of the *Review*. Our new faculty members bring new research specialties, excellence in teaching, impressive publications, and the hope of a bright future.

In this issue of the *Review*, we draw your attention to some promising research that is ongoing and in several cases is also nearing publication. With a longer perspective in mind, Rachel Cope is beginning work on a database of nineteenth-century sermons that includes transcriptions of many previously unpublished sermons. The work involves a host of student transcribers who are working at various institutions across the United States. This project promises to provide new insights into contextualizing early American religious life as well as contextualizing the Restoration. Lincoln H. Blumell and a team of scholars across BYU campus is nearing publication of the HBLL's important papyrus containing



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a commentary from Didymus the Blind (died 398 CE). The papyrus is perhaps the HBLL's most important papyrus in its collection, and has been at BYU since the 1980s. Also, Michael MacKay and Nick Frederick recently published with the RSC a new book about Joseph Smith's seer stones, and in this issue of the *Review* he gives us a glimpse of seer stone culture in nineteenth-century America. I would also draw your attention to Mark D. Ogletree's article on David O.

Starting in January 2017, the Religious Educator will be available in both print and digital format, and we will also expand access to older issues of the journal.

McKay as a father. Mark did much of the research for this book as a PhD student at Utah State University.

As always, there are many exciting projects that are not highlighted in the *Review*, but I hope that what is included will give you a feel for the excellent research and teaching that is taking place in Religious Education. We have an exciting array of publications that highlight the growth of the Church across the globe. Other recent RSC publications that you

may find interesting are *A Reason for Faith: Navigating LDS Doctrine and Church History, A Historian in Zion*, and *Provo's Two Temples*. We continue to strive to publish the best works on LDS history, doctrine, and scripture and to make those works as broadly available as possible. Finally, we would like to draw your attention to our 2017 release of the *Religious Educator* in digital format. Starting in January 2017, the *Religious Educator* will be available in both print and digital format, and we will also expand access to older issues of the journal. For more information on the *Religious Educator*, please visit rsc.byu.edu. ✕



Thomas A. Waymont
Publications Director
Religious Studies Center

calendar of events

Open to the campus community and the general public

OCTOBER 2016

SIDNEY B. SPERRY SYMPOSIUM

Friday and Saturday, 28–29 October 2016

The 45th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium will be held in the Joseph Smith Building (JSB) auditorium on BYU campus. The theme is “Foundations of the Restoration: Fulfillment of the Covenant Purposes.” Presentations will cover the Savior’s restoration of foundational truths, doctrines, and covenants. For more information, visit <https://rsc.byu.edu/sperrysymposium>.

FEBRUARY 2017

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

Friday, 17 February 2017

This event is held in the Wilkinson Student Center from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The annual student symposium provides a forum for students to research, write, and present papers about religious subjects from a faithful perspective. For more information, visit <http://rsc.byu.edu/studentsymposium>.

APRIL 2017

BYU EASTER CONFERENCE

Friday, 15 April 2017

This Easter Conference will be held on Good Friday in the Joseph Smith Building (JSB) auditorium beginning at 7:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be President Kevin J. Worthen, president of Brigham Young University. The other two speakers are Camille Fronk Olson, chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture at BYU, and Hank Smith, assistant professor of ancient scripture. Each speaker will talk about various aspects of the Savior, his life, his mission, the Atonement, and his influence on our lives today. Plan to bring a friend or loved one and come early. For more information, visit <http://rsc.byu.edu/easterconference>.

These events are free of charge, and registration is not required. Some event details are subject to change. For more details, please visit us online at rsc.byu.edu/conferences or contact Brent Nordgren at 801-422-3293.



Faculty Highlight: Camille Fronk Olson

CAMILLE FRONK OLSON (camille_fronk@byu.edu) IS A PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



CAMILLE FRONK OLSON DETERMINED that excelling in school was the way to connect with her father. Along the way, she also discovered that she loved learning. Shortly after returning home from her mission to southern France, she was offered a job as a seminary teacher in the Salt Lake area. At that time, she was the sole female full-time seminary teacher in the Church. She attained a master's degree in Near Eastern studies at BYU and afterward joined LDS Business College as the dean of students. From there, she moved on to teach at the

institute adjacent to the University of Utah. As had been the case when she taught seminary, she was the only full-time female instructor. She was invited to BYU to fill a full-time visiting slot while she completed a PhD in sociology, focusing on Palestinian families. She is now a professor and is chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture. She is the author of *Women of the Old Testament* and *Women of the New Testament*. She inherited a daughter and son when she married Paul F. Olson and now has four grandchildren. ✂

Faculty Highlight: Roger P. Minert

ROGER P. MINERT (roger_minert@byu.edu) IS A PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.



ROGER P. MINERT RECEIVED HIS DOCTORAL DEGREE IN 1991 FROM THE OHIO State University, specializing in German language history and second language acquisition theory. He taught German for ten years, and was then accredited by the Family History Library for genealogical research in Germany and Austria. For twelve years, he worked as a private genealogical contractor. In August 2003, he was appointed professor of family history at Brigham Young University. The author of nearly 100 books and articles, he recently published two volumes on the Latter-day Saints in Germany and Austria during World War II: *In Harm's Way* and *Under the Gun*. Those books were followed by *Against the Wall*, the story of the first Austrian branch president. During a sabbatical in Vienna in 2015, he wrote *German Census Records, 1816–1916*. He is responsible for courses in beginning family history, beginning and advanced German family history, and German paleography. ✂

Faculty Spotlight: Brian M. Hauglid

BRIAN M. HAUGLID (brian_hauglid@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



BRIAN M. HAUGLID WAS BORN AND RAISED A ROMAN CATHOLIC NEAR Minneapolis, Minnesota. In early 1976, he was introduced to the missionaries by his younger brother, who was investigating the Church. Brian received the missionary lessons and joined the Church in June 1976. He subsequently acquired a GED and served in the California Sacramento Mission (1977–79). Later, he received a BA from Brigham Young University (1984) in Near Eastern studies and an MA and PhD in Arabic and Islamic studies from the University of Utah Middle East Center (1991 and 1998 respectively). After about a dozen years with the Seminaries and Institutes program, he joined the Ancient Scripture Department in 1999. His interests include the Pearl of Great Price—especially the Book of Abraham—Islamic studies, the Book of Mormon, Christian theology, and interfaith outreach. He is married to the former Tessa McNamara and has three daughters. ✂

Faculty Highlight: Tyler J. Griffin

TYLER J. GRIFFIN (tyler_griffin@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



TYLER GRIFFIN WAS BORN AND raised in Providence, Utah, in beautiful Cache Valley. After serving a mission in Curitiba, Brazil, he completed a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. Afterward, he married Kiplin Crook and began teaching seminary in Brigham City, Utah. After six years in that assignment, he worked at the institute adjacent to Utah State University for the next seven years. He obtained a master's and a doctorate degree in instructional technology and has

been at BYU since August 2010. He has loved his time here and the opportunity to work with so many incredible students and colleagues. He enjoys designing and developing digitally immersive products to enhance teaching and learning in the scriptures. He and Kiplin have ten children—five boys and five girls



Lincoln H. Blumell with
Thomas A. Wayment and
a student, examining and
mounting papyrus.

An Ancient Treasure Is about to See the Light of Day

LINCOLN H. BLUMELL

LINCOLN H. BLUMELL (*lincoln_blumell@byu.edu*) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.

JUST OVER 1,600 YEARS AGO, IN THE LATE FOURTH century AD, a renowned Christian teacher named Didymus “the blind” taught in Alexandria. Though blinded as a child because of disease, Didymus overcame this impediment to become one of the leading Christian interpreters of scripture in his day. He was held in high regard far and wide and attracted students from all over the ancient Mediterranean world. They included the likes of the famous St. Jerome—the translator of the Latin Vulgate. When Didymus lectured, it is reported that stenographers would take copious notes so that his discourses on different books of the Bible could circulate far and wide. When Didymus died in about AD 398, he left behind a large body of texts that included biblical commentaries and various theological treatises.

In his own day, Didymus was regarded as fully orthodox, but as a result of fifth-century controversies in the ancient Christian Church, he was posthumously anathematized—among others things he had espoused a doctrine of the preexistence of the soul, for which he was condemned. As a result, his writings fell into disuse and were no longer copied by Christians of later centuries; thus he was all but forgotten. In 1941 his posthumous fortunes dramatically changed when a crew of Allied engineers stationed in Egypt stumbled across a large cache of his writings while surveying a cave system in Tura (just south of Cairo). Following WWII, the bulk of these papyri were sold on the antiquities market and landed in collections in Cologne, Geneva, and London and were published shortly thereafter. One group of papyri, which never made their way onto the antiquates market, was sent by one of the American engineers, who had been a part of the initial discovery, to a relative in Boston for safekeeping. There they sat in an attic for nearly thirty years pressed between the pages of a large family book. Upon the death of this relative in the early 1980s, his widow, who was a convert

to the LDS Church, cleaned the attic and came upon these papyri. Unsure of what to do, she approached her home teacher. He first took them to Harvard University, who initially did not show much interest, and then afterward he contacted BYU.

Hugh Nibley was first approached to see if BYU might be interested in the papyri, followed by Tom Mackay. The latter immediately expressed great enthusiasm once he recognized their value. In December of 1984, BYU purchased these papyri, which consisted of twenty-two pages of Greek text that belonged to Didymus’s lectures on Psalms 20–29. Work on deciphering the papyri commenced but proceeded at a slow pace and was delayed for various reasons with

Drawing upon the work of previous editors, I am very pleased to say that five years later, a volume has been completed that includes a transcription, translation, and commentary of this material that has been submitted for publication.

intermittent stoppages and faculty turnover. In 2011 I began work on these papyri as the lead editor. Drawing upon the work of previous editors, I am very pleased to say that five years later, a volume has been completed that includes a transcription, translation, and commentary of this material that has been submitted for publication. This section of Didymus’s commentary on the Psalms reveals much about his biblical interpretation and will be of great interest to scholars of early Christianity. It is remarkable that BYU possesses such an ancient treasure and that it can finally see the light of day after some 1,600 years. ✂

David O. McKay: Creative Father and Grandfather

MARK D. OGLETTREE (MARK_OGLETTREE@BYU.EDU) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AT BYU.

CERTAINLY, THERE IS A DEARTH OF fatherhood role models in our country. Not long ago, men did not have to look very far for paternal examples. Role models could be found in the home, community, and in the media.

It has been decades since a solid model of fatherhood has been presented to us on prime-time television.

Instead, over the past twenty-something years, fathers have been depicted in media circles, among special interest groups, and on prime-time television as unfit and inadequate, and that's being optimistic. The most predominant way of thinking about fathering is that it is a social role which men usually perform awkwardly—at best. For example, contemporary prime-time television portrays these “doofus dads” as troubled, deranged, pudgy, generally incompetent, and not terribly bright.¹

Where can contemporary men look for fatherhood role models? With such a shortage of fatherhood examples in our culture, it appears that men have fewer and fewer places to turn. In the “Father Attitudes Survey,” 74 percent of the respondents looked at *other* fathers or men as examples and resources to improve their

fathering. Ironically, only 62 percent looked at their *own* fathers as examples.² President Spencer W. Kimball helped Latter-day Saint fathers know where to look for paternal examples. Besides their own fathers and other close relationships, President Kimball explained, “We all need heroes to honor and admire; we need people after whom we can pattern our lives. For us Christ is the chiefest of these. . . . Christ is our pattern, our guide, our prototype, and our friend. We seek to be like him so that we can always be with him. In a lesser degree the apostles and prophets who have lived as Christ lived also become examples for us.”³ One such hero or role model was the man, the father, and the prophet—David Oman McKay. This article will attempt to demonstrate how David O. McKay connected with his children, nurtured them, loved them, and disciplined them.

President McKay may have spoken more on marriage and family life than any other Church leader of his era. He believed actively and deeply in the family, and he lived his life in accordance with his teachings on family life. David O. McKay was married to Emma Ray Riggs, and together they had seven children. During the 1950s and '60s, most

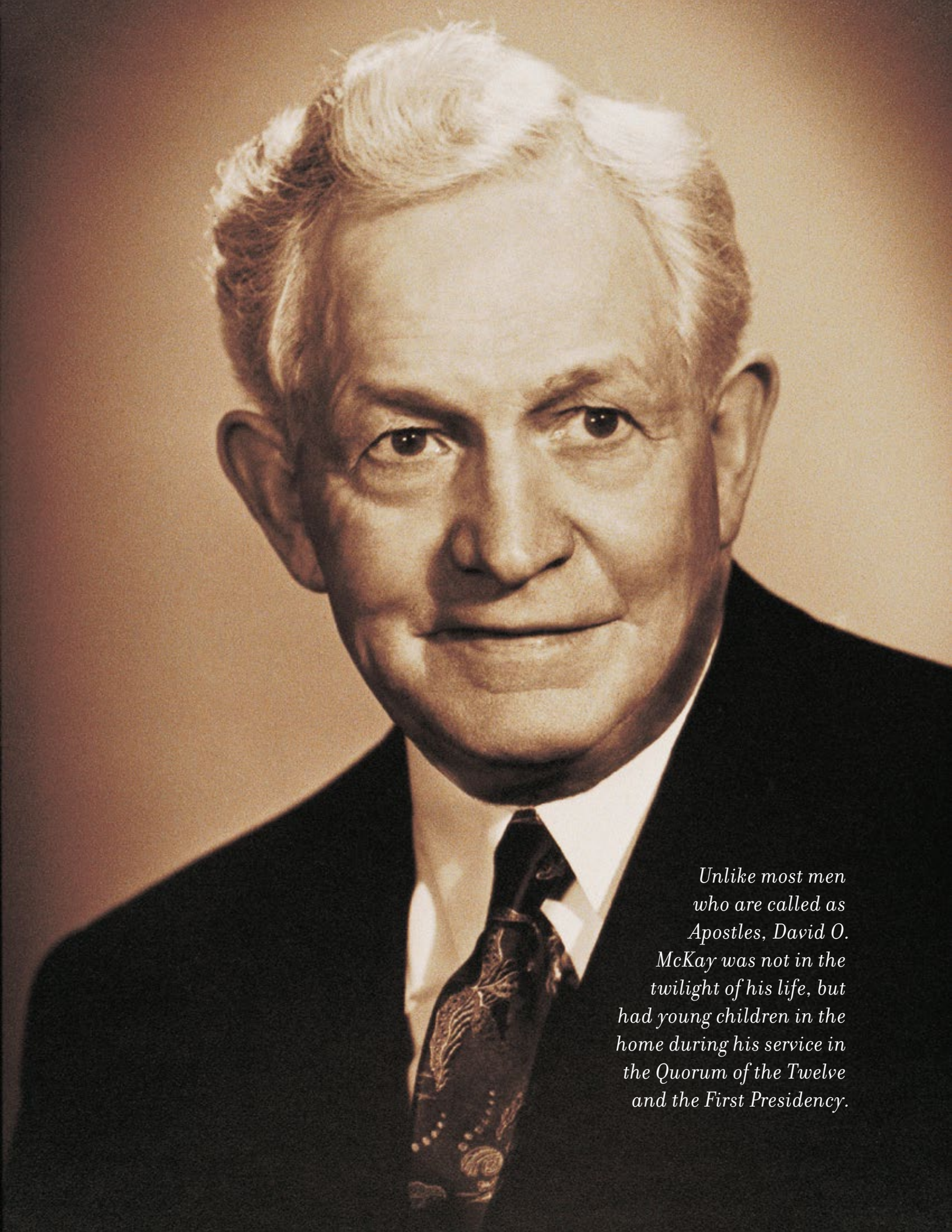
members of the Church looked to President and Sister McKay as role models for happiness in family living. Even today, President McKay still stands as a healthy example of fatherhood. If men want to be successful fathers, they should study the life of President McKay.

Like contemporary fathers today who work long hours and travel extensively with their jobs, David O. McKay was busy, even busier than most men of his generation. For example, unlike most men who are called as Apostles, David O. McKay was not in the twilight of his life, but had young children in the home during his service in the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency.

As an author and researcher, I have had the privilege of reading David O. McKay's diaries and his personal letters. I have discovered that he was an amazing father, despite the fact that he traveled extensively when his children were young and that he had so much Church responsibility placed on his shoulders at a relatively young age.

Modern fathers can draw strength and obtain insight about

Opposite: David O. McKay.
© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.



Unlike most men who are called as Apostles, David O. McKay was not in the twilight of his life, but had young children in the home during his service in the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency.

how to connect with their children, despite busy schedules, through President McKay's example. President McKay understood that time is a valuable commodity, and since he had so little of it, he needed to manufacture opportunities and make time count when he was home. Therefore, he created experiences for his family where they could have fun, relax, and enjoy each other's company.

For example, one of President McKay's favorite activities was sleigh riding. Even into his eighties, he took his children and grandchildren on sleigh rides every Christmas vacation. His son Lawrence related how fun it was to see his father driving the children and grandchildren, wearing "his long thick raccoon coat and big gloves, beaming from ear to ear."⁴ In 1939, when David's brother Thomas

was serving as a mission president in Europe, David wrote, "Did anyone tell you about the sleigh ride we had with our grandchildren, including their parents, Lawrence, Mildred, and Llewellyn? We had a glorious time—the joys of our youth were with us again!"⁵ It must have meant something to President McKay for him to mention this experience in a letter. Furthermore, President McKay would also organize other activities with his children and grandchildren, such as games of baseball and croquet, in order to create more opportunities to spend time together.

Strong fathers and grandfathers are usually willing to create an environment that fosters family memories and family fun. Many contemporary grandparents today move into apartments, assisted living centers, and even condominiums. One of the significant perks to such "downsizing" is zero yard work and considerably less upkeep on the homestead. However, such dwellings are not exactly "kid friendly" because children rarely have things to do at their grandparents' "condo." David O. McKay and Emma Ray came up with a solution to that problem.

After living in a Salt Lake City apartment for many years, they decided to purchase a home in the same area. Therefore, they bought a two-story red brick home at 1037 East South Temple Street. The home had a yard "where exuberant grandchildren could exhaust their pent-up energies and yet be near enough for

Strong fathers and grandfathers are usually willing to create an environment that fosters family memories and family fun.



President and Sister David O. McKay and family. Courtesy of Church History Library.



President David O. McKay playing the piano surrounded by children and grandchildren. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

grand-parental supervision—and enjoyment.”⁶

Here we see a patriarch creating an environment in his home so that all could laugh and have an enjoyable time.⁷ He was willing to create spiritual, intellectual, entertaining, and athletic opportunities for his family. As a result, these legacies were passed through the generations. The memories facilitated by President McKay continue to keep the McKay family bonded together today. President McKay understood that family was his most important priority. Although he was busy, when he was with his family, he created memories, he created opportunities, and he strengthened relationships. ❧

1 J. Warren, “Media and the State of Fatherhood,” in *Father Facts*, 5th ed. (National Fatherhood Initiative 2007), 11.

2 *Fathering Attitudes Survey* (National Fatherhood Initiative, 2006) 24.

3 Spencer W. Kimball, “Preparing for Service in the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 47.

4 Spencer W. Kimball, “Preparing for Service in the Church,” 70.

5 Thomas E. McKay Papers, Letters Sent and Received by Thomas E. McKay and His Brother, David O. McKay, MSS 1442, box 1, folder 3, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

6 Francis Gibbons, *Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 188.

7 David and Emma Ray were also excellent grandparents. In their Salt Lake City home, they had the grandchildren over quite often. For Christmas dinner, the adults usually sat around the large kitchen table while

the children ate their meals on several card tables. At one Christmas dinner, the adults were laughing and carrying on while the grandchildren, sitting at their card tables, wondered what all the fuss was about. One granddaughter asked what they were laughing about because she couldn’t hear it. Immediately, President David O. McKay changed the family tradition on the spot. He said, “Christmas is for the children.” From that point on, the grandchildren sat at the large table, and the adults sat at the card tables, which were now closer to the main table. Now everyone could laugh together! David Lawrence McKay, interview by Gordon Irving, James Moyle Oral History Program, Salt Lake City, January–May 1984. MS 200 734, 132. Church History Library, Salt Lake City.



Anthony Sweat,
By the Gift and Power of God.

MORMON PARADIGM SHIFTS

JOSEPH SMITH'S
SEER STONES

BY MICHAEL HUBBARD MACKAY

MICHAEL HUBBARD MACKAY (*michael_mackay@byu.edu*) IS
AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

With the recent publication of photos of the “brown stone” by the Joseph Smith Papers Project, the critical function of seer stones in the formative years of the LDS Church’s rich history is ripe for exploration.¹ Our recent book, *Joseph Smith’s Seer Stones*, attempts to trace the history of the stones and explore the role of seer stones in Joseph Smith’s restoration theology. It discusses the origins of Joseph Smith’s seer stones and explores how Joseph used them throughout his life in a way that goes beyond the Book of Mormon translation. It also traces the provenance of the seer stones once they leave his possession. Additionally, the book looks at how the Book of Mormon helps build a theology of seer stones through its narrative storyline and what Joseph Smith may have learned about his own prophetic gifts from that process. Finally, it explores how Joseph Smith took his experiences with seer stones and created a “theology of seer stones” that became closely linked with his unique doctrines of exaltation. In this article, we would like to examine the implications of new knowledge within Mormonism, especially the knowledge of seer stones.

Changing what we think is always a tricky process, especially when it comes to religion. When new information becomes available, we cringe under an orthodox mindset, particularly when we challenge ideas and beliefs that have been “set in stone” for decades. Thomas Kuhn coined the term *paradigm shift* to represent this often painful transition in science of shifting to a new way of thinking. He argued that “normal science” represented a consensus of thought among scientists when certain precepts were taken as truths during a given period. He believed that when new information emerges, old ideas come crashing together with new ones, causing a crisis. Once the basic truths are challenged, the crisis ends in either revolution or dismissal.

The age of information that we live in today has likely caught nearly every member of the LDS Church off guard and bombarded them with new ideas. This is not completely unlike the Copernican Revolution that

Kuhn used as one of his primary examples to explain the paradigm shift. Using similar instruments and comparable celestial data as those before them, Copernicus and others revolutionized the scientific view of the heavens by describing the earth orbiting the sun instead of the sun orbiting the earth. Ingrained Ptolemaic beliefs naturally protected the geocentric model, making the new idea almost impossible to grasp.

Paradigm shifts also occur in religion, though the stakes are different; many believe that the implications are more directly relevant and that they are certainly more applicable to the average believer. One major difference between Kuhn’s theory and change that occurs within Mormonism is that when lay members with varying knowledge and understanding are faced with new information, their revolutions may occur only privately.

This short article uses the example of seer stones to examine the idea of how new information slips into our Mormon lives. Throughout Church history, we have seen friends and family members have faith crises because of new things they learn about the Church, its members, and our history. Those who have experienced the onslaught of new information understand the gravity of these massive paradigm shifts in our lives. By looking at just one example, this article will provide a helpful way of thinking about new information and how to deal with it when it arrives.

SEER STONES: THE BLACK SWAN APPEARS

The Church published a photo of one of the legendary seer stones in the October 2015 *Ensign*. To some, this publication was like a present to a child at Christmas, with the child tearing the carefully wrapped paper from the box to find exactly what he or she was hoping for. To some members, the *Ensign* article revealed a whole new facet of early Mormonism, settling many of their curiosities. However, not every member was excited. Left without the inoculation of knowing about the seer stone before, the announcement may have felt strange to some members. They might have wondered why they had never heard of



CONTRADICTION THE IDIOM THAT “ALL SWANS ARE WHITE,” A SINGLE GLIMPSE AT A BLACK SWAN INSTANTLY DEMOLISHED AN APPARENT REALITY WHILE ALSO ENABLING A NEW, MORE INFORMED STATE OF MIND.

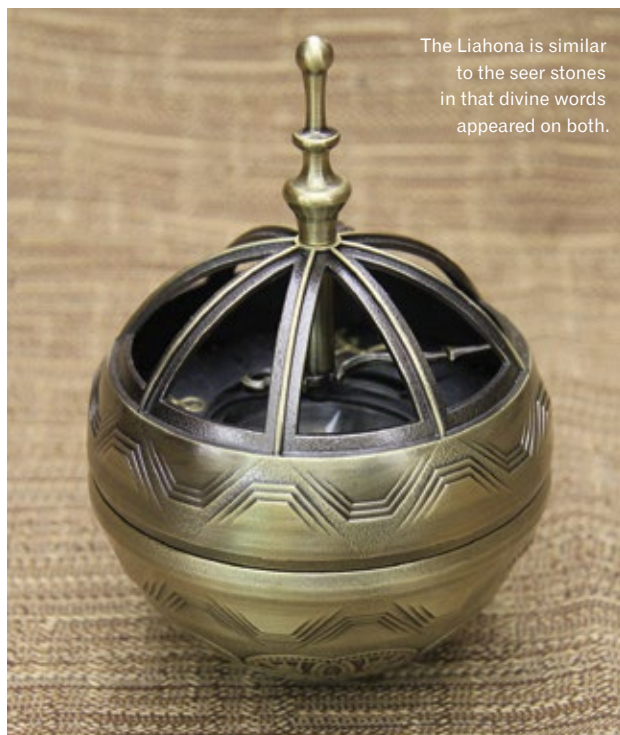
the seer stone and why the Church had not informed them earlier that it possessed the item.

Many who were concerned about the seer stone were apparently willing to understand how it worked during the translation of the Book of Mormon, but there were still some who were concerned that this was the first time they had heard of it. It is true that the rational mind of someone schooled in even the most basic sciences routinely wants to figure out how, for example, Jonah was swallowed by a big fish or how the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. However, it is not uncommon for religious people, including Latter-day Saints, to be moved by the miraculous. When Joseph Smith’s seer stone was depicted in the *Ensign*, to some it was as if the rational mind played second fiddle to a more important issue: the dilemma of not knowing.

Members believed that Jesus walked on water and turned water into wine, yet the mystery of the seer stone was still troubling to some. In fact, the seer stone was disconcerting even though it seemed to have parallels to other stories in the scriptures, such as the words that appears to Lehi on the Liahona or the words that appeared to Belshazzar in the temple or even the seer stones that Mosiah II used to translate the twenty-four gold plates within the Book of Mormon. The shock of not knowing took some members off guard.

Our fragile world of understanding can be altered rapidly with new information. Before 1697, the Western world believed that all swans were white. Because they had never seen a black swan, it seemed an impossibility

until a Dutch explorer found one in Western Australia. Contradicting the idiom that “all swans are white,” a single glimpse at a black swan instantly demolished an apparent reality while also enabling a new, more informed state of mind. In Mormonism, our black swans lie outside our regular conversations and expectations, usually hidden by our secular preconceptions and our current beliefs and knowledge. Like the Dutch explorer, we have seen a glimpse of something that didn’t seem possible. The seer



The Liahona is similar to the seer stones in that divine words appeared on both.

stone has given us the opportunity to begin to reshape our understanding of the translation of the Book of Mormon and how prophets can communicate with God. Discoveries such as the black swan and the seer stone may always cause idiomatic pains as things we didn't know previously are revealed, but they can also bring a sense of enlightenment in spite of our dogmatic tendencies. Even though we may perceive that we know what a swan looks like, there is always the possibility of the discovery of new types or breeds. Given the nature of historical discovery and continuous revelation from a prophet, we know there is always the possibility of the discovery of new facts or doctrines. Like the problem of inductive reasoning in science, there is always something that you don't know that may be true.

NORMATIVE KNOWLEDGE

Many of the things we believe seem normal to us, but only because they have become that way over a matter time. Take, for instance, the age of marriage in the United States. Marriage to a minor would be frowned upon today, yet young girls were often legally married as youthful teenagers in nineteenth-century America. Though this is an unusual example, it opens a door for less distinct instances to be identified. In Mormonism, the nature of the ninth article of faith, "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal," creates an ideal environment for normative knowledge to solidify in our minds, but the ninth article also declares, "He will yet reveal many great and important things."

Because of such teachings like the ninth article of faith, the nature of Mormonism is prone to paradigm shifts. But these changes are also exacerbated by the information age that we live in. By the simple click of a mouse, historical information nestled away in archives reaches the average LDS member with relatively little effort. New information about Church history and theology are inevitable parts of our lives. This means that change and new information can potentially disrupt our sense of normative knowledge quite often, but it can also offer the potential for the concept of new information to become normative. Perhaps in the future, the paradigm shifts we



experience will begin to exclude crises, and careful evaluation will allow for a smooth transition from not knowing to knowing.

It is interesting that most Church members in our day do not know about the seer stones because they were a familiar topic in Joseph Smith's day and well known to historians since that time. To Joseph Smith and early Church members, the idea of seer stones was normative, not because they were any easier to explain in the 1830s but because it was apparently a well-known fact that Joseph translated the Book of Mormon with seer stones. It wasn't a secret; people knew about them. On the other hand, artwork that depicts the translation has excluded seer stones from the miraculous process that Joseph used to translate the gold plates. By releasing the photograph of the seer stone in the *Ensign*, the Church has begun a process of normalization, a process of recapturing the miracle in historical terms.



Opposite: brown seer stone, white seer stone. Above: Nephite spectacles. Paintings by Anthony Sweat.

IS IGNORANCE BLISS?

As believing Latter-day Saints, we can give pause to miracles just as Jesus's disciples did when they saw him raise Lazarus from the dead, or as Mary did when she saw the resurrected Christ. dddd

Joseph Fielding Smith declared in 1956 that Joseph had to become familiar with the “use of the Urim and Thummim” before translating or even studying the characters on the plates and sending them to scholars in New York City.² Knowledge of the seer stones will not change our doctrines; nor will it offer us salvation. But it is a lesson in the threat of normative thinking and the barriers we create when we refuse to acknowledge new information. After all, the basic principles and doctrines taught in Sunday School inspire us to fill our lives with study from the best books to elaborate upon the foundations of Mormonism.

With a great deal of literature on the topic of seer stones, one might wonder if we have chosen to forget or refused to understand. For instance, the early Saints saw the seer stones differently than we do today. The witnesses of the translation process described Joseph Smith's use of seer stones as evidence that the Book of Mormon came from God. Emma declared that Joseph Smith did not have a prepared manuscript or book in front of him as he dictated the words of the Book of Mormon to his scribes. Oliver Cowdery reflected back upon his experience as Joseph's scribe with fond memories as the “days never to be forgotten.” As Joseph Smith read the words delivered to him by God on the seer stones, he likely did not have time

WE SHOULD PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGE EDUCATION; EVEN JOSEPH SMITH HAD TO LEARN THE VALUE AND PURPOSE OF HIS OWN SEER STONES.

to reference other works or add his own insights into the narrative. It was a perfect way to demonstrate that Joseph Smith did not invent the content of the Book of Mormon, yet, with the march of time, somehow this miracle has faded in the minds of some Saints.

Members of the Church believe that Jesus walked on water, turned water into wine, raised Lazarus from the dead, healed the maimed, and appeared to thousands as a resurrected being; yet the mystery of the seer stone is still troubling to some. Knowledge of the seer stone will not change our doctrines, nor will it offer us salvation, but to maintain our belief in miracles is the foundation of the Restoration and the establishment of the Church in these latter days. ✂

1. <https://www.lds.org/topics/book-of-mormon-translation?lang=eng>; JSP, D1:xxviii–xxxii. See Michael Hubbard MacKay and Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light: Joseph Smith's Translation and Publication of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015). The following are a few recent publications that try to address the extant sources: John W. Welch, “The Miraculous Translation of the Book of Mormon,” in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844*, ed. John W. Welch with Eric B. Carlson (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 82–98. Royal Skousen, “Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), 61–93. A hierarchy of sources is described in JSP, D1:xxviii–xxxii. For a recent speculative piece about the translation, see Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011).
2. MacKay and Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light*, 60–78.

TRANSCRIBING EARLY AMERICAN MANUSCRIPT SERMONS (TEAMS)

Interview with Rachel Cope

RACHEL COPE (*rachel_cope@byu.edu*) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

Q: You are currently doing some research on early American manuscript sermons. What does this project entail?

A: Transcribing Early American Manuscript Sermons, or TEAMS, is a collaborative scholarly effort (which includes scholars from Colorado State University, Lafayette College, the College of William and Mary, and Drew University) to make the vast archival record of early American sermons more accessible through a free, public database. Those involved in the project have been, are, and will be traveling to various archives, where we take photographs of relevant sermon texts we discover in their holdings. After transcribing the primary sources—a laborious process that requires skills in paleography—we check the transcription at least two more times to ensure accuracy. Finally, we code the sermons, so they can be made available on our website (<http://earlyamericansermons.org/about/>).

There is so much archival material available, but it's not easy to get to that material. We want to change that. We want scholars, teachers, students, pastors—anyone and everyone interested in religion—to have access to

these important documents. So, even though this project requires a lot of tedious work, it is also exciting and interesting work that has the potential to change how we understand early American religion.

Q: You mentioned that this could change our understanding of religion in America. How? Why is this project so important?

A: As Yale University historian Harry Stout argued over twenty years ago, notwithstanding the popularity of printed sermons, “Only from the vantage point of unpublished sermons . . . can the full range of colonial preaching be understood.”¹ Even despite the best efforts of several scholars of religion, we still know relatively little about what transpired in colonial and antebellum churches on an average Sunday—especially in churches unaffiliated with the Congregational Way and outside of New England. Indeed, most college students who have taken an early American history class are familiar with a single sermon: Jonathan Edwards’s “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” Because the vivid imagery—centered on hellfire and

damnation—that Edwards uses in this text so readily imprints itself on the minds of young readers, many students are left with the false impression that this poignant piece is characteristic of sermons preached in early America. A broad survey of Edwards’s published and unpublished sermons, however, suggests that this particular message was even atypical for him. Edwardian theology more commonly focused on God’s love for his children than it did on his wrath for sinners. Since many of Edwards’s personal papers are now easily accessible online through the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, including more than 1,200 sermons, it has become increasingly possible to complicate the assumptions so readily made by students who have read “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” by exposing them to a variety of Edwards’s manuscript sermons. The complexity and nuance found in such sources—Stout has suggested that the typical colonist listened to approximately 7,000 hours of sermons over the course of a lifetime—can expand our understanding of American Christianity as well as other aspects of life in early America.



Rachel Cope and a student on a research trip to Harmony (Oakland Township), Pennsylvania. Courtesy of Rachel Cope.

As a young student, I assumed that Edwards (and by extension, early American religion) was a harsh figure; I thought that a fear of hellfire and damnation—a sense of disconnect from God—characterized religious life. As I began to study early American religion, and as I immersed myself in various types of manuscript materials, I discovered that I had been wrong. Religion was real and powerful and meaningful to people, and they believed in and embraced God’s love and mercy. The divine was not distant, but rather a very real part of their daily lives. I love this project because I think it can demonstrate some of the things I learned in the

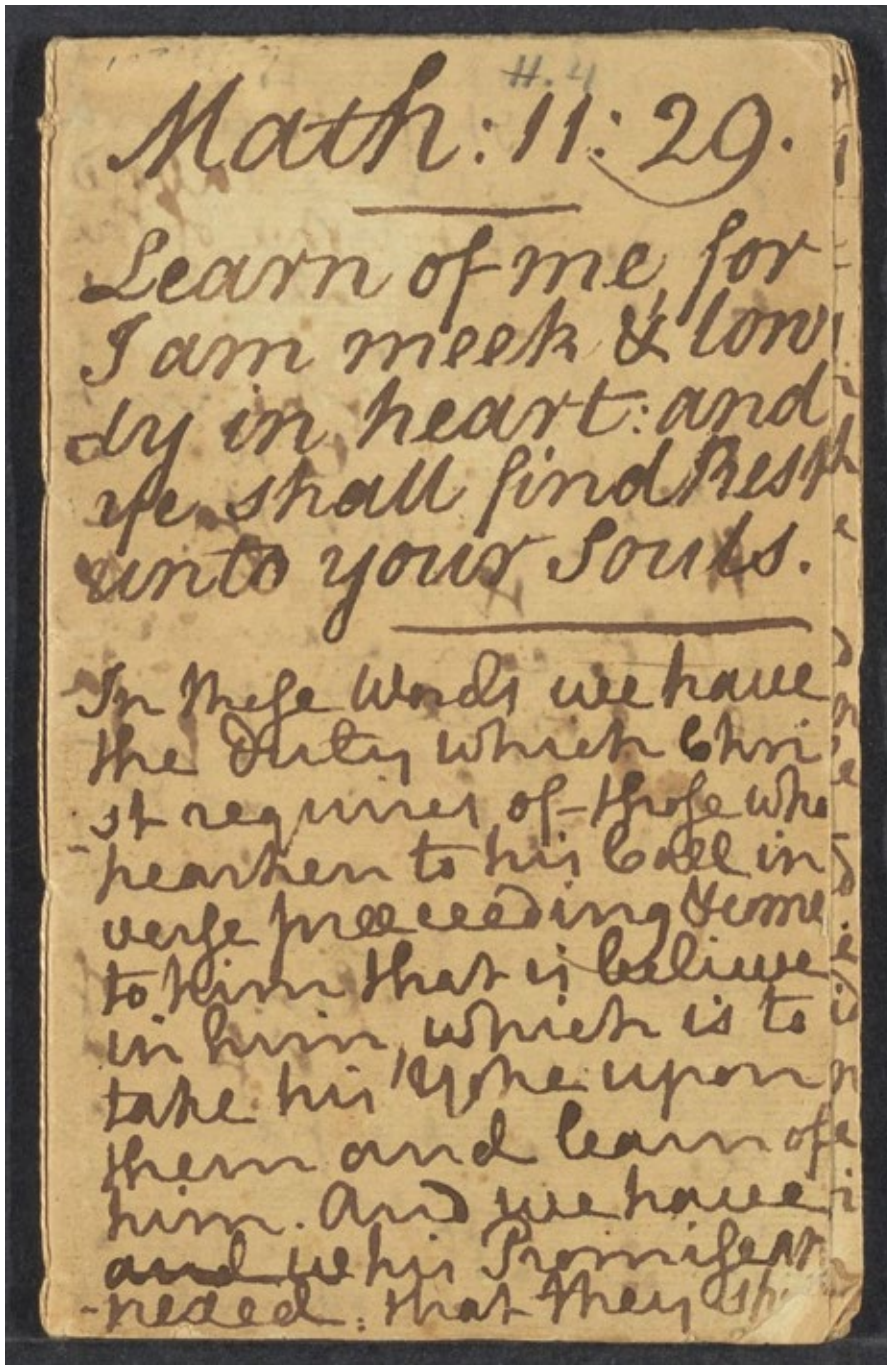
Religion was real and powerful and meaningful to people, and they believed in and embraced God’s love and mercy.

context of an archive. Since everyone doesn’t have the opportunity to travel to an archive, we will bring the archive to them.

Q: What have you learned so far from being involved in this project?

A: Although we are still in the beginning stages of this project, we have already identified and transcribed many interesting sermons, and have images of more than one hundred manuscript sermons preached throughout the

original thirteen colonies by Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic, Anglican, and Congregational ministers from collections at Georgetown, Harvard, the Andover Theological Library, and the American Antiquarian Society. We also launched a TEAMS prototype in the spring of 2015, which currently includes transcriptions of more than twenty-five sermons. In this small sampling, we have already made note of interesting themes that seem to challenge past historiographical interpretations. For example, contrary



Harvard University—Andover-Harvard Theological Library / Fairfield, John, 1737–1819. *Sermons, 1785–1797*. A sermon based on Math: 11–29. “Learn of me for I am meek & lowly in heart: and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls.” bMS 733/1 (1), Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard Divinity School.

Our data imply that the New Testament may have been used more often than the Old.

to arguments in prevailing scholarship, including the recent work of Erin Shalev, that the Puritans valued the Old Testament over the New Testament, our data imply that the New Testament may have been used more often than the Old (suggesting that James Byrd’s claims about published sermons are likely to be confirmed by the manuscript record). Tabulating scriptural citations for the twenty-five sermons we have coded and uploaded to the TEAMS site thus far, we have discovered 232 Old Testament citations and 290 New Testament citations. While it is possible that the trend will not hold up—we certainly need more sermons/ data before we can be conclusive in our analysis—it appears that there are significant implications for the way we think and talk about early American religion. In addition, Harry Stout has argued that published sermons are different than manuscript sermons. But what if they’re not? Two of our twenty-five sermons are more or less plagiarized, or at least cobbled together from extant print sermons. (It is interesting to note that Benjamin Franklin, in part 3 of his autobiography, talks about the scandal that would emerge if parishioners figured out what was going on.) It also appears that millennialism, which is generally discussed in terms of congregational ministers, was fairly rampant among other sects; we have three apocalyptic sermons by Baptist and Catholic preachers from the time of the Revolution.

In short, even a small sampling of sermons initiates interesting questions, challenges previous assumptions, and encourages us to

In short, even a small sampling of sermons initiates interesting questions, challenges previous assumptions, and encourages us to continue searching for material that can potentially provide answers.

continue searching for material that can potentially provide answers. As a student of history, I am constantly recognizing how much we don't know, and how much potential there is to learn. A small selection of sermons has taught me so much already. I can't wait to learn more.

Q: How might this project facilitate further understanding of the Restoration of the gospel?

A: In so many ways! Early nineteenth-century sermons have been overlooked even more than seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sermons. That omission is glaring, since the number of sermons that were delivered and the number of individuals who listened to sermons increased from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. In order to rectify this historical blind spot (one that certainly complicates a study of the religious context in which Joseph Smith lived) and to give nineteenth-century American preaching a more prominent role in cultural memory, the TEAMS project has begun locating and transcribing nineteenth-century sermons in addition to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sermons it is already publishing. As material from this latter period becomes more accessible, scholars will be more prone to analyze the reception and

function of nineteenth-century American sermons, thus increasing our understanding of religious beliefs and practice at that time.

From an LDS perspective, it is clear that such understanding will shed light on the context of the early Church—the very reason I have started to focus my research efforts on sermon manuscripts given between 1800 and 1830. Sermons from this time period will help us better understand the religious experiences and beliefs of Joseph Smith's contemporaries, as well as provide insight into the development of the budding prophet's own religious questions. Indeed, this work will reveal the religious environment in which the Restoration of the gospel took shape.

This summer, I have perused archives for manuscript sermons given in upstate New York during the early decades of the nineteenth century. I have discovered countless sources at Cornell University, and a number of manuscript materials at Syracuse University. I am thrilled by what I have found thus far and excited to discover additional sources. It's all so fascinating.

Q: What aspects of this project do you most enjoy?

A: I think the first has already been mentioned. I love contextualizing

the Restoration. I enjoy engaging in research projects that help me understand the history/origins of my own faith better. Although the connections are often indirect, or implicit, every research project I engage in is ultimately about understanding the Restoration more fully. I am grateful that I have the opportunity to learn about it in so many different ways.

I have also enjoyed the challenging quest to find manuscript sermons given by women. Extant sources are nearly nonexistent, but I have been able to discover a few, and I have some other leads that I am pursuing. Finding the impossible is a very rewarding moment for a historian! I love it.

And, finally, I enjoy the opportunity to mentor student research assistants—it's one of the best parts of my job. Students involved in this project having been learning about the religious context of the Restoration of the gospel. Through the sermons they read, the research they conduct, and discussions with me, they can come to a greater appreciation for and testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the important work that he did. They will also receive training in archival research, document transcription, and documentary editing practices, and will develop skills relevant in the publishing world, including preparing a text for publication and searching out references. ✂

¹ Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4.

Q & A

Book of Mormon Studies and Grace: A Conversation with Brad Wilcox

Interview by Brent R. Nordgren

BRAD WILCOX (*brad_wilcox@byu.edu*) IS AN ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.

BRENT R. NORDGREN (*brent_nordgren@byu.edu*) IS MANAGING EDITOR OF THE
BYU RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REVIEW MAGAZINE.

Q: After many years of teaching in the School of Education at BYU, you are moving over to join Religious Education. What motivated you to make this change?

A: Ever since returning from serving as a mission president in Chile ten years ago, I have been teaching mission prep and Book of Mormon classes on the side. I guess it was time to make my side job my full-time job. I definitely found that it was something that I loved. It is a place where I can extend my reach and hopefully do the most good. This is a great change for me in my professional life. I'm thankful for the opportunity.

Q: Your research in childhood literacy has been well received by the Utah education community, and beyond. How do you see yourself continuing that research now that you have joined Religious Education?

A: I've helped bridge the literacy-religion gap in the past in some work I did with John Hilton, but now I'll be able to do it from the other side. We've learned a lot about literacy and effective reading, writing, and study habits that we could easily implement in Religious Education. I'm asking my Book of Mormon students to read, write, and keep study journals. There are ways that have been used effectively in education circles that I think I'll be able to bring into my religion classes. Rather than just saying "read your scriptures" or "write in your study journal," I hope to give students strategies they can implement and be successful.

Q: Tell us about your ongoing interest in Book of Mormon studies.

A: Before, any religious research I was doing had an outlet at Especially for Youth (EFY) and BYU's Education Week, where I would share insights from my studies, but now I hope to

also have academic outlets for this research as well. It gives me another place to start sharing what I am learning.

Much of my research has focused on names in the Book of Mormon. My interest started back during the Harry Potter craze when all the kids were reading Rowling's books. I started to notice that elementary students were writing knockoffs of Harry Potter and inventing a bunch of funny, weird names. I started noticing that I could identify writers simply by the names they were creating. They had patterns of how they would come up with those names. For example, one would have the same ending and just change the beginning. He would use *Thorup* and *Borup* and then *Clorup* and *Snorup*. I was identifying authors just by the patterns in made up names. I started thinking, if I can do this with young students, is this something I could do with adult authors?



Brad Wilcox (left) with Brent Nordgren. Photo by Richard B. Crookston.

That started me on a line of research into sounds that I've labeled *phonoprints*. This is not something that was already in the literature. LDS readers are familiar with wordprint studies and how authors can be identified by the way they put words together in sentences. Phonoprint goes to a micro level, identifying the way authors put sounds together in invented words. So some colleagues at BYU and I have looked at fantasy authors, and we've been able to establish that, yes, they do have a phonoprint. We are able to recognize authors by the sounds they gravitate to. Just like an author gravitates to certain word choices, an author will

gravitate to certain sound choices as well. We've published some of this research in professional journals having to do with onomastics, the study of names.

We're starting to look at the names in the Book of Mormon now and what's interesting is that we're not seeing a phonoprint. So, if Joseph Smith made up all those names, as critics claim, he certainly did it differently than J. R. R. Tolkien, who made up hundreds of names and based them on invented languages. We've been able to show that Tolkien has a distinct phonoprint that he wasn't able to escape, even when he went from language to language—from

dwarf to elf to hobbit—he still kept his same phonoprint. As we research the Book of Mormon names, we're not seeing the same thing happen. We're not seeing one phonoprint surface. We're seeing a clear distinction among the Nephite, Lamanite, Mulekite, and Jaredite names—they're different in ways that mirror the patterns we see in authentic names.

We've also looked at names from the census. We've shown that the census names don't have a phonoprint pattern because they've evolved from differing language backgrounds rather than being made up by one author. We're showing that the Book of Mormon names actually have more in common with the authentic names

than they do with names made-up by authors.

Similar research that was published in *Religious Educator* 17, no. 2, has to do with the name-letter effect. Authors tend to gravitate towards sounds in their own names. Edgar Allen Poe, Washington Irving, Charles Dickens, and Nathaniel Hawthorne were nineteenth-century authors who gravitated towards the sounds in their own names as they named characters in their books, whereas the sounds in Joseph Smith's name and the sounds of his family member's names do not surface significantly as we examine the names in the Book of Mormon. That would've been the natural pool from which Joseph Smith would have been drawing sounds if he had invented the names, following the pattern that we're seeing in other authors. As we look at the Book of Mormon in new ways, we're finding that it is holding its ground.

Q: Grace is a topic you have researched, written about, and spoken about for quite some time. In fact, I remember attending the BYU devotional in 2011 where you spoke about grace. It is a topic with a growing interest among Church leaders and members. Your talks and books have helped make this complicated topic more accessible. What is most satisfying for you as you share this hopeful message?

A: I'm thrilled that so many people in the Church are speaking more and writing more about grace, because

it's so important. Missionaries are grabbing hold of it, too. Five years ago, I think missionaries in the Church would have encounters with born-again Christians over grace and not know what to say. Now, they are happy to speak about grace and say, "We believe in grace," and they can talk about it with confidence. They are no longer feeling like grace catches them off guard. They're able to explain that we are Christians and saved by grace.

The *doctrine* has not changed, but I have tried to teach it in a way that people could understand it a little bit more. That's perhaps where my elementary education background came in handy. I've adapted difficult concepts to teach at basic levels for years, so when people tell me they loved the book *Continuous Atonement* because they could understand it, I take that as a huge compliment because it means people are grasping this doctrine. I tried to lay out the doctrine of grace so that people can see that it isn't some born-again Christian extreme that we have to avoid; it's something we embrace. I tried to teach it from an LDS perspective.

I used comfortable language and gave some comfortable examples so that people could understand and share it with children and teens. They are emphasizing works and obedience but for different reasons than in the past. We're not earning our way to heaven. We're learning to be heavenly. We're not putting Christ's Atonement aside. We're utilizing the Atonement

to reach the goals that he wants us to reach. Being able to teach about the continuous nature of the Atonement in a way that people have been able to wrap their heads around has been very satisfying.

Bishops have told me they're using the book to help people, and I think that's great because it's getting into the hands of people at moments when they need it the most. I've heard from people who are going through a repentance process, people who are on the edge of leaving the Church, people who are excommunicated and wanting to come back to the Church, even people in prison. I'm able to see that it is reaching people, and nothing could make me more happy.

Q: Do you have any books coming out anytime soon?

A: The next book Deseret Book is publishing is called *Changed Through His Grace*. It explains how the Atonement is not here just to cleanse us from our sins, but grace, the power that flows from the Atonement, can change our natures. Change is not a popular topic in today's world, but that's the message of the gospel. Christ can change us from bad to good and from good to better. We can even be changed from human to divine. That is the ultimate goal—coming to Christ so we can become like Christ.

Q: We wish you well in your new position at Religious Education and with the new book. ✂

THE RSC AS A TRAINING GROUND

By *Devan Jensen*

DEVAN JENSEN (*devan_jensen@byu.edu*) IS EXECUTIVE EDITOR AT THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER.

THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER (RSC) ANNUALLY publishes ten to fifteen books, *Religious Educator* (three issues), *Review* magazine (two), and *Studia Antiqua* (two), with a robust website and social media presence. The source of RSC productivity is the effective mentoring of students.

Mentoring begins with tapping into the talented pool of BYU editing minors and design students. In turn, these amazing students are further refined and trained to become competitive professionals. The RSC has proven to be an effective gateway to high-demand internships at Church magazines, Church Publishing Services Department, *BYU Magazine*, and *Joseph Smith Papers*. During the past two years, about half the Church internships were filled by RSC editors or designers.

The RSC is a valuable training ground for future success. After graduation from BYU, many of these students have gone on to careers as editors, designers, social media experts, and writers. The following is a sampling of student comments about their RSC experiences:

REAL-LIFE, HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

“My experience at the RSC has been by far the most valuable editing experience that I’ve had at BYU. There is no substitute for real-life, hands-on practice in the publishing field, and that’s exactly what the RSC offers its students. I

also appreciated the variety of experience that was offered here. In addition to copyediting, proofing, etc., I also got to typeset an entire book, index a book, brainstorm titles, gain web experience, and do countless other things that I never expected to do at an editing job.”

—Shanna D’Avila, editing intern

“The Religious Studies Center greatly supplemented my editing classes with hands-on experience. Though I learned about things like courtesy to authors, style guides, and tone in my courses, I didn’t understand them beyond their value as theories until I worked at the RSC. At the RSC, I developed skills in being detail oriented, precise, professional, and scholarly. I learned to love research and work as a team, which greatly helped me as I started a new editing job after graduation. Above all, the RSC was an amazing environment, and I will both miss and greatly value the time I worked there, as well as the people I worked with.”

—Austin Ballard, content editor at Boostability

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

“The Religious Studies Center has been an important part of my professional success. At the RSC I received professional job training while I was a student and was able to work on professional projects, which prepared me for employment as an editor after I graduated. Learning from

Mentoring begins with tapping into the talented pool of BYU editing minors and design students. In turn, these amazing students are further refined and trained to become competitive professionals.

professionals there was invaluable, and I was able to hone the skills I gained in class by working on real-world projects. In my editing work I have relied on the knowledge of the publishing process I gained at the RSC. I also made lifelong friends and associates there. I am incredibly grateful for all the RSC taught me.”

—Elizabeth Pinborough,
writer at Church Publishing Services Department

“I have greatly appreciated my time at the RSC. It has provided me a stable and flexible job that let me use and develop my skills and talents while I attended grad school. I have appreciated the opportunity to design and typeset books and to help out in other areas from file storage to workflow to the electronic articles project. I have also greatly appreciated the good people that I have worked with, both students and full-time staff, and the enduring friendships that I have formed here.”

—Jonathon Owen, associate editor, BYU Independent Study

MENTORING

“Working as an intern for the RSC was a fantastic experience professionally. The RSC is also set up to be a mentoring experience for the interns, and it does a great job of that. In many internships, the intern doesn’t do much and has a hard time feeling a part of the team or figuring out if they’re in the right field. At the RSC this really wasn’t a problem. I did a lot of editorial work, but wasn’t afraid to ask questions or learn as I went. I felt valued, necessary, and dedicated to doing my best, but I wasn’t stressed about not being good enough. I learned through instruction, observation, and experience. My

coworkers were intelligent, insightful, hardworking, and fun, and I loved both working with them and talking with them.”

—McKenna Johnson, editor at KLAS

DESIGNING SUCCESS

“In some companies, you’re expected to only understand your part and your part only, but at the RSC, we used interdependence and teamwork to get more done faster. This helped me intimately understand each part of the publishing process, from acceptance to distribution and everything in between. I was also trusted to finish large projects on my own, independent of the group, which gave me firsthand experience managing my time, taking responsibility for my work, and even coordinating with authors.”

—Alex Masterson, social media specialist at Entrata

TEAMWORK

“I am currently working as a senior editorial assistant at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., and I am loving it! I’ve just hit my two-year mark, and the more I learn, the more grateful I am for the foundation I received at BYU and the editing department at the Religious Studies Center. Learning to follow different style guides prepared me to quickly adopt a very specific editing style in my department. My experience with working in a team of editors at the RSC has also helped me appreciate and learn how to foster a high level of communication and collaboration in my current team, both in giving advice and receiving it. Through my work with various reports at the RSC, I learned how to send tactful queries to authors and how to work with them to solve questions, a skill I use every day in my current position. Most importantly, my proofreading and editing skills were sharpened through my internship, and I felt confident walking into this position, already familiar with the production process and editorial challenges I would face. I couldn’t be more grateful for the opportunities my experience at the RSC has provided me in my professional career.”

—Rachel Taylor, senior editorial assistant at
the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC



Left to right: student employees Tyler Balli, Jessica Neilson, Katie Carlile, Sadie Gearheart, Lauren Whiby, Leah Welker, and Kimball Gardner.
Photo by Richard B. Crookston.

ALWAYS LEARNING SOMETHING NEW

“At the RSC, I actually got to apply what I learned in my editing classes. Beyond that, I was able to take on new challenges, like interviewing professors, working with HTML, and creating an index. At other campus jobs, I clocked in, worked, and got my paycheck. At the RSC, I was always learning something new. With two years of real editing experience by graduation, I had no problem starting my career after college.”

—Nyssa Silvester, associate proposal writer, SirsiDynix

STUDIA ANTIQUA

“The experiences I gained as editor-in-chief of *Studia Antiqua*, BYU’s student journal for ancient studies, were invaluable training for the editing and publishing work that is so critical to my current employment. I wouldn’t have my job without my time at the Religious Studies Center. I greatly value the training as well as the wonderful relationships I made working in a collaborative and faith-based environment.”

—Daniel O. McClellan, Scripture Translation Supervisor,
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ❧

FACULTY AND STAFF

APPOINTMENTS

Kenneth L. Alford was promoted to the rank of professor, and **Rachel Cope** was granted continuing faculty status and promotion to the rank of associate professor of Church history and doctrine.

Lincoln H. Blumell and **Tyler J. Griffin** were granted continuing faculty status and promotion to the rank of associate and associate teaching professor of ancient scripture, respectively.

Joining the Department of Ancient Scripture are **George A. Pierce**, **Hank Smith**, **Brad Wilcox**, and visiting professors **Jason Combs** and **Joseph Spencer**. Joining the Department of Church History and Doctrine are **Casey Paul Griffiths** and **Byran Korth**.

Marshall Morrise joined the staff as a web and systems administrator.

Beverly Yellowhorse became the Faculty Support Center supervisor.

AWARDS AND HONORS

At the Religious Education Spring Social in March 2016, **Guy L. Dorius** received the Robert J. Matthews Excellence in Teaching Award. Dorius challenges students to understand and apply gospel principles related to eternal marriage. His research and writing are motivated principally by his desires to improve his teaching and provide answers to students' questions. For example,

Dorius has visited Church historical sites in New York and Kirtland eight times since 1998 to enhance classroom discussions for Doctrine and Covenants classes. Several years ago, Dorius played a major role in improving the pedagogy of transfer faculty and the content they taught in the classroom.

David M. Whitchurch received the B. West Belnap Excellence in Citizenship Award. Since joining the faculty of the Department of Ancient Scripture in 1998, David has provided selfless service and leadership in Religious Education. He has filled three demanding assignments at the BYU Jerusalem Center. He also has served as a member or chair of numerous university, college, and department committees, including the Sperry Symposium committee, the university's Pre-Dental Interview Committee, the College Curriculum Committee, and the Rank and Status Committee. **Andrew C. Skinner** received the Richard Lloyd Anderson Excellence in Research Award. He is the author or coauthor of more than one hundred articles and books. As a member of the international editorial group that translated the Dead Sea Scrolls, Dr. Skinner coauthored with Dr. Dana M. Pike *The Unidentified Fragments from Qumran Cave 4*, an analysis of all the unidentified

Hebrew and Aramaic Dead Sea Scroll texts published by Oxford Press. Amazingly, Dr. Skinner's scholarly accomplishments were achieved while serving as department chair of Ancient Scripture, dean of Religious Education, the first executive director of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, associate director of the BYU Jerusalem Center, holder of the Richard L. Evans Professorship of Religious Understanding, member of the Church Correlation Evaluation Committee, and member of the Sunday School General Board.

At the Religious Education Spring Social in March 2016, the following received Harvey B. and Susan Easton Black Outstanding Publication Awards:

Jared W. Ludlow (Gospel Scholarship in Ancient Scripture) for his 2015 *BYU Studies Quarterly* article titled "A Narrative Approach to the Joseph Smith Translation of the Synoptic Gospels."

Lincoln H. Blumell and **Thomas A. Wayment** (Academic Scholarship in Ancient Scripture) for their 2015 book, *Christian Oxyrhynchus: Texts, Documents, and Sources (Second through Fourth Centuries)*, published by Baylor University Press.

Mark D. Ogletree (Gospel Scholarship in Church History and Doctrine) for his 2015 book published by Covenant Communications, titled *Just Married: Nurturing a Healthy, Happy and Eternal Marriage*.

Mauro Properzi (Academic Scholarship in Church History and Doctrine) for his 2015 book published with Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, *Mormonism and the Emotions: An Analysis of LDS Scriptural Texts*.

Brad W. Farnsworth (ancient scripture) received the Religious Education Dean's Award for going the extra mile in acquiring skills to be an outstanding religious educator. He is an exemplary citizen of the college, always fulfilling assignments effectively and going above and beyond the call of duty. Of particular note is his significant contribution to the semiannual prospective missionary firesides and his untiring work as chair of the Awards Committee.

Richard E. Bennett (Church history and doctrine) received the Religious Education Dean's Award for demonstrating his deep commitment to student learning. His student-mentoring efforts over the last two decades have strengthened the academic preparation and personal conversion of undergraduate and graduate students at BYU.

Two student-centered initiatives in religious education that resulted from Dr. Bennett's vision and perseverance deserve particular commendation—the annual BYU Religious Education Student Symposium, now in its nineteenth year, and the Church history Nauvoo Summer Study program.

In August 2016, the following university awards were presented.

Lincoln H. Blumell (ancient scripture) received the BYU Class of 1949 Young Faculty Award. He completed his PhD at the University of Toronto in the Department for the Study of Religion in 2009. He is editor, along with **Matthew J. Grey** and **Andrew H. Hedges**, of the book *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World*.

Tyler J. Griffin (ancient scripture) received the Loretta C. Gledhill Teaching and Learning Faculty Fellowship. He obtained a doctoral degree from Utah State University in instructional technology and has been at BYU since August 2010. He enjoys designing and developing digitally immersive products to enhance teaching and learning in the scriptures.

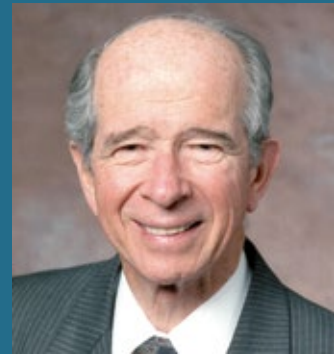
Devan Jensen received the President's Appreciation Award for his work at the Religious Studies Center since October 2001. He served as the executive

editor when the annual output increased from two books to fourteen books, two scholarly journals, a magazine, and a robust website. He has trained and supervised more than sixty students at the RSC.

RETIRING

Kip Sperry (Church history and doctrine) announced plans to retire in December. ☘

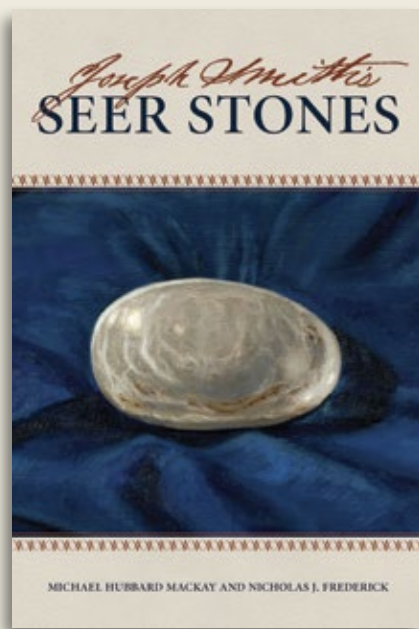
IN MEMORIAM



Reed Amussen Benson (ancient scripture) passed away on 24 August 2016.



Walter D. Bowen (Church history and doctrine) passed away on 1 July 2016.



Joseph Smith's Seer Stones

By Michael Hubbard MacKay and Nicholas J. Frederick

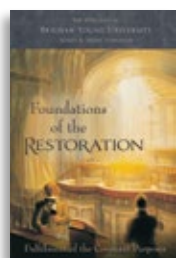
This book discusses the origins of Joseph Smith's seer stones and explores how Joseph used them throughout his life in a way that goes beyond translating the Book of Mormon. It also traces the provenance of the seer stones once they leave his possession.

The authors also examine how the Book of Mormon itself provides a storyline about the history of seer stones, which also helped Joseph Smith learn about his own prophetic gifts. Finally, this book explores how Joseph Smith took his own experiences with seer stones and created a theology of seer stones that became closely linked with his unique doctrines of exaltation.

ISBN: 978-1-9443-9405-9, US \$24.99

NEW RSC PUBLICATIONS

To purchase any of the following publications, please visit www.byubookstore.com and search by book title or ISBN, or call the BYU Bookstore toll-free at 1-800-253-2578.



Foundations of the Restoration: Fulfillment of the Covenant Purposes

Edited by Craig James Ostler,

Michael Hubbard MacKay, and Barbara Morgan Gardner

This book is a compilation of essays from the 45th annual Brigham Young University Sydney B. Sperry Symposium titled *The Foundations of the Restoration*. The keynote address by Robert L. Millet highlights the restoration of plain and precious truths. Readers will learn how we understand LDS history and doctrine, about

the beliefs declared in the Articles of Faith and how we apply their truths, about the development of temples and temple ordinances, and about the restoration of true Sabbath worship. Also included are chapters on Church newspaper editor and hymn writer William W. Phelps's contributions to our understanding of the Restoration of the gospel; the historical development of sustaining members of the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve as prophets, seers, and revelators; and the harmony and counsel needed in their declaring doctrine and making administrative decisions.

ISBN: 978-1-9443-9407-3

US \$24.99



A Reason for Faith: Navigating LDS Doctrine & Church History

Edited by Laura Harris Hales

A Reason for Faith was written to

do just as the title implies: provide reasons for faith by offering faithful answers to sincere questions. Before the Internet, historical and doctrinal questions not addressed in the curriculum of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were mostly found in the scholarly articles of academic journals. This is no longer the case.

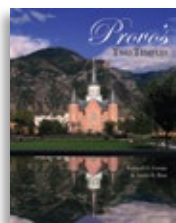
These topics are now widely debated and discussed online and in other forums. And when members of the LDS Church come across information that is unfamiliar, they may feel surprise, fear, betrayal, or even anger. ISBN: 978-1-9443-9401-1 US \$29.99



**Sacred Space:
Exploring the
Birthplace of
Mormonism**
By Michael
Hubbard MacKay

Many Church members may not realize that the birthplace of Mormonism is not just a cut-and-dried bit of historical trivia. In fact, initial Church publications referring to the organizational meeting mistakenly claimed it happened in Manchester, New York. The authors of the book *Inventing Mormonism* challenged traditional Latter-day Saint history by pointing out inconsistencies concerning the Church's birthplace. This book sorts through the complicated history of where the Church was established.

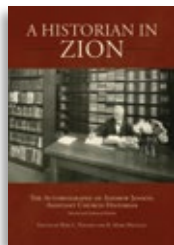
ISBN: 978-0-8425-2979-2
Retail: US \$17.99



**Provo's Two
Temples**
Richard O. Cowan
and Justin R. Bray

Provo, Utah, is the home of two LDS temples, each with a distinctive story. This volume includes a comprehensive account of each of these two temples, which have very different histories. One

temple was built from the ground up and dedicated in 1972. The other is like a phoenix, born again of the ashes of a building destroyed by fire. This book includes richly illustrated pictures and text that traces the unique construction, history, and many other details that help tell the stories of each of Provo's two temples. ISBN: 978-0-8425-2965-5 Retail: US \$29.99



**A Historian in
Zion: The
Autobiography of
Andrew Jensen,
Assistant Church
Historian, Revised
and Enhanced
Edition**

Edited by Reid L. Neilson and
R. Mark Melville

The *Autobiography of Andrew Jensen*, first published in 1938, tells the personal story of a Danish Mormon convert who eventually served as Assistant Church Historian for over forty years. The author mined his voluminous personal journals and assembled Church records to tell the story of the Restoration of the gospel since the 1850s when he arrived in Utah as a European immigrant. This revised and enhanced edition features a biographical essay telling the overarching sweep of Jensen's life and contextualizing his other printed works. Through his synthesized research, writing, and reflections, readers come away with deeper appreciation for the men and women whose lives constitute Mormon history.

ISBN: 978-1-9443-9400-4
Retail: US \$39.99



**The Worldwide
Church:
Mormonism as a
Global Religion**
Edited by Michael A.
Goodman and
Mauro Properzi

From Samuel Smith's first missionary efforts in 1830 to the more than 88,000 missionaries now serving worldwide, the Church continues the modern-day effort to fulfill the Lord's mandate: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19). In the past thirty years, the international membership has grown from less than a quarter of total Church membership to over 55 percent. While US and Canadian growth came in at 61 percent over that thirty-year period, international growth reached a staggering 537 percent. As a result, the Church is becoming an increasingly international church. This volume is a compilation of scholarly papers presented at the BYU Church History Symposium entitled "The Worldwide Church: The Global Reach of Mormonism." President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, was the first keynote speaker. He emphasized the importance of learning our history. The second keynote speaker, Terry L. Givens, highlighted the universal nature of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Seventeen other papers by notable historians, scholars, educators, and leaders are included.

ISBN: 978-0-8425-2973-0
Retail: \$31.99 ✂



YOUR DONATIONS DIDN'T JUST
MAKE HIS DAY; THEY HELPED
**DECIDE HIS
FUTURE**

Kimball Gardner wasn't sure what he wanted to do after he graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in English. Then he landed a job with the Religious Studies Center (RSC), where students are paid from donated funds.

As an editing intern, Kimball has enjoyed numerous opportunities to copyedit and proofread publications while working closely with authors, including Fred Woods and RoseAnn Benson.

"The RSC has helped me learn and enhance my editing skills so that when I graduate from BYU, I will be able to get a job in editing," he says. "Without this job, my future would be much less certain."

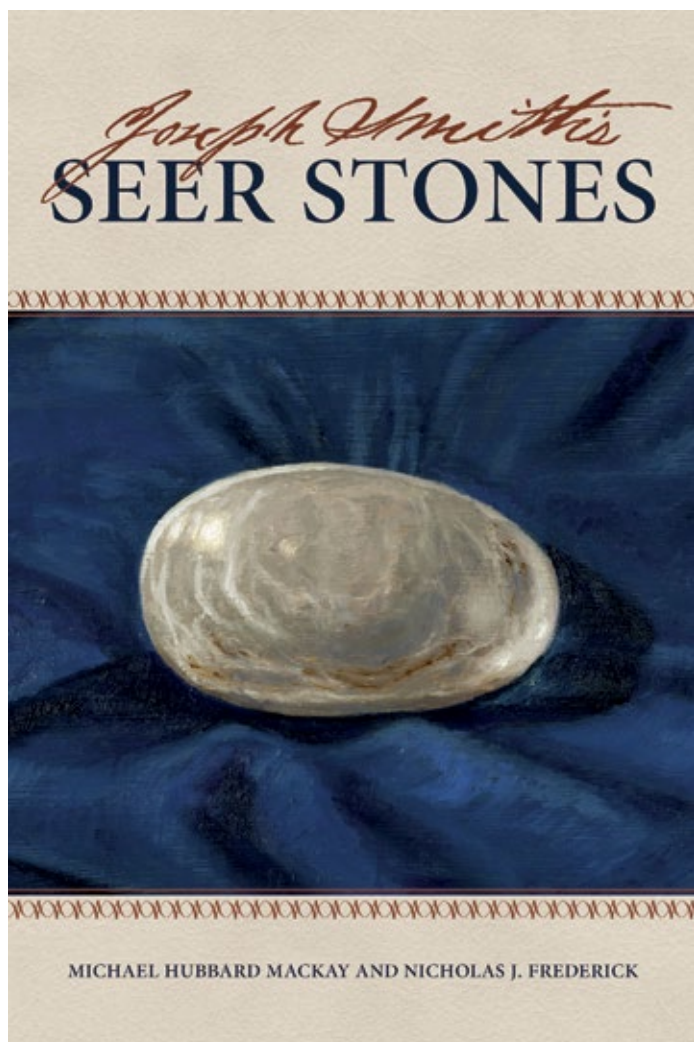
Kimball goes on to say, "I am very grateful for the very generous donors who have made my job possible. Thank

you for your kindness. Your donations have gone to a good cause."

If you would like to make a Religious Education student's day, please visit give.byu.edu/kimball.



JOSEPH SMITH'S SEER STONES



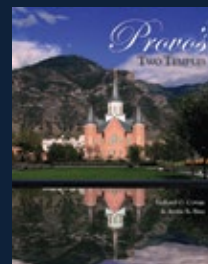
After the Church released photos of the brown seer stone that was owned and used by Joseph Smith, the news ignited a firestorm of curiosity and controversy. This book discusses Joseph Smith's seer stones and explores how he used them throughout his life.

JOSEPH SMITH'S SEER STONES CAN BE FOUND WHEREVER LDS BOOKS ARE SOLD OR AT RSC.BYU.EDU/RECENT.



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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY



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Don't miss out!

Make time for these upcoming Religious Education events.

Sidney B. Sperry Symposium Friday and Saturday, 28–29 October 2016

2017 Religious Education Student Symposium. Friday, 17 February 2017

2017 BYU Easter Conference Friday, 15 April 2017

See page 3 for more information.