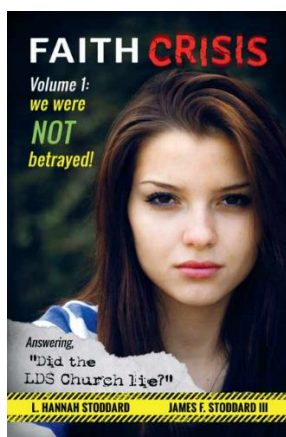


Highlighting Faith Crisis Vol. 1

By Hannah & James Stoddard

Defending The Character & Teachings of Joseph Smith
from Attacks of The Progressive Historians



Nate Richardson





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Preface

This is a great message of faith in the restored gospel. Many today seek to undermine the foundations of the restoration and spiritualize many important actual events (like the first vision, the Book of Mormon plates, the garden of Eden, the fall of man, and even the atonement of Christ).

There are 575 references in this book. It is research, reporting, and sermon all in one. Despite what some claim, this is a well-done terrific showcase of what many members are thinking and feeling – we are not okay with what some liberal scholars in the church are pushing the Church history narrative toward!

In a free society, when it comes to academics, we don't have to be experts to pick a side. We can look at all the evidence from experts on both sides and make decisions by reason and the spirit about which is right. Academics are only valid to the extent that they measure up to scriptural standards and revealed truths.

Some claim this book is just about the Stoddard's hero version of Joseph Smith, but those who have read it know better. They don't stand alone; they stand with the prophets in their witness. The time has long come for Church members like you and I to defend the servants of Christ so we don't end up with one of the false Christ's popular today.

Thick in the fight against the growing progressive movement, Apostle Boyd K Packer taught, "Atheists and agnostics make nonbelief their religion and today organize in unprecedented ways to attack faith and belief. They are now organized, and they pursue political power. You will be hearing much about them and from them. Much of their attack is indirect in mocking the faithful, in mocking religion.

The types of Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor live among us today (see Jacob 7:1–21; Alma 1:1–15; Alma 30:6–60). Their arguments are not so different from those in the Book of Mormon. You who are young will see many things that will try your courage and test your faith. **All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church.** Let me say that again: All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Be careful that you do not fall into the category of mocking.” (President Boyd K Packer, Jan. 16 2007 [Lehi's Dream and You - Boyd K. Packer - BYU Speeches](#))

Enjoy this preview of Faith Crisis and be sure to read the full text for many more insights references and to master this critical history!

Get a copy at [Faith Crisis, Volume 1: We Were Not Betrayed! - Online Store \(josephsmithfoundation.org\)](#)

Do you have a **loved one** who is struggling with **faith crisis**?
Do you want to know **why**?

The research and findings in this volume are truly history altering. Using newly released documents, combined with deep knowledge of Church History, the Stoddards are bringing to light what could be termed a "soft coup d'état" of the Church's scriptures and prophets by progressive historians, bent on altering its history. Hold tight to your faith in the history held by the church for over 150 years and the teachings of our prophets as you discover how deep this attempted takeover has infiltrated, and altered, our sacred history.

—Rod Meldrum, researcher, best-selling Latter-day Saint author, & international lecturer

- ⇒ Progressives claim the Church **covered up** its history for nearly 200 years. Is the current **faith crisis** stemming from **unmasked history** . . . or **new interpretations**?
- ⇒ Why did New Mormon Historians insist Hofmann's forgeries were legitimate, even when investigators provided convincing evidence to them of the **hoax**?
- ⇒ How did Bruce R. McConkie **know** Hofmann's Joseph Smith III blessing was a **fake**, despite authentication by document experts and pressure by historians calling him "**incompetent**" for questioning?
- ⇒ Who were the "**Swearing Elders**"? How did this group of progressive Latter-day Saints **reshape** the identity of Mormonism?
- ⇒ Why did Carol Lynn Pearson and Leonard Arrington share cards that read, "History is on **our side**—as long as we can **control** the historians?"
- ⇒ Leonard Arrington shared that an "**invisible higher power**" commissioned him to rewrite or **reconstruct** our dominant narrative of the Restoration. Did **God** want our history **changed**?
- ⇒ Why did Leonard Arrington say the First Vision, Nephites and gold plates were part of the Mormon "**myth**"?
- ⇒ Why did Leonard Arrington note that if he were **honest** about his beliefs, "not many" Latter-day Saints would "want [him] to teach their **children**"? How did this affect his career as **Church Historian** and later at BYU?
- ⇒ Progressives, working in the Church History Department and at BYU, claimed 40 years ago it would take a generation to **re-educate** the Church. Where are we in this re-education?

(Back cover of Faith Crisis)

Introduction

Today in the scholarly world a conservative ideology and a religious mindset are not accepted. Only the liberal naturalistic view is accepted.

Ezra Taft Benson warned about what we can encounter from the fallen ways of mainstream academic professors, he said, “in many cases a higher degree today, in the so-called social sciences, can be tantamount to a major investment in error. Very few men build firmly enough on the rock of revelation to go through this kind of indoctrination and come out untainted. Unfortunately, of those who succumb, some use their higher degree to get teaching positions even in our Church Educational System, where they spread the falsehoods they have been taught.” (ET Benson Teachings p319)

Many chose to not work within the faith intolerant system of mainstream academia.

An intellectual stood at sacrament meeting and said he doesn't like to hear missionaries come home and say they knew God lived, because no one can know anything! This reminds us of John 3:11, “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”

Mormon 8:38 warns “ye teachers, who sell yourselves...”

The Book of Mormon is the ideal standard for history academically, and contains true science. It is not written with a naturalistic or materialistic frame. True histories should follow this.

Faith Crisis Ch. 1 Hofmann & the Forging of the New Mormon History (*Salamander Letter & Other Progressive Forgeries Impact on Rewriting Church History, etc.*)

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Joseph wasn't a money digger, or old. (JFS)

“The fact that there were superstitions among the people in the days of Joseph Smith is no evidence whatever that the Church came of such superstition.” Gordon B Hinckley

Spencer W Kimball quietly removed progressive Leonard Arrington from position of Church Historian in the early 1980's.
p4

Salamander: Progressive vs. Traditionalist History

The Salamander fake letter said Joseph used an old hat to translate in the darkness, and that Moroni transformed into a salamander. Aka the Whitmer Transcript.

Rewriting Latter-day Saint History

Speaks of how the Salamander letter rocked everyone's faith and started everyone believing in a magical Joseph.

In reality there were no wizardry, no treasure digging, no magic salamanders. P8

The salamander unmistakably represented an occultic icon. P10

The Bombs Go Off

Mark Hofman made and detonated bombs against those who threatened to expose him.

Hofman forged 100's of documents.

Hofman & New Mormon History

Hofman gravitated toward dark and antagonistic historical accounts. He stole an anti-Mormon book from a library. He padded missionary reports to keep up appearances.

Hofman was a student of church history but not of the gospel. A neighbor reported that he never had evening prayer or read the scriptures. P12-13

Hofman is like Amulon one of King Noah's priests. He taught academics but not of the Lord (Mosiah 24:1-7). P12. The secular scholars like Amulon want education learning and history to be void of religion. They want it to be 'objective.' P13

Hofman's friend Salt reported that Hofman was well versed in Brodie's 'No Man Knows My History' (a derogatory book against Joseph). He saw Joseph as cunning for getting away with so much deception, a hero on that account, and not as a prophet. P13

Ezra Taft Benson in 1976 challenged the New Mormon History and other revisionist history movements in America. "Secular scholarship, though useful, provides an incomplete and sometimes inaccurate view of our history...This is a view of life without the idea that God is in the picture or that He had anything to do with the picture in the first place..." p13 footnote

See Ezra Taft Benson's BYU Devotional "God's Hand in Our Nation's History". He says it's not always been this way, this critical view of historians now to not bother with the teachings of

the Founding Fathers, they avoid these things so they can have a secular faith. P13 footnote

Hofman eventually confessed he didn't believe in the church or in God. P14

Says Robert Flanders, Community of Christ. He "The New Mormon History is a response to such shifting values." He goes on to say, "It is a shift from an evangelical towards a humanistic interest." P15 & footnote.

Hofman was dedicated "to finding documents that would disprove traditional Mormon history." His fiancé recounted. P16

[Faith Crisis Ch. 2 Trusting in Experts or Revelation? Joseph III Blessing & Anthon Transcript \(Bruce R. McConkie Challenges Hofmann's Documents with Doctrine, etc.\)](#)

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More exposing of Hofman forgeries.

Many were surprised the Church leaders didn't detect Hofman earlier. But these leaders never claimed to have the same revelatory gifts and understanding that Joseph Smith possessed. They are prophetic and they do testify of Christ, but they have made it clear that Church members should not compare them with Joseph Smith as head of this dispensation. P20, refers to statements in Urim & Thummim book by the Stoddards.

Church leaders also depended on experts who authenticated the forgeries of Hofman.

It is inaccurate to think that Church leaders should always be able to know and be right on all issues confronting them. P20

Hofman met with Elder Oaks an Apostle after his murders, some wondered why Oaks didn't detect this. But Oaks himself said "We don't believe in the infallibility of our leaders." (Dan Rascon, "LDS Church introduces new leadership to worldwide audience" Jan 16 2018, link in the text) p21

Russel M Nelson adds, "Give your leaders a little leeway to make mistakes, as you hope your leaders will give you a little leeway to profit by your errors" and "Don't be offended by what may have been said, or what may have transpired. Make sure you are square with your Heavenly Father." (SLC Tribune, "New Mormon Leader Russel Nelson Pledges to Serve God until His Last Breath..." ref. in text p21)

Brigham Young said, "Can a Prophet or an Apostle be mistaken? Do not ask me any such question, for I will acknowledge that all the time...." (from "A Series of Instructions and Remarks by President Brigham Young at a Special Council, Tabernacle, March 21, 1858," Church Historical Department, in Richard S. Van Wagoner, ed., Complete Discourses of BY 2009) p22

So what do we depend on, what is the foundation? Joseph Smith said, "there is no error in the revelations which I have taught." (JS Discourse 12 May 1844 Reported by Thomas Bullock p.2 The Joseph Smith Papers)

Joseph Smith III Blessing

Much concerning Hofman and this document.

Bruce R. McConkie Challenges Hofmann's Document

Intellectuals had a “tizzy” when Bruce got up in General Conference and started speaking “in the name of the Lord”

When mocked, Bruce said “This is marvelous, it is just as important to know who your enemies are as your friends.” P29-30



Esplin thought McConkie incompetent for rejecting the Hofman document. It was over 5 years later that McConkie was found to be right. P30

Traditionalist Standard: Doctrine

McConkie pointed out the doctrinal error of the Hofmann letter. Hoffman said if in sin, the Lord would receive him immediately to Himself. McConkie knew that is not where sinners go.

Traditionalist Standard: Revelation

Revelation is communication through the Spirit. It isn't emotional, sensational, psychological, or mystical. It is literal communication based on laws that govern the universe. P32

Spiritual experiences are only understood by those who have paid the price to receive them (Alma 5:45-46).

Boyd K Packer spoke of someone who tried doing a doctorate thesis about the role of a bishop as a counselor. They didn't like him writing about how the bishop receives spiritual revelation about how to direct the people, or about the bishop having spiritual power or inspiration of God in that calling. The man published the article leaving out the references to receiving spiritual revelation. Packer says this made the document less

accurate and less scholarly than it otherwise could have been, that “the most essential ingredient was missing.”

Elder McConkie didn't detect the forgery by progressive means. The spirit confirmed it to him as he was already grounded in traditionalist foundations. Joseph Smith never gave the alleged JSIII blessing.

Faith Crisis Ch. 3 Indolent Treasure Digger – The Josiah Stowell Letter

References in this chapter: 29

Hofmann continued forging. 446 of his documents were received by the Church to its collection. This was only a fraction of all his forging.

Josiah Stowell Letter

The crew had begun digging for the mine before Joseph was hired. Joseph convinced Stowell to cease the foolish venture. “I prevailed with the old gentleman to cease digging after it. Hence arose the very prevalent story of my having been a money digger.” P36

Progressive historians with the Joseph Smith Papers believe Joseph was lying and covering up his past. They teach that the Smith family was established traditions influenced by folk religion and magic. They say Smith didn't talk about this much because he knew people were skeptical of it. (source in text) P36-37 [Wow! They hype up a narrative to support their bias against Joseph!]

Joseph Fielding Smith taught that Mormonism stands or falls on the story of Joseph Smith, either a Prophet of God, divinely called, properly appointed, or was a great fraud.

Persecution of the church in 1834 was rooted in scandalous tales.

Nephi saw America in vision, that the righteous there weren't magicians and fortune tellers, but were saints of God with the power of God. Magic and Satanism were not countenanced by the righteous Puritans, Pilgrims, Huguenots, Quakers, Covenanters, and other reformed Christians, or their humble descendants. Some Lamans and Lemuels of the colonies may have dabbled in magic and the occult, but the Nephis and Lehis despised these dark practices.



George A. Smith (Joseph Smith Jr.'s cousin) and Wilford Woodruff excommunicated a member of the Church for "fortune Telling" and "magic". P42

Progressives in the Church want us to stop talking about Joseph Smith's personality, the angels who appeared to him, and the golden plates those angels delivered which Joseph translated miraculously. Church leaders have warned against leaving these accounts.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ renounced plural marriage, the book of Abraham, Joseph's teachings on women and the priesthood, baptism for the dead, etc.; they've distanced themselves from Joseph. In 2001 they changed their name to "Community of Christ" to move toward Protestantism and evolve on social issues.

Faith Crisis Ch. 4 Magical Worldview: The Salamander Letter

References in this chapter: 56

A young woman by the last name of Chase looked through a green glass and saw many things, such as where the gold plates supposedly were, she sent people to find the plates, but they never did. This same Chase accused the Smiths of being untrustworthy, that the Smiths were money diggers, and that Joseph had a stolen seer stone.



When the false salamander letter came out, before it was exposed, FARMS was busy trying to defend it, pointing out the connections between Moroni and salamanders...

President Hinckley responded to the Salamander Letter news release that it could have been a forgery from a time when the Church had many enemies.

It was claimed that Hinckley and Oaks defended things which proved to be fakes, like the Salamander Letter and the Joseph Smith III Blessing. But prophets aren't infallible. They possess a varying degree of various spiritual gifts when it comes to discernment, etc. D&C 42:11-12.

Scripture, particularly the D&C, warns against fraud. D&C 46:8; 128:20, 129:8

You cannot always tell the wicked from the righteous – D&C 10:37

Elder Oaks pointed out that “Hoffman succeeded in deceiving many experienced Church historians, sophisticated collectors, businessmen-investors, national experts who administered a lie detector test to Hoffman, and professional document examiners...” p60

Each member is responsible for detecting error; we cannot hide behind our leaders.

Every member has the duty to purge iniquity from the Church. “Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations. For it shall come to pass that **the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion. And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them....**” (D&C 64:37-39, Joseph Smith Sept. 11 1831)

Faith Crisis Ch. 5 Victims: Murders,
Historians & Police Investigation
(Progressive Historians Finally Admit
Deception but keep New View)

References in this chapter: 53

When Hoffman was exposed for bombing people, Arrington still held on to the Hoffman documents, calling them scientifically authentic.

Arrington had invested significant time in the Hoffman letters, and had rewritten Mormon history on the foundation of Hoffman’s documents.

Jeff Simmonds a non-LDS historian disagreed with Arrington, saying the Hoffman letters sounded too much like anti-Mormon propaganda to be real, they seemed to attack the origins of the LDS church, and he said this before the Hoffman bombings were known. On television Simmonds and Arrington disagreed, ironically, taking opposite sides you'd think they would.

Arrington's reputation was on the line if the Hoffman documents weren't true. Arrington was the chief evangelist for the New Mormon History. The Salamander letter (of Hoffman) was the only supposedly reputable source of Joseph Smith's involvement with magic. The letter fitted Arrington's personal view of Joseph's moral character.

Weeks after the bombing Arrington was still declaring the documents authentic. He liked that they explained Smith in terms of "folk culture of his day" (the fallen culture of his day).

To Arrington, truths like the First Vision didn't matter if they were literal or merely symbolic or poetic. He spoke of religion being mythical, symbolic rather than literal. He said the Book of Mormon plates could have also just been symbolic and mythical rather than real. (What a joke!)

A woman who visited Hoffman attested of a very dark evil feeling around him, which her husband (also present) didn't pick up on.

Throckmorton & Flynn Investigate

The science applied to the Hoffman documents wasn't as foolproof as they thought. Throckmorton & Flynn found the errors proving the documents a forgery. As the investigation continued, progressive historians at BYU wouldn't let him see the original documents. The progressive historians claimed to be

open minded, but had become guardians of their ‘pet Salamander’. Throckmorton and Flynn heroically continued the investigation and finally got ahold of the original documents with tight security in the church vault. They were able to tell authentic documents from Hoffman documents without even being told which source the document was from. They tested 600 Hoffman documents and found all were forged.

Progressive Historians Refuse to Accept Forgeries (as fakes)

Arrington held on, when he had to admit some Hoffman documents were forgeries, he claimed earlier ones were still authentic. With the bombing arrest of Hoffman etc., the church looked stupid having their chief historian defending Hoffman.

Ironically, the religion professors were more objective than the ‘academic’ historians. The religion teachers pointed out the Hoffman fraud, the historians kept defending it.

In the face of overwhelming evidence, Arrington persisted in defending fraudulent documents reporting Joseph Smith as treasure digging, occultic, and a village seer.

8 months after the bombings, the Throckmorton investigation, etc., Arrington’s annual group meeting still promoted the Hoffman letters, and the occultic Joseph taught in them, and argued that magic and Christianity weren’t polar opposites, but were “inseparable natural allies.”

Cheryll L. May, Co-Chair of the Mormon History Association Program, spoke highly of Hoffman, and said that “even if all the Hoffmann ‘discoveries’ are eventually proven to be forgeries, they will have changed the face of the profession in many deeply significant and generally positive ways.”

Hoffman Confesses

Progressive Historians Admit Deception

Some who worked on the Hoffman case had their faith weakened, and reported even after Hoffman was exposed, that they now only believed the Book of Mormon to be from the mind of Joseph, and though spiritually useful, not historically accurate.

One writer pointed out that Hoffman's documents were held on to so strongly because they were the "sexiest" to stimulate the new Mormon history. The church historians defended Hoffman saying he couldn't be a killer because he supposedly knew the brethren and the church vaults. They when it was known that he was a killer they said 'ok he was a killer, but the documents are still true!'

Hoffman's Forgeries Today

There could likely still be documents floating around which Hoffman forged which we don't know of. Under his prison cell bed a document was found where Hoffman listed the 79 forged signatures he could do from prominent figures in church history. Hoffman worked making forgeries full time.



The lesson? Don't base your testimony, or your direction in life, on 'history'.

Faith Crisis Ch. 6 Is Our Dominant Narrative True? (*Reconstructed Narrative, New Era, & New Church*)

References in this chapter: 18

The 3rd most common reason people are leaving the church (and 1st for millennials), as reported from a large survey in 2016, was a trust gap, “I did not trust the church leadership to tell the truth surrounding controversial or historical issues.” (study by Peggy Stack) p82 in this text.

Members weren’t happy about hearing the ‘seer stone in a hat’ narrative from somewhere other than the church (then the church affirming such to be the case, even though it very well may not be). Where they heard it from bothered them more than the message itself.

Some leave the church who grew up on a “one true church” gospel, but who now hear messages (from the historians and other progressive teachers) that it’s not the one true church, just another church. They feel betrayed.

“A Reconstructed Narrative”

There’s a growing movement among disaffected members and disgruntled academics (prominent LDS historians etc.) who are calling for the Church to change our history, a ‘reconstructed narrative.’ Richard Bushman is prominent among these. He says “the dominant narrative is not true”. He calls for the narrative to be changed. He calls his Rough Stone Rolling book a “reconstructed narrative” which was “shocking to some people. They could not bear to have the old story disrupted in any way.”

And “not everyone can adjust to this new material” and “The whole church, from top to bottom, has had to adjust to the findings of our historians.” (2016 fireside) p85

Bushman’s *Rough Stone Rolling* promotes radical new ideas very different from the traditional church narrative, including Joseph being “involved in magic”, magic as a preparatory gospel for Joseph, magic culture staying with Joseph to the end, Joseph giving angry responses and lashing back, Joseph having easily bruised pride, Joseph unable to bear criticism, Joseph rebuking any who challenged him, Joseph into ‘treasure-seeking greed’, the Smith family being ‘diagnosed as dysfunctional’ who produced a ‘psychologically crippled son’, the Smith family being drawn to ‘treasure-seeking folklore’ and who saw astrology and magical formulas and rituals as connected to their spiritual well-being, Smiths mixing magic and religion, that consecration never worked properly, that Smith Sr. was an ‘oft-defeated, unmoored father’ who abdicated family leadership and who was ‘blighted by shame’, and questions whether Joseph was an adulterer in an illicit affair, that Joseph was boastful about his mastery with outrageous confidence, that treasure seeking taught Joseph to look for the unseen in a stone, that Joseph drank too much, that Joseph exaggerated persecution after relating the First Vision, undermines Joseph’s intelligence (that Joseph was not more intelligent than any other), that Joseph “was not the luminous figure he is sometimes made out to be”

These claims of Bushman are clearly a departure from claims of any previous church historian, including Willard Richards (present at Carthage martyrdom), George A. Smith (1st cousin to Joseph), and Presidents Wilford Woodruff and Joseph Fielding Smith. Bushman admitted this new history and new version of Joseph's character was radically different.

“A New Era”

Ronald O. Barney was director of the Mormon History Association which Arrington founded, and was an editor for the Joseph Smith Papers project. He admired Bushman's RSR and called for a “new era” in how we view Joseph and Church history. Barney knew that the new way of portraying these things was a “clear departure” of tradition.



In short, the progressive historians were using previously considered anti-Mormon sources and reinterpreted friendly sources. This new approach is causing the greatest faith crisis in Mormon history.

Laura Hales, Ron Barney, and Bushman wrote “A Reason For Faith”, they were the ‘experts’, and wrote this companion to go with the Gospel Topics Essays (which deal with controversial issues (in often the wrong way)). Hales says there are no “definitive answers”, that the avoided words like “truth” and “answers”.

The reconstructed narrative does not promote truth.

John 3:11 “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”

If we don't have the answers, we aren't progressing, we are regressing.

A New Church

A BYU-Provo faculty member Margaret Young celebrated the progressive movement in the church, “the changes over the past fifty years have been monumental... We will become a church known for exactly the opposite reasons it was known for in the nineteenth century.” (from “The Future of Mormonism”, 2015)

Has God changed his plans? Were we mislead?

Margaret Young also said “we have some awful statements from all of the leaders of the Church... I've had to just kind of pinch my nose as I read through the terrible things that have been said by past leaders of the Church. Understanding the damage that they have done... it's kind of like when the Salt Lake Temple was constructed on the foundation of sandstone that simply was not adequate to hold up. And the instructions came down, “tear it down! It's got to come down. Tear it down so that you can build it on something that will last.” And so all of that work had to be completely torn apart and the temple started again.” (2006 interview) p90 of this text

Are the progressives changing things in the right direction? Questions about how our history should be interpreted should not be answered by a few intellectuals in influential positions.

Is the Dominant Narrative True?

For nearly 2 centuries the church has maintained a consistent message about its foundational events. The message has been that God directed Joseph as His Prophet to restore the truth and to organize the Church according to the pattern of His primitive Church. And that Joseph was a righteous man who built the

Church based on literal revelations received directly from God; that actual angels appeared, that members witnessed authentic miracles. God restored his priesthood through Joseph, the restorer and Head of this Dispensation, who stands next to Jesus Christ in righteousness.

Hyrum Smith said "...Joseph has the spirit and power of all the Prophets." P91

Brigham Young said that when the facts are known, we can find no person who presents a better character than Joseph. P91

Wilford Woodruff said that "no greater prophet than Joseph Smith ever lived on the face of the earth save Jesus Christ..." p91

Brigham Young called himself "Joseph's Apostle", and continued to orchestrate the vision Joseph set forth.

The Angel Moroni told Joseph that his name would be "had for good and evil"

The greatness of Joseph is beyond what most have imagined, and there has been no cover up of his character.

Joseph Smith did carefully deny plural marriage in Nauvoo. The Lord commanded the practice in opposition to the laws of the land, necessitating that its practice be out of the public eye.

Post 1890-manifesto polygamy with sanction of the President of the Church was not dishonorable when you know the real history around it.

Since David O McKay, Church Presidents have been very careful about what message is available to the media and have tried to portray the Church in the best light possible. All businesses and organizations are acutely aware of this necessity

today. These decisions by the Church have been made in righteousness, at least generally.

The real faith crisis is not the result of ‘unmasked history’, but of new interpretations.

Traditional leaders have resisted the intellectual progressives (lead by Arrington) whose goal about 40 years ago was that it would take a generation to re-educate the Church membership.

[Faith Crisis Ch. 7 The Swearing Elders](#)
[\(Sterling McMurrin, Leonard J. Arrington,](#)
[Mormonism’s Lost Generation, & the Goal](#)
[of Change\)](#)

References in this chapter: 35

A group of disgruntled academic Church members met once a month in SLC. Some were leaving the church and looking for an intellectual justification for doing so. Others were having problems in their wards.

Sterling McMurrin

McMurrin was a primary organizer of the Swearing Elders, a University of Utah professor, was in the CES (Church Ed System), and didn’t believe in the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

McMurrin told Harold B Lee and Joseph Fielding Smith that he didn’t believe Adam and Eve existed, didn’t believe in the fall of man, the divinity of Christ because he didn’t believe in the fall,

that Christ was only a great spiritual teacher, he doesn't believe in spirits just mental illness, didn't believe in Joseph Smith's 1st Vision, etc.

Leonard J. Arrington

Arrington was a member of the Swearing Elders, and was appointed Church historian at the time of Joseph Fielding Smith's presidency (who was the prior church historian), but Smith and other traditional leaders knew nothing of the historians true motives and personal agenda. Arrington became known as one of the Church's most influential progressive leaders of the 20th century, known as the 'father' of New Mormon History.

Traditionalist leaders Boyd K Packer, Mark E Peterson, and Ezra Taft Benson resisted the progressive movement leaders.

Arrington and his Church history department were removed as Church historians and moved to BYU. Followers of Arrington became promoted authors, editors of the Joseph Smith Papers, succeeding Church historians, and countless LDS scholars and professors. He made a point of getting young students into his cause.

"Dialogue" journal now is similar to The Swearing Elders group, intellectual discussion that often undermines the gospel.

Arrington claimed the Swearing Elders group wasn't anti-Mormon, it was just intellectual.

Mormonism's Lost Generation

The Swearing Elders were pro Darwinian Evolution. They didn't like Joseph Fielding Smith's book "Man: His Origin & Destiny". Arrington said he "fully accepted the law of evolution in

biological science”

(Note: Notice how they change the theory into a law, simply by popular demand.)

Arrington taught that earth and man are old and evolving.

In 1909, 3 BYU professors were fired for promoting scripture as not being revelation from God, and for promoting Darwinian Evolution, and for their progressive interpretation of Church history.

Joseph Fielding Smith said that many of the BYU professors had absorbed paganism of the world, had accepted too readily the views of uninspired educators without regard for the revealed word of the Lord... We are traveling down the same road to apostasy as the primitive church. (Quote on p105)

Change

The Dialogue records etc. showed that these LDS progressive historians had a large network, their own sort of ‘extended LDS ward’ as progressive Jan Shipps called it. Arrington and others called these communities the ‘underground church’.

Fawn Brodie wrote “No Man Knows My History”, a defamatory biography of Joseph Smith. The Swearing Elders loved it, and McMurrin offered Brodie 10k\$ to write a similar volume against Brigham Young.

Another Swearing Elder named Heber Snell believed the Book of Mormon was neither historical or inspired scripture. Arrington said Snell was needed in the group. Snell was appointed director of the institute (CES) in Pocatello Idaho. When Joseph Fielding Smith heard Snell speak, he warned the Church commissioner of education Franklin West that, “If the views of these men become

dominant in the Church, then we may just as well close up shop and say to the world that Mormonism is a failure.” P107

Snell light-heartedly told McMurrin that they ought form a combination and put out the fundamentalists (referring to Joseph Fielding Smith and Ezra Taft Benson); that in their zeal for truth they should call down fire upon them or have them eaten by bears. P108

Arrington believed he was called of God to introduce a new narrative of the Restoration. He spoke of working within the system to make change.

Faith Crisis Ch. 8 Divergent Paths:
Historians Leonard Arrington & Joseph
Fielding Smith (*Scripture Belief, Mission v*
College, etc.)

References in this chapter: 19

Arrington read the bible and Book of Mormon at age 13, then at age 57 said he had not read either completely through since them. He said he did not enjoy the bible. He said he didn't learn much from either, just that he could say he read them. He admitted he is not a Book of Mormon student. P109

Joseph Fielding Smith from his youth loved the scriptures, he hurried through chores and games to have more time reading the Book of Mormon. He carried a small New Testament



so he could read it as he walked and during lunch. He said he usually had a book in hand at home, often Sunday school books, and that from the time he learned to read and write he studied the gospel. As a young man he read the History of the Church, all the standard works, and other church literature. P110

Joseph Fielding Smith's father was President Joseph F. Smith, son of Hyrum Smith (Joseph Smith's brother). Joseph F. was



persecuted for plural marriage by the government but still made instruction of his children in the gospel a high priority. J Fielding's father gave him a Book of Mormon at age 8 and he had read it through twice by age 10. Joseph F. was very poor and giving J Fielding this book was a great gift. Joseph F.

recounted one Christmas where they had no money at all, and only had each other's company to enjoy on Christmas. J Fielding recalls that Joseph F. was a tenderhearted man, and he spent hours by his father's side (Joseph F.) discussing the gospel.

Arrington said he would be a greater accomplishment to be a US Senator than an LDS Apostle. As a teen Arrington joined what he considered an anti-Mormon society, the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, and knew he was likely the first Mormon to be invited to that group. P113

Mission or College?

Arrington had no interest in serving a mission. Despite his father offering to pay for his mission in very difficult times of the Great Depression, Arrington declined and went to University.

Arrington didn't see a need to frequent the temple, and said he gained just as much inspiration from being in nature.

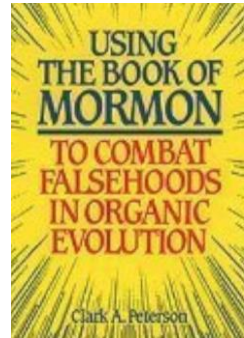
Missions in the early 1900s often required men to leave after marriage. 1 year after his marriage, Joseph Fielding was called and went 2 years on a foreign mission. Returning from his mission, Fielding turned down an offer at a lucrative job because it “would have taken him into some undesirable situations”.

Fielding worked as Church Historian for 69 years. He published 25 books which he personally researched and hand typed, generally working alone.

Faith Crisis Ch. 9 Arrington’s Faith Crisis in College (*Arrington Converted to Evolutionism*)

References in this chapter: 13

Young Arrington said he acted like a believer but wasn’t sure. When he went to University he started as a believer in the “Bible-inspired view of creation,” and left as a converted Darwinian evolutionist. He read several books on evolution, as he recounted, “a few pages

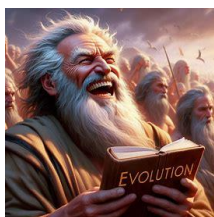


each night as one might read the scriptures.” In his classes he was taught that life evolved from a germ. At first he thought perhaps this applied to animals but not

humans; he was ridiculed for that idea, and with help from the persuasion of his evolutionist church class institute director

George S. Tanner, he became a full evolutionist. Tanner at first knew that Arrington was sensitive and might report Tanner to his parents, so Tanner encouraged him to ‘become informed’ without necessarily believing it all. Arrington soon later wrote a paper called “Two Arringtons” where he admitted that “I am not the same Leonard Arrington I used to be.” He admitted now accepting evolution, which he formerly violently opposed. Arrington said he now rejected ‘doctrines of fundamentalists’ [those which accepted the Bible as history].

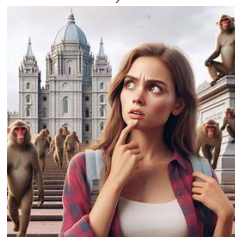
There are plenty of ‘real scientists’ who reject Darwin’s theory.



A 2001 statement titled ‘Scientific Dissent from Darwinism’ signed by PhDs, scientists, MDs, and other professors declared, “We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged.”

Darwinian science is scientifically inaccurate and flawed. By 2019, thousands of scientists had signed on, and were willing to “publicly declare their skepticism in the face of absolutist claims for evolutionary theory.” P120

Ezra Taft Benson said we aren’t using the Book of Mormon as we should, that we should be using it to expose and combat falsehoods of socialism, organic evolution, rationalism, humanism, and so forth (ETB Teachings, 60-61).



Expressed views of Presidents of the Church show that 12 directly refuted evolution theory, 2 implied that some people may not know for sure, and none suggested that the theory could be a possibility. P121

Professor George S. Tanner who introduced Arrington to Darwinian Evolution also introduced him to an interpretation of scripture that challenged its historicity, its literal interpretation, its accuracy and its credibility.

[Faith Crisis Ch. 10 Criticism Leads the Camel's Nose into the Tent \(Arrington Embraces Biblical Criticism, The Documentary Hypothesis, FairMormon's Faithless Answers, Scriptures Mythical Not Literal, Accessing Church Archives\)](#)

References in this chapter: 42

George S. Tanner introduced Arrington to Biblical Criticism, about treating the Bible as a human book with fictional stories with an allegorical purpose rather than inspired Word of God. It undermines the reality of Adam and Eve, Noah's worldwide flood, Jonah & the whale, Moses' Exodus, and other miraculous stories.

Arrington Embraces Biblical Criticism

Arrington was persuaded to begin using the Goodspeed Bible, produced by a liberal Christian who believed there were errors in the New Testament, that the Gospel of John wasn't written by John, etc.

Similarly other translations of the bible downplayed the divinity of Christ and the sacredness of the bible. The New Oxford Annotated Bible of Michael D. Coogan claims the gospels were

written 60 years after the death of Christ, and aren't firsthand witness accounts.

David Bokovoy worked for the CES (church ed system) 18 years and co-founded Mormon Interpreter with BYU professor Daniel C. Peterson. He spoke at FairMormon (now Fair Latter-day Saint) conferences and wrote papers available on Book of Mormon Central. In 2015 he said "the Gospels are historical sources that lack historicity." That they were just a perspective. That "...the Gospels contain inaccurate historical reconstructions – stories about Jesus' life and ministry that simply could not have taken place the way they're depicted." P124 (Bokovoy "Who Wrote the Gospels")

Arrington ultimately renounced his belief in the literal interpretation of the Bible, saying the Bible could be merely read as parable, allegory, and treated as myth or folklore.

Arrington met some LDS missionaries, he told them about not taking the bible literally. One missionary knelt down and prayed for him. P124

The Documentary Hypothesis

Arrington's position on the Bible has become popular among many progressive scholars. The Documentary Hypothesis is that the 1st 5 books of the bible weren't written by Moses, but by an assortment of ancient texts from authors who may have exaggerated their narratives to give Israel an identity. But the Book of Mormon unequivocally identifies 5 books of Moses available to the Nephites from the Brass Plates. (1 Ne. 5:10-11 & 3 Ne. 20:23, 12:11.) Joseph Smith said the Book of Mormon is the most correct of any book.

Moses 1:1 (in the Pearl of Great Price) says that these are the words of God to Moses. But FairMormon uses Biblical Criticism and the Documentary Hypothesis to say that the Book of Moses is not literally the word of God to Moses.

FairMormon claimed alternative theories to what the Church has taught us about this text, saying that “We know things today that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young did not know.” P126

FairMormon goes on to say that the book of Moses didn't actually have the words of Moses, but words which were ‘attributed’ to Moses, which weren't from a source of Moses' actual words.

This is not reasonable or logical. Why would the Lord reveal the Book of Moses to Joseph Smith if it was a false account, “edited/reinterpreted as writers felt inspired”?

Joseph Smith recorded that the Lord commanded Moses to personally “write the things which I shall speak”. The Lord also said the writings of Moses would be corrupted (Genesis), but that he (The Lord) would raise up another like unto Moses (Joseph Smith) who would restore Moses' words for those willing to believe. This is all in Moses 1:40-42.

Throughout the Joseph Smith Translation, Joseph never intimated that Genesis was *not* written by Moses.

Progressive author Terryl Givens acknowledges that the Pearl of Great Price poses concerns for the progressive narrative. He admits that without the PoGP, Mormonism would just look like Protestantism. He says the LDS have issue with the PoPG due to “the shifting tide of theology in Mormonism”. He says the PoGP reconstitutes covenant theology radically, and gives the cosmic framework for Mormonism. It gives us premortal existence for

the original covenant, and repeats the covenant in the garden. (Givens interview with Jana Reiss “Why Do Latter-day Saints Ignore the Pearl of Great Price?”) p129 of this text

In “Reflections of a Scientist”, Henry Eyring Sr., scientist professor at BYU, said that he didn’t know or care whether Moses really parted the Red Sea, or whether the Nile was really turned to blood, or whether manna really fell from heaven. He says its not even worth talking about. “I don’t know the answer, and it doesn’t make any difference anyway. These are historical events and can’t be confirmed by laboratory experimentation.” (Reflections of a Scientist, 92-93)

(Note: See my essay responding to this establishment pro-evolution book (“Reflecting on ‘Reflections of a Scientist’”). Eyring believed in God as creator, but got just about everything else about the creation wrong, and buys the lies of mainstream science. He was certainly a nice and charitable guy who served in callings and prayed, but very wrong on this topic.)

For the progressive new narrative that dismisses the reliability of scripture, our historical narrative should be adjusted accordingly, to fit the sanitized facts.

The Gospels: Mark & Matthew

David Bokovoy said the gospel of Matthew isn’t an eyewitness account but a creative rewritten version of Mark. That this is a recording of a deceptive fable.



The Book of Mormon

David Bokovoy published on the Book of Mormon Central website about the Book of Mormon being questionable historically when considered in the view of “Higher Criticism”. He said the spiritual validity is more important than the questions of historicity.

If we are going to question the bible, that leads us to questioning the Book of Mormon.

Note: The text of The Book of Mormon claims to be true, so how valuable a moral teacher is that book if the book itself is just a story, a story which in fact claims to be more than a story? That would make the book a work of deception rather than a work of revelation.

Ancient prophets understood, as did Joseph Smith, that in our day, the ‘learned scholars’ would attack the foundation of the Bible – its authenticity. Joseph Smith’s preordained mission as head of the last and greatest dispensation is, in large part, to clarify and bring back the original teachings doctrines and history which was known from the days of Adam concerning the true Christian faith. By casting aspersions toward the original Biblical texts and their writers, the **progressive New Mormon Historians stand in direct opposition to the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith** and the foundation of the Restoration. Joseph Smith knew personally many ancient prophets whose writings appear in the Old Testament, New Testament, and Book of Mormon. These were people who actually lived when they said they did. The Book of Mormon references the Bible in ways that affirm its historical value, so progressives attack it for that since they don’t believe the bible in the first place. P132-3

Historicity of the Book of Mormon

Arrington said the Book of Mormon was boring and confusing. He attempted rewriting a modern version of a few of the chapters in college.

Greg Prince (who also said he didn't believe in the historicity of The Book of Mormon and told people to "grow up" who still thought it was historical) was asked by Arrington's daughter to write Arrington's biography. In that Prince recorded that Arrington wasn't able to reconcile "scientific truth regarding the Book of Mormon with what he assumed to be elements of its religious truth." Prince wrote that the last century was the story of religion retreating in the face of science.

When asked if there were really Nephites & Lamanites, Arrington laughed and said, "Well let's put it like this. That is part of the great Mormon myth that we all hold to and all benefit from."

"Myths" in the Mormon Epic



Arrington said he did not concern himself "about the historicity of the First Vision or of other epiphanies in Mormon, Christian, or other religious history." While Church historian, Arrington said that in the First Vision, Joseph may have just 'thought' he saw God mythically, without really having seen God, and that the Book of Mormon plates may have been symbolic rather than literal. That he is comfortable either way. That "The scriptures are not themselves divine revelation." (Arrington Diaries) P136 of this text

"I [will] be a teacher and writer"

Arrington felt he was "drifting farther away from the Church in some ways (theologically)" (Diaries)

Arrington saw he had a mission to revolutionize the world through his pen.

Arrington describes a spiritual experience he has using New Age jargon, popular at the time, of ‘the great eye’, and being ‘lifted out of the ordinary world’.

Arrington never thought he would end up in history, but went on to reinterpret history in ways traditionalists would find naturalistic, moving away from God.

Arrington set out to write an economic history of Mormonism which was later published widely.

Accessing Church Archives

Arrington needed access to Church archives and reached out to like-minded Elder John A Widtsoe about this dissertation topic and accessing the archives. Widtsoe advised him to gradually build confidence by going in and asking to see published books, then a few days later basic thesis and dissertations, then ask for Journal History, then ask for specific documents he needed. “This way you will build up their confidence in you, and they will see you as a serious scholar. Like the proverbial camel, you will stick your head in the tent, gradually move fa[r]ther in, and ultimately carry the whole tent away with you.” (Arrington Diaries) p138



Arrington asked then Church historian Elder Joseph Fielding Smith to access the archives while Elder Smith was doing some scriptural research, Smith replied, “I guess there would be no harm in that, but...” His unfinished sentence evidenced preoccupation with his research. Arrington went with that.

Arrington's biographer Greg Prince admitted that had Smith been aware of Arrington's interpretation of history, he would likely have been unwilling to grant him access to the archives; but Arrington was instead able to "fly under the radar" Smith wanted Church history to continue to be written in a way that celebrates the triumphs of an exceptional God-favored people, and that anything short of that, including scholarly history that attempted to be data-driven and unbiased, was viewed as aiding the enemy.

In spite of rumors at the time of the Church archives being closely guarded, Arrington said he was never refused any document he asked for and his notes were never examined. (Diaries)

Arrington, when using documents he thought others would question him about, "sometimes remained in an obscure corner of the stacks and copied out needed entries without taking it out to the desk in the research room." (Diaries)

Arrington said restrictions on research occurred during the 1950's but they found ways around it, like hiding notes in pockets, socks, and shoes, or keeping carbon copies of notes, etc. He reported a community of scholars doing this together, and that they were doing a service to the church. (Diaries)

[Faith Crisis Ch. 11 Arrington's Epiphany
\(Testing & Judging Spiritual Impressions,
Korihor & the Nephite Faith Crisis, etc.\)](#)

References in this chapter: 24

Arrington's "3rd epiphany" he described as a 'feeling of ecstasy' coming over him, and other mythical language.

Arrington's Call

Progressive historians want to change what it means to be a Latter-day Saint. They want to change history about who Joseph Smith is, how the restoration happened, etc. Leonard Arrington, Mark Hoffman, Fawn Brodie, Juanita Brooks and others all have these same ultimate goals. They all wanted to move historical perspectives away from past historians such as President Wilford Woodruff, Elder George A. Smith, Elder Willard Richards, and President Joseph Fielding Smith.

Arrington got his epiphany while involved with the "Swearing Elders", who promoted evolution, psychiatry, progressive education, progressive literature, etc.

Testing Spiritual Impressions

People of various religions testify that theirs is the one true religion with the one true leader.

Arrington's work attacks the restoration in a way that has produced the greatest faith crisis in church history, even beyond the Kirtland apostasy.

How Can We Judge?

Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and others taught that our physical senses can be deceived. The devil can imitate physical sensory phenomena such as euphoria, stirring patriotism, adrenaline-inducing fear, sexual urges, goosebumps, energy rushes, etc. All of our senses can be deceived, and movie makers take advantage of this to make big money.

Brigham Young said we can be deceived in the eye and the hearing and the touch, and that the revelation of the Lord is the only thing to enable us to understand the Gospel. We must follow the revelations of the Lord in order to know and understand things as they are. (JD)

Brigham said that Joseph, after his death, visited him and told him to tell the people to “be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small still voice; it will teach you what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the Kingdom.” ... that it will “whisper peace and joy to their souls...” and “be sure to tell the people to keep the Spirit of the Lord; and if they will, they will find themselves just as they were organized by our Father in Heaven before they came into the world. Our Father in Heaven organized the human family, but they are all disorganized and in great confusion.” (Manuscript History of BY)

Joseph Smith taught that “...A man must have the discerning of spirits...” and “nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit, when they think they have the spirit of God.” (JS History) p145 of this text

Arrington believed that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not necessarily the only true Church. The Prince biography said Arrington said in 20 years the Brethren might be prepared to say we are just a good church, not ‘the only true church’, and that the young people today aren’t buying everything they’re told. P146 of this text

Joseph Smith said “...all nations have been deceived, imposed upon and injured through the mischievous effects of false spirits.” (JS History)

Korihor & the Nephite Faith Crisis

Korihor claimed there was no literal Christ, that the traditional God of the Nephites was outdated. (Alma 30:14-16)

Korihor was about getting new explanations and up-to-date interpretations to supersede old outmoded motions. For Korihor, archaic priests and teachers of the past were merely materially motivated, power-seeking, and antiquated.

Korihor taught naturalistic theories, that there is no convincing evidence of a Supreme Creator. There are remarkable similarities in Darwin's teachings taught by today's evolutionists.

When Alma confronted Korihor, Alma used logic, reason, true science, an appeal to scripture, and gave Korihor the sign he wanted, being struck dumb. Korihor was then terrorized and confessed that he had been deceived by a fallen angel through a 'spiritual' or 'mythical' experience, calling him on a mission to save the Nephite Saints of that day.

Korihor confesses that he always knew there was a God, that the devil deceived him, telling him to recall the people who were going after an unknown god; that he withstood the truth. (Alma 30:52-53)

Whose testimony was from God: Alma's or Korihor's? Each person has to decide for themselves.

Shortly after a period of great growth in the church among the Nephites, there was a massive faith crisis due to the rising generation hearing philosophies of men like Korihor.

Many today are falling away from the church, casting their once-beautiful testimonies at the feet of progressivism. In 1976 Arrington told the Church History Division staff that it would "take a generation to educate the Church to historical trends." (Diaries)

Progressives call traditional church history a fairy tale, and call for taking God out of history and science, and for belittling scripture.

Find out who is right (traditionalists or progressives) by their fruits. (Matt. 7:15-20)

“By their fruits...”

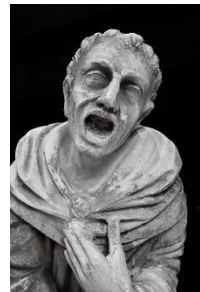
Bushman’s “Rough Stone Rolling” book reviews include comments pointing out that the book takes Joseph down from his pedestal. That the scripture is just imperfect people’s opinions and bias. That Joseph’s words weren’t Gods words. That “Bushman’s prophet is not the virtual superman depicted by Truman G. Madsen”. That Joseph was imperfect, and that if Joseph has a chance, so do we. That folk magic was a preparatory gospel, making treasure digging and peep stones ok.

Joseph Smith said “it requires the Spirit of God to know the things of God,” that thereby the things of God are “out of reach of the wisdom of the learned...” p151

Revelation: Traditionalists vs. Progressives

Progressives place God’s revelations on a spectrum, assigning ‘weight’ or credibility based on particular academic fields of study, built upon a framework of their discipline.

Theories are accepted by one generation, discarded by the next, and revived by the following. (David E. Bohn on objective history as illusive)



2 Timothy 3:7 they are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

The progressive worldview does not accept the revelations as literal revelation from God in a concrete sense. Arrington called taking the scriptures literally “a big mistake”.

Joseph Smith could be called the father of traditionalism. He taught of firsthand witness of God the Father and the Son; of literal combat with the adversary, and of receiving the pure word and will of God, directly from God. To Joseph this was not mere inspiration, it was not mythological allegorical or folklore, it was actual literal personal experience. Joseph warned that when it comes to understanding the things of God, “...without a divine communication they must remain in ignorance.” P152

Whether traditional or progressive, you must admit there is a major difference between the 2 views.

[Faith Crisis Ch. 12 Great Basin Kingdom](#)
[\(Economic Interpretations of History, Beard](#)
[Ridicules Constitution, Church warns](#)
[against FDR, Why Institutions Failed,](#)
[Joseph's Vision, Visiting Spirits\)](#)

References in this chapter: 43

Arrington's book Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900 reinterpreted the history of the LDS in Utah through an economic perspective, strongly criticized President Brigham Young for his presumed failed economic direction, and defended and promoted excommunicated dissenters including William Godbe.

Economic Interpretations of History

Arrington's approach is not new. Charles Beard in 1913 said the Founding Fathers motive was based on the desire for wealth business and economic prosperity. President Benson warned an audience at BYU in 1976 against this man's philosophy in his address, "God's Hand in Our Nation's History". Benson said that Beard's economic interpretation of the constitution was beginning a trend to defame the motives and integrity of the founders; that the economic motivation theory originated with Karl Marx which continue today.

David Barton in his article, "God" Missing in Action from American History", explains that 'taxation without representation' was only reason 17/27 reasons given in the

Declaration of Independence, and others we now don't hear of deal with moral and religious issues. Signers Samuel Adams and Charles Carroll said religious freedom was why they



became involved in the American Revolution. Further, half of the signers held bible seminary degrees. Barton shows that in the 1920s-40s, secular writers (like Beard, W.E. Woodward, Fairfax Downey etc.) wrote works on American history with a new paradigm – that economics was the only issue of importance. They called it "the economic view", and only focused on that part.

Barton points out prominent moral and religious issues which prompted the War of Independence. [Anti] slavery was one issue. Also "in 1762 the king vetoed the charter for America's first missionary society; he also suppressed other religious freedoms and even prevented Americans from printing an English language Bible." Barton says now people think that

economics are what created and made America great. In the 2004 presidential debates, ‘jobs’ and ‘economy’ were mentioned 100s of times but ‘marriage’ less than a dozen. Over the past decade, 45% of evangelical Christians say economic issues are more important than moral issues when voting.

See David Barton’s work at WallBuilders.com

Progressive LDS historian D. Michael Quinn, close friend of Arrington, said that the New Mormon History was “a reflection of a larger process of change in the writing of history generally. Since the 1950s American historians have adopted new techniques and emphases in reexamining familiar topics....The New Mormon History includes all of the ingredients of “new history” in America at large...” (Editors introduction in *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Mormon Past*)

Arrington was very fond of Charles Beard’s “Rise of American Civilization” book.

Charles Beard Ridicules the Constitution

Beard saw the Constitution as a subverter of the spirit of democracy; ratified by men who were motivated by money and greed. President Benson directly opposed Beard by name, and cited Madison who said “There was never an assembly of men... who were more pure in their motives.” Benson called upon us to remember these men who pledged their fortunes and their sacred honor.

Note- the way to be a hero isn’t to wear a mask, it is to put your name with your message, and be willing to face the consequences.

D&C 101:80 “I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood.”

D&C 98:5-8: “5 And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me. 6 Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land; 7 And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil. 8 I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.”



Beard relied on the “new history” to make a case for a “living constitution” that could support New Deal legislation. Beard said the Constitution should be interpreted in light (dark) of changing social, political, and economic conditions. He called for Courts to change their interpretation of the Constitution along with the changing times. (Mehrotra on Beard) p158

Church Presidents Warn Against Franklin D. Roosevelt

The 1st Presidency issued a strong warning against New Deal policies due to their socialistic unconstitutional nature (see the Stoddard’s documentary “Divinely Sanctioned Governments”). The Church warned the Saints repeatedly against the nation’s trend toward Communism and its inherent dangers.

J. Reuben Clark Jr. lamented: “The Lord gave the people of the United States four elections in order to get rid of him, but they failed to do so in these four elections, so He held an election of

His own and cast one vote, and then took him away.” (Michael Kent Winder, Presidents and Prophets: The Story of America’s Presidents and the LDS Church, 2007, p248)

In 1936 FDR had 69% of the vote. “Determined that Utah should not support FDR’s bid for a third term in 1940, the General



Authorities once again drafted a joint anti-Roosevelt statement but settled on issuing a less dramatic unsigned editorial....” FDR got 62% vote in Utah, when President Grant saw this he was

“dumbfounded”. Grant lamented in his journal deep concern about half of the LDS almost worshipping Roosevelt and his policies. Grant regarded Roosevelt’s neo-socialism as “one of the most serious conditions that has confronted me since I became President of the Church.” (Michael Kent Winder, Presidents and Prophets: The Story of America’s Presidents and the LDS Church, 2007, p251)

Arrington voted for Roosevelt proudly, and listed him as one of his favorite presidents.

Failed Economics in Utah?

Arrington suggested it was Brigham’s council which caused the Utah economy failures. Arrington blamed it on failed systems setup by the leaders.

Brigham taught the Saints that failures of these industries were the result of the Saints’ refusal to follow counsel.

Arrington defended William Godbe, founder of the Liberal Party of Utah, calling him and his peers talented intellectual liberals

excommunicated for honest differences with the Priesthood on temporal policy. But that's not the whole story.

Promoting Brother Joseph's Vision

President Young told the Saints that if they would follow the council Joseph Smith gave them while in Nauvoo that they should become independent from the world culturally, educationally, politically, and in all areas. Joseph envisioned a Zion society where men and women with faith in the Restoration would author textbooks and literature to train children. The entire culture was to come from faithful like-minded members, including music, fashion, technology, inventions, furniture, news, the entire culture to gather Israel. They were to make their own clothing and eat from their own farms.

Joseph & Hyrum Smith emphasized that Israel would not survive the events of the Last Days unless the commandment to gather was followed. ("Proclamation to the Saints Abroad")

Brigham learned how to lead Israel from tutoring by Joseph in Zions Camp, etc. He called himself a "an Apostle of Joseph Smith, and also of Jesus Christ". Brigham attributed his wisdom and success to obedience to counsel of Joseph Smith. Brigham said, "I wish to say that, when I see [men] in Israel who are **careless and unconcerned, who trifle away their time...where there are opportunities to learn, my experience for the best part of forty years teaches me that they never progress....**In my experience I never did let an opportunity pass of getting with the Prophet Joseph and of hearing him speak in public or in private, so that I might draw understanding from the fountain from which he spoke, that I might have it and bring it forth when it was needed. My own experience tells me that the great success with which the Lord has crowned my labors is owing to the fact

of applying my heart to wisdom.... In the days of the Prophet Joseph, such moments were more precious to me than all the wealth of the world. No matter how great my poverty – if I had to borrow meal to feed my wife and children, I never let an opportunity pass of learning what the Prophet had to impart. This is the secret of the success of your humble servant.” (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses vol. 12, p.269-270)

The Relief Society went down for a while due to issues between Joseph and Emma. John Taylor said “Sister Emma got severely tried in her mind about the doctrine of Plural Marriage and she made use of the position she held [as President of the Relief Society] to try to pervert the minds of the sisters in relation to the doctrine. She tried to influence my first wife and to make her believe that the revelation was not correct.” (ref. on p163) Eliza Snow said concerning Emma leading the RS, that Emma “gave it up so as not to lead the society in Error.” (ref. on p163) John Taylor also said the “reason why the Relief Society did not continue from the first organization was that Emma Smith the Pres. taught the Sisters that the principle of Celestial Marriage as taught and practiced by Joseph Smith was not of God.” (ref. on p163)

Eliza Snow, next Relief Society President, taught the sisters to “creation [their] own fashions,” produce their own silk, learn to store grain in case of trouble, obtain “degree[s] for medicine,” and teach skills of midwifery and healing to others.

Brigham Young attempted to launch several economic industries but these struggled due to lack of faith among the members.

William Godbe wanted the saints to depend on the US economically, upon their bankers and merchants, rather than living free of these entanglements as the prophet taught. Godbe’s

philosophy had connections to Karl Marx. President Benson explained, “According the Marxist doctrine, a human being is primarily an economic creation. In other words, his material well-being is all important; his privacy and his freedom are strictly secondary.” (ETB Proper Role of Government, BYU Oct. 21 1986).

If heeded, Brigham’s counsel could have saved the Saints from great depressions, market fluctuations, federal control – essentially avoiding the turmoil and confusion of the latter days. Note- the inflation, etc.

The Saints had their own coinage, with “Holiness to the Lord” written on it in the Deseret Alphabet.

Séances & Visiting Spirits

Godbe and his peers in the 1860s and onward resorted to using Séances and Spiritualism to communicate with spirits who “unfolded to our minds...a grand system of theology.” Godbe’s opposition to Brigham’s policies appears to stem from messages from spirits he communicated with. Spiritualism, communicating with spirits, was growing quickly, with millions of converts. These Séances take place in darkness due to light supposedly hindering communication (perhaps it does hinder it when you’re dealing with the wrong kind of spirits). Brigham warned the saints against this, telling them that the power of Satan is real and fully able to make objects move, to make noises, etc. Brigham further said, “Can you tell whether that is by the power of God or by the power of the devil? No, unless you have the revelations of Jesus Christ.” P166-67



Spiritualism was born in Hydesville NY, 15mi away from the Hill Cumorah. Joseph Smith taught, “false prophets always arise to oppose the true prophets... the devil always sets up his Kingdom at the very same time in opposition to God...” p168

Faith Crisis Ch. 13 William Godbe:
Spiritualism (*Modern Progressives Continue*
the Mission of Occultic Medium Spirits),
Socialism, Economics

References in this chapter: 56

Joseph Smith said the source of the most persecution against the Saints was ‘false brethren’. Daniel Tyler and Isaac Behunin called themselves friends of Joseph. When Joseph told of several who were trying to destroy him, Behunin said that if he would leave the church, he wouldn’t do as others had done in bothering the Mormons, he would go away and leave it all behind. But Joseph taught him, “Brother Behunin, you don’t know what you would do. No doubt these men once thought as you do. Before you joined this Church you stood on neutral ground...when you joined this Church you enlisted to serve God. When you did that you left the neutral ground, and you never can get back on to it. Should you forsake the Master you enlisted to serve, it will be by the instigation of the evil one, and you will follow his dictation and be his servant.” P170 (Daniel Tyler Recollections, Juvenile Instructor)

Spiritualism vs. the Restoration in Utah

Godbe and fellow dissenters made the Utah Magazine, forerunner of the Salt Lake Tribune (famously anti-Mormon). The Utah Magazine aired supernatural and Gothic elements about various powers, mediums, and various topics in Spiritualism. The magazine was openly hostile toward Brigham and the Church, criticizing Brigham's economics and policies. Arrington commended these newspapers in his Great Basin Kingdom book.

Joseph Fielding Smith explained that these newspapers of the "Godbyeites" of 1870 were "brought into the world to lie." The Liberal Party loved putting down Mormons. "It's only principle, apparently, was hatred of everything Mormon" wrote historian Whitney, pouring venom on any who opposed it, libeling & lampooning both the living and the dead. Its contents were filthy, and inappropriate for homes. The Nauvoo Expositor was holy writ compared with the Salt Lake Tribune. (Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials in Church History, 548)

Godbe's Utah Magazine 1st issue accused Brigham of being a tyrant, and said the Church was declining in spiritual gifts. Of course he wasn't referring to 'gifts of the spirit' in the traditional sense, but the 'spiritual gifts' that occurred at Spiritualist Séances which he embraced. He accused the church of being materialist. On the contrary, members records document that gifts of the spirit were abundant. Priestess Eliza R Snow had the gift of tongues, blessed others, prophesied, gave blessings through the gift of tongues which blessings were fulfilled. Eliza's journal and elsewhere report repeated occurrences of this.

The Salt Lake Tribune published an account of a medium where voices were heard, such as the voice of Heber C Kimball, and they left the meeting with a determination that "the deluded but honest followers of Brigham Young should be emancipated from

such bondage.” Godbe and his peers claimed that Heber C Kimball taught them ‘higher’ doctrines. They claimed visits from Jesus, Joseph Smith, Solomon, the Apostles Peter James and John, and Alexander Humboldt who purportedly appeared with a promised to “...advance humankind past evolutionary theory, even as Darwin had gone beyond Moses.” They claimed a dim light was seen when Jesus appeared. They claimed to be taught by invisible angels. The spirits gave them messages to *downplay the Book of Mormon and distrust the D&C, to reject the doctrine of a personal deity, to reject literal resurrection and atonement, that Joseph Smith was an imperfect spiritual medium who was untutored in spiritual things whose revelations were inferior to the “new light” being given them, that they should lead a revolt against Brigham Young to ‘free’ the children of zion*, and that Joseph and Christ endorse such things. This advice Godbe and his peers received in the Séances is **very similar to what modern progressives** are trying to do in the Church. (The evil spirits are inspiring people with the same false doctrines today as they did yesterday.)

The Tribune pointed out that when an intelligent Mormon leaves the church, they don’t go to Protestant churches, they either go into Spiritualism or materialism.

(Note – that does seem like a true trend! Mormon apostates learned from the true Church that the spiritual realm is real (unlike the protestant churches), and that there is importance in material/temporal things (also unlike the protestant churches)).

Here are examples of progressives today who echo the very messages of the evil



spirits from the Séances at the time of Godbe:

(Note- this is some deep stuff, here we will see the exact messages of the evil spirits being towed today, pigs with lipstick parading in the church as beloved intellectual thought leaders!)

See p176-180 of the full text for references of the following, and of the Tribune article citing what the medium told the Godbeites to teach (p175)

“devaluation of the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants”:

1. FairMormon: claims that prophets produce scripture based on their worldviews, says this can affect the validity of the worldwide flood of Noah account, etc.

2. Blake T Ostler: says scripture is not free of cultural bias and human interpretation with conceptual limitations, that revelation isn't just God, it's the prophet's personality and limited understanding, that scripture is not supernatural, but is just people participating with God.

3. David E. Bokovoy: says the Book of Mormon doesn't need to be considered ancient or historical

“rejection of a personal deity”

1. David H. Bailey: doesn't believe in anthropomorphic god or miracles or theology in general.

2. Sterling M. McMurrin: doesn't believe in Adam and Eve, Garden of Eden, fall of man, savior, Jesus is just a great teacher with 'enormous spiritual insight', these are just cultural myths.

“the Doctrine and Covenants, filled with the revelations of Joseph Smith, was not to be fully trusted

1. Richard L. Bushman: Smith was arrogant and the church was built on his confidence, Joseph didn't consider wording in the revelations to be infallible, says the revelations weren't gods revelation, but are a mix of god and Joseph.

“Joseph Smith had been...a spiritual medium”

1. Richard L. Bushman: claims Joseph was a boy who gazed into stones and saw treasure who later became a translator to look in a stone and see words.

2. Richard L. Bushman: said Joseph was into treasure-seeking greed who had stones to find treasure, that magical culture stayed with him to the end, that magic served as a preparatory gospel.

3. Richard L. Bushman: said Joseph's practice with scrying stones which influenced his translation methods later, that Joseph blended magic with inspired translation.

Joseph Smith's “revelations... were inferior to the ‘new light’ now being given”

1. Ronald O. Barney 2016: We are in a new era, a clear point of departure has happened in the last few years, we will look back on this period of time (a transition period)

2. Margaret B. Young 2015: We are on a bridge, change comes slowly in the Church, the past 50 years have been a time of miraculous change, “We will become a church known for exactly the opposite reasons it was known for in the nineteenth century.”

Joseph Smith “imperfectly strained divine light through his untutored understanding”

1. Russel Anderson, FairMormon: Treasure digging magic (occultic practices) were consistent with the life and times of Joseph Smith.

2. Richard L. Bushman: Joseph was just one of many visionaries of his time. He was taught by philosophies of the time including “universalism, rational skepticism, republicanism, progress, revivalism, magic, communitarianism, health reform, restorationism, Zionism, and a host of others.”

“they were to lead a revolt against Brigham Young”

1. Jennifer L. Lund: “...there are just some things about him [Brigham Young] which can be disconcerting or discomfoting... [he was] a product of the times in which he lives”

2. Matthew J. Grow: Brigham was a complex figure who used “violent rhetoric” which was rough on people.

“they must ‘free the children of Zion’”

1. Margaret B. Young: “I’ve had to just kind of pinch my nose as I read through the terrible things that have been said by past leaders of the Church. Understanding the damage that they’ve done and the damage that they continue to do...” She goes on to describe Church history and teachings of early brethren as a broken foundation that needs to be entirely thrown out to start over. “It’s got to come down. Tear it down so that you can build something that will last.”

2. Leonard J. Arrington: “Elders Benson and Petersen will never accept books written by us, given our understanding of history... we shall have to be more careful in what we write and say and publish... I’m still ebullient, still optimistic, still determined to do what we must do.... The Lord is with us yet!”

3. Richard L. Bushman: “The dominant narrative is not true; it can’t be sustained. The Church has to absorb all this new information or it will be on very shaky grounds and that’s what it is trying to do and it will be a strain for a lot of people, older people especially. But I think it has to change.”

(Note – it’s not new information, it’s a new hatred for our leaders, a new acceptance of anti-Mormon sources, a new betrayal of the truth.)

Godbe and his associates were instructed by the spirits to “make almost any personal sacrifice” to retain their Church membership so they could continue to sow “such advanced truths as would elevate the people and prepare them for the changes at hand.” This is like the angel (later discovered to be a devil) who told Korihor to “Go and reclaim this people, for they have all gone astray after an unknown God.” Korihor had great success, many believed the message. (Alma30:53) (The same is done by the progressive historians and progressive thought leaders, they stay in the church to ‘change the system from within’)

Socialism

Godbe was a follower of Robert Owen, founder of the 19th century “Utopian socialism”. Godbeites wanted Mormon socialism, they wanted worker unions, etc.

Marx and Engels were big fans of Robert Owen. Owen was one of the first to use the term ‘socialism.’

Owen came to America a year after Joseph Smith was first visited by the Angel Moroni.

Owen in America established various socialist programs with his “New



Harmony” program, including the first kindergarten, the first trade school, the first free library, and the first community-supported public school in the US.

Owens socialist township lasted only about 2 years.

Owen was also into 19th century Spiritualism. He said all religions were false, but converted to spiritualism by an American medium.

The Liberal Party of Utah was the 1st anti-LDS political party. Godbe helped organize it.

Godbe knew it would be hard to get the Saints away from the Church by doctrinal issues, so he focused on political and social issues.

Arrington is opposed to Joseph and Brigham in almost every way. He defends Godbe. His message aligns with the message the spirits gave Godbe, in direct opposition to the church.

(Note – the fox was really guarding the hen house folks!)

Keynesian Economics

Arrington supported Godbe’s accusation against Brigham’s economics. Brigham was pro-independence, Godbe called that unsound economic principles.

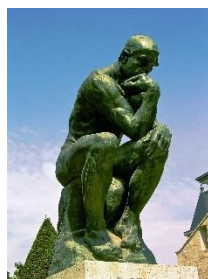
Arrington proudly supported FDR’s progressive policies and described himself as a liberal.

President Benson identified John Keynes as one of 5 specific antichrists of our day. Others named by Benson were Sigmund Freud, Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, and John Dewey. Since these are promoted in college, Benson said “Today there are much worse things that can happen to a child than not getting a full

college education. In fact, some of the worst things have happened to our children while attending colleges led by administrators who wink at subversion and amorality.” (ETB Conf. Report “A Plea to Strengthen our Families” Oct. 1970, 22)

Keynes was a member of the Liberal Party in the UK and Godbeites wanted association with them when founding the Utah Liberal Party.

Keynes’ thinking could be summarized by the maxim, “The government has all the answers.” He wanted government intervention for the economy, banks, labor union protection, transportation, media, housing, mortgages, pension funds, retirement plans, and a thousand other things. That government answers every problem. That government creates something (prosperity) out of nothing, that government is God. (see Dave Breese, *Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave*, 1990, 196)



Arrington said that Keynes, Freud, and Darwin molded his thinking throughout his life.

Two Worldviews in Conflict

Arrington used his liberal academic training in college to influence his gospel ideas, whereas Benson relied on the Book of Mormon and revealed doctrine.

Benson said, “Our families may be corrupted by worldly trends and teachings unless we know how to use the book [of Mormon] to expose and combat the false teachings of socialism, organic evolution, rationalism, humanism, and so forth.” (ETB Teachings, 60-61)

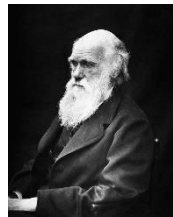
Faith Crisis Ch. 14 Waging War Through
Education & Mentorship (*Brigham Young
Academy Original Vision Not Upheld,
Arrington Not Seen as a Member, Arrington
Selling a 'Naturalistic' (Godless) 'More
Plausible' History*)

References in this chapter: 30

Brigham Young Academy

Brigham Young donated his own finances to the BY Academy in Provo. He wanted the revelation of the Lord for the texts and books to be written and manufactured by the Saints. But today there are no schools which do this.

Brigham wanted schools to expressly counter false philosophies like Darwinism, Marxism, socialism, atheism, etc. Schools to teach the doctrines of the Gospel as contained in Latter-day revelation to counter false philosophies. Schools where the primary texts were the standard works of the Church, and no doctrines contrary to those scriptures would be promoted. Schools where converted Saints create and manufacture all the textbooks and teaching materials.



Brigham commissioned Karl G Maeser as President of the academy and told him, “you ought not to teach even the alphabet or the multiplication tables without the Spirit of God.” P190

George Albert Smith attended the academy as a youth and remembered hearing Maeser teaching there that he would be accountable to the Lord for the thoughts he thinks, as his life would be a sum of his thoughts.

BY Academy's entire educational program centered around a gospel framework designed to ground children firmly in gospel teachings. 11 years after its conception the Deseret News reported, "ninety-five percent of students in a few weeks [become] intensely interested in the Gospel." P191

Arrington Concentrates on the Youth

Arrington said "how many...would want me to teach their children? Probably not many."



Arrington's friend Carol Lynn Pearson wrote him, "History is on our side – as long as we can control the historians."

Arrington was said to have "influenced a generation of thinking" said Ron Barney, an editor of the Joseph Smith Papers.

A manager at Book of Mormon Central said, "if you don't like Arrington...you'll have problems with this group." (a social media group run by BofM Central).

Prince reported that Arrington mentored 100s of people at all levels and "shaped the future of Mormon studies."

Arrington knew that the "LDS desire for education and learning is so strong that I think they will accept me and let me teach them in spite of some of my 'radicalism.'"

For 8 years Arrington had an office in the BYU library (1972-1980).

Arrington was congratulated for ‘liberating’ the minds of young Mormons, it should have been said ‘liberalizing’ the minds of young Mormons.

Is Leonard Arrington a Member?

People couldn’t tell by Arrington’s books whether he was a member, some even thought he wasn’t a member by reading his books. Arrington considered this “the supreme compliment.”

Jesus said that those who deny him before others will He deny before His Father. (Matt. 10:32-33)

Arrington said, “The professional in us fights against religious naivete – believing too much.”

Arrington gave “natural explanations”, meaning explanations that did not credit God with involvement – a “restrained religious voice” and a “middle ground” between secularism and faith. His approach became a hallmark for the New Mormon History.



Note – Remember, Joseph Smith said he never heard of a man being damned for believing too much.

The Church had a copy of Arrington’s book “Great Basin Kingdom”, and on the catalog it was marked with an “a”, he asked what this meant and was told it meant ‘anti-Mormon’.

The picture of Brigham used in Arrington’s Great Basin Kingdom intentionally removed the prophetic-aura.

Arrington’s Great Basin Kingdom book gave no example of revelation or inspiration.

Arrington excused his faithless approach by saying that he was writing to a secular audience who dismissed such revelation “as rubbish.”

Note – Why was Arrington so obsessed with presenting an anti-Mormon view of Mormon history? Why was he so married to his ‘academic audience’? Why was he trying to please them and them alone? For all intents and purposes, it appears he sold his soul for academics!

Arrington confessed intellectualizing the gospel and looking at history in naturalistic terms, and the personal doubt that goes with that.

Debating the Source of Revelation

Arrington warned LDS readers of Great Basin Kingdom in the preface that it would be a “**naturalistic** discussion”, that it was “a perfectly valid aspect of religious history, and, indeed, makes **more plausible** the truths they [the prophets] attempted to convey.”

For Arrington it was “impossible” to separate which parts of scripture were from God, and which were just Smith’s opinions and biases as influenced by environmental factors. He saw scripture as unreliable, inaccurate, subjective, and a sandy foundation.

This is very different from the faith based view that scriptures are an “iron rod”. Joseph Smith said “There is no error in the revelations I have taught”. Harold B Lee taught that all Church teachings must be couched in the scriptures. That things not in scripture are mere speculation, and that things which contradict scripture are not true. “This is the standard by which we measure all truth.”

Faith Crisis Ch. 15 Mormon Historians Move to Take Brigham from His Pedestal

References in this chapter: 15

Brigham's last words were "Joseph! Joseph! Joseph!" with "a divine look in his face [which] seemed to indicate that he was communicating with his beloved friend, Joseph Smith, the Prophet." (Susa Young Gates, The Life Story of Brigham Young)

Brigham's name, like his predecessor Joseph, has fulfilled prophecy that it would be known for good and evil.

A central message of Arrington's Great Basin Kingdom is to dethrone Brigham. Arrington called Brigham a "complex figure" with "violent rhetoric." The message of the New Mormon History is clear: Brigham is no hero.



When Brigham first met Joseph, Brigham spoke in tongues, and Joseph prophesied that Brigham would be preside over the Church.

Brigham was an ardent defender of Joseph. Brigham traveled constantly on missions without purse or scrip. Joseph saw in vision an angel defending Brigham with a drawn sword against his enemies, and Jesus in their midst unseen by them.

During the Kirtland apostacy, all but 2 of the 12 Apostles betrayed Joseph, the two were Brigham and Heber C Kimball.

Heber recalled that “a man’s life was in danger the moment he spoke in defense of the prophet of God”, and there were threats against Brigham’s life. A mob tried to kill Brigham necessitating his fleeing Kirtland, “because I would proclaim, publicly and privately, that I knew, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Most High God, and had not transgressed and fallen as apostates declared.” P201

Joseph had to escape Kirtland in a box.

Brigham declared, “The Prophet Joseph had lade [sic] the foundation for a great work, and we will build upon it, I will ask who has stood next to Joseph and Hiram [sic]? I have and I will stand next to him.”

Brigham said he knew Joseph as well as Joseph’s father and mother, and that no one on earth knew him better than he did. Brigham then said that “Jesus Christ excepted, no better man ever lived or does live upon this earth. I am his witness.”

In D&C 138, Brigham’s character as a “noble” “great” and “mighty” man was canonized and accepted by the Church body as doctrine.

Faith Crisis Ch. 16 Contriving and Mentoring The New Mormon History

References in this chapter: 13

Arrington hired and recruited and mentored people (BYU graduates etc.) to write Mormon biographies and histories. Leonard had a knack for knowing everyone. His genius was his

ability to network. Eventually Arrington had gathered a large enough circle to make the Mormon Historical Association.

Mormon studies were shifting to focus on progressive reform, Freudian analysis, folklore, rural sociology, and skepticism.

Faith Crisis Ch. 17 The Standard of Truth (We Were Not Betrayed, No Error in the Revelations)

References in this chapter: 18

Brigham Young was fasting and praying daily and had a vision where Joseph Smith appeared to him and Joseph “shewed him the mountain that we now call Ensign Peak and there was an ensign fell upon that peak, and Joseph said “Build under the point where the colors fall and you will prosper and have peace.”... When they entered it [the valley] President Young pointed to that peak and said he, “I want to go there.” (George A. Smith) p208

Brigham built that ensign (standard, message), and he did so temporally, spiritually, doctrinally, educationally, and culturally. He established the ensign unfurled by Joseph Smith, an ensign to the nations. The Saints prospered as they adhered to the foundation laid by Joseph Smith.

Arrington and his followers were on a mission to raise a different ensign, a different history.

In 2020 the Salt Lake Tribune reported that the Church recorded its smallest membership growth in Utah in at least 2 decades that past year. That in 2019, 14 of the state’s 29 counties saw the

number of members decline. In 2019 we had the slowest year for growth since 1953. The 2018 statistical report “provided some of the bleakest numbers ever reported by the Church during the past 80 years.” (LDS Growth Case Studies,” Cumorah.com; full reference in text pg209)

A parallel event happened in the book of Helaman 4:24-26, where they saw a faith crisis after a time of astonishing growth.

We Were Not Betrayed

Joseph Fielding Smith taught, “...**every soul** upon the face of the earth who has a desire to know it [testimony of Joseph Smith & Restoration] has the privilege, for every soul that will humble himself, and in the **depths of humility and faith**, with a contrite spirit, go before the Lord, will receive that knowledge just as surely as he lives.” (Conf. Report Oct. 1, 1944, 89)



We do not need to be intimidated by claims from those with advanced degrees or alleged superiority.

No Error in the Revelations

Joseph Smith said “there is no error in the revelations which I have taught.”

In 2016 New Mormon Historian Ron Barney announced that we are in a “new era” of LDS history. In 2015 progressive Margaret Young blogged, “In the year 2020, I predict that... We will become a church known for exactly the opposite reasons it was known for in the nineteenth century.”

The new narrative promotes the idea that Joseph’s revelations were Satanic occultic magic treasure-seeking seer stone based

and that the revelations were polluted by Joseph's mind and mental baggage as a product of his environment.

The progressives want us to throw out Joseph's teachings and revelations and 'move on.'

Joseph Smith said "O ye Twelve and all saints, profit by this important Key- that in all your trials troubles &, temptations, afflictions, bonds imprisonment & death See to it that you do not betray heaven, that you do not betray Jesus Christ, that you **do not betray your Brethren, & that you do not betray the revelations of God whether in the bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine & Covenants or any of the word of God.** Yea in all your kicking, & floundering see to it that you do not this thing **lest innocent blood be found in your skirts & you go down to hell.**" (Recorded by Wilford Woodruff in the Joseph Smith Papers p87, 2 July 1839) p213

Joseph Smith taught "the only way to obtain truth and wisdom is **not to ask from books, but to go to God in prayer,** and obtain divine teaching." (JS Hist)

Joseph F. Smith promised, "If members of the Church would **place more confidence in the word of the Lord, and less confidence in the theories of men,** they would be better off. I will give you a key for your guidance. Any doctrine, whether it comes in the name of religion, science, philosophy, or whatever it may be, that is in **conflict with the revelations of the Lord that have been accepted by the Church as coming from the Lord will fail.** It may appear to be very plausible; it may be put before you in such a way that you cannot answer it, it may appear to be established by evidence that cannot be controverted, but all you need do is **bide your time. Time will level all**

things.” (Joseph F. Smith, recorded by Joseph Fielding Smith, The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, Oct. 1930, 155)

President Hinckley set the example of how to navigate the Church based on Joseph Smith’s teachings: “...we have a great body of revelation, the vast majority of which came from the prophet Joseph Smith. We don’t need much revelation. **We need to pay more attention to the revelation we’ve already received.** Now, if a problem should arise on which we don’t have an answer, we pray about it, we may fast about it, and it comes.” (“Sunday Interview – Musings of the Main Mormon” interview by Don Lattin, Apr. 13 1997) (link in the text)

Mountain Meadows Massacre

The massacre was a genesis for the New Mormon History with the progressive attempt to place much of the blame for the atrocities on Brigham Young, and Joseph Smith’s cousin George A. Smith.

This will be covered in Faith Crisis vol. 2.

Leonard Arrington vs Ezra Taft Benson

Benson rose up to defend the church against Arrington. At first Benson declared that Dialogue should be burned while oblivious to the fact that the History Division was filled with Dialogue supporters.

In 1976 Benson went to BYU to combat the New Mormon History, publicly challenging Fawn Brodie’s ‘No Man Knows My History’, Dialogue author Duane Jeffrey and his article discrediting President Joseph Fielding Smith, the progressive interpretations of the First Vision, and more.

Fawn Brodie wrote against Joseph Smith and against Thomas Jefferson, promoting popular lies about these men.

A covert cold war began at Church headquarters in SLC Utah with progressives spying on traditionalists (like President Benson, Elder Mark E. Peterson, Elder Boyd K. Packer, etc.), traditionalists spying on progressives, secret informants, leaked documents, falsified reports, employed pseudonyms, etc.

In 1977 a “landmine” exploded with Richard Marshall, a young, naïve undergraduate student, wrote a thesis paper celebrating the progressive shift within the Church. Marshall featured interviews with Arrington, D. Michael Quinn, and other New Mormon Historians explaining their calculated plan, their successes, and fears. These statements were given to Marshall without realizing they would be published, unabridged, in a thesis paper. Elder Mark E. Peterson found the paper and gave it to the Quorum of the Twelve, who then highlighted it and gave it to the First Presidency, resulting in restrictions and changes within the Historical Division.

This is all covered in Faith Crisis vol. 2.

A New Joseph Smith

In the midst of the controversy, Arrington’s Sesquicentennial history book series became the subject of debate as leaders sought ways to cancel their legal contract to publish.

Church leaders weren’t happy about Bushman’s attacks on Joseph in Arrington’s history book series. The books depicted Joseph not as a God-seeking plough boy, but as a selfish, greed-centered, magic-dabbling, treasure-digging occultist who was transformed into a Prophet of God by intense correction and contrition, as well as strict adherence to magic ritual.

Bushman also depicted Lucy Mack Smith as prideful, belligerent, and high strung, and her husband Joseph Smith Sr. as an apathetic, faithless, drunken treasure digger and failed father.

Leaders acted quickly to try and keep Arrington and Bushman's Joseph Smith from replacing the real hero Joseph Smith.

This is talked about in Faith Crisis vol. 2.

The Standard of Truth

“The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.” (JS Hist)



Edwin D. Woolley taught us about staying in the church even when hard, “I won't [apostatize]...If this were [Brigham Young's] church I might, but it's just as much mine as it is [Brigham Young's].”

We hear the call of Joseph Smith, “Shall we not go on in so great a cause?” (D&C 128:22)

Appendix: Eyewitness Accounts of the Prophet Joseph Smith's Greatness

References in this chapter: 25

D&C 135:3, 6 speaks of Joseph's greatness nobility and accomplishments, that he was great in the eyes of God and died in glory.

Joseph Smith said those who rise against him would feel the weight of their iniquity upon their own heads. That those who speak evil of him and the Saints are ignorant and abominable characters. He said that although he does wrong, he doesn't do the wrong others accuse him of. He points out that they said bad things about Jesus too. (Relief Society Minutes, History, 1842) (full reference in text p220)

Joseph couldn't tell people his full identity, he said they would call it blasphemy and they would seek his life. (from Life of Heber C Kimball by Orson F. Whitney, 333)

Joseph said "I never did harm any man since I was born in the world. My voice is always for peace." He said no one knows his history, and he cannot tell it. He said "When I am called by the trump of the archangel and weighed in the balance, you will all know me then." 1844 JS Papers (full ref in text p220)

Joseph attested he was not guilty of any great or malignant sins, that such was never in his nature.

Joseph was asked if he knew he would be saved, he said "I know I will. I have the oath of God on it and God cannot lie." Joseph said John was caught up to the 3rd heaven, but that he knows someone who was caught up to the 7th heaven and knows things

unlawful to utter. (Diary of Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, 1936, Church History Library) (link in text p221)

Joseph said people little know who he is when they talk to him, and he dare not tell them, but they will know. (Remarks by Mary F. Lightner at BYU 1905) (ref in text)

Joseph said “Paul had seen the third heavens and I more.” (Joseph Smith Papers) (ref in text)

Joseph said he could explain 100-fold about the glories of heaven which he had seen in vision were he permitted, but the people weren’t ready for it. (JS Hist) (ref in text)

Joseph told Brigham that were he to show the saints all the revelations he had received, “there is scarce a man that would stay with me, they could not bear it.” (Millen. Star) (ref in text)

Hyrum Smith said “There were prophets before Adam, and Joseph has the spirit and power of all the prophets.” (JS Hist) (ref in text)

Brigham Young said he knew Joseph as well or better than anyone, that Joseph was persecuted for the same reasons any righteous man was, and that Joseph was the best man second to Jesus Christ. (JD 9:332)

Brigham Young said he felt like shouting hallelujah all the time when he thought of how he ever knew Joseph Smith, the man with the keys from God to build the kingdom, which keys the Saints still have to continue the work Joseph commenced in preparation for the coming of the Son of Man. (JD 3:51)

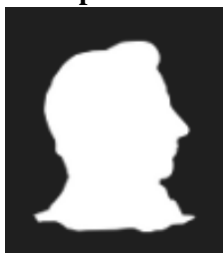
Brigham Young said he felt that he would crawl around the earth to see a man like Peter Jeremiah or Moses, someone that could

tell him about God and heaven, and that he found such a man in Joseph Smith. (ref in text)

Brigham Young said Joseph Smith's character is as fair as any mentioned in the bible. (JD 14:203)

Brigham Young said Joseph Smith holds the keys of this last dispensation... and **“no man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial**

kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith”, that we “must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are – I with you and you with me. I cannot go there



without his consent. He holds the keys of that kingdom for the last dispensation – the **keys to rule in the spirit world; and he rules there triumphantly**, for he gained full power and a glorious victory over the power of Satan while he was yet in the flesh, and was a martyr to his religion and to the name of Christ ,which gives him a most perfect victory in the spirit world. **He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven.** Many will exclaim – “Oh, that is very disagreeable! It is preposterous! We cannot bear the thought!” But it is true.... Joseph Smith, junior, **will again be on this earth dictating plans and calling forth his brethren**...he will never cease his operations, under the directions of the Son of God, until the last ones of the children of men are saved that can be, from Adam till now. Should not this thought comfort all people? They will, by-and-by, be a thousand times more thankful for such a man as Joseph Smith, junior, that it is possible for them to be for any earthly good whatever....[The Lord] has watched that family and that blood as it has circulated from its

fountain to the birth of that man. He was foreordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation.” (JD 7: 289-290)

(Note – I thank God for Joseph Smith, and tremble with awe as I write these notes. As I wrote this, I was hearing a long list of hundreds of hymns, and the hymn “We Thank Thee Oh God for a Prophet” played. I was renewed in my reverence for this holy prophet of God, with an unshakable witness that he was sent from God, with important work for myself, and everyone now living who will receive it. Read ‘em and weep: Joseph Smith is the presiding god of the spirit world, and will return to earth to help us yet!)

Brigham Young said “...no matter how odious his name may be to the inhabitants of the earth. I will defy any nation to hate a man more than the Jews hated the name of Jesus Christ – when he lived in the flesh. I honor and revere the name of Joseph Smith. I delight to hear it; I love it. I love his doctrine.... Should I be hated and my name cast out as evil because I love the truth? Yes, or the words of Jesus could not be fulfilled, for he said, “Ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.”” (JD 13:216)

Brigham said he in 1833 moved to Ohio where he became familiar with Joseph Smith, and was with him in public and private from then until the day of his death, and testified, “I can truly say, that I invariably found him to be all that any people could require a true prophet to be, & that a better man could not be, though he had his weaknesses; and what man has ever lived upon this earth who had none?” (Church Hist Library, ref and link in the text)

John Taylor said that the Book of Mormon tells us that Joseph Smith is the seed of Joseph in Egypt. Taylor said Joseph was “the most profoundly learned and intelligent man that I ever met

in my life”. Taylor said he had mingled with all kinds of people all around the world, but that “yet I have never met a man so intelligent as he was. And where did he get his intelligence from? Not from books; not from the logic or science or philosophy of the day, but he obtained it through the revelation of God made known to him through the medium of the everlasting gospel.” (JD 21:163)

Wilford Woodruff said Joseph Smith was the greatest prophet except for Jesus Christ. He continued, “Father Adam, as I have said, stands at the head; but Joseph was reserved to lay the foundation of this great kingdom and dispensation of salvation to the whole human family in these last days, to build up Zion, to establish God’s Kingdom, and to prepare it for the coming of the Son of Man. He held those keys.” (WW Discourses) (ref in text)

Wilford Woodruff said that on several occasions Joseph remarked to his brethren, “Brethren you do not know me, you do not know who I am.” Woodruff said that Joseph said while smiting himself upon the breast, “I would to God that I could unbosom my feelings in the house of my friends.” Woodruff said Joseph was foreordained like Jeremiah, and known of God before he was begotten. (JD 21:317)

Wilford Woodruff said Joseph Smith’s “mind, like Enoch’s, expands as eternity, and only God can comprehend his soul.” (Church History Library, ref and link in text)

Lorenzo Snow said he was intimately acquainted with Joseph Smith for years like a brother, and that “there never was a man that possessed a higher degree of integrity and more devotedness to the interest of mankind than the Prophet Joseph Smith.” (Conf. Report Apr. 1898, 64)

Lorenzo Snow said Joseph was “full of the spirit of his calling...honest in all his endeavors. No one that was as intimately acquainted with him as I was could find any fault with him, so far as his moral character was concerned...I bear testimony of the good character of Brother Joseph smith, of his honesty, his fidelity, his faithfulness, his generosity, and benevolence, as a man and as a servant of God.” (Millennial Star vol.57 no.26 1895, 402)

[Bonus: Lecture Highlights: Hannah Stoddard Talks about New Progressive Mormon History on the Mormon Renegade Podcast](#)

https://open.spotify.com/episode/2Aus31RUVVvhC1FGG9behx?si=4fL42O7xTqSfJNXdQna1Hw&utm_source=copy-link

The Book of Mormon speaks of how they long for days past, it’s a message for us we should yearn for the days of pilgrims and puritans when people cared about scripture.



Take down the man and you take down the message. this is why they attack the character of the founding fathers of the country and the founding fathers of the restoration.

When you talk to students at BYU, you learn that they have no

clue who the Puritans are, who the pilgrims are, what happened with the first Thanksgiving, none of that.

The Scarlet letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is fake history with an agenda to mock God and make the Puritans look bad.

David Whitmer and others after the death of Joseph Smith were highly rebellious to the church and were inspired by the devil to write a revisionist history making Joseph look like a bad person. They gave a completely new narrative to the Book of Mormon translation, claiming that it was by a dark stone and a hat. This directly contradicts the revealed word and testimony which says that the translation was done by two transparent stones together in the Urim and Thummim.

See book Revealed Educational Principles. It shows how early in America, people with agendas came in and set up free schools.

John Taylor was adamant that we never go a day without the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, that these should be a big part of our education, and that we should not go to the gentile schools.

Harvard, Yale, these schools were made by Puritans to train people to be a doctor lawyer or minister, but later they went off the rails of course.

The Rough Stone Rolling book claims to be the facts, it is seen as a great biography in the Church about Joseph, but it's one of the main reasons people are leaving the church, and it doesn't present real facts!

Leonard Arrington progressive church historian didn't care about church doctrine, he didn't read the scriptures, he didn't go on a mission even when his dad offered to pay for it; he was on a mission from some spiritual source where he was impressed that he needed to rewrite church history to get rid of all those old school ideas to give us a brave new world. Arrington paints Joseph as a person not to be taken seriously who just had a few good ideas, and that now it's time to do something even better.

We're having the worst faith crisis ever experienced in the church, nothing compares to it; the youth are leaving the church in droves.

There's a fake narrative going around that there's new history we have not before known, and that this information demands a progressive view.

Faithful woman in church history really haven't had their stories told; the Stoddard book published on Helen Kimball (a plural life of Joseph) is the first in a very long time. There's tremendous work to be done to write the true history of the church.

Joseph Fielding Smith wrote faithful history showing God's hand in the lives of the saints and the hand of the adversary trying to stop them. Compare this to Leonard Arrington who said his view of history is that God is not really involved, that it's more just about economics and whatever people could figure out; Arrington was more of a theist.

At the opportune moment God calls faithful people who give everything they've got to fight for truth and freedom, and these faithful people keep entire organizations from collapsing. We

must be “Joseph's boys” of prophecy who wake up and roar like the thunders on Mount Sinai speaking in defense of the true character of Joseph Smith.

Mormonism was meant to be a counterculture, not just another church, but a people who are coming out of Babylon. Joseph said we are going to build Zion as a city, a separate people with our own military, our own schools, our own music, song, dance, theater, etc.

(Note – of course Brigham Young carried this vision forward. If there was something good but not quite up to Zion standards, the people were to remake it up to Zion code. This is a great rule of thumb for us. Reject anything unclean and make your own.)

Rough Stone Rolling breaks down the character of Joseph Smith so people don't want to listen to what he says about woman, family, economics, society, etc.

(Note – of course, what's the point of a prophet if he doesn't teach us about these important topics? The progressives are trying everything they can to get Joseph's influence and teachings out of the Church!)

We still don't have Joseph Smith's teachings organized by topic. (It's a project they're doing.)

A strength of millennials is that they don't want the fluff, they want the pure data.

Book of Mormon missionaries were father and son, brothers, etc. They did these missions as families! Each family is together to serve a purpose. If Joseph Smith were around today

perhaps he would be writing curriculum for children rather than books in general. Your kids need to be a part of the fight to defend the true restoration. Teach kids how to use sources to find their own answers.

See “Washington's rules for gentleman and decent behavior.” Washington was a surveyor at 16 years old. (Kids can do hard & complex & worthwhile things when we expect train and ask them to.)

House rules should be backed by scripture as God is the ruler of the house. Kids will respond to scriptural terms and words, that's what they're familiar with from pre-mortality, they knew the word of God. We are told this is a great generation, but we are losing more than ever. It's not their fault, we must teach them God's ways. To wake up kids, purge their music and movies. Then they'll come alive. You can't compete with Babylon, they'll always be cooler and more entertaining. Instead of just reading about the scriptures let's be like them.

Joseph was prophet seer and revelator, not prophet seer and reader. The translation involved him learning the language, and having visions of the culture, being visited by the inhabitants of Ancient America, etc.

We see Goliath progressives, we need faith to stand up against them. If you take a stand and get the word out, you will save people. If you don't, people will ask why you knew and didn't tell them.

Being sincere doesn't make you right; the 911 bombers we're sincere about their act for religion. Arrington was sincere, but he was dead wrong in his worldview. His view was faithless,

focused on belittling church leaders, he focused on using lying scoundrel sources, giving them equal weight, etc. His work undermines the true providential church history. Arrington's message was radical, and he was secretive about his agenda.

Astonishingly, it is now popular to argue that the Book of Mormon is bias toward Nephi's view.

(Note – One of my BYU religion professors talked this way, essentially claiming, “the Lamanites probably weren't so bad, Nephites just liked to complain!” But we must know there is in fact truth vs error. There is such thing as truth. The book is inspired, and Nephi's view was the correct view. It was the prophetic view.)

Progressive Bias in Church History is Taking Its Toll...

What happens when you attack the founders of a movement? The whole thing comes crumbling down. Attacks against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' founder Joseph Smith and his teachings are not just occurring outside the Church.

Learn about specific players and publications in the fight for faith in the restored gospel.

Thick in the fight against these growing progressive narratives, Boyd K. Packer warned, "...Much of their attack is indirect in mocking the faithful, in mocking religion... All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. ... Be careful that you do not fall into the category of mocking." (Jan. 16 2007 Lehi's Dream and You - BYU Speeches)

