

The King Follett Sermon: A Biography goes beyond a mere historical account; it also explores the sermon's profound theological implications and its lasting legacy for Latter-day Saints. The author elucidates the key themes and teachings embedded within the sermon, including the nature of God, the eternal progression of humankind, and the concept of exaltation. Drawing from a wide range of sources, he explores the sermon's reception among Latter-day Saints (across two centuries) and subsequent studies by religious scholars and historians.

William Smith's writing is engaging and accessible, making complex theological concepts approachable to readers of all backgrounds. He balances academic analysis with storytelling, ensuring that the biography remains both informative and engaging.

The King Follett Sermon: A Biography stands as a definitive and groundbreaking work on a pivotal moment in Latter-day Saint history. Smith's research, assessment, and ability to weave a compelling account unite in a way that will captivate readers interested in Joseph Smith, his teachings, and Latter-day Saint history.

—Matthew B. Christensen

Both Things Are True by Kate Holbrook (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2023)

Kate Holbrook was a professional historian (PhD, Boston University), a gospel scholar (MTS, Harvard Divinity School), a mother of three daughters, and a champion of Latter-day Saint women's voices. She worked for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the managing historian of women's history and edited several books in her

efforts to amplify women in the Church. Before Holbrook's life ended, Rosalynde Welch from the Maxwell Institute asked Holbrook if she would provide her own voice as well. *Both Things Are True* is Holbrook's collection of personal essays edited and compiled by Rosalynde Welch, Jana Reiss, Jenny Pulsipher, and others who knew and loved her.

Readers may remember a statement by Joseph Smith, "By p[r]oving contraries, truth is made manifest."¹ In *Both Things Are True*, each essay provides contraries Holbrook encountered during her life. Within each set of contrary truths, Holbrook shows a Christlike way.

In the first essay, "I Belong to the True and Living Church," Holbrook explains why the Church is true and why it is living. She compares truth to wheat that the Relief Society organization has gathered, stored, and shared for over one hundred years. As we add wheat to our current store, we are each responsible for personal truth seeking, and Holbrook describes the fidelity to reputable sources and to each other that is required as we search for truth. She ends with the statement "Our Church is true and living, as we are true to one another" (50).

In the second essay, "Revelation Is a Process," Holbrook shows that when we learn how revelations were given, received, and recorded in various past examples, we learn to be patient with our personal revelatory process and possible interpretive errors. Choosing hope in eventual revealed solutions is crucial despite "our imperfect human efforts" (71).

1. "Letter to Israel Daniel Rupp, 5 June 1844," 1, Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-israel-daniel-rupp-5-june-1844/1>.

In the third essay, “Housework Is a Crucible of Discipleship,” Holbrook describes housework as a daily practice that may yield feelings of guilt, resentment, and drudgery. When the practice is appropriately shared, and when we see the opportunity for gratitude, we can learn to “forgive the ground for its weeds” (91).

In the fourth essay, “Forgiving and Remembering,” Holbrook provides a healing perspective on how forgiveness empowers us to act, but remembering precedes improvement. Through sharing Church history experiences, Enos’s experience with prayer, an American writer’s experience remembering slavery, and a personal experience, Holbrook reveals how healing can take place.

In the final essay, “The Weight of Legacy,” Holbrook claims that our legacies matter but that the focus should not be on ourselves. She compares our efforts to a pie’s lattice-top crust: we weave our desire to matter with our efforts to love and remember others. In the epilogue by her husband, Sam Brown, he recalls a story from Holbrook’s 2020 Neal A. Maxwell Institute lecture, in which she taught, “You matter because you love, not because you successfully compete” (140).

Prior to the essays, the book begins with a short interview, published by the LDS Women’s Project in 2018. When asked about her research on Latter-day Saint women, Holbrook said, “To put forth these examples of really savvy, independent, faithful women—to show my daughters that they’re part of this religious context—that means so much to me” (17). Throughout this book, we get to glimpse the savvy, independent, faithful life of Kate Holbrook. Readers will experience how Holbrook so precisely and compassionately navigated the inherently contrary waters of life and faith.

—Katie Lewis

Mormon Envoy: The Diplomatic Legacy of Dr. John Milton Bernhisel by Bruce W. Worthen (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2023)

Mormon Envoy: The Diplomatic Legacy of Dr. John Milton Bernhisel by Bruce W. Worthen is an exploration of the life and diplomatic career of Dr. John Milton Bernhisel, a prominent—though perhaps lesser known—figure in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Worthen’s research and analysis shed light on Bernhisel’s role as a diplomat and advocate for the Latter-day Saint community during a important period in American and Utah history.

In this engaging biography, Worthen delves into Bernhisel’s life, from his humble beginnings in Pennsylvania to his involvement in the early Latter-day Saint movement and subsequent leadership roles within the Church. The book places special emphasis on Bernhisel’s diplomatic endeavors, highlighting his significant contributions to securing recognition and support for the Latter-day Saint faith and its followers.

Worthen narrates Bernhisel’s interactions with key political figures of the time, including Presidents James K. Polk and Millard Fillmore, as well as influential senators and congressmen. Through Bernhisel’s correspondence and diplomatic missions, the reader gains a deeper understanding of the complex political landscape of the mid-nineteenth century and the challenges faced by the Latter-day Saint community.

While Bernhisel’s primary objective was to secure religious freedom and protections for his fellow Saints, Worthen also explores the broader implications of his diplomatic efforts. Bernhisel’s legislative advocacy to create the state of Deseret and his involvement in the