

From the Editor



The motto on the title page in each issue of *BYU Studies Quarterly* reads: “Involving readers in the Latter-day Saint academic experience.” As this issue goes to press and to you, our readers, all over the world, I am excited about all that our experienced authors bring to you. How do their articles and other materials involve you in an LDS academic experience?

As the breadth and depth in the content of this issue represents, an LDS mind strives to embrace all truth found in a variety of disciplines and approaches while remaining grounded in the body of the canonical works of LDS scripture. An academic approach utilizes exhaustive research, careful attention to detail, clear formulation of hypotheses, and responsible evaluation of evidence. Involvement results from embracing meaningful insights relevant to significant values of the full experience of life, intellectually and spiritually, individually and collectively, temporally and eternally, and so much more. Each of the items in this issue instantiates various facets of this experience.

Austin Robinson and Curtis Hunter take you virtually into the operating room to experience the drama and the inspiration involved in the landmark heart surgery performed by Russell Nelson, then surgeon and now Apostle, in 1960. Filled with rigorous professional insights and anatomical detail, this impressive documentary account brings to life Nelson’s experience in a manner that is accessible to all.

Julie Smith uses narrative theology as a hermeneutical tool to harvest unexpected meaning from the Gospel of Mark about discipleship and atonement, subjects of central interest to Latter-day Saints. By exquisitely extracting understanding from three brief stories that follow the

crucifixion of Jesus, all people—Jew and Gentile, men and women—find themselves experientially drawn into a closer relationship with God.

The down-in-the-details article by Joshua Sears about the new Spanish LDS edition of the Bible helps readers appreciate the monumental importance of this international scriptural publication. Each page of this meticulous article helps English speakers comprehend this gigantic step forward advancing the unity of faith among the large Spanish-speaking population of the Church.

Shon Hopkin and Ray Huntington allow all to walk a few miles on the BYU campus in the shoes of the Muslim students at Brigham Young University. Aided by objective sociological surveying, these authors give readers reliable information about meaningful religious experiences of non-LDS students in an LDS academic setting.

Scott Hoyt's passion for marshalling detailed information about the Inca god Viracocha and his legendary visit in ancient Peru will be an eye-opener to many. His examination of early Spanish records with their archaeological and academic substantiations offers captivating information relevant in testing a potential relationship with the Book of Mormon's report that Jesus would show himself to many people besides those gathered at the temple in Bountiful (3 Ne. 17:4).

In addition to presenting two personal essays and a poem, this issue raises the curtain on what Callie Oppedisano's theatre essay calls "a milestone in Mormon drama." Celebrating a full season of five stage productions of plays by playwright and former BYU professor Eric Samuelsen, this expert assessment of these dramatizations of subjects of interest to Latter-day Saints makes readers into more than merely amused observers.

Insightful reviews of a batch of new publications will help keep readers up to date on subjects of interest to teachers, citizens, historians, and scriptorians. Stephen Webb's theologically engaging review of *Wrestling the Angel* applauds and pushes forward Terry Givens's presentation of foundational LDS concepts. James Allen's review of two more volumes in the *Joseph Smith Papers* introduces readers to important early Church historical documents that many people have never heard of before.

These are pages you can get involved with. They bring you research and insights into topics of deep interest to Latter-day Saints. Like most academic pursuits, these studies add new information to our reservoirs of knowledge, while at the same time raising fascinating riddles yet to puzzle over. And that too is typical of a true academic experience, in which new things are found, forgotten things are remembered, and familiar things take on added significance. So, enjoy the experience!