

From the Editor

John W. Welch



With the publication of this issue of *BYU Studies Quarterly*, I find myself looking back to the end of 1991, when Macmillan's *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* was released, exactly twenty-five years ago. That monumental publication, to which over 750 authors contributed articles on more than 1,200 subjects, is still maintained by BYU Studies and is available online at eom.byu.edu. While some of its articles are obviously out of date (such as the entries on the Church in Africa or Temples,



where the Church has seen dramatic growth in recent decades), much of the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* is still an excellent place to look for initial articles on the doctrine, scriptures, biographies, history, organization, and culture of the Church. In many ways, the breadth of coverage and precision of details in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* are echoed in the ongoing publication of articles in *BYU Studies Quarterly* that have steadily supplemented, updated, and added to the encyclopedia.

Continuing in that long-standing tradition, this issue is filled with an excellent variety of very interesting and useful information. We are privileged to have all of these outstanding items in this journal.

Pertinent to the modern worldwide Church, Khumbulani Mdletshe shares his personal history of conversion in South Africa and his call in 1985 to serve as a missionary in London, where he first learned about the 1978 revelation on the priesthood and its difficult history. Now a member of the Third Quorum of the Seventy serving in Africa, he tells

here his personal tale of growth through searching for answers and learning to trust in God and his prophets.

Making an important contribution to Church history, Richard Dilworth Rust introduces historians and readers everywhere to the journals of President George Q. Cannon now being released online. As one of the key developers of this massive database, Rust shares his enthusiasm for these journals and explains their importance as a resource filled with information about the Church in the late nineteenth century.

For readers interested in sports and statistics, Nelson Chung writes about the BYU football program and the “analytics revolution.” This article gives an overview of the growing field of sports analytics and then analyzes BYU football in that light, examining ideas about positions, recruiting, and how BYU has used this technology in recruiting players for three of the most important positions on any football team. It then tries to divine the new coaching staff’s likelihood of using these tools.

In the realm of theology and interfaith dialogue, Alonzo Gaskill writes in memory of the Christian scholar Stephen H. Webb, who died earlier this year. Published several times in recent issues of *BYU Studies Quarterly*, Stephen possessed, and generously shared, one of the most brilliantly articulate minds ever to engage with Mormon thought. For all, his loss is tragic.

For a new scriptural insight, David Larsen examines closely the semantic range of meanings behind the Hebrew word that is translated as “victory” in Isaiah 25:8, “He will swallow up death in victory.” Similar statements in the Book of Mormon appear to be dependent variations on this hopeful and eternal theme.

Returning to the age-old question of the problem of pain and suffering, Tyler Johnson’s essay searches in Mormon theology for answers. Johnson sees empathy as God’s answer to human suffering, pointing out that in many ways we are God’s hands in extending that empathy.

Philosophy professor Daniel Graham argues that Socrates, the paragon of intellectual inquisitiveness, was not only devoted to rationality but also to spirituality. As such, the famous Greek wise man shows that Athens and Jerusalem may not be as completely alien to each other as some have thought.

Reveling in wonderful English literature, three essays in this issue express meaningful lessons learned by an unsuspecting organist, by a sensitive observer of the aging process, and by a conscientious person striving to transmit religion through generations. And poets gather for

us beautiful images of those who “dangle cherries” for earrings and heron’s wings that “crescendo the air.”

As always, the book reviews in this issue strive to keep discerning readers current on recent publications. In this issue, they spotlight new studies about the Civil War in Utah, the surprising appearance of Semitic and Egyptian roots in Uto-Aztec languages, an unusual volume presenting Hopi phonetics in the Deseret Alphabet, the challenges of being Chicano while Mormon, the determined life of Amy Brown Lyman, a collection of writings by Mormon feminists, an elegant collection of early Mormon poems, the story of a pioneering missionary to Switzerland and Palestine, and interesting interconnections between the fourth Article of Faith and the temple.

Because this year also marks the completion of my twenty-fifth year as editor in chief of this amazingly rich and beautiful publication, let me take this opportunity to thank all of the editors, staff members, web designers, student interns, advisors, and supporters for their contributions to all that this quarterly accomplishes. Few academic journals even dream of trying to cover such a wide diversity of topics as does *BYU Studies Quarterly*. The vibrant diversity of types of materials brought out four times a year through this publication stretches us and epitomizes for readers everywhere the Latter-day Saint axiom that all truth can be drawn together and encompassed in one great whole.

As has been stated on the inside back cover of every issue of *BYU Studies* in the last twenty-five years, this periodical continues to explore scholarly perspectives on all kinds of Latter-day Saint topics. This publication remains committed to seeking truth “by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118) and recognizes that all knowledge without charity is nothing (1 Cor. 13:2).

Because *BYU Studies Quarterly* can print only what it receives, I also thank authors from all around the world who voluntarily submit their fruitful research on productive questions that have captivated their sustained interests and endless hours of careful research and writing.

Please enjoy every page in this issue of *BYU Studies Quarterly*, and by all means feel free to let us hear from you.