The Other Side of the Coin: A Source Review of Norman Geisler's Chapter

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Abstract   Review of "Scripture" (1998), by Norman L. Geisler.

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NORMAN GEISLER'S CHAPTER

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Character cannot be counterfeited, nor can it be put on
and cast off as if it were a garment to meet the whim of the
moment.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek[1]

Introduction

In 1997 InterVarsity Press of Downers Grove, Illinois, published a
book coauthored by moderate Baptist minister Craig L. Blomberg
and a Latter-day Saint professor of religion at Brigham Young
University, Stephen E. Robinson. It was titled *How Wide the Divide? A
Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation* and dealt with the evan-
gelical and Latter-day Saint views on four subjects: scripture, God
and deification, Christ and the Trinity, and salvation. The book does
not seem to be widely known in Latter-day Saint circles beyond the
scholarly tier and those interested in apologetics. In the evangelical
world, however, it has created considerably more interest, even debate.[2]
Apparently some evangelicals feel that Blomberg was too agreeable

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1. In Arthur F. Lenehan, ed., *Leadership . . . with a Human Touch* (1 August 1995): 24.
2. See, for example, the following Internet sites: www.pfo.org/stilwide.htm
www.gospelcom.net/apologia/mainpages/WhatsNews/ HowWide/
www.gospelcom.net/apologia/textown/ttWhatsNews/ttHowWide/ttARtalkHW.html

and accommodating and that he didn't take Robinson to the mat. So, to date, evangelicals have written two books in response to *How Wide the Divide?*—both from Harvest House Publishers in Eugene, Oregon.[3] The most recent response is a volume of essays with the rather confrontational title *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism*. It treats the same subjects as *How Wide the Divide?* and each chapter is written by a different author. The project was the idea of Phil Roberts and Norman Geisler, two of the contributing authors. Although there is no indication in the book, Norman Geisler claims responsibility as the general editor.[4]

The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism is a recent addition to the topmost layer of rubble of an ever-increasing anti-Mormon literary *tel*. This essay is a *source* review of the first chapter—dealing with the scriptural canon—written by Geisler.[5] According to the Web site of Southern Evangelical Seminary[6] in Charlotte, North Carolina, he is the dean of that institution, which is also the home of the Veritas Graduate School of Apologetics and Counter-cult Ministries. The Web site rather immodestly declares him to be an "internationally

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www.gospelcom.net/apologia/mainpages/WhatsNews/WN970527.html

www.gospelcom.net/ivpress/author/blombec.html

www.watchman.org/watchman.htm

www.california.com/~rpcman/HWTD.HTM

My thanks to Stan Barker for providing most of this list.

Recently *How Wide the Divide?* has received attention in this series with a review by young evangelical students Paul L. Owen and Carl A. Mosser. See their review with responses in *FARMS Review of Books* 11/2 (1999).

3. The first was James White, *Is the Mormon My Brother?* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1998), which deals specifically with the LDS concept of God and deification.

Harvest House has produced a stream of anti-Mormon publications in recent years. See, for example, Ed Decker and Dave Hunt, *The God Makers* (1984); John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Mormonism* (1992); John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Behind the Mask of Mormonism* (1992). Ed Decker, *Decker's Complete Handbook on Mormonism* (1995); and Ron Rhodes and Marian Bodine, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons* (1995).

4. Norman Geisler, e-mail to author, 29 January 1999.

5. The chapter under consideration here is forty pages long. It is nearly equally divided between a presentation of the evangelical and the Latter-day Saint views of scripture. Two of the forty pages are endnotes.

6. See ses.digiweb.com/ngeisler.htm (this site is apparently no longer available).

known speaker and debater. Considered one of the greatest living defenders of the Christian faith,"[7] he is fairly new to the ranks of those who publish criticisms of Mormonism, although his contribution to *Counterfeit Gospel* is not his first salvo against the church.[8] Geisler is well educated, holding four academic degrees,[9] and is considered a nestor with a substantial reputation as an evangelical scholar.

Given his reputation, it is with considerable regret that I make the following report. He has not made a significant nor even an important contribution to the discussion regarding the Mormon view of the canon. From whatever perspective one wants to view it, the piece does not nearly approach the level of *How Wide the Divide?* It is dogmatic and somewhat speculative in its presentation of the evangelical view[10]

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7. He also runs Impact Ministries, a "Christian Apologetic Book & Tape Ministry." And judging from the schedule of his speaking engagements, he is a popular lecturer.

8. In 1997 he coauthored, with longtime anti-Mormon Ron Rhodes, an encyclopedia of responses to cults. See Norman L. Geisler and Ron Rhodes, *When Cultists Ask* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1997). The greatest number of entries in that volume were directed against the LDS Church. By count of items under the bold subheadings in the "Religious Groups Index" in the back, the five most frequently referred to religious movements include twenty-three entries on the Word of Faith Movement, twenty-five on New Age, thirty-eight on Roman Catholicism, forty-five on Jehovah's Witnesses, and forty-seven on Mormonism. Since Mr. Rhodes is a longtime anti-Mormon, one wonders if Geisler was recruited to their ranks by him.

Geisler wrote relative to his chapter in *Counterfeit Gospel* that until its publication he "had only spoken on the topic (not written)." Geisler to Bachman, 29 January 1999.

9. Geisler has two bachelor's degrees, one each from Wheaton College and William Tyndale College. He earned an M.A. at Wheaton Graduate School and a Ph.D. from Loyola University. His publications include at least ten articles and fifty-five books. Most of these show no special interest in Mormonism. He is also the editor of the new *Christian Apologetic Journal,* first published in the spring of 1998.

10. I have in mind here his section on "The Confirmation of Scripture"; there he argues that, "Unlike other holy books, including the Qur'an or the Book of Mormon, the Bible alone has been supernaturally confirmed to be the Word of God. For only the Scriptures were written by prophets who were supernaturally confirmed by signs and wonders" (p. 23). A similar section in the LDS portion of the chapter reads, "Unlike the Gospels, the witnesses to the claims of the Book of Mormon were not supported by supernatural events, as were Jesus and the apostles. That is, neither Joseph Smith nor his witnesses were confirmed by a multitude of miracles including healing the blind, lame, and deaf, and even raising the dead" (p. 33).

Well, what does one say about that? One can only point out this is a new criterion by which to establish the canonicity of a document, one invented by Geisler specifically,

and superficial in analyzing the LDS position. It is cavalier, poorly written, and replete with errors.[11]

But there is more. It is an interesting twist of irony that Geisler challenges the probity of Joseph Smith by accusing him of plagiarism (p. 38),[12] because it becomes my unpleasant duty to inform the reader that the majority of Geisler's material dealing with the LDS view of scripture (approximately twenty pages) is not derived from his original research. The organization and format are his, but most of the quotations and many of the ideas come from a book written by Jerald and Sandra Tanner: *The Changing World of Mormonism*, published in 1981 by Moody Press in Chicago. *Changing World* is, according to the back cover, "a complete revision, update, and condensation of the Tanners' earlier definitive work,"[13] *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* It is indeed distasteful to point out that this cleric, academician, and educator has not done his homework or his writing properly.[14]

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though erroneously, to exclude Latter-day Saint scriptures. This criterion is not mentioned in standard treatments of the subject, and I think many of Geisler's fellow evangelicals may have a difficult time swallowing it. Interestingly, it is not even incorporated in the list of criteria he includes in his own book on the subject. See Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *From God to Us: How We Got Our Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1974), 53–61, 151–58. For a contemporary conservative view of the "criteria of canonicity," see Roger Nicole, "The Canon of the New Testament," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40/2 (1997): 200–227, electronic edition by Galaxie Software, 1998.

11. See the review by Alma Allred in this issue, pages 137–74.

12. Seasoned historian and educator Davis Bitton articulated the commonly understood academic definition of plagiarism as "using another's work without acknowledgment and presenting it as your own." Senator Joseph Biden and Martin Luther King Jr. were guilty of such misconduct, Bitton reminds us, "But is that what is going on when the Book of Mormon quotes biblical passages? Was Joseph Smith indeed trying to claim that he, not Jesus, was the author of the Beatitudes? Was he trying to pretend that the beautiful prose of the Authorized Version was for the first time being produced by him? How foolish, then, to draw his quotations from the single work most familiar to the public in his lifetime! What intelligent reader of the Bible would fail to notice?" Davis Bitton, review of *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994): 3.

13. Moody Press no longer publishes *Changing World*; however, the Tanners purchased the remaining stock, and I was able to purchase a copy in the summer of 1998. But as of the fall of 1999 Sandra told me there are no more copies available. The main weapon in the Tanner arsenal continues to be *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

14. It should also be mentioned that the chapter does not rise to the same level as the

In tapping primarily one book, not only for quotations and reference citations, but also for ideas, facts, logic, and even phrasing, Geisler has not served as an archaeologist who leads his evangelical or LDS students to a newly discovered library of ancient documents, an inscribed amulet, or even a fine ostracon. Rather, the portion of his chapter relating to the LDS view of scripture is little more than a fragment of Tannerian conglomerate excavated from the 1981 stratum of anti-Mormon literature.[15] It is, in fact, one of the most blatant examples of unacknowledged appropriation and use of the work of others in modern anti-Mormon writing and constitutes a stain on Geisler's heretofore highly praised career.[16]

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work of his mentors, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, at least in respect to accuracy in reproducing quotations. This review will have occasion to draw attention to only a few of the most egregious errors that riddle this chapter.

15. LDS apologists generally believe that it is a common practice of anti-Mormon writers to borrow frequently from each other without attribution. It is also believed that *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* is the most popular and copied book among them. It would not be inaccurate to describe it as "The Anti-Mormon Documentary History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." However, little actual data has been published to substantiate these perceptions. In a recent exception, Daniel Peterson shows how Ron Rhodes and Marian Bodine, in their *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1995), copy the arguments and language of Marvin W. Cowan, *Mormon Claims Answered* (Salt Lake City: Cowan, 1975). See Daniel C. Peterson, "Constancy amid Change," review of *Behind the Mask of Mormonism*, by John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *FARMS Review of Books* 8/2 (1996): 81–84. For another example from the same book, see Daniel C. Peterson, "Editor's Introduction, Triptych (Inspired by Hieronymus Bosch)," *FARMS Review of Books* 8/1 (1996): ix–x.

Jerald and Sandra Tanner have written about the ethics of some of their fellow anti-Mormons: "While we are sorry to have to say this, it seems there are some who will accept any wild story or theory if it puts the Mormons in a bad light. They reason that since they already know that Mormonism is false, it is all right to use anything that has an adverse effect on the system. The question of whether an accusation is true or false appears to be only a secondary consideration." Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Serious Charges against the Tanners: Are the Tanners Demonized Agents of the Mormon Church?* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1991), 47.

16. Interestingly, the Evangelical Ministry to New Religions (EMNR) has a statement on plagiarism to which its members subscribe. According to listings on their Web site neither Norman Geisler nor a number of professional critics of Mormonism are members of EMNR. The statement, pointed out to me by Barry Bickmore, reads:

"PLAGIARISM. EMNR members must always give proper source credit to works published under their name. For our purposes, plagiarism shall be defined as:

I am not unaware of or insensitive to the difficulties of advancing such a position. Recently the evangelical scholar C. E. Hill noticed similar wording between Geoffrey Mark Hahneman's 1992 study of the Muratorian Fragment and Harry Y. Gamble's 1985 book on the New Testament canon. "Curiosity compounds," he writes, "when one sees that at least thirteen full sentences and parts of many others from . . . Gamble's book also appear verbatim or nearly so in chap. 3 of Hahneman's book, without attribution."[17] After citing two of Gamble's sentences that were reproduced nearly word for word in Hahneman, Hill considers some questions relating to the "tricky business" of determining cases of possible unattributed dependency.

Does this show that Hahneman borrowed from Gamble? To conclude so might be rash; after all, "no explicit appeals are made." And, even though Gamble's book appeared first and is listed in Hahneman's bibliography, it is just possible

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The act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind. To be liable for plagiarism it is not necessary to exactly duplicate another's literary work, it being sufficient if unfair use of such work is made by lifting a substantial portion thereof . . . (Black's Law Dictionary, 5th ed.)

We recognize that plagiarism can be committed unintentionally, such as when the original source for a stream of ideas and concepts has been forgotten and the source text is not physically before the writer as it is worked into the new document. Quoting clichés, catchphrases, or data of common knowledge (which can be found in three or more reference sources) is not cause for action. However, plagiarism of substantial portions of another writer's material is grounds for disciplinary action within EMNR. Sustained or repeated instances of plagiarism in a member's career, followed by no acknowledgment of regret or remorse, may result in Expulsion or Temporary Suspension of Membership." (See *Manual of Ethical and Doctrinal Standards, Evangelical Ministry to New Religions* at emnr.org/EMNRMEDS.htm)

17. C. E. Hill, "The Debate over the Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon," *Westminster Theological Journal* 57/2 (1995): 443, electronic edition by Galaxie Software, 1998. This is a review article of Geoffrey M. Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992). See Harry Y.

that it was Gamble who borrowed from Hahneman. Perhaps the material originated in a lecture or seminar given years earlier by Hahneman in which Gamble may have been in attendance. Alternatively, as Hahneman says of Polycarp and the Pastorals, verbal agreements in our modern authors may "suggest no more than that they both stand in the same ecclesiastical and cultural tradition." Hahneman and Gamble then may be heirs of oral, history-of-the-canon tradition, in this case a tradition which must have come complete with suggestions for footnotes. Or, are they both indebted to a common written source, now lost . . . which circulated through both authors' respective scholar-communities in the early 1980s? Perhaps less likely, but a viable critical possibility nonetheless, is that Gamble and Hahneman are in reality the same person (cf. the theory that Polycarp wrote the Pastorals). So, here, just as in the case of apparent use of NT writings in the Apostolic Fathers and others, actual dependence must not be hastily claimed until all the probabilities are carefully weighed.[18]

Hill's analysis, however, concludes, "But when they are, actual dependence, in both our ancient and modern instances, is still perhaps the best conclusion."[19] Because the evidence of Norman Geisler's borrowing from the Tanner volume is so extensive, I must agree with Hill. When all the probabilities are carefully weighed, actual dependence is "still perhaps the best conclusion" and needs to be detailed. Let me stress that the following remarks are directed primarily to the second half of the essay under review, that portion which deals with the LDS view of the canon.

Gamble, *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).

   18. Hill, "The Muratorian Fragment," 443–44.

   19. Ibid., 444.

The Evidence for Geisler's Dependency
on Jerald and Sandra Tanner

Most of the data substantiating the lack of independent research of which I speak can be seen in the extensive supplement to this review: "Comparison of Quotations Related to the LDS Position Cited in Norman Geisler's *Counterfeit Gospel* and Jerald and Sandra Tanner's *Changing World*."[20] It contains all the quotations Geisler uses in the portion of his chapter relating to Mormonism in parallel with the corresponding citations in the Tanners' *Changing World*. The most important illustrations of the close affinity of the two works are detailed in the discussion below. The details are massive, consistent, and indicting. They include but are not limited to (1) the total number of references cited, (2) the number and publication dates of LDS-related sources used, (3) similar constellations of quotations in both volumes, (4) similar language used in introducing quotations, (5) similarity of inconsistent Book of Mormon citations, (6) Geisler's use of *Changing World* to improve endnote references, (7) similar use of unique reference citations, (8) extent of the quotations used, (9) mistakes made by Geisler, and (10) his adoption of the ideas and logic of the Tanners.

The Total Number of References Cited

In the section of his chapter dealing with the LDS view of scripture, Geisler provides ninety-nine sources. Thirty-three of fifty-one endnotes pertain to this section (endnotes 19–51); the rest of the references appear within the text. Of Geisler's ninety-nine sources, eighty-six were also found in *Changing World*. Thirteen do not appear to have similar parallels in that source. Of those thirteen, five are scriptural references,[21] two cite the volume being rebutted, *How Wide*

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20. To order, request Danel W. Bachman, "Comparison of Quotations Related to the LDS Position Cited in Norman Geisler's *Counterfeit Gospel* and Jerald and Sandra Tanner's *Changing World*," from FARMS, P.O. Box 7113, University Station, Provo, UT 84602.

21. One assumes, given his background, that Geisler is familiar with the scriptures.

the Divide? and one is a quotation from one of Geisler's own books. So eight of thirteen items not found in *Changing World* are not necessarily relevant to the question of homogeneity. When these items are subtracted from the total of ninety-nine, the percentage of relevant quotations possibly acquired from the Tanners rises to as high as 94. These statistics are particularly troubling because only eight of thirty-three of the endnotes and none of the in-text references relating to the LDS section of the chapter tell the reader the author is using the Tanners' *Changing World* as his source.[22] To be fair, it should be noted that endnote 33 covers five quotations in the text. Thus about 14 percent of the eighty-six items used, which are also found in the Tanner volume, are actually attributed to the Tanners by Geisler. Also, five quotations have no references in either the text or an endnote, but all five are in the Tanner volume with references.[23] Demonstrating that Geisler expropriated a great deal from *Changing World* without giving proper credit demands more than just numbers, as suggestive as they might be. Therefore, we turn to specifics.

The passages are Malachi 3:6; Psalm 90:1; Isaiah 43:10; Jacob 2:26–29; 3:3–11; and Matthew 24:24. After searching for Geisler's sources visually in *Changing World,* I discovered that the Tanners have put a facsimile copy of it on their Web site. I searched that text electronically and discovered that of the above list only Malachi 3:6 is cited by the Tanners and can be found on page 187.

   22. Endnotes 25, 31, 33, 34, 36; 37, 43, and 47. For comparative purposes, we have an equally thick anti-Mormon screed from the same publisher that also relies heavily on *Changing World.* John Ankerberg and John Weldon published a booklet of about forty pages called *The Facts on the Mormon Church: A Handy Guide to Understanding the Claims of Mormonism* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1991). It has 202 endnotes, many of which cite *Changing World,* something found therein, or other works by the Tanners. Although the booklet is at about the same level as Geisler as far as content and persuasiveness of argument is concerned, it contrasts with his chapter in one important respect—Ankerberg and Weldon have gone to greater pains to give the Tanners appropriate credit for their work. See notes 4, 28–30, 32, 34, 41, 69–70, 81, 84, 103, 105, 111–18, 120, 127, 132, 135, 139, 141–42, 144, 153, 156–57, 169, 171–72, and 175–77. However, the questions raised in note 15 above are consistent with repeated suspicions that surfaced while I read the booklet and checked footnotes: here too there may also be times when Ankerberg and Weldon relied on the Tanners without giving them credit. Verification of this must await further investigation.

   23. See items 3, 10, 30, 31, and 60 in the supplement. This is the first of many manifestations of haste and unprofessional work on the part of Geisler and his publishers.

The Number and Publication Dates of LDS-Related References Cited

One important way to examine the nature of Geisler's research is to look at the LDS-related materials cited and the dates of their publication. All but four of the sources used, excluding some scripture references, appear in and could have been extracted from *The Changing World of Mormonism.* In addition to that work, the four LDS-related sources not found in *Changing World* are (1) Robinson and Blomberg's *How Wide the Divide?*; (2) a standard LDS Sunday School manual, *Gospel Principles* (1988); (3) Keith Marston's dated reference work, *Missionary Pal* (1976); and (4) Michael Marquardt's *The Use of the Bible in the Book of Mormon* (1979). Since *How Wide the Divide?* is the subject of the essays in *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism,* it is not relevant to the discussion of dependency. The rest—*Missionary Pal, Gospel Principles,* and *The Use of the Bible in the Book of Mormon*[24]—are cited only four times in the text; only *Gospel Principles* postdates the 1981 publication date of *Changing World of Mormonism.*[25] All the remaining sources relating to Mormonism cited in the text and endnotes predate the publication of *Changing World* and were available to the author in that publication. That means he could have, and the facts strongly suggest he did, produced the LDS section of his chapter by consulting as few as half a dozen sources relating to Mormonism. It is consistent with the remainder of the findings of this study that the vast majority of the quotations used to build the LDS portion of his chapter were quarried from *Changing World.* The use of this book as his primary source also explains why the preponderance of LDS materials used is nearly twenty years old; the most recent is more than a decade old. Furthermore, Geisler is also not keeping up with Tanner productions relating to Mormonism, because even *Changing World* is not the latest version of this work; *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* is now in its fifth edition (published in 1987). And, strange as it may be in an essay deal-

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24. This is a reprint of an article originally published in the *Journal of Pastoral Practice* in 1978.

25. I searched *Changing World* electronically for the two pre-1981 sources discussed in the text and *no* matches for either were found.

ing with the LDS canon, he does not refer to, indeed seems unaware of, the most recent editions of the LDS scriptures.

Similar Constellations of Quotations in Both Volumes

Another avenue by which to assess dependency is to explore significant relationships between the groupings of quotations found in each text. Well over half (fifty-seven of ninety-nine) of the quotations in our author's treatment of Mormonism fall into groupings that are identifiable in the Tanner volume. For example, fifteen are found on pages 102–16 of *Changing World* in a section on the Book of Mormon. Four more, dealing with changes in the Book of Mormon, are on pages 128–29; two about the plurality of gods are on page 175; six dealing with deification, a mother in heaven, and the virgin birth are on pages 177–80; and four on page 187 are about the changeable nature of God. Significantly, twenty-six of Geisler's citations are found in the Tanner chapter titled "Mormon Scriptures and the Bible," the most relevant to his subject.[26] Of these, five are found on pages 366–67, three on page 379, nine on pages 382–86, seven on pages 388–93, and two on page 396.[27]

Not only are at least half of the quotations used by Geisler found in groupings similar to those in *Changing World*, but reliance on that volume is also illustrated by the numerous quotations in the chapter that appear in the same order they do in *Changing World*. For example, five items in my supplement (17–21) match the order on page 386 in *Changing World*. A minor exception is that the Tanners include a second quotation from Jenson's *Church Chronology* between supplement items 18 and 19 that Geisler does not use. Similarly, items 34–38 in the supplement show up in the same order in both books. Of the fifteen citations on pages 35–38, also on pages 102–16 in chapter 5 of *Changing World*, all but three (items 41, 42, and 44 in the supplement) duplicate the sequence in *Changing World*. Items 50–56 in the supplement are in chapter 14 of *Changing World*, titled

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26. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World*, 364–97.

27. See the supplement for verification of these statistics.

"False Prophecy." There the Tanners give four alleged false prophecies of Joseph Smith—the same four Norman Geisler discusses in *Counterfeit Gospel* and in the same sequence. All seven of Geisler's quotations on the subject mirror those in *Changing World*. Items 74–77 of the supplement are all found on page 187 of *Changing World* and item 77 is the only one out of order. This high correlation, both of dates of the works cited and of the groupings of quotations, demonstrates an unusually strong affinity between the two volumes.

Similar Language Used in Introducing Quotations

That Geisler benefited from *Changing World* without appropriate acknowledgment may also be seen in the similarity of the introductions to a number of the citations in each book. About 25 percent of the time he adopts language or phrasing similar to that used by the Tanners to introduce their quotations.[28] In several cases the wording is exact, or nearly so.[29] The similarities here are compelling when viewed side by side. Four on the list of twenty-five come from quotations acknowledged in endnotes as being taken from the Tanners. Of those, items 34 and 61 are included in the table below for comparative purposes because we know in these instances they have a direct relationship to *Changing World*. Though modified, one can clearly see the Tanners' language reflected in Geisler's introductions of these two items. When these examples are compared with the rest of the items in the table, the similarity is evident, especially in the use of key words and phrases found in *Changing World*. Thus the perception of dependency on that volume grows. The table on the following pages contains a sample of the twenty-five introductions with significant similarities. The item number in the supplement is at the left.

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28. See supplement items 4, 6, 17, 19, 34–35, 37, 43, 45, 50, 53–55, 58, 61, 65, 68, 70, 72–73, 75–76, 82, and 85–86.

29. See supplement items 6, 50, 68, 75, and 76.

#	Geisler's *Counterfeit Gospel*	Tanners' *Changing World*
6	In 1832 the Mormon publication *The Evening and the Morning Star* said the changes in the Bible were made "by the Mother of Harlots."	In 1832 the Mormon publication *The Evening and Morning Star* said that the changes in the Bible were made "by the Mother of Harlots."
17	In the *History of the Church* we find this statement by Joseph Smith under the date of February 2, 1833:	In the *History of the Church,* under the date of February 2, 1833, we find this statement by Joseph Smith:
19	And in a letter of July 2, 1833, signed by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and F. G. Williams, this statement is found:	In a letter dated July 2, 1833, signed by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and F. G. Williams, the following statement is found:
34	In short, David Whitmer was not a man of strong character or credibility. Rather, he was gullible, being influenced by Hiram Page's "peep-stone" and possibly by a woman with a "black stone in Kirtland, Ohio."	David Whitmer was also very gullible. He was influenced by Hiram Page's "peep-stone" and possibly by a woman with a "black stone," in Kirtland, Ohio.
43	In his *History of the Church,* Joseph Smith admits that Martin Harris was not with the other two when they saw the angel. Smith had them pray continually in an effort of obtaining a vision for Harris.	In his *History of the Church* Joseph Smith admits that Martin Harris was not with Whitmer and Cowdery when he saw the plates. Joseph had the three witnesses pray continually in an effort to obtain a view of the plates, but to no avail.
55	In 1835 Joseph Smith prophesied that Christ would return in 56 years. In *History of the*	In 1835 Joseph Smith prophesied that the coming of the Lord was near and that fifty-six years

Church (HC 2:182) we read that

should wind up the scene. In the *History of the Church*, volume 2, page 182, we read as follows:

61 Oliver B. Huntington recorded in his journal that Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, claimed

Oliver B. Huntington recorded in his journal that in 1881 Joseph F. Smith, who later became the sixth president of the Mormon church, taught

68 Milton Hunter, who served in the First Council of the Seventy, affirmed that

Milton R. Hunter, who served in the First Council of the Seventy, affirmed the same teaching;

75 Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, said,

Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth president of the church, said that

82 Even the first (1835) edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* emphatically denounced polygamy:

In the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, printed in 1835, there was a section which absolutely denounced the practice of polygamy.

86 Even the signed statement by the eight eyewitnesses has been altered. In the 1830 edition it read,

It is interesting to note that even the signed statement by the eight witnesses to the *Book of Mormon* has been altered. In the 1830 edition the last page read:

Similarity of Inconsistent Book of Mormon Citations

A unique but highly important parallel illustrating the use of Tanner materials may be seen in the inconsistent form of Book of Mormon references used in both volumes. A variable method of citing scripture is itself unusual inasmuch as scholars and editors generally insist on a standard form of scriptural notation in publications. What is telling here is that in each instance Geisler employs essentially the same format for each Book of Mormon reference that the Tanners use. Twice he quotes 1 Nephi 13:28 (items 5 and 9 in the supplement). The reference in the second one is "BM, 1 Ne 13:28," which is very close to the Tanners' notation: "*Book of Mormon,* 1 Ne 13:23–28."

The parallels in item 77 of the supplement are more explicit. Here Geisler quotes Moroni 8:18, but his reference is "BM 517:18." He does not explain that this means page 517 verse 18, nor are we told the edition in which this may be found. Examination of the same quotation used to make the same point in *Changing World* explains the anomaly: There the reference is "*Book of Mormon,* page 517, verse 18."[30] Notably, the Tanners also omit the book, chapter, and edition in their notation. It is difficult to explain why Geisler, who has studied and written about the canon, would refer to a text without noting the edition, inasmuch as such information is so vital to textual criticism.[31]

In a third example, Geisler argues that the 1830 rendition of Mosiah 21:28 was changed in later versions. He illustrates this by quoting a 1964 edition (p. 44). Why he singles out the 1964 Book of Mormon in a 1998 essay to make a point about changes in scripture is puzzling because the most recent major edition was published in 1981. If Geisler knew this and was writing to an LDS audience, why refer to a 1964 edition, which almost no present-day Mormon would

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30. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 187.

31. Two additional examples where only page numbers are used, in one instance citing two different editions of the Book of Mormon, one of which is not identified, may be found in items 87 and 88 of the supplement.

own, let alone use? The question is answered in *Changing World,* which makes the same point using the same passage from the same 1964 edition. The Tanners give the reference in their text as "*Book of Mormon,* 1964 ed., p. 176, v. 28."[32]

In our final example (see item 84 in the supplement), Geisler writes: "Another change involving king Benjamin once read (in 1830) '... for this cause did king *Benjamin* keep them ...' (page 546). Today it reads 'for this cause did king *Mosiah* keep them ...' (page 485)." Here we have another departure from the standard method of citing scripture references by substituting page numbers for chapter and verse, just as Jerald and Sandra Tanner do in *Changing World.* The use of the word *today* in this paragraph is also curious. Although the passage does read this way in the 1981 edition of Ether 4:1, that verse is now on page 494 of the current LDS edition rather than 485. Geisler, apparently unaware of the 1981 edition, again follows the Tanners' use of the 1964 version and makes the erroneous assumption that it is the one being used "today"—the mistake reveals the source of his information. The close resemblance of unique Book of Mormon references in both texts suggests that Geisler did not consult the originals but adopted whatever Book of Mormon citation format the Tanners were using. Outside the certainty of Geisler's use of *Changing World* in these examples, it is inexplicable why a reputed expert on the canon, who presumes to discuss Mormon scriptures, fails to use the latest revision of the Book of Mormon to make his arguments, especially when that edition is now nineteen years old!

Geisler's Use of *Changing World* to Improve Endnote References

The careful student may point out something that seemingly contradicts the thesis of this essay. On pages 27–28 of *Counterfeit Gospel,* our author quotes a pamphlet written by Orson Pratt. In endnote 22 the reference is "Orson Pratt, *Orson Pratt's Works* (Liverpool, 1851), pp. 46–47" (p. 49). Yet in *Changing World* one notices that the Tanners do not give the publication data "Liverpool, 1851" in

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32. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 129.

the text (item 11 in the supplement). So, one might ask, if Geisler didn't examine the original how might he have known this information? Isn't it exculpatory evidence? In fact it is not, because the information was available to him in *Changing World's* bibliography. On page 569 we find the following entry: "Pratt, Orson. *Orson Pratt's Works*. Liverpool, 1851." So to complete his endnote properly, Geisler needed only to check the bibliography of *Changing World*. Can we be certain that this is what happened? Not completely perhaps, but there are additional telltale signs. His endnote indicates that the quotation came from pages 46–47 of Pratt's *Works*, but the Tanner quotation comes from pages 44–47. Again, one might wonder if this doesn't further contradict the thesis. However, when his quotation is checked carefully against both the Tanner version and Pratt's original, the apparent reason for the discrepancy emerges. Actually, Geisler's portion of the quotation comes from page 47 of the 1851 edition of Pratt's pamphlet. So, was he simply careless in writing his endnote? Maybe. Many clues elsewhere suggest that the preparation of this chapter was very hasty and slipshod. Nevertheless, I propose a different scenario. If the reader studies item 11 of the supplement, he will discover that the reverend begins his citation well after that in the Tanner version. In other words, he left out a considerable portion at the beginning of what the Tanners reproduce; there are three sets of ellipses in that unquoted portion. The Tanners use three more sets of ellipses in the remainder of the quotation that Geisler cites. It appears then, if he consulted only *Changing World*, he would be forced to guess on which page the passage actually appeared. Perhaps he suspected the first ellipses eliminated a couple of pages and since the quotation from that point on is more than half of the entire text, he assumed the portion he was drawing from came from the last two pages. He guessed wrong, but who was going to check his sources?

Other characteristic items strengthen the hypothesis that Geisler didn't examine the original 1851 edition of Pratt's pamphlet. Both he and the Tanners refer to the article from which the excerpt is extracted as "The Bible Alone An Insufficient Guide." However, the precise title is considerably different. Actually, it is a chapter designation of a larger work called *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*.

The full title of this chapter is "The Bible and Tradition, Without Further Revelation, An Insufficient Guide."[33] One can understand why the Tanners abbreviate the rather long title, thereby withholding the important caveat "and tradition, without further revelation" from their readers. But it is fair to inquire how Geisler came up with the identical abbreviation, error included (the word *alone* is not in the original), that the Tanners use. The data presented above suggest that he did not examine the original Pratt pamphlet but seized what he found in *Changing World,* in the process making two critical errors.[34] Moreover, using *Changing World* to improve source references is not a onetime occurrence in Geisler's chapter but is part of a pattern. Three more instances are considered below.

One with equally powerful support appears in the reference in endnote 23 (item 13 in the supplement). Here Geisler cites his source as, "John A. Widtsoe, *Joseph Smith—Seeker after Truth* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1951), p. 251." Four things indicate that the Tanners were the source of this reference rather than the original. First, both give the same incomplete title; it is actually *Joseph Smith: Seeker after Truth, Prophet of God.*[35] How did that come about if Geisler used the original source? Second, while the Tanners do not provide the publication data for the reference in the text of *Changing World,* it is in the bibliography as "Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1951,"[36] precisely the same as in *Counterfeit Gospel.* But, and this is the third point, it is common in citing publishers with the name *Deseret* in them to include the whole name to distinguish among publishers. This is because the

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33. Orson Pratt, *A Series of Pamphlets by Orson Pratt,* series 2, (Liverpool: James, 1851), 3:33–48. See supplement item 11. One will note that the Tanners cite this as *Orson Pratt's Works.* The confusion of titles is explained by bibliographer Chad Flake, who writes: "Originally published as separate pamphlets. A title page, table of contents, and a portrait of Orson Pratt were published, and the work bound in an official press binding of 3/4 embossed leather, stamped O. Pratts Works, &c." Chad Flake, ed., *A Mormon Bibliography 1830–1930* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978), 519.

34. Actually he made two other errors that are not germane to the point of the discussion. See details under the heading "Extent of the Quotations Used," 196–99 below.

35. John A. Widtsoe, *Joseph Smith: Seeker after Truth, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1951).

36. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 573.

word *Deseret* was part of several different publishers' names over the years. For whatever reason, the Tanners left the full publisher's name out of the bibliography. Why wouldn't Geisler cite it correctly as *Deseret News Press?* The answer seems to be that he did not consult the original and simply assumed that when the Tanners gave the publisher as "Deseret" it was the complete name. Finally, he capitalizes the word *He* after the first set of ellipses, while the Tanners correctly leave it in lowercase. While this may be dismissed as a typo or poor editing, when seen in context of the pattern here developed, it would suggest that Geisler did not consult the original and may have again simply guessed that the first word after the ellipses should be capitalized.

Another case of sprucing up the endnotes without consulting the original is found in item 96 in the supplement.[37] Here Geisler cites Lucy Smith's 1853 history of her son and adds that the work was reprinted by Preston Nibley in 1954. Again, the latter fact is not in the Tanner text but is in their bibliography. It is puzzling, without knowledge of the thesis of this article, why he would note that the work was reprinted in 1954. Not only is that very old news, but there have been other editions of Lucy Smith's work since then. The reasonable explanation seems to be that he relied overmuch on information provided by the Tanners and is not current in Mormon studies himself.[38]

Finally, the reference in item 45 in the supplement also requires combining the Tanners' in-text reference with additional data in the bibliography to be complete as he presents it. Note that neither source gives the page number of the reference or the date of the publication. Thus on several occasions Geisler apparently consulted both the text and the bibliography of *Changing World* in order to put his endnote references in something simulating proper academic format while at the same time camouflaging the true origin of the information—a secondary source.

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37. For yet another example of the same genre, see item 45 in the supplement.
38. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 571.

Similar Use of Unique Reference Citations

An intriguing demonstration of Geisler's requisitions from *Changing World* is found in the use both he and the Tanners make of Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine*. Well-informed Latter-day Saints know that there were two editions of this work, the original published in 1958 and a second revised and enlarged edition released in 1966; the Tanners point this out in their bibliography.[39] Norman Geisler quotes *Mormon Doctrine* four times (items 12, 67, 71, and 99 in the supplement) in his chapter, but only one (item 12) is taken from the 1958 edition; the other three are from 1966. All four are also found in *Changing World*, and Geisler quotes only the portions found in *Changing World*. What is especially interesting here is that the material cited from the 1958 edition is unchanged in 1966, making reference to the former unnecessary. If Geisler were researching the original sources, he would not have needed to hunt for one of the rare first editions to cull from it a nonunique quotation. The Tanners have done such a cut-and-paste job from numerous sources on *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* over the years that it is understandable that they may have missed updating the *Mormon Doctrine* citations as *Shadow* went through successive editions. But how does one explain the identical problem found in Norman Geisler's chapter eighteen years later? One must believe either that it was a miraculous coincidence or that he has simply copied the Tanners without checking the original sources.[40]

A similar problem is found in endnote 35 where the source is given for a passage from a book review by Marvin Hill in the journal *Dialogue*. The standard method of citing a journal is to give the article title in quotation marks and the journal name in italics. Interestingly,

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39. Ibid., 568.

40. My thanks to Barry Bickmore, who suggested I check further into this matter. The item exposes the amateurish work of both *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* and Norman Geisler's chapter in *Counterfeit Gospel*—for completely different reasons, however. In checking *Mormon Doctrine*, I also discovered that the Tanners' ellipsis points separating the two portions of the quotation leap over almost two and one-half columns of text. To verify my assertions here and in the text, compare pages 351–52 in the 1958 edition of *Mormon Doctrine* and 383–84 in the 1966 edition.

both Geisler and the Tanners cite only the journal name and omit the article title.[41] But, you might ask, why didn't Geisler consult the bibliography to enhance the reference as he did with others? Because the complete reference is not in the Tanners' bibliography either. Thus he could not have known the title of the Hill article without consulting the original. The conclusion that he merely copied *Changing World* is supported as Geisler later quotes the same Hill article for a different purpose. Not only is the same reference given (endnote 49), but the excerpts in both books are exactly the same. The likelihood that Norman Geisler independently quoted twice from a rather old and, for non-Mormons, a somewhat obscure journal article, with the quotations identical to those found in *Changing World,* and then gave precisely the same incomplete reference documentation as well, seems extremely remote.

A final instance of using similar but unique references might also fall under the category "Mistakes Made by Norman Geisler" discussed below. Geisler cites, or rather cites incorrectly, the writings of David and John Whitmer. He quotes David Whitmer's *Address to All Believers in Christ* three times and John Whitmer's *History* once. All four texts are also in *Changing World* (see items 33, 45, 52, and 54 in the supplement). Two—items 45 and 54—have introductions that slightly resemble those in *Changing World.* Most important, however, are the very significant problems with the references for these quotations that raise serious doubt about whether the originals were ever consulted. Geisler's confusion about the writings of the Whitmer brothers surfaces in his first reference to David Whitmer's *Address to All Believers in Christ;* he puts the title in quotations as if it were a speech or a thesis rather than in italics as a book should be. The Tanners cite it correctly (see item 33 in the supplement). Significantly, the confusion continues as he cites the writings of David and John Whitmer, twice attributing quotations from David to a publication written by John (see items 52 and 54 in the supplement).[42]

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41. Marvin S. Hill, "Brodie Revisited: A Reappraisal," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 7/4 (1972): 72–85. There is one indication in the endnotes (number 9) that our author understands this convention.

42. On another occasion he confuses Orson Pratt with Orson Hyde. See item 74 in the supplement.

What possibilities explain these errors? First we might charitably suggest that Geisler was more than careless in keeping track of the sources from which he drew his quotations, thereby mixing up both David and John Whitmer *and* their writings. Or, consistent with the patterns revealed in this study, he never consulted the originals and knows little or nothing about either the Whitmers or their writings, but hastily and inaccurately copied their statements from his primary source—*The Changing World of Mormonism*. Why is careless use of the Tanners' book the more reasonable explanation of the two since they both involve shoddy work? The likelihood of confusing the Whitmers and their writings is greater if Geisler relied on a secondary source than if he actually looked up and read the primary source.

Extent of the Quotations Used

The most obvious and incriminating indication that *Changing World* was mined almost exclusively as a source for the quotations used in Geisler's section on the LDS view of the canon may be seen in the extent to which individual quotations are copied from the Tanners. It is an astounding but true fact that where the materials cited are in *Changing World* (and remember this is eighty-six of ninety-nine quotations), Geisler never provides more material from the original source than is available to him in the Tanner volume. In other words, he never begins a quotation before the Tanners do, and when they leave something out of a quotation or end one at a particular point, the reverend follows suit. The use of ellipses is particularly interesting because a glance at the supplement will demonstrate that the Tanners use them extensively. Sometimes our author leaves out more than the Tanners, but he always leaves out what they do and never quotes more text than they do.[43] Certainly this knowledge further establishes the point that Geisler lifted his quotations directly from *Changing World* without bothering to check the originals. All of these phenomena may be observed in the example comparison provided below from item 11 in the supplement.

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43. The reader simply has to study the supplement thoroughly to verify this statement.

Geisler's Quotation

Since Mormons believe that the Bible as we have it is an unreliable guide, they claim this reveals the need for new revelation, such as the Book of Mormon. In a pamphlet titled "The Bible Alone An Insufficient Guide," Apostle Orson Pratt wrote:

"We all know that but a few of the inspired writings have descended to our times, which few quote the names of some twenty other books which are lost . . ."
and
"What have come down to our day have been mutilated, changed, and corrupted in such a shameful manner that no two manuscripts agree."

Tanners' Version

In a pamphlet published in the 1850's, Apostle Pratt further commented:

Many Protestants say they take the Bible as their only rule of faith. . . . What evidence have they that the book of Matthew was inspired of God, or any other of the books of the New Testament? The only evidence they have is tradition. . . . If it could be demonstrated by tradition, that every part of each book of the Old and New Testament, was, in its original, actually written by inspiration, still it cannot be determined that there is one single true copy of those originals now in existence. . . . What shall we say then, concerning the Bible's being a sufficient guide? Can we rely upon it in its present known corrupted state, as being a faithful record of God's word? We all know that but a few of the inspired writings have descended to our times, which few quote the names of some twenty other books which are lost. . . .

What few have come down to our day, have been *mutilated, changed, and corrupted,* in such a shameful manner that no two manuscripts agree.

For
"verses and even whole chapters have been added by unknown persons; and even we do not know the authors of some whole books; and we are not certain that all those which we do know, were wrote [sic] by inspiration,[44]

and who, in his right mind, could, for one moment, suppose the Bible in its present form to be a perfect guide?"

In fact,
"Who knows that even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original?"

In view of this,
"no reflecting man can deny the necessity of such a new revelation [as the Book of Mormon]." (pp. 27–28)

Verses and even whole chapters have been added by unknown persons; and even we do not know the authors of some whole books; and we are not certain that all those which we do know, were wrote by inspiration.
Add all this imperfection to the uncertainty of the translation, and *who, in his right mind, could, for one moment, suppose the Bible in its present form to be a perfect guide?*

Who knows that *even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution,* so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original? . . .
There can be no certainty as to the contents of the inspired writings until God shall inspire some one to rewrite all those books over again. . . .

No reflecting man can deny the necessity of such a new revelation (*Orson Pratt's Works,* "The Bible Alone An Insufficient Guide," pp. 44–47). (*CW,* 366–67)

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44. The [sic] in brackets is Geisler's own.

A particularly interesting example, which may possibly be an exception to the generalization above, is found in item 89 of the supplement in which Geisler quotes Doctrine and Covenants 13:8 from the 1835 edition, but this is *not* quoted in the text of *Changing World*. However, the Tanners do reproduce a facsimile of the relevant portion of the 1833 Book of Commandments, along with their marginal notes of the changes made in the 1966 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, which also reflects changes made in the 1835 edition. So it was possible for Geisler to reconstruct the verse in his text from the Tanners' marginal notes without consulting the original, but I am not able to demonstrate that he obtained the accurate reference to Doctrine and Covenants 13:8 in the 1835 edition from *Changing World* (p. 58).[45]

This anomaly aside, it nevertheless defies belief to suppose our author independently extracted only what the Tanners did from the original sources, especially since this at times involved compressing many lines and sometimes pages of an original by means of ellipses. Furthermore, that he never found a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph in a parallel source to incorporate into his chapter that was not used by the Tanners is beyond credibility. It is incriminating data of the strongest kind.

Mistakes Made by Geisler

More telltale signs that our author did not rely on original sources in his research surface when one examines closely his mistakes in this brief chapter. They are legion, but several of the most critical ones are reviewed below. Take, for example, items 17 and 18 in the supplement. In *Changing World* the Tanners give two brief quotations from the *History of the Church* and two from Jenson's 1899 edition of *Church Chronology* to show that the Joseph Smith

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45. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 58. A careful comparison of Geisler's reconstruction with Doctrine and Covenants 13:8 (1835 ed.) shows he left out two commas and the first instance of the word *which* in that verse, thus compounding the problem of determining the source of this quotation. It is Doctrine and Covenants 42:29–31 in the present edition.

Translation (JST) was completed in Joseph's day.[46] Speaking of the last source, they write: "In the *Church Chronology,* by Andrew Jenson, we find the following under the date of February 2, 1833: 'Joseph Smith, jun., completed the translation of the New Testament.' Under the date of July 2, 1833, this statement appears: 'Joseph the Prophet finished the translation of the Bible.'"[47]

Geisler recites a mixture of these same sources and in doing so makes two errors that suggest that *Changing World* was the source of his argument. After citing the 2 February 1833 entry in the *History of the Church,* Geisler then says, "And in the *Church Chronology* by Andrew Jenson [under] the entry of the same day (February 2, 1833) we read: 'Joseph Smith, jun. Completed the translation of the Bible" (p. 30). *Counterfeit Gospel's* version ends with the words "the Bible" whereas the Tanners correctly have it as "the New Testament." This faux pas is perhaps best explained by the fact that both statements appear on the same page in *Changing World,* whereas they are on different pages in *Church Chronology.*

But a more serious conceptual error seems to clinch the matter of his dependency on the Tanners. Geisler makes exactly the same point that they do about the JST when he says, "Furthermore, early Mormons considered it a completed version" (p. 30).[48] And he recruits the same witnesses as do the Tanners (i.e., the *History of the Church,* Andrew Jenson, and Arch Reynolds) to make the point. But in using Jenson he betrays his ignorance of the original sources he is calling upon. And it is exactly the same mistake made by the Tanners. Both assume that Jenson and the *History of the Church* are separate witnesses to the completion of the JST. Actually, they represent only one source because Jenson is drawing on the *History of the Church* for this data in his *Chronology.*

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46. Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), 8–9. The edition is mentioned in the bibliography of *Changing World.*

47. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 386.

48. According to the Tanner version, "at one time the early Mormons considered it to have been complete." See Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 386.

In another representative error, Geisler copies a statement by Joseph Smith (item 56 in the supplement) regarding the time of the second coming and gives "Ibid." as his in-text reference; however, it is incorrect. The previous reference in the text is to *History of the Church,* 2:182, but the quotation in question actually comes from *History of the Church,* 5:336. Why the problem? If he had actually looked at the *History of the Church,* the chances of making this mistake seem remote. But if he borrowed from *Changing World,* the reason for the error becomes evident. In their treatment of this subject, the Tanners actually used three extracts from the *History of the Church.* The second one was from *History of the Church,* 5:336. Then they begin the paragraph containing the third quotation by saying, "On the same page Joseph Smith said." In his haste Geisler missed the second quotation with its reference. He assumed that when the Tanners said the third passage was on the same page that they were referring to *History of the Church,* 2:182, the reference for the first quotation. Hence the erroneous "Ibid." reference. Here again, Geisler's carelessness exposes his reliance on the Tanners' work.

In item 62 of the supplement we find perhaps the most telling blunder of all, one which unquestionably divulges our author's lack of knowledge about Mormonism, especially the Book of Mormon and indeed all the latter-day scriptures, as well as his unfailing dependency on the Tanner volume. Here he tries to make the point, as do the Tanners, that Joseph's understanding about God changed between the time he wrote the Book of Mormon and when he translated the Book of Abraham. He wrote,

> The Book of Mormon teaches that there is only one God. The later *Book of Abraham* affirms that there are many gods. A *comparison of the two books* reveals the *former* saying over and over "I, God" or "I, the Lord God" while the *latter* affirms "the Gods" or "they [the Gods]" (cf. Moses 2:1,10,25; 3:8 with Abraham 4:3,10,25; 5:8). By 1844 Smith came to believe that "God himself, who sits in yonder heavens, is a man like unto one of yourselves." (pp. 41–42, emphasis added)

As the references indicate, the comparison here is not between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham as our author believes; rather it is between the books of Moses and Abraham, both in the Pearl of Great Price.

How did Geisler make such a blunder? The answer may be attributed to his inattentive but slavish use of *Changing World*. The Tanners make the same point in their chapter entitled "The Godhead." The similarities of the arguments in both texts are uncanny.[49] The Tanners write,

> The best way to illustrate Joseph Smith's change of mind concerning the Godhead is to compare the Book of Moses with the Book of Abraham. Both of these books are printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church. . . . While the Book of Moses states that "I, God" created the heavens and the earth, the Book of Abraham states that "they [the Gods]" created them.[50]

The Tanners then place in parallel columns the very excerpts from the books of Moses and Abraham that Geisler cites above. Unfortunately, he overlooked the fact that the book of Moses is part of the Pearl of Great Price and wrongly assumed quotations from it were from the Book of Mormon. Thus he adapts and summarizes the information he finds in the parallel columns of the Tanner work, but by not consulting the originals he commits an oversight that once more shows that he did not discover these ideas by independent research. If he had, surely he would have realized the book of Moses was not part of the Book of Mormon.

Still another very revealing mistake concerns a reference attending a comment about Doctrine and Covenants 132. Geisler writes,

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49. One such similarity concerns the latter part of Geisler's quotation above. "By the year 1844," the Tanners write in *Changing World*, 173, "Joseph Smith had completely disregarded the teachings of the *Book of Mormon*, for he declared that God was just an exalted man and that men could become Gods." They then quote from the *Times and Seasons*, the same passage Geisler mentioned in his last sentence above. Endnote 44 for his citation reads, "Joseph Smith in *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, IL., 1839–46), 5:613–14."

50. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World*, 173.

"Smith had earlier received his revelation about many wives on July 12, 1843. This change in revelation is printed as part of LDS Scripture in *Doctrine and Covenants* (D&C 132:1–62)" (p. 44). The casual reader may not notice that the reference to "D&C 132:1–62" is incomplete, but Section 132 actually has 66 verses. Assessing how such an elementary mistake could be made is easy. Geisler did not consult an LDS edition of the Doctrine and Covenants; instead he simply lifted his information from *Changing World,* leaving behind an unintentional clue that he had copied the reference without verifying it. In their book the Tanners also reproduce portions of the revelation for which they give the following reference, "*The Doctrine and Covenants,* published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1966, 132:1–4, 19, 20, 34, 35, 38, 39, 52, 60–62."[51] Doubtless the reverend assumed their last number was the end of the section without checking it for himself.

In our final example, Jerald and Sandra Tanner write in reference to Hugh Nibley's *The Myth Makers,* "Dr. Nibley's book also states that if the authenticity of the court record could be established it would be '*the most devastating blow to Smith ever delivered.'*"[52] However, when Geisler rustles this statement from *Changing World* he places the quotation marks around the comments of *both* Jerald and Sandra as well as Nibley—but attributes them only to the latter! The Tanners' words are italicized in the following passage to highlight the error. "LDS apologist Dr. Hugh Nibley admitted, '. . . *if the authenticity of the court record could be established it would be* the most devastating blow to Smith ever delivered'" (p. 46).[53]

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51. Ibid., 205.

52. Ibid., 72. See supplement item 94. Nibley did not exactly say it the way the Tanners have portrayed it here. See Hugh Nibley, *The Myth Makers* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961), 142.

53. There is a similar phenomenon in material Geisler acknowledges he took from the Tanners. In supplement item 34, summarized in endnote 33, he puts quotation marks around the whole phrase "black stone in Kirtland, Ohio," whereas the Tanners only have quotation marks around the words "black stone." The remaining words "in Kirtland, Ohio" are theirs. Again in item 37 in the supplement, which is also summarized in endnote 33, Geisler has put quotations around the wrong portion of the passage. He has shortened the Tanner statement, leaving out the phrase "during the period" but including

Thus we have several potent examples of how mistakes resulting from hasty preparation of his chapter and carelessness regarding detail provide consistent illustrations of his repeated and unattributed poaching of quotations, information, and ideas from *Changing World of Mormonism* and his failure to check the original sources the Tanners cite. In every instance where Geisler makes a significant error in the examples above, it can be explained by his reliance on *Changing World*.[54] No other hypothesis can comprehensively and credibly account for these errors.

Adoption of the Ideas and Logic of the Tanners

We have already seen the frequency with which quotations used by Geisler to make the same points are found in the same order as they appear in *Changing World*. Elaboration of an example or two is helpful to see that he also incorporated the Tanners' ideas and logic as well. Let me acknowledge here that I did not concentrate on this aspect of the problem in my research. I spent my time and effort analyzing the sources and quotations, so I have only included here those items that surfaced in the course of those investigations. I believe a more diligent search would turn up more of the same.

We begin with Geisler's contention that Joseph Smith finished his work on the JST. Above, it was pointed out that supplement items 17–21 regarding this matter all come from page 386 of *Changing World* and appear in the same order as they appear in that work. Subsequent paragraphs of the Tanner argument were also used by Geisler. He cites "Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds," who asserted that the JST was finished, and in endnote 25 Geisler acknowledges

the whole thing in quotation marks when the Tanners have quoted the correct portion of the article in question.

54. Another example of Geisler's shoddy work, his dependency on *Changing World*, and his failure to consult original sources may be seen in item 65 of the supplement. Here he gives a reference for a Brigham Young quotation as *JD*, 5:19, when it should be *JD*, 7:333. As with our other examples this can be explained by the fact that both quotations appear on page 175 of *Changing World*. He simply attached the wrong reference to the quotation.

that he got this information from *Changing World*. He continues by quoting Doctrine and Covenants 104:58: "I have commanded you to organize yourselves, even to shinelah [print] my words, the fulness of my scriptures," but he does not say he also got this information from this portion of the Tanners' book. He simply puts the reference "D&C 104:58" at the end of the selection. The supplement (item 21) shows that the parenthetical insertion "[print]," which explains the non-English word *shinelah* in the verse, is in both texts. The insertion "print" appeared in a pre-1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants used by the Tanners in *Changing World*. However, in the 1981 and subsequent printings of the Doctrine and Covenants the word *shinelah* was removed and the word *print* was substituted without parentheses. If Geisler had consulted the current edition, he would have been unaware of the presence of the non-English word. Thus he was either using a pre-1981 edition or relying on *Changing World*. Since both the Reynolds excerpt and the D&C 104:58 verse were also part of the Tanner argument, the former option seems unlikely.

But this is not the only indication of his utilization of this part of the Tanners' work. Immediately following Doctrine and Covenants 104:58, the Tanners reproduce two more excerpts from the Doctrine and Covenants and then return to another selection from Arch Reynolds. In his very next point, Geisler adopts some of Reynolds's logic from the Tanners' second citation without crediting either Reynolds or the Tanners. Here is what they quote of Reynolds, which Geisler paraphrases:

> Why the Bible was not published is still an enigma; of course the Saints were unsettled: they were persecuted, but many other works were published so why not the Holy Scriptures? . . . The Lord gave Joseph a commandment to publish the Bible to the world, and the Lord prepared the way to accomplish this but it *was not fulfilled*.[55]

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55. Arch Reynolds, cited in Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World*, 386, 388, emphasis in the original.

Here is Norman Geisler's version: "Even though the Mormons were unsettled and persecuted, they were able to publish many other works. Why then do they not publish their prophet's Inspired Version of the Bible?" (p. 30).

As we view Geisler's entire section devoted to the JST, we become more convinced we have discovered the sources of his ideas regarding that work. This is accomplished by outlining his arguments and comparing them with those in *Changing World.* He devotes about three and a half pages to the subject, "Joseph Smith's Inspired Version of The Bible" (pp. 28–32).[56] The Tanner treatment of the JST is in chapter 12 of *Changing World,* named "Mormon Scripture and the Bible" under the subheading "Inspired Revision."[57] Below is a detailed outline of Geisler's analysis. The section name and subheadings are reproduced as they appear in the text, with various points in a bulleted listing. Following each point, I will give the page number where the item is found in both *Counterfeit Gospel* (*CG*) and *Changing World* (*CW*).

Joseph Smith's Inspired Version of the Bible (CG, 28; CW, 383)

• The Inspired Version is an embarrassment to the Church and was not published in Joseph Smith's lifetime (*CG,* 28; *CW,* 383).

As an illustration of the similarities one can find by this type of comparison, notice the likeness of the language in both books on this point.

> Actually, the *Inspired Version* of the Bible has been the source of much embarrassment for Mormon church leaders. It was never published during Joseph Smith's lifetime. (*CW,* 383)

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56. It should be mentioned that even the term *Inspired Version* is a clue to the dated nature of Geisler's knowledge of Mormonism inasmuch as it has not been in vogue in the church since the 1979 publication of the LDS edition of the Bible. There, extracts of the JST were included in the footnotes and in an appendix. Since that time it has been customary to refer to Joseph's work on the Bible as the Joseph Smith Translation. Obviously if Geisler were familiar with LDS-related literature beyond the 1981 edition of *Changing World of Mormonism*—especially regarding the canon—he would have known this and would likely have used the new terminology. So, as it is, this is also one more bit of evidence of his extensive reliance on dated Tanner materials, in this case terminology.

57. Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World,* 383–95.

> Actually, this so-called 'Inspired Version' of the Bible has been an embarrassment to the Mormon Church. It was never published during Smith's lifetime. (*CG*, 28)

• Emma gives the Inspired Version to the RLDS Church in 1886 (*CG*, 28; *CW*, 383).

• The 1887 [*sic*][58] edition is sold by Deseret Book and cited by LDS scholars (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 384).

Under the heading "The Origin of the Inspired Version," the following points are made:
• The text quotes John A. Widtsoe on how Joseph prepared the Inspired Version (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 384; supplement item 13).

• The text quotes Reed C. Durham about eighteen sections of the Doctrine and Covenants concerning the "Revision" (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 384; supplement item 14).

• The text quotes Doctrine and Covenants 73:3–4—a commandment to finish the project (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 384).

• God expected Joseph to finish the work; failure to do so was disobedience, or God was wrong (*CG*, 29).

Under the heading "The Mormon Dilemma," the following points are made (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 385):[59]
• Latter-day Saints cannot deny Joseph was commanded to make changes (*CG*, 29).

• Incorrect parts were not changed (*CG*, 29).

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58. This is another of Geisler's many factual errors. The Tanners speak of the 1867 edition, but later point out that a revised 1944 edition is sold in Deseret Book and often referred to by LDS scholars. See Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World*, 385. One wonders if Geisler thought the Tanners were in error, assuming there would not be an RLDS publication until after the manuscripts came into the possession of the RLDS Church. If so, the logic is understandable but erroneous.

59. The idea of a dilemma is found in both texts, but Geisler departs from the Tanners in describing the nature of the dilemma. To me his description is more abstract than theirs.

• The text quotes *Doctrines of Salvation* (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 385; supplement item 15).

• Joseph Fielding Smith's explanation of Joseph's failure to revise further because of persecution is insufficient for several reasons (*CG*, 29).

• Mormon scholars admit there are errors in the Inspired Version (*CG*, 29; *CW*, 385–86).

• An omniscient God would have known where corrections were needed and so inspired Joseph (*CG*, 29–30).

• An omniscient God would have known of Joseph's busy schedule (*CG*, 30).

• Mormons considered the Inspired Version completed (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386).

• The text quotes *History of the Church*, 1:324 (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386; supplement item 17).

• The text quotes Jenson's *Church Chronology* (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386; supplement item 18).

• The text quotes *History of the Church*, 1:386 (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386; supplement item 19).

• The text quotes Arch Reynolds (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386; supplement item 20).

• The text quotes Doctrine and Covenants 104:58 (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386; supplement item 21).

• The text paraphrases Arch Reynolds: why doesn't the LDS Church publish the Inspired Version? (*CG*, 30; *CW*, 386–87).

Under the heading "An Evaluation of the Inspired Version," the following points are made (*CG*, 30):
• Many problems remain with the allegedly inspired Bible (*CG*, 30).

• Joseph overlooks some verses that are contrary to LDS teaching—for example, 1 John 5:7–8 (*CG*, 30–31; *CW*, 389).

• Joseph renders authentic verses without justification—for example, John 1:1 (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 390–91).

• Joseph could have restored lost books; instead, he removed the Song of Solomon (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 393).

• A strange eight-hundred-word interpolation appears in Genesis 50:24 (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 391–92).[60]

• A bias against blacks comes out in the Inspired Version (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 392).

• The claim that Adam was baptized as believers were in Acts 2 is an anachronism (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 392–93).

• The nature of the revision process indicates it was human, not inspired (*CG*, 31; *CW*, 397).

• The Inspired Version corrects Bible verses that are quoted in the Book of Mormon (*CG*, 32).

Obviously this is a very high degree of correlation between the two texts. The parallels in the outline constitute twenty-four of thirty-four items, or about 71 percent. A number of these ideas appear in the same sequence in both works. Geisler does not have one quotation in his section on the JST that is not found in the Tanner volume, and he uses only those portions of the quotations which are available therein. Virtually all the facts he cites are in *Changing World*, as well as most of his logic and arguments.

Geisler's list of Joseph Smith's alleged false prophecies, noted above, is another example of plagiarism that indicates Geisler's dependence on the Tanners' text. If space permitted, similar detailed outlines would demonstrate very strong correlations between the two texts on the subjects of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon and changes in the Book of Mormon.

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60. The Tanners provide the fact thus: "Over 800 words were added into Genesis 50:24." Tanner and Tanner, *Changing World*, 391.

Conclusion

By depending on this eighteen-year-old material, yet being un-
aware of its weaknesses, Geisler left himself extremely vulnerable to
criticism. He essentially confined his research to a 1981 production,
and his endnotes demonstrate that he has not gone beyond that time
in keeping abreast of LDS scholarship on the canon. (Even if he used
the originals of the sources he cited he is still woefully behind.)[61]
Moreover, Geisler seems unaware that *Mormonism—Shadow or
Reality?* has been negatively reviewed[62] and also unwittingly falls into

61. A sample of works that have been produced in the last twenty-five years and were
not consulted includes: Robert J. Matthews, *"A Plainer Translation": Joseph Smith's
Translation of the Bible, A History and Commentary* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1975); Hugh
Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City:
Deseret Book, 1975); Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A
Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Provo, Utah:
Seventy's Mission Bookstore, 1981); Neal E. Lambert, *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture
and Religious Experience* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1981); Hugh
Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), now in its second edition
(2000); Noel B. Reynolds, ed., *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins*
(Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1982); Monte S. Nyman and Robert L.
Millet, eds., *The Joseph Smith Translation: The Restoration of Plain and Precious Things*
(Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1985); John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient
American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS,
1985); H. Donl Peterson and Charles D. Tate Jr., eds., *The Pearl of Great Price: Revelations
from God* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1989); Phillip L. Barlow, *Mormons
and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1991); John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering the
Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991); John W. Welch, ed.,
Reexploring the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992); Roger
R. Keller, *Book of Mormon Authors: Their Words and Messages* (Provo, Utah: BYU
Religious Studies Center, 1996); Noel B. Reynolds, ed., *Book of Mormon Authorship
Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997). Of course this
list does not include the many articles and essays on this topic that have appeared in other
books, professional journals, church magazines, and publications of book reviews.

62. Anonymous, *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response
to* Mormonism—Shadow or Reality? (Salt Lake City, n.p., 1977); Matthew Roper, review
of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Review of Books on the
Book of Mormon* 4 (1992): 169–215; Matthew Roper, "Comments on the Book of
Mormon Witnesses: A Response to Jerald and Sandra Tanner," *Journal of Book of Mormon
Studies* 2/2 (1993) 164–93. Several other Tanner publications have received similarly neg-
ative reviews in recent years.

many of the same errors as his source. Moreover, he compounds their weakness with many serious errors of his own. Given his unfamiliarity with ongoing discussions by Latter-day Saints of canonical issues since the 1981 publication of *Changing World,* he can hardly be deemed an authority on the LDS canon. Indeed these facts explain why he exhibits a conspicuous lack of awareness that a number of the issues that he rehashes have been answered or refuted time and time again. Consequently, Geisler receives a failing grade in original and careful research, in his knowledge about his subject, and in the content of his analysis.

By itself any given section above may not convince the reader that Geisler drew his quotations and ideas from the work of Jerald and Sandra Tanner. However, the probability that he produced *all* these similarities, many identical, through independent research and writing, is incalculably infinitesimal—approaching zero. In the aggregate they make a much stronger case, say, than the evidence both he and the Tanners present to accuse Joseph Smith of relying on Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* or of plagiarizing the King James Version of the Bible to produce the Book of Mormon. Cumulatively the findings of this study are so convincing that when all the possibilities are carefully considered, actual dependency on *Changing World* is the best conclusion in reference to the sources Norman Geisler used to write the LDS section of his chapter. He may be "considered one of the greatest living defenders of the Christian faith," but this study raises serious ethical questions about his method insofar as his attack on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism* is concerned.

Harvest House Publishers must also bear its share of the blame for publishing this error-filled, poorly edited scoria. The publisher obviously did not demand a rigorous peer review of these essays, nor did the editors proofread the text carefully or check the accuracy of quotations and references. They mismanaged the publication as much as the author himself did, exhibiting a disconcerting lack of professionalism, and must, with him, shoulder the stigma surrounding the first chapter of *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism,* which puts them among third-rate evangelical propaganda machines in the

United States. Both bear responsibility for the fact that half of the first chapter of *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism* is itself an imitation.[63]

One ponders why such a tactic as herein described was employed by the author and permitted by the publisher. Apparently both believe that Mormonism is so superficial, its historical basis so groundless, its theology so transparently false, its leaders so wickedly deceptive, its people so easily duped,[64] that all that was required to debunk it was to obtain a large anti-Mormon documentary tome with a good reputation among countercultists, then incorporate some of its most provocative ideas and quotations on the topic in a chapter in an anti-Mormon book. Norman Geisler's failure to seriously confront the

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63. Therefore, it is obvious I do not completely share the view of Marianne Jennings, professor of legal and ethical studies at Arizona State University, who recently said, "Years ago when I was working in the U.S. Attorney's Office, we did not have word processors. One of the secretaries finished making final copies of a 75–page brief for an appellate case. At the last minute, I discovered a typographical error. I went to the senior attorney and said, 'This is not my fault. I corrected the type on the last draft, but the secretary missed it.' He looked at me and said, 'Does it have your name on it?' When I replied that it did, he said matter-of-factly, 'Then it is *your* mistake.'" Marianne Jennings, "The Evolution—and Devolution of Journalistic Ethics," *Imprimis* 28/7 (July 1999): 4–5.

What little experience I have had with publishers has shown me that late mistakes can enter in after the author has checked the proofs. Last-minute directions for final changes can be misunderstood by editors and deadlines can prevent a final check of those that have been made. But it should be mentioned that Jennings's remarks were said in context of a journalist's relationship with her editor, which is presumably much closer spatially and professionally than most authors have with publishers.

64. From the beginning such an attitude has pervaded anti-Mormon sentiment, though in those days of less politically correct speech authors were more overt in expressing their opinions. In 1832 Joshua V. Himes explained in a preface to Alexander Campbell's anti-Mormon pamphlet, *Delusions,* that he thought Mormonism should be exposed but "judicious friends" advised him against it because "the system was so unreasonable and ridiculous, that no person of good common sense would believe it." Inexplicably, however, it was making progress "among some of our respectable citizens . . . worthy members of the religious societies to which they belonged," so he decided it was his duty to use his "exertion against its spreading and contaminating influence." But Campbell beat him to it, so Himes contented himself for a time with promoting the former's pamphlet. His own work, *Mormon Delusions and Monstrosities,* came out in 1842. See Joshua V. Himes, "Prefatory Remarks," in Alexander Campbell, *Delusions. An Analysis of the Book of Mormon; with an Examination of Its Internal and External Evidences, and a Refutation of Its Pretenses to Divine Authority* (Boston: Greene, 1832), 3.

Mormon canon with substantive scholarship indicates an underlying prejudice[65] common among many critics of Mormonism. Cloaked in pseudoscholarly garb, his highly dependent piece—counterfeit coin, really—turns out to be little more than a diatribe against Mormonism. If this is the best the students of Veritas Graduate School of Apologetics and Countercult Ministries are receiving from their mentors, if this kind of scholarship is typical of its faculty and students, or if this is the ethical foundation on which the school is built, then both evangelicals and Mormons can continue to expect to be fed warmed-over stew from the greasy kitchen of Jerald and Sandra Tanner, all the while believing they are partaking of original cuisine. It is hoped that this source review will serve notice that their writings and arguments will continue to be meticulously scrutinized, if for no other reason than to inspire an increase in the quality of dialogue between Mormons and evangelicals in the spirit initiated by Stephen Robinson and Craig Blomberg.

La Roy Sunderland, another critic of this period, was equally condescending. It could not be supposed, he thought, "that any number of intelligent people are in much danger of being carried away by a delusion so manifestly monstrous and absurd." As for believing in the Book of Mormon, he observed "one patient reading of this book, would probably suggest to any one the true reason, why more notice has not been taken of it, and more efforts made to expose and confute its pretended claims to inspiration." Its errors, contradictions, and "gross blasphemies" were so "abundantly sufficient to lead any person of ordinary intellect, who reads it with attention, to suppose that but few, if any, who believe the Bible . . . could be led away by such barefaced hypocrisy." Yet he also faced the paradox of people falling for the so-called fraud. He also found it difficult to comprehend why reasonable people would leave their homes and migrate to Missouri as Joseph Smith had encouraged them to do. "This requisition of Mormonism is so perfectly preposterous, and cruel, so evidently a figment of a covetous combination, that it almost tortures the human imagination to conceive how any man, in his senses, can believe it has the sanction of truth or the Bible." He gives the only explanation that made any sense to him in the face of such bald deception: "that persons are found, professing faith in the Christian Scriptures, and, yet, ignorant enough to be duped by such a monstrous and bare-faced delusion, is an evidence of the inefficiency of human reason, to discern between the claims of truth and the absurdities of error." La Roy Sunderland, *Mormonism Exposed and Refuted* (New York: Piercy & Reed, 1838), iii–iv, 34.

65. My dictionary gives as its first definition of prejudice "an adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts." William Morris, ed., *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), s.v. "prejudice."