



10-1-2013

Fire in the Pasture: Twenty-First Century Mormon Poets

Angela Hallstrom

Tyler Chadwick

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq>



Part of the [Mormon Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hallstrom, Angela and Chadwick, Tyler (2013) "Fire in the Pasture: Twenty-First Century Mormon Poets," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52 : Iss. 3 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol52/iss3/17>

This Notice is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *BYU Studies Quarterly* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

The Savior in Kirtland, by Karl Ricks Anderson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012).

Karl Ricks Anderson has lived in Kirtland, Ohio, for more than forty years, and his studies and time there have made him one of the leading authorities on the Kirtland period of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1994, Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles asked Anderson to write about the Christology of Kirtland. *The Savior in Kirtland* is the final product of Anderson's eighteen-year project.

As the title suggests, *The Savior in Kirtland* focuses on manifestations of Jesus Christ during the Kirtland period. The book begins with an explanation of how Christ prepared "the Ohio," including how he spiritually prepared Sidney Rigdon, and then describes the extraordinary events after the Saints gathered there. The area of Kirtland was a place of intense adversity; however, it was also a place of intense spirituality, as Joseph Smith and others received countless Christocentric revelations during the construction of the Kirtland Temple. All of these preparatory events culminated in the "mother lode of Christology" on April 3, 1836, when Jesus and the prophets Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared and bestowed essential priesthood keys. In addition to the Kirtland period of Joseph Smith's day, Anderson relates his own personal experiences in an appendix describing the ways the Lord directed his work in restoring Kirtland in the twentieth century.

The book is extensively researched and would appeal to anyone interested in anecdotes from Church history. The research will be helpful to scholars, but the information is presented in such a way that it seems to be directed to lay students of the gospel. The work collects accounts from numerous figures in Church history and weaves their stories

together into an informative narrative. Quotations and incidents are gathered from the usual sources, such as the Doctrine and Covenants and *History of the Church*, but they are also gathered from countless other sources and collections, including personal journals from early Church members who lived in Kirtland. The wide range of sources brings to light many testimonies and accounts that are not often heard in the Latter-day Saint community. Additionally, each chapter begins with original illustrations by Carma de Jong Anderson and Tyson Snow. Overall, *The Savior in Kirtland* provides an extensive body of Kirtland scholarship that brings refreshing insights into Church history.

—R. Mark Melville

Fire in the Pasture: Twenty-First Century Mormon Poets, edited by Tyler Chadwick (El Cerrito, California: Peculiar Pages, 2011).

In the foreword to the poetry anthology *Fire in the Pasture*, poet and BYU English professor Susan Elizabeth Howe explains that a poet's desire is "to make readers see what they did not see before, to offer insight, to create empathy, to provoke thought, or to express beauty, soundness, depth" (xvii). Editor Tyler Chadwick, a poet and doctoral candidate in English at Idaho State University, has gathered into one substantial volume the work of eighty-two contemporary Mormon poets, and the majority succeed in conjuring the emotional, spiritual, and aesthetic rewards Howe describes.

This anthology is the first major collection of poetry by LDS writers since Eugene England and Dennis Clark's *Harvest: Contemporary Mormon Poems*, published by Signature Books in 1989. In the over two decades since *Harvest's* publication, a cadre of talented Mormon poets have published a growing

body of excellent work. Poets Lance Larson, Neil Aitken, and Timothy Liu are among many poets in the anthology who have garnered substantial attention in the wider literary world. *Fire in the Pasture* also includes the work of many up-and-coming new poets, as well as writers who are best known in Mormon literary circles.

Although the readership of poetry anthologies is not large, it is encouraging that *Fire in the Pasture* collects and preserves many of Mormonism's most potent poetic voices from the early twenty-first century, making them available for generations to come. This volume would also be a quality addition to any literature class, Mormon or otherwise, especially at LDS schools. Although not all the poems in the anthology have overtly Mormon elements, many address ideas and issues at the core of our theology and culture. For those who erroneously believe that LDS poetry is primarily comprised of sentimental rhymed verses or charming couplets, this anthology is proof that the complexity and beauty of Mormon life can, and should, be rendered in powerful, sophisticated poetic expression.

—Angela Hallstrom

Bountiful Harvest: Essays in Honor of S. Kent Brown, edited by Andrew C. Skinner, D. Morgan Davis, and Carl Griffin (Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011).

Bountiful Harvest is a collection of essays written and assembled in honor of S. Kent Brown, recently retired professor of ancient scripture and Near Eastern studies at Brigham Young University. An impressive array of colleagues, former students, teachers, admirers, and friends of Professor Brown have contributed to this handsome volume, resulting in twenty-one essays that are

a worthy tribute to Brown's legacy. The volume includes an introduction by the editors in well-deserved praise of Brown's career and significant achievements, and also an appendix listing his many published works.

As the list of his writings attests, S. Kent Brown is recognized for the breadth of his interests and the diversity of his expertise, and as the editors put it, these essays "are something of a capsulized summary of his career and interests" (xi). The topics covered include canonical and extracanonical texts; studies on Old and New Testament subjects; Mormon studies; Egyptian, Jewish, Islamic, early Christian, and Coptic studies; theological treatises; the Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price; the Dead Sea Scrolls; linguistic analyses; and archaeological findings.

The diversity of topics covered, combined with the high quality of academic scrutiny displayed, exemplifies an important aspect of LDS scholarship that should be cherished and preserved. As the academy continues to follow the trend of increasing specialization and compartmentalization, LDS scholars do well to follow Brown's lead and engage in the type of intertextual and interdisciplinary studies that have proved to be of great value to the Latter-day Saint community.

Bountiful Harvest presents something of interest for almost all readers. Although most essays are written for an LDS audience, many will be of interest to a broader body of readers as well, including scholars in the various disciplines covered and also interested laypersons. The volume includes, for example, an article by Jacob Neusner, a renowned scholar of Jewish studies who is not LDS but whose work will be of interest to the Mormon community. Many will profit from the knowledge shared in this book, just as many have benefitted from the scholarship of the man whom it honors.

—David J. Larsen