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## From The Editor

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## From the Editor



This year *BYU Studies* celebrates its fifty-fifth year of publication. As I look back at the table of contents of the first issue, published in 1959, I am struck that the same multidisciplinary variety still flourishes today in *BYU Studies* as it did then. Articles, essays, and book reviews in that issue covered topics of contemporary interest that are still of interest today.

In that inaugural issue, subjects included an LDS philosophical engagement with existentialism, a Mormon embrace of the human values found in modern art, an economic historical analysis of the Word of Wisdom, and a literary reading of Hawthorne's wrestle with the complexities of human interactions and of moral transgressions. Found in that first volume were department chairs as well as rising young assistant professors whose names were larger-than-life presences in LDS academic circles and on the BYU campus when I arrived as a freshman in the fall of 1964. They included such notables as Truman Madsen, Conan Matthews, Marden Clark, Leonard Arrington, and Kent Fielding.

In marking any anniversary, it is good to glance back into the past, in order to regroup and reestablish our bearings. In this present issue, as Patrick Moran's personal essay sensitively states, memory "is the very glue that keeps me bound to what I have been, what I am, and what I will become."

Fifteen years ago, on the fortieth anniversary of *BYU Studies*, I reflected on the precepts that have come to epitomize the academic code of professional conduct found today in our Author Guidelines.<sup>1</sup> Its six main ideals still today are:

1. Unity: The goal of unity with God and our fellow beings must be continually cultivated and nourished. The goal of unity does not imply that all scholarly methods or personal views must be the same, but “if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27).

2. Harmony: *BYU Studies Quarterly* seeks to harmonize and transcend, in a spiritual, intellectual, and practical unity, elements of this mortal existence that appear to most people to be incompatible contradictions.

3. Honesty: Accuracy and reliability are of the essence in scholarship.

4. Thoroughness: It is expedient to understand “all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God,” at home and abroad, in heaven and in earth, “things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass” (D&C 88:78–79).

5. Humility: No person says or understands everything perfectly, and a variety of opinions on a shared scale of progression are expected. Scholarship is not an end in itself. Research cannot create faith; it can only set the stage for greater light and knowledge.

6. Charity: In order for communication to occur, there must be charity, for no statement exists (including this one) that cannot be misconstrued. If fellowship and goodwill do not exist, especially in an academic setting, we will not communicate with one another.

If you as a reader resonate positively to these professional values, *BYU Studies* hopes to always be your trusted friend. Recently, Steve Piersanti, a highly positioned West Coast book publisher, dropped me a note to say, “The guidelines for authors from *BYU Studies* are wonderful and amazing. I’ve never seen anything like them before.”

As I have looked over the page proofs for this issue one last time, I have seen these values pervading the pages of this journal.

I feel a sense of unity in the various faithful voices of men and women who cherish relationships and communion with the household of faith.

I find cohesion as these authors harmonize dichotomies and conundrums, as they evenhandedly conjoin evangelical grace and Latter-day Saint works (Robert Millet), wisely blend the world of business and the values of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Douglas Anderson), and take seriously both folklore and inspiration (Eric Eliason).

I am amazed at the painstaking efforts that have been taken to ensure the greatest possible accuracy in our transcriptions of early Church discourses (LaJean Carruth) and Church newspapers from the 1840s (Susan Easton Black).

Expansive interests draw together Mormons and Buddhists (Reid Neilson), bring together the factoids of numerology with the sacred

messages of scripture (Corbin Volluz), and draw to attention a dozen early Armenian reflections on the life of Abraham (Douglas Clark). Thoroughness is exemplified by the scripture database noticed here, which pinpoints hundreds of thousands of scripture references found in over seven thousand books and speeches and articles.

Humility is found not only in recognitions by these authors of their own inadequacies and vast amounts of work yet to be accomplished, but also in submitting to personal disappointments and still being able to say, “Be it unto me, according to thy word,” as in the award-winning personal essay by Rebecca Clarke.

And charity can be found rolling alongside the “villages on wheels” whose stories have been rescued from obscurity by the late Stan Kimball’s astonishing collection of thousands of firsthand records never before compiled, telling details of suffering, love, humor, tragedy and joy on the trails of the Saints gathering to Zion, the quintessential Mormon experience.

Moving forward in this fifty-five-year tradition of distinctive scholarly LDS publishing, all of us at BYU Studies are very happy to bring you this latest issue. We hope it enriches the goodness of your life.

John W. Welch

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1. The points listed here are extracted from John W. Welch, “Moving On,” *BYU Studies* 38, no. 1 (1999): 226–28, and are found at the BYU Studies website as Author Guidelines: <https://byustudies.byu.edu/NewsAndEvents/AuthorSubmissions.aspx>. ^