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## From the Editor

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## From the Editor



At the beginning of this new academic year, which also comes with the inauguration of Kevin J. Worthen as president of Brigham Young University, all of us at BYU Studies are pleased to release this latest issue of the *BYU Studies Quarterly*. In his first five months in office, President Worthen has already emphasized the mission and destiny of BYU, and as I glance over the table of contents of this issue, I am struck by the many ways in which all of these items reflect and promote the foundational mission statement that stands behind the aims of a BYU education. The pages in this issue offer readers a bounty of stimulating learning. Its wide variety of topics grounded in a diversity of disciplines offers an array of scholarly productivity that is unusually rich. Each contribution has been made possible by commitment to excellence, striving for the full realization of human potential.

Featured in the color section of this issue and on the front and back covers is work by Professor of Chemistry John D. Lamb, whose Karl G. Maeser Distinguished Faculty Lecture and portfolio of paintings offer lessons learned through a lifetime of scientific investigations while still seeing God as the dispenser of all truth. This article, like all instruction and services at BYU, is bathed in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Leading off this new issue, Jack Harrell articulates the constitutive elements of a Mormon literary theory. A new thrust in LDS intellectual interests is to develop Mormon theoretical approaches to give LDS thinkers greater traction in engaging in academic pursuits. Recent BYU publications have probed Mormon fundamentals pertinent to such subjects as aesthetics and art criticism, family sciences, jurisprudence,

psychology, and counseling. Harrell's literary criticism makes better readers of us all and beckons others to articulate more explicitly comparable Mormon theoretical approaches to history, religion and science, dance and music, biblical criticism and theology, political science, and to just about any other self-reflective discipline within academia.

Following the goals of the BYU mission statement, BYU students and lifelong learners are drawn to subjects ranging throughout the curriculum of arts, letters, and sciences, while being enlightened by prophetic insights and the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Disciplines and academic skills brought together in this issue include chemistry, history, law, architecture, documentary editing, poetry, personal essays, statistics, and scriptural interpretation.

It is hard for me to say which of all of these submissions are my favorites, for in the process of encouraging, receiving, peer reviewing, evaluating, selecting, editing, revising, and preparing each of these articles for publication, and together with the unflagging assistance of all of the members of the BYU Studies editorial boards and staff, we have gotten to know these authors personally and to admire their dedication to the pursuit of clear and effective communication, uncompromising research, and their consecrated eagerness to make their scholarly productivity available to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to people all over the world.

Not only what these articles say but also how they are phrased has come to characterize *BYU Studies Quarterly* issue after issue:

- What could be more character building than a personal interview with Emma Lou Thayne, a humanitarian par excellence?
- What could help to broaden perspectives in today's narrowing world of specialization than Cheryl Preston's multi-disciplinary insights about both the horizontal and vertical forms and functions that produce a unique unity within the living practices of the LDS Church?
- Who could drill deeper than Mark Staker and Robin Jensen into the details of a newly discovered document from the late 1820s, helping us understand more about the daily life of Joseph and Emma Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania, the historic site where the Church is now constructing a visitors' center at the place where the majority of the Book of Mormon was translated and the priesthood restored?

And not to be missed are four very engaging reviews. One explores what other Christians can learn from the Latter-day Saints, and another describes the self-sacrificing service of Jacob Hamblin as a frontier missionary to native Americans. A third covers a theatrical tour de force produced in conjunction with the Illinois Supreme Court about the constitutional importance of individual liberties and the right of habeas corpus from the times of Joseph Smith and Abraham Lincoln to modern political and judicial decisions regarding detainees at Guantanamo. The review essay advances our understanding of issues relating to Book of Mormon authorship, especially generating useful results through statistical analysis.

In the end, as the BYU mission statement sets forth, “Any education is inadequate which does not emphasize that [the name of Jesus Christ] is the only name given under heaven whereby mankind can be saved.” So, the scriptural meditation by David Randall Scott on the book of Jonah offers a reading that encourages attentive students of scripture to consider each passage in that book as testifying of and foreshadowing the self-sacrificing life and atoning victory of Jesus as the Christ. Although modern approaches to scripture do not generally employ this symbolical approach, Jesus himself spoke of the “sign of Jonah,” and his early followers took it as a given that “all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken,” in some way had foretold the events of Jesus’s life and ministry (Acts 3:24). Indeed, the book of Jonah was one of the principal places where the early Christians found numerous typological allusions to the death, resurrection, and saving mission of Jesus Christ, and in this light Scott offers viewers a chance to see Jonah anew through this typological lens.

My thanks go without reservation to the many students, coauthors, and editorial boards whose collaborative efforts have brought this issue together. This issues offers the voices of immensely promising young scholars as well as intrepid authors offering their wisdom toward the end of their careers. Intellectual excellence and spiritual strength abound on the pages of this quarterly contribution to the mission of our unique university. We hope it offers all readers something they did not yet even know they were looking for.