Type: Book Chapter

The Sacred, the "Secret," and the Sinister in the Latter-day Saint Tradition

Author(s): Christopher James Blythe
Source: *The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Secrecy*
Editor(s): Hugh N. Urban and Paul Christopher Johnson
Published: New York City; Routledge, 2022
Pages: 228-242

Abstract: Many Latter-day Saints would be uncomfortable with the presence of an essay on their tradition in a book on religion and secrecy. While I suspect the vast majority of my co-religionists would be fine with the sort of study I present here, they would likely not be startled but annoyed at the word “secrecy” used to describe their religious practice. Latter-day Saints are well aware of the potentially negative connotations of a “secret” and instead describe those rituals, teachings, and experiences that should only be shared with the utmost care and only in the right contexts as sacred. In contrast to a “secret” where the goal is to conceal it from others, Latter-day Saints reason that they want to share the sacred with all but must only do so when individuals are properly prepared to understand sacred things. In this chapter, I look at how the “sacred” has been discussed and implemented in regards to Latter-day Saint ritual, how esotericism defines interactions with outsiders, and informs Latter-day Saint identity and practice.

16

THE SACRED, THE "SECRET," AND THE SINISTER IN THE LATTER-DAY SAINT TRADITION

Christopher James Blythe

Many Latter-day Saints would be uncomfortable with the presence of an essay on their tradition in a book on religion and secrecy. While I suspect the vast majority of my co-religionists (more on that below) would be fine with the sort of study I present here, they would likely not be startled but annoyed at the word "secrecy" used to describe their religious practice. Latter-day Saints are well aware of the potentially negative connotations of a "secret" and instead describe those rituals, teachings, and experiences that should only be shared with the utmost care and only in the right contexts as sacred. In contrast to a "secret" where the goal is to conceal it from others, Latter-day Saints reason that they want to share the sacred with all but must only do so when individuals are properly prepared to understand sacred things. In this chapter, I look at how the "sacred" has been discussed and implemented in regards to Latter-day Saint ritual, how esotericism defines interactions with outsiders, and informs Latter-day Saint identity and practice.

I begin with a section examining approaches to the study of Latter-day Saint esotericism before moving into the next section on the foundations of an esoteric logic in the Book of Mormon, the tradition's unique book of scripture. The third and fourth sections include a discussion of public descriptions of the temple liturgy and then an examination of how these rites were introduced historically, as well as the controversy on their connections with Freemasonry. The fifth and sixth section examines the impact of Latter-day Saint esotericism on outsiders and insiders respectively. The fifth section looks at how preventing access to temples attracted controversy and as a result Americans turned to exposé to educate them the alleged contents of their ceremonies. Ultimately, the final section examines how esotericism shapes Latter-day Saint behavior.

A note for the non-expert: The Latter Day Saint tradition (notice "Latter Day Saint" does not include a hyphen in this instance, representing a more expansive body) includes dozens of denominations with their origins in the Church of Christ, later renamed the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This new church presented itself as a restoration of primitive Christianity and was founded around the belief that God had called a modern prophet, Joseph Smith. After Smith's 1844 assassination, the church was divided in different segments with the vast majority of the faith siding with the leadership claims of Brigham Young. This essay examines only this largest segment of the overarching tradition with its headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003014751-20

Scholarly Approaches to Latter-day Saint Esotericism

The essential dilemma in studying that which a tradition does not wish to disclose is defined succinctly by historian of religion Hugh Urban as the epistemological and ethical "double-bind" of secrecy. On one hand, we must ask "how can one study or say anything intelligent about a religious tradition that practices active dissimulation...and intentionally conceals itself from outsiders?" (Urban 1998, 209). On the other hand, we must ask "if one does learn something about an esoteric tradition—above all, if one goes so far as to become an insider, receiving initiation into secret teaching—how can one then say anything about this tradition to an uninitiated audience of outsiders?" (Urban 1998, 209–210). Simply put, the outsider scholar can never be fully knowledgeable about the internal dynamics of a religion employing secrecy—an epistemological dilemma—and, the insider (or former insider) is bound to maintain the oath of silence and, as such, cannot share her knowledge—an ethical dilemma. In the more pointed words of Buddhologist Edward Conze, speaking of the esoteric teachings of tantra: "Either the author of a book of this kind has not been initiated into Tantra; then what he says is not first-hand knowledge. Or he has been initiated. Then, if he were to divulge the secrets to all and sundry just to make a little profit or to increase his reputation, he has broken the trust placed in him and is morally so depraved as not to be worth listening to" (1962, 272).

To understand the contours of this dilemma when studying Latter-day Saints, it is important to be aware that within the tradition there are multiple opinions on what should and should not be treated with absolute confidentiality. Speaking of the endowment, the central ritual of the Latter-day Saint temple, this is in part because there is ceremonial content that all agree explicitly not to disclose, as well as content that does not include its own explicit agreement not to share with others. As anthropologist Brad Kramer has observed, "The covenants of non-disclosure for a very limited range of temple discourse are so powerful and taken with such grave seriousness that the prohibitions effectively spill over onto the rest of the ceremony" (2014, 26). It is most common for practicing Latter-day Saints to take a conservative approach to this issue and consider details altogether off-limits for discussion with (and by) the unendowed (i.e., uninitiated.) In fact, church leaders have often encouraged endowed Latter-day Saints to limit their discussion of the ceremony to the confines of the temple itself. One thing is certain that the more specificity given to the details of the endowment—actually quoting from the ceremony, for instance—the more uncomfortable a Latter-day Saint would be with the conversation. While acknowledging ambiguity when it comes to how individuals might discuss the ceremony among fellow believers and even outsiders, it is also important to understand that many Latter-day Saints experience exposure as violence. It is a strategy deliberately used to undermine their faith.

Scholars have taken a variety of approaches when handling the study of esotericism connected to the Latter-day Saint tradition. It is not unusual for studies to draw and even quote from exposés as sources. In rare but notable cases, researchers simply take the position that exposure is a necessary element of legitimate scholarship on esotericism. The most blatant example of this approach is David John Buerger's *The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship*. In his introductory remarks, Buerger expressed his regret that he would "offend readers who may not share my understanding about what is appropriate [to discuss]," particularly since he had "decided that, given exaggerated claims about the temple and its origin by some enthusiastic apologists, a degree of specificity in detail is unavoidable." In other words, Buerger held that full exposure of those parts of the ceremony even explicitly forbidden to share was the only way to disprove believers' insistence that the rites were ancient. He hoped readers would "see that I have tried to achieve a balance of scholarly objectivity, reverence for the sacred, regard for the sensibilities of others, and adequate documentation and development of the points to be discussed"

(1994, viii). In response to this statement, one Latter-day Saint reviewer of *The Mysteries of Godliness* wrote, "I wondered why Buerger would profess a desire to be nonoffensive to his audience and then produce a text that was certain to do just the opposite" (Brown 1998, 100). Buerger is not alone in revealing explicitly forbidden content. Respected anthropologist Douglas Davies (2000) followed suit in *The Mormon Culture of Salvation*.

That said, most scholars do not reveal those items explicitly forbidden in the temple, although some use exposés to discuss elements of the rite not explicitly forbidden. Whether they do this knowing that the average Latter-day Saint and the Church would see it as an act of prejudice or believe this is a gray area is usually not explained. In only two cases that I am aware of have scholars taking this approach provided any substantial explanation of their methodologies and ethics. I will look at them briefly before explaining my own approach.

In a 1997 article "Sacred, Secret, and the Non-Mormon," religious studies scholar Colleen McDannell defended her approach to the study of Latter-day Saint garments in her then recent book, *Material Christianity* (McDannell 1995). McDannell explained that her responsibility was to tell the full story of those she had interviewed rather than to limit their stories based on concerns of the institution of the church. In a telling passage she writes, "For some Latter-day Saints, reflecting on the meaning of their garments does not breach the boundaries between sacred and profane. These people define the sacred in a manner different from LDS authorities, and I must respect the boundaries they establish" (1997, 44). One ethical problem with this approach is that McDannell did not compile a representative sampling of Latter-day Saints for her research. Instead, as described in *Material Christianity*, with the help of a research assistant, she "located people we thought would speak about garments through friends and the Sunstone Foundation" (1997, 296). To me, this sounds suspiciously like McDannell believes that the only justification a scholar needs for revealing a community's secrets is if they are able to find an informant willing to disregard their obligations of secrecy. The other problem with McDannell's stated approach is that her chapter did not simply depend on these few voices, nor do I imagine their comments on how they interpret the purpose of wearing garments would be very controversial. Instead, McDannell's chapter drew extensively on historic and contemporary exposés. Thus, it seems that her maneuver to point to the inclusion of heterodox Latter-day Saints in her study was a strawman justification to open portions of an esoteric tradition to public research.

A more serious and seemingly more sincere methodology was offered by religious studies scholar John-Charles Duffy, himself a former Latter-day Saint—although still an adherent in the larger Latter Day Saint tradition—who was endowed. Duffy's most important ethical rule was to limit his documentation of the endowment to portions that are not "explicitly covered by covenants of nondisclosure" (Duffy 2007, 3). With this broad understanding of what can be discussed publicly, he published the entire endowment ceremony minus "those few portions of the ceremony that are explicitly reserved for initiates" (Duffy 2001a, 1). Duffy explained that "as an endowed Latter-day Saint, I am concerned that my people's desire to preserve the sanctity of temple worship has turned into paranoia. Our covenants permit us to say in public much, much more about the ceremony than we are wont to do" (Duffy 2001b, 2). When Duffy published a 2007 article on "ritual nudity" in the endowment, he similarly used his personal initiation to claim "that LDS claims about the privacy of temple rites are contestable on the rites' own terms" (Duffy 2007, 3).

Duffy distinguishes between the "*probing* for information about religious secrets," perhaps akin to McDannell's interviews, and "scenarios in which religious insiders are *volunteering* information" through their own exposés. That is to say, he is less concerned about the ethics of disclosure when the informant "publicizes her knowledge of temple ritual to strike against an institution she has come to regard as immoral or oppressive" (Duffy 2007, 2). Scholars, he insists, by

establishing an ethic of not revealing the ceremonies, are themselves siding with the institution in a conflict with former insiders. Duffy makes a subtle distinction from McDannell's methodology in that it still places the impetus on what can be revealed about an esoteric tradition on those who leave the tradition or hold minority views. It still allows him to disclose what the average Latter-day Saint would consider a private sacred matter so long as he can find someone who has expressed it in the past. Of course, it also allows that he might not simply depend on other's writings but take this privilege himself (although he doesn't do so in the work).

My own methodology is undeniably informed by my being a scholar who is also an endowed Latter-day Saint. While I respect Duffy's desire to stand by his obligations not to reveal certain portions of the ceremony, my position within the tradition helps me to see the violence that exposure even of this more careful sort achieves. While Duffy wants to depict the question as siding with the "disaffected initiate" on one side and an institution on the other, and McDannell speaks of respecting her three dozen informants in preference to the hierarchy, in reality we are not talking about a privacy imposed on Latter-day Saints from the elite of their faith, certainly not in the twenty-first century. As noted above, the vast majority of endowed Latter-day Saints feel attacked and disrespected when someone divulges what they believe should be held in what some term, sacred silence.

Unlike Edward Conze quoted above, I do not think that those who reveal a tradition's secrets are universally corrupt. They may have very real concerns for why they would expose the contents of a ceremony or teaching. However, I think they are participating in a form of protest and contest that adherents experience as violence and violation. It is a type of research and publication that does harm and to not take this into account when developing a methodology is irresponsible to say the least.

While it is tempting to embrace Duffy's legalistic claim that parts of the ceremony are not protected explicitly by oaths of nondisclosure and are thus ethically available for academic study, this strikes me as an untenable position. While there is no established code for just how much is permissible to discuss in public, this is an internal matter not for scholars to resolve. There is a widely accepted cultural code cautioning against the public disclosure of ceremonial details. I will follow an approach employed by Latter-day Saint commentaries concerning the temple experience to "not describe the sacred ordinances and ceremonies of the temple in more detail than has previously been published by the Church" (Packer, "Introduction"). When Latter-day Saint Anthropologist Brad Kramer attempted a similar approach in his dissertation, he recalled being surprised to find that his "religious ethical obligations" of confidentiality and his "professional ethics not to disclose information about my ethnographic community that could in any way compromise, demean, or otherwise harm the community or its members" closely aligned (Kramer 2014, 12). That is, while there is certainly much for the initiated scholar to benefit from this approach, it is also a recognized position in the study of esotericism.

Esoteric Logic in the Book of Mormon

In order to understand the logic of esotericism in the Latter-day Saint tradition, it is worthwhile to examine the depictions of esotericism that appear in the church's founding scripture, the Book of Mormon. The text laid out a number of ideas that would be useful for when the tradition would later introduce a lived esoteric tradition. The Book of Mormon presents two distinct types of esotericism—one adhered to by the righteous and another by the most wicked. Among the Book's righteous, the idea that knowledge or experiences might be "forbidden" to share appears throughout the text. The narrators use the term "mysteries" as a shorthand for divine knowledge that has yet to be revealed generally. Divine revelation is obtained in portions—"line upon

line"—and the book assumes that not all individuals are prepared for or worthy of all truths. One of the major prophets of the Book of Mormon, Alma, explains, "It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless, they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him" (Alma 12:9).

In these passages, it is the individual's pursuit of sacred knowledge that receives the most attention. "Mysteries" might be revealed by a prophet (the figure in these passages who determines what "portion" can be imparted more freely) or even in group contexts but the reception requires individual spiritual preparation. When Book of Mormon figure King Benjamin reveals the contents of an angelic visitation to the citizens of Zarahemla, he commands them to "open your ears that you may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view" (Mosiah 2:9). In this case, the mysteries are bestowed with clearly expressed verbal instructions. The only question is whether the audience is able to accept the message. As one passage in the Book of Mormon explains, "the guilty take the truth to be hard" (1 Nephi 16:2).

Mysteries might also be imparted through symbols that the individual must decode via revelation. One of the very first scenes of the Book of Mormon models this sort of symbolic reading (i.e., inspired interpretation). Lehi, the first prophet in the Book of Mormon, has a dream of humanity on a journey that passes by various impediments on their way to the "tree of life." When he conveys the dream to his sons, he does not offer them much interpretation but does describe the things that he was shown. The Book explains that his son Nephi responded by being "desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things," believing that "he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries or God shall be unfolded unto them" (1 Nephi 10:17, 19). The result is that Nephi prays and receives an even more elaborate vision that provides an interpretation of the symbols. In contrast, his brothers are deeply confused by the dream, as well as their father's continuing use of symbols. Nephi eventually reveals the meaning of the dream but only after a fascinating dialogue in which he asks them if they have "inquired of the Lord" to reveal the symbols. His brothers respond "We have not; for the Lord maketh no such things known unto us." Nephi then criticizes them for not remembering that God had promised "these things shall be made known" (1 Nephi 15:8-11). They only needed to truly desire divine instructions and pray for it.

These narratives, as well as others in the Book of Mormon, are unlike the ritual esotericism introduced by Joseph Smith's lifetime in that they are not depicted as unfolding via ceremony. They do however offer a basic theology by which contemporary Latter-day Saints understand their esoteric practices. (1) There are higher truths available to the righteous than what is generally available to the public. (2) All may receive these mysteries if they live up to the spiritual prerequisites. (3) Higher truths may be conveyed and obtained via understanding symbols and their correspondences.

The Book of Mormon's second esoteric tradition, what is referred to throughout as "secret combinations," stands in stark contrast to the undisclosed knowledge of the righteous. It is a secret ritual system intended to allow initiates to infiltrate political and legal structures in a conspiracy "to murder, and to rob, and to gain power" (Helaman 2:8). The secret combinations emerge through the book are linked to the "oaths handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the beginning" (Ether 8:15). While a Book of Mormon narrator refused to record the details of this covenant, Smith would reveal an inspired version of Genesis which revealed more of the first murderer's oaths of secrecy, a satanic pact in which "Satan sware unto Cain he would do according to his [i.e., Cain's] commands," and Cain receiving the title "Master Mahan" (Moses 5:30-31). For our purposes, the significance of this sinister esoteric

tradition is its function in differentiating the closed knowledge of the righteous from the "secret combinations" of the wicked. A belief that conspiracies might employ esoteric ritual explains in part the deep sensitivity Latter-day Saints have with their esoteric tradition being labeled a secret. These defining ideas would be useful when lived esotericism became part of the tradition. We'll turn our attention to the rites first performed about a decade after the publication of the Book of Mormon and that have been a crucial element of Latter-day Saint practice since.

The Temple and Its Rituals

There is often a "Visitor's Welcome" sign at the front of meetinghouses of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. You don't need to be a Latter-day Saint to attend a local congregation. In stark contrast, visitors are expressly not welcome in the church's nearly 200 temples. There is a brief period when all can tour a newly constructed temple, but once it is dedicated, only Latter-day Saints with temple recommends are allowed to enter and usually only to participate in ritual or to attend marital sealings of a friend or family member.

To acquire a temple recommend involves a two-part interview process. The Latter-day Saint first meets with a local leader from their ward (i.e., congregation), either the bishop or one of his two counselors, and then meets with a member of the stake presidency, a three-member leadership body in charge of several wards. These interviews—both identical—include a standard set of questions dealing with the living of moral standards, loyalty to the church and its leaders, and acceptance of specific beliefs. The questions have varied across time, but the current list as of 2019 has been published on the church's official website. At the end of this process, the Latter-day Saint is given a paper temple recommend signed by those who interviewed them. They will then present the recommend in the foyer of the temple before proceeding further into the building.

Latter-day Saints perform three major ordinances or rituals in their temples, including baptism for the dead, the endowment, and sealings. Baptism for the dead is the practice of baptizing living individuals on behalf of the deceased. Latter-day Saints believe that a requirement to enter the highest degree of heaven, called the Celestial Kingdom, is for individuals to develop faith, repent of their sins, and be baptized. Those who in life were not able to learn these teachings will have the opportunity to do so in the afterlife, but they cannot be baptized without bodies. Death does not exempt them from this requirement. Thus, Latter-day Saints are baptized vicariously for the dead who they believe can accept the baptism if they so desire. Latter-day Saints believe this ceremony was first instituted by the early Christians and is even referenced in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 15:29). As with ordinary baptisms in the Latter-day Saint tradition, baptisms for the dead are performed by immersion. While baptisms for the living typically occur in tub-like fonts in local meetinghouses, baptisms for the dead currently occur only in the temple baptismal font located in the basement of the temple. The temple font is large and inspired by the laver in Solomon's Temple, constructed on the backs of twelve oxen. Unlike other ceremonies in the temple, participants are not expected to refrain from speaking of, or describing baptism for the dead. Because the ordinance is now confined to temples, only Latter-day Saints are present; however, it was first performed publicly when it was instituted in the Mississippi River in 1840 (Tobler 2013).

The endowment is performed in two parts the first of which consists of washings and anointings which are frequently referred to as the initiatory ordinances. Latter-day Saints sometimes compare this portion of the ceremony to ancient priestly rites described in the Hebrew Scriptures. When the initiatory is performed for the dead, it is also at this time that the deceased male is ordained to the priesthood (Talmage 1912, 94). It is also during these initiatory ordinances that

one is given ceremonial undergarments, "referred to as the 'temple garment' or the 'garment of the Holy Priesthood.'" Once endowed, Latter-day Saints wear the garment throughout their lives. According to the church's official website: "For Church members who have received the endowment, the garment reminds them of their connection to God, their commitment to follow His will, and the blessings and protection God has promised the faithful" (LDS 2020a).

The second part of the endowment is simply referred to as the endowment and has been described in a variety of settings by Church leaders. Traditionally, descriptions are deliberately vague but understandable to the initiated. For instance, Brigham Young famously described the endowment: "Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell" (Van Wagoner 2009, 2:646). While the fact that Young understands the endowment is an ascent ritual significant for the afterlife is clear, the quote is largely incomprehensible to outsiders. This is why Latter-day Saints have often been comfortable citing this statement when introducing the temple.

Kramer refers to these vague statements only fully understandable to the initiated as "temple code" —that is, "an entire grammar of cryptic quotation, winking, gesturing, and otherwise establishing connection with the inside of the temple" (2014, 75). While temple code is certainly essential for Latter-day Saint discussions of the rites, over time, official sources have offered more details on the ceremony. The most recent description notes that the ritual is performed "in a group setting" and presented through video and "temple officiators." "During this part, the plan of salvation is presented, including the Creation of the world, the Fall of Adam and Eve, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the Apostasy, and the Restoration, as well as instruction on the way all people can return to the presence of the Lord" (LDS 2019).

Latter-day Saints are also comfortable discussing and providing images of the rooms that the endowment is traditionally performed in. The ceremony begins in the creation room, moves to the Garden Room ("characterized by richness and beauty"), then to the World Room depicting "scenes typical of the earth after the fall," and then to the Terrestrial Room named for the second degree of heaven in Latter-day Saint thought. Between the Terrestrial room and the final room, the Celestial room "the Veil of the Temple hangs" (Talmage 1912, 283). While not all temples have each of these rooms, the ceremony always leads from some form of "ordinance room" into the Celestial room. Again, according to the most recent descriptions, "At the conclusion of the endowment, participants symbolically return to the Lord's presence as they enter the celestial room. There you can spend time to ponder, pray, read the scriptures, or quietly discuss your experiences with family and friends. It is a place of peace, where you can also find comfort and divine direction" (LDS 2019).

Latter-day Saints tend to emphasize the covenants or vows made as part of the endowment when explaining the ceremony outside of the temple. As one Saint interviewed by anthropologist Brad Kramer put it, the endowment is "basically just a series of covenants you make with God" and regardless of other details, "the covenants are still the most important part" (quoted in Kramer 2014, 15). Latter-day Saint philosopher James E. Faulconer also notes that the covenants are "central" and sees "the rites of the temple [as] the medium through which celebrants are made ready to receive the covenants enmeshed in those rites" (2015, 204–205). Historically, the specific covenants have often been treated as details not to be disclosed outside of the temple and have been more often summarized broadly than laid out directly. For example, James Talmage in 1912 explained that the "ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part

of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the race; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King,—the Lord Jesus Christ" (Talmage 1912, 100). This hesitancy towards articulating the specific covenants ended in 2019 when the Church published the names of the five covenants (although not the specific wording) that individuals make as part of the endowment: the Law of Obedience, the Law of Sacrifice, The Law of the Gospel, the Law of Chastity, and the Law of Consecration (LDS 2019). Latter-day Saints believe that it is through the keeping of these covenants that the spiritual blessings promised within the endowment are realized.

The third ceremony performed in the temple is the sealing ceremony which establishes relationships for "time and eternity." There is both a ceremony sealing an endowed man and endowed woman as husband and wife, as well as a ceremony for sealing endowed husband and an endowed wife or a child (whether endowed or not) to their endowed parents. If one is born to parents who are already sealed before their births are "born in the covenant," meaning they are considered already sealed to their parents. The ceremonies are performed in a specially designated sealing room. According to the church's website, the marital sealing is performed as a couple "kneel and join hands across a sacred altar." The ceremony is officiated by a "temple sealer," who leads the couple in "sacred covenants with the Lord and each other" (LDS 2021). The specific wording or other details of the ceremony have not been published by the Church.

Origin of the Endowment and Its Connections to Freemasonry

The current esoteric rites performed in temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have their foundations in the rituals of the church's first temple built in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1836. In the early 1830s, Smith had dictated a series of revelations commanding the building of a temple where individuals would be endowed "with power from on high" (*The Doctrine and Covenants* 1981, 95:8). These revelations as well as sermons Smith preached during this period pointed to the requirement of spiritual preparation: "The endowment about which you are so anxious, you cannot comprehend now, nor could the Angel, Gabriel explain it to the understanding of your dark minds, but strive to be prepared in your hearts" (Smith 1835). In March 1836, Smith introduced this endowment consisting of washings, anointings, spoken blessings, and a communal shout of "hosanna" (Howlett 2014, 22–23). There does not seem to have been an oath of nondisclosure but attendance during these rituals were limited to men who had been ordained to the priesthood.

In 1840, with the Saints now settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, Smith announced plans for the building of a new temple and began to envision an extended ritual corpus to be performed therein. In May 1842, Smith first performed the ceremony that modern Latter-day Saints would recognize as the endowment. He did so on the second floor of his general store that he had "arranged representing the interior of a temple" (quoted in Anderson and Bergera 2005, 2). Two years later, there were thirty-seven men and twenty-nine women among the endowed. As one of those who attended the first endowment ceremony explained, "there was nothing made known to these men but what will be made known to all Saints, of the last days, so soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them" (quoted in Anderson and Bergera 2005, 5). Smith had intended that those he endowed before the completion of the temple would eventually administer the rituals to the rest of the church when the temple would be completed.

Early participants in the Nauvoo endowment pointed to the connection between the endowment and Freemasonic ceremony. Indeed, only six weeks before administering the endowment in Nauvoo, Smith had become a Freemason and advanced through the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason. According to one of the first group of initiates, Heber C. Kimball, Smith had taught that "there is a similarity of preast Hood in masonary. Bro[ther] Joseph ses masonary was taken from preasthood but has become degenerated but menny things are perfect (sic)" (quoted in Anderson and Bergera 2005, 9). In the same way that Smith conceived of the church as a restoration of primitive Christianity, he believed that he was restoring an ancient rite once performed in antiquity vestiges of which remained in Freemasonry (Bruno, Swick, and Literski 2021).

While the resemblance between the ritual systems would become a point of critique by anti-Mormons in the coming decades, during this period, Latter-day Saints seemed largely unconcerned about the similarities. Smith encouraged Latter-day Saints to become involved in Freemasonry leading to the building of a Masonic temple in the city (Homer 2014, 165–166). As another initiate observed, the Latter-day Saint participation in Freemasonry "seems to have been a stepping stone or preparation for something else, the true origin of Masonry" (Ehat 1979, 145).

The earliest sources do not address why there were similarities except that Freemasonry was a corrupted version of these older rites. Based on the timing of Smith's instituting the endowment only two months after becoming a Master Mason, it is reasonable to believe he had been inspired by his experience in Freemasonry to develop the endowment. This was assumed by both outsiders and insiders. For instance, in 1899, one Church leader explained "Joseph, the Prophet, was aware there were some things about Masonry which had come down from the beginning and he desired to know what they were hence [joined] the lodge.... Joseph enquired of the Lord concerning the matter and He revealed to the Prophet true Masonry, as we have it in our temples" (quoted in Homer 2014, 318). Yet, in the twentieth century, Latter-day Saints became more self-conscious about the claims that Smith pirated the ceremony from Freemasonry and as a result a new understanding emerged which claimed that Smith merely saw in Freemasonry a corrupted form of what he had already had revealed to him about the endowment. The apostle B.H. Roberts would point to elements of the Book of Abraham that seemed to also depict the contents of the endowment previous to Smith's involvement in Freemasonry (Homer 2014, 332–333).

One final element associated with the Nauvoo endowment was that it had developed across the two years it was performed in Nauvoo, and Smith apparently believed that it still needed further development. According to Brigham Young, Smith commissioned Young to "organize and systematize" the endowment (Van Wagoner 2009, 5:3104). That the endowment might continue to change in detail is a crucial aspect of contemporary Latter-day Saint belief. As explained in a 2020 church statement: "The sacred teachings, promises, and ceremonies of the temple are of ancient origin, and point God's children to Him as they make further covenants and learn more about His plan, including the role of the Savior Jesus Christ. Through inspiration, the methods of instruction in the temple experience have changed many times, even in recent history, to help members better understand and live what they learn in the temple" (LDS 2020b).

Exposé

If safeguarding knowledge with oaths of nondisclosure is a strategy of sacralization, then exposing that knowledge is a strategy of desecration. Latter-day Saints have always limited what was available to outsiders—the first example being the gold plates that Joseph Smith said he translated the

Book of Mormon from. In response to this strategy of confidentiality, critics drew on discourses of conspiracy and exposé. Whether early anti-Mormon writings proposed to reveal the true unsavory character of Joseph Smith, describe his participation in occult practices, or detail the alleged fraud that had gone into producing the Book of Mormon, they promised a look behind the scenes of the faith. It was rare that criticism focused on statements of belief, scripture, or public discourses alone.

As time passed and Latter-day Saint "secrecy" became ritualized, critics had a set of specific forms and content that they set out to unveil. Curious and concerned outsiders made a ready audience for new publications, lectures, and parodic performances. These depictions of the endowment were never rote descriptions of what occurred behind closed walls but were dominated by additional scenes of anti-Americanism, polygamy, domestic abuse, and violence. On one hand, the prevalence of reports made the ceremony what historian Spencer Fluhman called "among the nation's worst-kept secrets" (2016, 222); yet, from the perspective of Latter-day Saints these often-sensationalized exposés were, in the words of Brigham Young, "a garbled mass of trash." Young believed that when an endowed Saint abandoned their faith, "God takes that knowledge [concerning the ceremony] from their minds" (Van Wagoner 2009, 3:1292).

Nineteenth century exposés were often inaccurate, as Young suggested, or at least they were expanded from what seems to have actually occurred in these closed spaces. This is useful for understanding anti-Mormon exposure because we can examine these fictive scenes without ethical concerns. As the historian David Brion Davis (1960) established in his classic essay, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," the earliest examples of anti-Mormon exposés were part of a larger nativist literature popular in the mid-nineteenth century addressing the limits of American identity. This literature was reminiscent of anti-Catholic writings, such as the *Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*, in which secret settings and rituals were used to manipulate innocent women for sexual ends and to cover their abusers' deeds (Foster 1993, 116–117).

In anti-Mormon exposé, women were similarly placed in compromising positions for the pleasure of lecherous Mormon men. Images of forced nudity, voyeurism, and sexual assault were already present in the earliest exposés. In 1846, the Warsaw Signal published an exposé that included both male and female initiates "taken into a room together, where they are stripped of all their clothing, and are made to wash each other head to foot" (Warsaw Signal 1846). A former Latter-day Saint who had been endowed would respond to these claims in the same newspaper two months later, acknowledging that she was for a time nude and "washed from head to toe," but denied that any men were present. "All this was done by sisters in the church—none others were present—it is false to say that men and women are admitted together in an indecent manner" (Emeline 1846). Despite this early denial, similar claims continued to appear throughout the century.

One exposé, *Fifteen Years Among the Mormons*, implied sexual acts occurred in the garden room where others not participating in the ceremony could watch through "peep-holes" (Green 1858, 46). Exposés would frequently be illustrated with visuals of the different scenes alleged to occur in the endowment. Images of bare-chested or otherwise scantily clad women were common, sometimes surrounded by gawking men. A series of illustrations in Increase Van Dusen's *Spiritual Delusions* showed an unflattering caricature of Brigham Young playing various roles in the ceremony, including a scene of him "in the enjoyment of his secret revelings, in dalliance with his chosen fair ones" (1854, 64).

When an exposé did not claim Latter-day Saints literally molested women during the endowment, then they often deployed the ceremony as a useful setting to build their harems. The earliest depiction of this scheme was in John C. Bennett's 1842 *History of the Saints* which claimed

there was a secret society established among the church's women. Initiates were assigned one of three degrees based on their standing in the alleged sexual economy of Nauvoo. Of course, concerns over the introduction of polygamy at the time underlaid these depictions and similar writings appeared throughout the nineteenth century.

Male initiates could also be subject to abuse and violence in the temple of the nineteenth-century American imaginary particularly if these men potentially stood in the way of a leader building his harem. According to John Benjamin Franklin's *The Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, temple priests examined male naked bodies to ensure that initiates were not "wounded in the testes" and if discovered to have such an injury would be castrated. Franklin suggested this occurred frequently to those men "who had taken a good-looking wife with him, and would not give her up to any other man when required (by the High Priest)" (quoted in Foster 1993, 123).

The threat of violence was also designed to compel obedience. Beadle made the singular claim that the ceremony included a portion referred to as the "searching hand" in which "the initiates are placed one by one upon the altar, stretched at full length upon the back, and the officiating priest passes an immense knife or keen-edged razor across their throats. It is understood that if any are false at heart, the Spirit will reveal it, to their instant death." While this would certainly be a frightening scene, Beadle did not go so far as to claim there were murders in the Endowment House. "Of course," he wrote, "all pass" (1870, 496).

The motivations behind any given exposé varies. They might be personal as with those "apostates" eager to protest an institution they now consider corrupt. Many exposés include a justification for breaking the vow of silence based on the assumption that exposing secret evils is a righteous deed. When John Hyde published a notable exposé in 1857, he gave a series of reasons for the "violation of [his] oaths" for why he would break his vow to not disclose the temple ceremonies. Most significantly, he had come to believe that he had been conned. Hyde believed that missionaries lured new converts to Utah with "dark hints" of the endowment and these "deluded Mormons" deserve to know "the value of their anticipated blessing" (1857, 89–90).

Arousing prejudice against "Mormons" through publicizing their secrets also had political ends. Hyde justified his exposé in part because "the obligations involve treason against the confederacy of the United States." Like so many other commentators, he argued that the nature of the temple ceremony prevented Latter-day Saints from fully embracing democracy. Mormons were theocrats who positioned their own leaders above American statesmen. This type of rhetoric alongside exposé tended to appear in moments when Latter-day Saints sought a level of self-rule. This was the case in the writings of William Smith and Increase Van Dusen who opposed the Saints' petition for the statehood of Deseret in 1849. The same was true during the controversy concerning the seating of the first Latter-day Saint senator, Reed Smoot, in 1904. Historian Spencer Fluhman has documented how these same suspicions of a candidate who had taken secret oaths in the temple were deployed in Mitt Romney's 2012 American presidential campaign (Fluhman 2016, 223; 227–228).

In the final decades of the twentieth century, Evangelicals took the lead in publishing temple exposés. In their 1969 publication, *Mormon Kingdom*, Jerald and Sandra Tanner first published a popular exposé of the endowment ceremony with the help of a recent dissident. In the coming years, Chuck Sackett would abandon his Latter-day Saint faith and leak a tape recording of the endowment which he would also transcribe and publish in pamphlet form. Sackett would organize a re-enactment of the endowment for the film *God-makers* associated with the era's most influential anti-Mormon, Ed Decker. A rift in the Evangelical anti-Mormon movement emerged based on whether the ceremony should be interpreted as a deliberate form of Satanic worship or whether it was misguided but somewhat less sinister (Introvigne 1994, 163–166). There continues to be Evangelical-based anti-Mormon ministries, but the next step in anti-Mormonism

has been left to secular anti-Mormons who have scattered visual and filmed images of the temple ceremony throughout the internet and film. Importantly, from the nineteenth century to the present, there have been popular culture representations of the endowment in books and film.

While the use of esotericism as a religious strategy seems to provoke hostility, exposure unintentionally serves religious communities as well. As I have noted above, exposure of sacred ritual is violent and experienced as such by the initiated. As one Latter-day Saint expressed it, "Discussing the temple ceremonies openly is as insensitive as burning the Torah, stomping on the Eucharist and desecrating a mosque" (quoted in Flake 1995, 6). Critics strengthen Latter-day Saint identity based in part in a heritage of persecution. While there are no contemporary martyrs in the faith, anti-Mormon sacrilege highlights ongoing hostility toward the faith.

Latter-day Saints took different strategies in responding to exposé. The earliest, as evident in the Brigham Young statement quoted above, was a denial that it was even possible for someone to break their vows of confidentiality and then relay the contents of the endowment to another. In time, rather than challenge the accuracy of exposés, Latter-day Saints argued that it was impossible to understand the rite without revelation. Apostle Widtsoe stated, "Some of their accounts form a fairly complete and correct story of the outward form of the temple service; but they are pitiful failures in making clear the eternal meaning of temple worship and the exaltation of the spirit that is awakened by the understanding of that meaning. Such attempts are only words; symbols without meaning" (1921, 62). Religious studies scholars have responded similarly to the limitations of exposé as a source. For instance, Mikael Rothstein declined the opportunity to study the esoteric lectures of Scientology, believing that "the texts would mean nothing to the uninitiated, myself included" (2009, 367).

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, one fascinating way that the church has responded to exposé is increased transparency. While this might seem counterproductive for an institution that wishes to keep their rituals private, the concerns of misrepresentation have been significant. For instance, when the *Salt Lake Tribune* published photographs of the interior of the Salt Lake Temple that they had purchased from a Latter-day Saint dissident, the church published their own interior photographs for the first time (Walgren 1996). The publication of the two most widely read Latter-day Saint books on the temple also came in the wake of widespread public discussion of the endowment. James Talmage's *The House of the Lord* (1912) was published several years after the Smoot hearings and Boyd K. Packer's *The Holy Temple* (1980) appeared in the wake of the rise of Evangelical exposés. The timing of the most recent descriptions of temple garments and robes, as well as new website describing the rites is likely not unconnected to the rise of internet videos secretly filmed in the temple and circulated widely.

Latter-day Saints and Esotericism

The endowment and the esotericism involved in the ceremony serves numerous individual and collective functions. The endowment functions as a rite of passage marking an initiate's maturity in the faith. For those raised Latter-day Saint or those who converted as children or adolescents, the endowment is typically received in their late teens or twenties shortly before one embarks on an eighteen-month or two-year mission or shortly before a temple marriage. Single Latter-day Saints who did not serve a mission previously typically receive the rite sometime in their mid-twenties. Converts are required to wait at least one year after their baptisms before being endowed. Thus, the endowment serves simultaneously as a coming-of-age ceremony and a rite akin to confirmation in other Christian traditions. The fact that initiates now share the mysteries of the faith marks this ceremony with deep significance. In their new status as endowed Latter-day Saints, individuals are given more religious opportunities and are likewise more accountable

for bad behavior. For instance, the gravity associated with different transgressions is considered more severe for the covenant-bound endowed Latter-day Saint.

The temple ceremonies provide instruction in proper Latter-day Saint behavior. Of course, this relates to the covenants that define proper devotion and an understanding of the Latter-day Saint cosmology relating to pre-mortality and afterlife. Even more practically, the temple provides instruction in the concept of the "sacred" that governs Latter-day Saint interactions with each other and outsiders. Joseph Smith believed that "the secrets of masonry is to keep a secret" (Smith 1843). He expressed his wishes that the women of the church be "sufficiently skill'd in Masonry as to keep a secret" (quoted in Bruno, Swick, and Literski 2021, xxx). Likewise, one of the key purposes of the "sacred" is the question of what can be discussed with whom and in what contexts. This obviously governs discussions of the temple, forging a community of ritual insiders, but also instills a sense of caution that was historically very useful for a faith that tended to arouse deep suspicions from outsiders. Keeping a secret was useful when Joseph Smith and other Latter-day Saint leaders hid from lawmen in the 1840s or when polygamists tried to evade prosecution in the 1880s.

To the present, a culture of caution also has regulated discussion of certain theological matters. There are also a wide variety of beliefs sometimes referred to as "deep doctrine" that Latter-day Saints are culturally predisposed to be cautious about discussing in public settings. These often include items related to deification, female divinity, or controversial historical items such as plural marriage. Ideas commonly held by Latter-day Saints but not taught as part of the church's official doctrine are expected not to be discussed in official meetings of the church, for example.

Finally, the endowment points the initiated to the necessity of seeking personal revelation. Recall the earlier reference from the Book of Mormon above. Nephi tells his brothers that they must ask God to understand the meaning of their father's mysterious use of symbols. In the same way, initiates are not given an interpretation of the symbols and performances they participate in. Rather, individuals are told to return frequently to participate in the ordinances and to ponder and pray about the meaning of the symbols. In the words of John Widtsoe, "To the man or woman who goes through the temple, with open eyes, heeding the symbols and the covenants, and making a steady, continuous effort to understand the full meaning, God speaks his word, and revelations come…[N]o human words can explain or make clear the possibilities that reside in the temple service. The endowment which was given by revelation can best be understood by revelation; and to those who seek most vigorously, with pure hearts, will the revelation be greatest" (1921, 63). Silvia H. Allred, a member of the Relief Society General Presidency (a woman's leadership body), noted, "We all receive the same instruction, but our understanding of the meaning of the ordinances and covenants will increase as we return to the temple often with the attitude of learning and contemplating the eternal truths taught" (2008, 113). The conclusion of the ceremony in the Celestial Room in which people can stay as long as they would like encourages this sort of contemplation and even makes space for quiet discussion between participants. It is not unusual for family members and friends to share their insights into the ceremony in this setting. While this practice of quiet contemplation points individuals to personal revelation, it also reminds individuals that their personal revelations are not to be shared without restraint (Blythe 2020, 252–255).

Latter-day Saint esotericism is at the center of the faith. When a person first receives the endowment, they are often startled by just how different the ceremonies are from other aspects of the church. Latter-day Saint chapels are simple. Clergy do not wear religious dress. Most rites have very little formula to them. Yet, in fact, the initiate had only previously experienced a portion of their religion. Thereafter, esotericism will play a crucial role in their lives and religious identity as it has for Latter-day Saints for nearly 200 years.

References

Allred, S.H. (2008) "Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants," *Ensign* (November), https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2008/11/holy-temples-sacred-covenants?lang=eng (accessed 14 September, 2021).

Anderson, D.S. and Bergera, G.J. (2005) *Joseph Smith's Quorum of the Anointed: 1842-1845, A Documentary History*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

Beadle, J.H. (1870) *Life in Utah: Or, the Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism: Being an Exposé of the Secret Rites and Ceremonies of the Latter-Day Saints, With a Full and Authentic History of Polygamy and the Mormon Sect from Its Origin to the Present Time*, Philadelphia: National Publishing Company.

Bennett, J.C. (1842) *The History of the Saints; or An Exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism*, Boston: Leland & Whiting.

Blythe, C. (2020) *Terrible Revolution: Latter-day Saints and the American Apocalypse*, New York: Oxford University Press.

The Book of Mormon (1981) J. Smith, Jr. (trans.), Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Brown, Matthew B. (1998) "Of Your Own Selves Shall Men Arise, Review of The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship by David John Buerger," *FARMS Review of Books* 10 (1): 97–131.

Bruno, C.L., Swick III, J.S., and Literski, N.S. (2021) *Method Infinite: Freemasonry and the Mormon Restoration*, Sandy, UT: Kofford Books.

Buerger, D.J. (1994) *The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

Conze, E. (1962) *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy*, London: George Allen & Unwin.

Davies, D. (2000) *The Mormon Culture of Salvation*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

Davis, D.B. (1960) "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47 (2): 205–224.

The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1981), Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Duffy, J.-C. (2001a) "This is *not* an exposé," *LDSEndowment.org*, http://www.ldsendowment.org/ (accessed 19 May, 2021).

—— (2001b) "Why this Website?" *LDSEndowment.org*, http://www.ldsendowment.org/why.html (accessed 19 May, 2021).

—— (2007) "'To Cover Your Nakedness': The Body, Sacred Secrecy, and Institutional Power in the Initiatory," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 21 (2): 1–21.

Ehat, A.F. (1979) "'They Might Have Known That He Was Not a Fallen Prophet' The Nauvoo Journal of Joseph Fielding," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 19 (2): 133–166.

Emeline (1846) Letter to Mr. Sharp, *Warsaw Signal*, 15 April.

Faulconer, J.E. (2015) "The Mormon Temple and Mormon Ritual," in T.L. Givens and P.L. Barlow (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Mormonism*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Flake, K. (1995) "'Not to be riten': The Mormon Temple Rite as Oral Canon," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 9 (2): 1–21.

Fluhman, S. (2016) "Secrets and the Making of Mormon Moments," in M.A. Sutton and D. Dochuk (eds.) *Faith in the New Millennium: The Future of Religion and American Politics*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Foster, C. (1993) "Victorian Pornographic Imagery in Anti-Mormon Literature," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 (1): 115–132.

Green, N.W. (1858) *Fifteen Years Among the Mormons: Being the Narrative of Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith*, New York: Charles Scribner.

Homer, M. (2014) *Joseph's Temples: The Dynamic Relationship Between Freemasonry and Mormonism*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

Howlett, D. (2014) *Kirtland Temple: The Biography of a Shared Mormon Sacred Space*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Hyde, J. (1857) *Mormonism: Its Leaders and Designs*, New York: W.P. Fetridge & Company.

Introvigne, M. (1994) "The Devil Makers: Contemporary Evangelical Fundamentalist Anti-Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (1): 152–168.

Kramer, B.H. (2014) *Keeping the Sacred: Structured Silence in the Enactment of Priesthood Authority, Gendered Worship, and Sacramental Kinship in Mormonism*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan.

LDS [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] (2019) "About the Endowment," *ChurchofJesusChrist.org*, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/temples/what-is-temple-endowment?lang=eng (accessed 19 May, 2021).

——— [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] (2020a) "Garments," *ChurchofJesusChrist.org*, churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/garments (accessed 19 May, 2021).

——— [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] (2020b) "A Message from the First Presidency on Changes to the Endowment, *ChurchofJesusChrist.org*, https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/first-presidency-temple-message-july-2020?fbclid=IwAR2eLiGSQU43S7FdNzi4eAKfN_QqmHY2Ww394pEMLOw7kcXGbrwqq06A_DM (accessed 13 June, 2021).

——— [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] (2021), "About a Temple Sealing," *ChurchofJesusChrist.org*, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/temples/what-happens-in-a-temple-sealing?lang=eng (accessed 19 May, 2021).

McDannell, C. (1995) *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

——— (1997) "Sacred, Secret, and the Non-Mormon," *Sunstone* 20 (1): 1–45.

Packer, B.K. (1980) *The Holy Temple*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft.

Rothstein, M. (2009) "'His Name was Xenu. He Used Renegades…': Aspects of Scientology's Founding Myth," in J.R. Lewis (ed.) *Scientology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Smith, J. (1835) Discourse, 12 November, 1835. *JosephSmithPapers.org*, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-12-november-1835/4 (accessed 7 June, 2021).

——— (1843) Discourse, 15 October, 1843, as Reported by Willard Richards, *JosephSmithPapers.org*, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-15-october-1843-as-reported-by-willard-richards/1 (accessed 19 May, 2021).

Talmage, J.E. (1912) *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries Ancient and Modern*, Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Tobler, Ryan G. (2013) "'Saviors on Mount Zion': Mormon Sacramentalism, Mortality, and the Baptism for the Dead," *Journal of Mormon History* 39 (4): 182–238.

Urban, H.B. (1998) "The Torment of Secrecy: Ethical and Epistemological Problems in the Study of Esoteric Traditions," *History of Religions* 37 (3): 209–248.

Van Dusen, I.M. (1854) *Spiritual Delusions: Being a Key to the Mysteries of Mormonism*, New York.

Van Wagoner, R.S. (2009) *The Complete Discourses of Brigham Young*, 5 Volumes, Salt Lake City: The Smith-Pettit Foundation.

Walgren, K. (1996) "Inside the Salt Lake Temple: Gisbert Bossard's 1911 Photographs," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29 (3): 1–43.

Warsaw Signal (1846) "Ceremony of the Endowment," *Warsaw Signal*, 18 February.

Widtsoe, J.A. (1921) "Temple Worship," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 12 (2): 49–64.