

tend “to define their most fundamental values and commitments by the ancient norms of the Christian faith, however perceived, and only then—if at all—by the norms of modernity or modernization. In other words, genuine primitivists judge the modern world by the standards of the ancient faith, not the other way around” (xiii).

Some of the essays raise interesting questions about whether churches that began as restorationist movements have moved away from that tradition because of the various influences of modernism. To what degree did, or does, accommodation to modernity undermine basic primitivism? This dilemma, however, is largely circumvented in LDS theology, which understands that continuing revelation originally stood at the core of true, primitive Christianity, which was founded on prophetic, apostolic leadership.

LDS readers will want to take note of the essay by Thomas G. Alexander, “Mormon Primitivism and Modernization” (167–96). Drawing from his extensive study of late-nineteenth-century Mormonism, particularly the administration of President Wilford Woodruff, Alexander focuses on the changing relationship between the temporal and spiritual spheres during that period. In his view, the temporal and the spiritual were fused so intimately in the early days of the LDS Church that there was no incongruity between them. Thus various economic programs, seemingly temporal in nature, were seen as merely one aspect of an all-encompassing faith. By the end of the

nineteenth century, however, the temporal and the spiritual had become separate, largely because of the pressures brought against the Church by the political campaigns against plural marriage and Utah’s quest for statehood.

Alexander discusses the gradual modification of various beliefs and practices that resulted in the fact that directions from Church leaders on temporal affairs no longer carried the same spiritual connotations as in earlier years. Nevertheless, he shows that the Church was still able “to perceive itself as the restoration of ancient Christianity. Modernization had not changed that” (187). Though Alexander does not specifically comment on the principle of continuing revelation, LDS readers will understand that this is the process that has always led, and still leads, to needful adaptation in the rapidly changing modern world.

—James B. Allen

---

*A Woman’s View: Helen Mar Whitney’s Reminiscences of Early Church History*, edited by Jeni Broberg Holzapfel and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel (BYU Religious Studies Center, 1997)

Helen Mar Kimball Smith Whitney (1828–96) witnessed early Mormon history from its center. She was a daughter of Heber C. and Vilate Kimball, and she became a plural wife of Joseph Smith. After the Prophet’s death, she married Horace K. Whitney, with whom she raised a large family in Utah.



Near the end of her life, Helen wrote her reminiscences of life among the early Latter-day Saints. She relayed her experiences of the momentous: the Missouri persecutions, the very beginnings of polygamy, the exodus from Nauvoo, and the sojourn at Winter Quarters. She also wrote much of daily living: family life, friendships, dancing, and Sabbath-day observance. Her narrative provides a woman's view of the ordinary and the extraordinary in early Mormon history.

Reminiscing from the distance of four decades makes for memory problems, but Helen Mar Whitney's narrative benefits from her use of letters and diaries of her father and others. Also, the retrospective position from which she wrote allowed for mature reflection and enabled her to see life lessons in her past experiences. For example, she wrote, "The experience had at Winter Quarters taught me that it was only through obedience and great humiliation, more especially through fasting and prayer, that we could obtain any great manifestations from on high, or the power to enable us to overcome the adversary" (462-63).

Helen's reminiscences were published serially in the *Woman's Exponent* from 1880 to 1886. The Holzapfels provide us the service of pulling together into one book all the scattered installments from this practically inaccessible periodical. In appendixes the editors also provide Whitney's autobiography and her obituary written by her friend Emmeline B. Wells. An introductory essay, accompanied

by a number of photographs, invites the reader into the book.

—Mark Ashurst-McGee

---

*The Rhetoric of Church and State: A Critical Analysis of Religion Clause Jurisprudence*, by Frederick Mark Gedicks (Duke University Press, 1995)

This book, written by a BYU law professor, is sure to command the attention of those with an interest in First Amendment religious issues, legal history, or legal and political philosophy, especially regarding church and state.

The author sees a major crisis in religion clause jurisprudence: the Supreme Court's doctrine of church and state is grounded in two distinct and conflicting discourses. The first is religious communitarianism, which dominated Supreme Court decisions until the middle of the twentieth century. Communitarianism is generally respectful, accommodating, and supportive of traditional Judeo-Christian values. The second discourse is secular individualism, which developed in the 1950s. Now the prevailing doctrine of the Court, secular individualism takes a more critical stance toward religion, relegating it to the role of a purely private institution toward which government is to remain strictly neutral.

Gedicks argues that the Court's shift from the principles of religious communitarianism to those of secular individualism is problematic because it has been partial and incomplete: "While the Court