

Alan C. Miner

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External Evidences of Book of Mormon Geography and Culture

1981 -----> Present

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Statements by Church Authorities

Significant **Books**, "Articles," & Events

[Significant Theoretical or Illustrated Models, or Illustrations Related to Book of Mormon Geography]

Notes*

YEAR1 PERSON PRIMARY SOURCE2

Note 1: The mark ^ after the year is purely a research tool indicating that a copy of the article or book is on file in the author's personal library.

Note 2: The year (listed on the left) for the event or quote is not always the same as the date of the primary source (listed on the right) from which the information was taken. If the source information (the later publication of the information) was significant, in and of itself, to the later time period in which it came

forth, there will also be a separate listing for that later year. When appropriate, additional sources will be listed.

1981 **Martin Raish** **"All That Glitter: Uncovering Fool's Gold in Book of Mormon Archaeology,"** in

Sunstone 6, January 1981, pp. 10-15.

Poor LDS scholarship has damaged Book of Mormon credibility. Raish points out several types of errors: reliance on archaeologists to lend credibility, faulty footnotes, the use of pictures not related to scriptures with which they are associated, and publishing unauthenticated artifacts that sometimes turn out to be fraudulent.

[J.W.M.]

1981[^] **Raymond C. Treat** **"A Simplified Look at Mesoamerica,"** in *Zarahemla Record* 13-14,

Summer and Fall 1981, pp. 7, 10-11, 15.

Examines the archaeological finds from the Pre-Classic period (2000 B.C.--A.D.100), and Classic (A.D. 100-900) in Mesoamerica. the author relates these finds to the Jaredite, Mulekite, Lamanite, and Nephite civilizations. Parallels are drawn between the Olmecs and the Jaredites as well as the Nephites/Lamanites and the Maya.

[A.T.]

1981 **Jack H. West** ***Trial of the Stick of Joseph: A Lecture Series.*** Salt Lake City: Sounds of Zion,

1981.

A three part lecture that recounts the events surrounding a mock trial of the Book of Mormon. . . . discusses internal and external evidences of the Book of Mormon. This work is reviewed in S.518.

[J.T.T

1981 Kirk H. Vestal *The Firm Foundation of Mormonism*, Los Angeles: LL Co., 1981.

Arthur Wallace

An apologetic work attempting to demonstrate evidence supporting Mormon beliefs. The authors provide a review of some of the evidence tending to support the Book of Mormon's complexity and authenticity. Among the topics discussed pertaining to the Book of Mormon are . . . archaeology . . .

[M.R.]

1981 Boyd K. Packer "The Mantle is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect," in *BYU Studies*,
vol. 21. Provo: BYU, p. 259.

1982 Hugh W. Nibley "Archaeology and Our Religion," in *Seventh East Press*, January 18,
1982, pp. 4-7.

Methodological musings on the inadequacies and interpretive pitfalls of archaeology against a setting of the general debate between science and religion.

[J.W.W.]

1982^ Raymond C. Treat "Volcanoes, Archaeology and the Book of Mormon,"
in *Zarahemla*

Record 16, Spring 1982, pp. 1-2, 8.

"This article discusses two ancient volcanic eruptions in El Salvador and their significance to the Book of Mormon." The eruptions were ca. A.d. 600 and ca. A. C. W. 260. the author predicts that further digs in these areas will uncover tremendous finds relating to the Book of Mormon.

[A.T.]

1982 C. Wilfred Griggs "The Book of Mormon as an Ancient Book," in *BYU Studies*, vol. 22,
Num. 2, Spring 1982, pp.

1982 Saints Alive *Archaeology Proves the Book of Mormon?*, Concord, Calif: Pacific, 1982.

Charging that Book of Mormon archaeologists and LDS church members do not possess adequate or credible qualifications, the author finds there is no archaeological evidence to prove that the Book of Mormon is the record of ancient American inhabitants. Known artifacts do not bear Nephite inscriptions and Book of Mormon cities have not been located as have biblical cities and texts.

[J.W.M.] and [M.R.]

1982 LDS Church *What is the Book of Mormon?* Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982.

A missionary tract explaining the coming forth and background of the Book of Mormon. Contains photographs of ancient ruins in Central and South America as evidence for the Book of Mormon.

[A.T.]

1983 V. Garth Norman "San Lorenzo as the Jaredite City of Lib," in *SEHA Newsletter* 153,

June 1983, pp. 1-9.

Agrees with archaeologist Michael D. Coe that there are no direct archaeological evidences of the Book of Mormon. Proposes that the Olmec civilization corresponds to the Jaredite nation and that the present San Lorenzo is located at the site of the Jaredite city Lib.

[D.M.]

1983 **Raymond C. Treat** **"The Convergence Pace Quickens: Barley Found in the New World,"**
in

Zarahemla Record 22-23, Fall 1983 and Winter 1984, pp. 1-3, 14-15.

Also in *Recent Book of Mormon Developments, Articles from the*

Zarahemla Record, 1:15-17. Independence, MO: Zarahemla Research

Foundation, 1992.

According to a scientific report, barley has been excavated from an ancient Indian site in Arizona. Such a discovery appears to be significant evidence of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

[B.D.]

1983[^] **Raymond C. Treat** **"The Convergence Pace Quickens: Barley found in the New**
World,"

in *The Zarahemla Record*, Issue Nos. 22 and 23, Fall 1983 and

winter 1984, p. 1-2, 14-16

1984[^] **Paul R. Cheesman, moderator,** **"External Evidences of Scripture: A Panel,"**
in *Scriptures for*

Noel B. Reynolds, John L. Sorenson, *the Modern World*, edited by Paul R. Cheesman and
Wilfred

and Arthur Wallace

C. Griggs, pp. 121-135. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young

University Religious Studies Center, 1984.

The panel fields several issues dealing with Book of Mormon external evidences, e.g., the persuasiveness of evidence to nonbelievers, the value of evidences to members with testimonies, the possibility that some alleged evidences are invalid, and whether or not non-Mormon scholars agree with Book of Mormon archaeology.

[B.D.]

1984 Ray T. Matheny "Book of Mormon Archaeology," an address delivered at the

Sunstone Theological Symposium. Provo, Utah: Special Collections,

Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

1984 Raymond C. Treat "Toward a Better understanding of Science," in *Recent Book of*

***Mormon Development, Articles from the Zarahemla Record*, 1:3.**

Independence, MO: Zarahemla Research Foundation, 1984.

Scientists do not gradually accumulate knowledge in a continuous upward movement, but progress by jumping from one paradigm to another. Studying American archeology can be rewarding as long as we realize which paradigm the archaeologists are using. If we realize this our testimonies of the Book of Mormon will not be affected by seemingly contradictory archaeological evidence.

[B.D.]

1985 Paul R. Cheesman *Ancient Writing on Metal Plates: Archaeological Findings Support*

***Mormon Claims*, Bountiful, UT: Horizon, 1985.**

The Book of Mormon was translated from gold plates. Correspondingly, many examples of writings on metal plates and other pre-Columbian writings have been discovered since the time of Joseph Smith. Such items lend credence to the gold plates of the Book of Mormon.

[B.d.]

1986 Roy E. Weldon *Other Sheep: An Examination of the Rich and Convincing Evidences*

in the Bible. Independence, MO: price, 1986.

The Book of Mormon is defended through analysis of early Spanish Colonial writings regarding the histories of the Aztecs, Toltecs, and Maya, and the author draws parallels between the archaeology of South America and the Book of Mormon.

[J.T.]

1986[^] Shirley R. Heater "Rio Azul: Archaeological Research Sheds Light on Book of Mormon

Subject," in *Zarahemla Record* 32-33, 1986, pp. 10-13.

Discusses excavations at Rio Azul (Mayan city, 250 B.C.-A.D. 400 to 500) and possible Book of Mormon connections. Five archaeological firsts are also reported in detail: (1) locking lid jars, (2) directional hieroglyphs, (3) the hieroglyph of the verb "bury," (4) ancient Maya fabric "1000 years older than any previously found," and (5) carving on the jaw of a wild pig.

[J.T.]

1987 Bruce W. Warren *The Messiah In Ancient America*, Provo, UT: Book of Mormon

Research Foundation, 1987.

New archaeological discoveries in Mesoamerica confirm the validity of the Book of Mormon. The authors discuss historical accounts, traditions, and myths and display photographs of ancient pictographs concerning Quetzalcoatl as the Christ figure in America who taught Christian values and ordinances. The Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ. This work is reviewed in S.742.

[J.W.M.]

1988^ "New Developments in Book of Mormon Research," in *Ensign* 18, February 1988, pp. 12-17.

A compilation of research reports on the Book of Mormon discussing such topics as Jesus Christ, law, biblical and Near Eastern studies, archaeology, anthropology, language, and literature.

[L.D.]

1988^ **"Is the Mormon Figure Lehi Connected with Prophetic Inscription near Jerusalem?"**

(containing a letter from Donna Cochran and a response from the editor). *Biblical*

Archeology Review 14, November-December 1988, p. 19.

Frank Cross of Harvard disassociates Beit Lei (erroneously known by some as "Beit Lehi") with the Book of Mormon Lehi.

[D.M.]

1988^ **Ronald L. Puening, etc. "Queries and Comments: More on the Nephites and the Book of**

Mormon," in *Biblical Archaeology Review* 14, November--December

1988): pp. 12, 14-18, 20.

Letters responding to C. L. Sainsbury's letter (July/August issue) seeking inclusion of Nephite history on an international timeline. Contributors contend that no archaeological evidence exists for the Book of Mormon, point out the book's similarity to the Bible, and enclose the Smithsonian Institution's statement concerning the Book of Mormon.

[E. G.]

1988 John W. Welch "What Is B. H. Roberts' 'Study of the Book of Mormon' and How Have Critics

Used It to Discredit the Book of Mormon?" in *A Sure Foundation: Answers*

***to Difficult Gospel Questions*, pp. 60-74. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988.**

Papers written in 1922 by B. H. Roberts bluntly state problems and arguments that could be used against the Book of Mormon, but he was firm in his faith in the Church and the Book of Mormon. His contention was that the power of the Holy Ghost was the source for finding the truth of the Book of Mormon and external evidence was not reliable.

[J.W.M.]

1989 Alan Goff "A Hermeneutic of Sacred Texts: Historicism, Revisionism, Positivism, and the

Ext bible and Book of Mormon. A Thesis Presented to the Department of

English, Brigham Young University. (Master of Arts thesis, June 1989.

1989 Ted Nelson, Glenn Scott, Lyle Smith "Archaeology Alert," in *The Witness* 67, winter 1989,

Brenda Trimble, and Linda Trimble p. 15.

Points out two different findings in Mexico that show how archaeology converges with the Book of Mormon. The two excavations uncovered a Maya Codex in a city close to San Salvador and a lost fort found in Guatemala.

[L.D.]

1990 Roy E. Weldon "A New Star Did Appear," in *Witness* 71, Winter 1990, pp. 5-7.

Discusses the sophistication of Mayan astronomy to show that the ancient inhabitants of the Americas would have noticed the appearance of a new star at Christ's birth.

[A.C.W.]

1990^ Paul R. Cheesman "External Evidences of the Book of Mormon," in *By Study and Also by*

Faith, edited by John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, Salt Lake

City: Deseret Book and Provo: FARMS, 1990, vol. 2, pp. 73-90.

Mentions practices, legends, ceremonies and beliefs of the Olmecs, Mayans, and Aztecs that support the stories contained in the Book of Mormon. Examples include Quetzalcoatl, the Bearded White God, the architecture of buildings, the existence of stone boxes and writings on metal, the religious beliefs of an afterlife and a heavenly kingdom, the evidences of Christian-like practices and rites, the legends of a dark and a light people, the existence of fortifications and weapons suggesting warfare, and the discovery of stelas and other carvings that make reference to the tree of life and other Mormon themes.

[A.A.]

1991 David S. King "'Proving' the Book of Mormon: Archaeology Vs. Faith," in *Dialogue* 24,

Spring 1991, pp. 143-146.

Reflects on the methodology and goals of Thomas Stuart Ferguson in his aspiration to discover the archaeological proofs of the Book of Mormon. Suggests that there are already accumulated numerous evidences of the Book of Mormon and that others will surface within science's "own inflexible timetable." While external evidences may be fascinating and illuminating, "our principle effort should be not so much to seek knowledge about the Book of Mormon as to seek knowledge of the Book of Mormon."

[D.M.]

1991 Stephen Williams "Archaeology and Religion: Where Angels Fear to Tread," in Williams's

Fantastic Archaeology: The Wild Side of North American Prehistory, 1991,

pp. 156-188. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

Recounts the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, rehearses the Book of Mormon story, and discusses how members of the Church have used Mesoamerican archaeology to prove the book is true. The Kinderhook plates, the Newark Holy Stones, the Mark Hofmann forgeries and other fraudulent archaeological finds are closely tied to Mormonism. Nothing is too preposterous to believe for those who want to do so. This work is reviewed in W. 394

[J.W.M.]

1991^ James Roy Harris Sr. *Southwestern American Indian Rock Art and The Book of Mormon*,

Orem, Utah: Author, 1991

1992^ John L. Sorenson "Silk and Linen in the Book of Mormon," in *Ensign* 22, April 1992, p. 62.

Excerpt from Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* giving archaeological support for the mention of silk and linen in the Book of Mormon. Native American plants and fibers were used to make cloth similar to silk from the Far East and European linen.

[A.C.W.]

1992 Rex E. Lee "The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ," in Lee's, *What*

Do the Mormons Believe?, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992, pp. 11-18.

. . . Notes that external evidences of the Book of Mormon are interesting but not critical, for they are as yet tentative. Emphasizes the spiritual power generated in the book.

[D.M.]

1992 Raymond C. Treat "El Mirador: Massive Guatemala site Shows Great Promise," in

Recent Book of Mormon Developments, Articles from the Zarahemla

Record, 1:27-29. Independence, MO: Zarahemla Research

Foundation, 1992.

Describes some of the discoveries of the preliminary work done in El Mirador and concludes that it "promises to be one of the more interesting sites to believers in the Book of Mormon."

[B.D.]

1992 David J. Johnson "Archaeology," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow.

New York: Macmillan, 1992.

1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

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1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

1992 John L. Sorenson "Latest Discoveries," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, edited by

John W. Welch, pp. 111-113. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and

FARMS, 1992.

Large stone carvings found in many places continue to baffle archaeologists and linguists. Press releases of "latest discoveries" have not been seasoned by time or studies and are often not accurately reported by the press. It may take years of study to assess the stones' import and meaning.

[N.K.Y.]

1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

1992 *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, John W. Welch, ed., Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mmormon Studies, 1992, pp.

1994^ J. Orvis, M. Chandler, S. Paige "Expedition Summary," January 28, 1994.

ext

The authors write:

For ten days, starting on January 13, 1994, our party of six toured various sites possibly significant to Book of Mormon geography. Our group consisted of one magazine editor, two photographers and three LDS voyeurs with a fetish for Book of Mormon study. While it wasn't expected that our group would uncover new material linking ancient American peoples to the Book of Mormon, we did encounter certain finds which may prove valuable. In any case, we have decided to summarize our finds for whom it may concern.

Among the sites they visited were Cerro Vigia ("the proposed site of the Hill Cumorah"). Here for three days they examined and photographed potsherds, caves, ancient drawings, and earthen works, along with investigating local legends of the occult regarding the hill. Their photographs are included in this report.

1998^ James R. harris *The Name of God From the Sinai To The American Southwest: A Script & Language of Ancient Palestine Also Found In the Ancient American Southwest*, Orem, Utah: Harris House Publications, 1998.

1999^ "Archaeological Alert," in *The Witness*, Winter 1989, p 15.

2000 Simon Southerton Internet Posting, <http://www.exmormon.org/whyifl25.htm>),
March 17, 2000

On March 17, 2000, a Mormon scientist in Australia posted on the Internet his struggle with DNA studies and its implications for the Book of Mormon.

. . . My name is Simon Southerton. I am married to Jane and we are the parents of five children. . . . We left the Church together towards the end of 1998. At the time I was a bishop in Brisbane, Australia. . . . During my PhD study I became fascinated with the power of molecular genetics to answer biological questions. I took the opportunity to learn many of the fundamentals of DNA technology in the stimulating and challenging environment of the John Innes Institute. . . .

At the end of January 1998 I took time off work and spent two months studying for an exam to enter a graduate medicine degree at the University of Queensland. The first subject I studied was biology. . . . Soon after completing my study I read an article on the Flood and the Tower of Babel in the January 1998 issue of the Ensign magazine. . . . I concluded that the Internet was the quickest and most readily available avenue for me to find out what other Latter-day Saints thought about the Flood. . . . **[In this part omitted he must have stumbled on the Tanner's website--see the clues which follow]**

Without doubt the article that had the most impact on me was a statement published by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. concerning the Book of Mormon. In very strong language this statement spoke of a complete lack of evidence for any connection between the Old World and the New World. The strength of this statement jolted me. Scientists rarely make such dogmatic statements unless they have plenty of evidence (or none in this case) to back them up. I had been told in seminary that the Smithsonian had been known to use the Book of Mormon in their research. The statement utterly refuted this claim. . . . I believed the Book of Mormon was true and that Hebrew civilization had occurred on the American continent. . . . With this in mind I decided to look for myself for research that supported Old World migrations to the Americas.

I began searching for research papers having some connection with American Indians or Polynesians. Because I was familiar with plant genetics I became interested in recent research on the DNA of American Indians. The principles of DNA analysis are applicable to all living things so it was relatively easy to jump from the plant to the animal kingdom. I rapidly accumulated many scientific papers

comparing the mitochondrial DNA of American Indians from numerous tribes with the mitochondrial DNA of other populations around the world. Mitochondrial Dna is passed from mother to child each generation. It is essentially a female genealogical lineage, or a maiden name if you like, stored in the mitochondrial Dna sequence. This part of the total DNA genome is used for population studies in many animal species.

...

In the last decade scientists from several research groups had tested the mitochondrial DNA of over 2000 American Indians from about a hundred tribes scattered over the length of the Americas. It soon became apparent to me that about 99% of their female lineages were brought into the Americas in excess of 12,000 years ago. Almost all of these lineages are most closely related to those of people in Asia, particularly in southern Siberia near Mongolia. Several tribes in Mesoamerica (which included Aztecs and Mayans) had been tested and all but a couple of individuals out of about 500 had mitochondrial Dna of Asian origin. The small fraction of Native American lineages that were not from Asia appeared to originate in Europe, most likely Spain. . . .

For two weeks I wrestled with the research. [How much can you read in two weeks?] I collected more and more research papers but failed to find anything that supported migration of Jewish people before Columbus. Enough is known about the DNA lineages of Jews to be very confident that they are clearly distinguishable from Asian lineages. They would also be easily distinguishable from Asian lineages. They would also be easily identifiable if they were present in the Americas in significant numbers. I struggled with the complete discrepancy between the research and my understanding of the Book of Mormon and the doctrine of the Lamanties. The Book of Mormon describes the occurrence of Hebrew civilizations in the Americas numbering in the millions. It is clear that the victorious Lamanites would have numbered in the millions in about 400 AD. I could not understand how such large numbers of people could have escaped detection.

. . . ; As much as I wanted the Book of Mormon to be true, I suddenly knew that it wasn't. It might be full of some remarkable stories and scriptural writings, but it wasn't history about real people. My belief in the Book of Mormon was the foundation for my belief in Mormonism. When it was shattered it brought a lot down with it. I immediately knew that I must be released from my calling. . . . (The entire text of Dr. Southerton's statement can be read at <http://www.exmormon.org/whyiftl25.htm>)

Source: Salt Lake City Messenger, Issue 100, p. 15-16.

2000 John L. Sorenson *Book of Mormon Scrapbook: Excerpts from John L. Sorenson's notes,*

Ext Provo, Utah: FARMS, May 2000

THIS MANUSCRIPT IS NOW ABOUT 450 PAGES. JOHN WILL SEND THIS VIA E-MAIL

2000 Theodore G. Schurr "Mitochondrial DNA and the Peopling of the New World," *American*

Scientist 88 (May-June 2000): 246-53

Grant H. Palmer writes:

During the last ten years, scientists from various research organizations, including biologists from Brigham Young University, have tested the DNA of over 7,000 American Indians. These tests cover about 130 tribes scattered throughout North, Central, and South America. This research has revealed that in excess of 99 percent of the ancestors of living Native American women arrived on the American continent from Asia over 12,000 years ago. About 90 percent of the men have Y-chromosome DNA from the same place of origin. Lesser DNA lineages originate in Africa or Europe, most likely Spain, but not from the Middle East.

Source: Grant H. Palmer, *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002, pp. 56-57.

2000 Simon Southerton "Simon Southerton to Grant Palmer, 16 Oct. 2000.

Grant Palmer writes:

Southerton, a Mormon geneticist with Canberra Laboratories, is writing a book on the DNA genealogies of American Indians.

Source: Grant H. Palmer, *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002, pp. 56-57.

2000 "BYU Gene Data May Shed Light On Origin Of Book of Mormon's Lamanites,"

***Salt Lake Tribune*, November 30, 2000.**

This article reviewed the claims of Simon Southerton:

Generations of Mormons grew up with the notion that American Indians are descended from a lost tribe from the House of Israel. . . . The problem is mainstream science has failed to back that story. Instead, archaeologists, linguists and genetic experts outside Mormon culture say all the evidence points to Asia as the place from which American Indians originated. . . .

But most scientists outside LDS culture argue that if a band of Israelists did come to America 2,600 years ago, they left neither a linguistic nor an archaeological trace. . . .

Past DNA studies at other universities have shown no evidence of a connection between American Indians and Israel, notes Simon Southerton, a former Mormon bishop and molecular biologist who has extensive background in DNA research. He predicts BYU data will show the same.

Source: Salt Lake City Messenger, Issue 100, p. 15-16.

2002 Thomas W. Murphy "Lamanite Genesis, Genealogy, and Genetics," *American Apocrypha*:

Essays on the Book of Mormon, eds. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee

Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 47-77.

2003 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 13, 2003

In December, 2002, Thomas Murphy, a lifetime Mormon and chairman of the Edmonds Community College Anthropology Department in Washington, was threatened with excommunication over his research on DNA and Book of Mormon issues. *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported:

In December [2002] the local stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints scheduled a disciplinary council and informed Murphy he faced the possibility of excommunication, or expulsion from the church. But the president of the stake--a district made up of a number of wards--indefinitely postponed the council after the debate hit the press and supporters staged rallies across the country. . . .

"Sin, Skin and Seed: The Mistakes of Man in the Book of Mormon" is the title of Murphy's talk today at the UW. . . .

The "sin" and "skin" in his lecture refer to Scripture linking skin color and behavior. The Book of Mormon states ancient Israelites came to the Americas about 600 B.C. and divided into two groups: the light-skinned, civilized Nephites and the dark-skinned, corrupt, Lamanites, who eventually defeated the Nephites. These Lamanites, according to the modern introduction to the Book of Mormon, are the principal ancestors of Native Americans.

In fact, says Murphy, DNA data, as well as anthropological studies, indicate American Indians are descended from Northeast Asians who migrated across the Bering Sea between 7,000 and 50,000 years ago.

The stir over his findings began when he published them on a Web site run by Mormon intellectuals and in a collection of essays on the Book of Mormon called "American Apocrypha," . . .

Murphy was frankly pleased with the publicity and subsequent response. He's received . . . missives from Native Americans who say they're happy to finally see someone addressing the issue of racism in Mormon text.

Source: Salt Lake City Messenger, Issue 100, p.16.

**2003 Michael F. Whiting "The Book of Mormon at the Bar of DNA 'Evidence'" in *Insights*,
vol. 23, 2003, p. 1, 4-5**

On 29 January a capacity crowd gathered in the Harold B. Lee Library auditorium to hear BYU biology professor Michael F. Whiting address the topic "Does DNA Evidence Refute the Authenticity of the Book of Mormon? Responding to the Critics." The size of the audience suggested the great interest people have in the role and limitations of DNA research in unlocking the past, especially the religious past.

Whiting began by noting that critics have recently rushed to judgment proclaiming the DNA evidence has dealt a deathblow to the Book of Mormon. As they see it, Native Americans have been shown to be of Asiatic ancestry, whereas the lineage history in the Book of Mormon, the critics claim, predicts a Middle Eastern genetic signature among the descendants of the Lamanites.

DNA analysis is a marvelous tool for biological inquiry, Whiting said, but it can answer only certain kinds of scientific questions--and the Book of Mormon, being a religious history, is not open to direct scientific confirmation.

A specialist in molecular systematics who sits on review panels for the National Science Foundation to evaluate proposed projects involving NSF-funded DNA research, Whiting also finds the critics' argument scientifically flawed. For example,

**2003 *DNA vs. The Book of Mormon* Video. Brigham City, Utah: Living Hope
Ministries, 2003.**

The Tanners write:

In a new video titled *DNA vs. The Book of Mormon*, several other scientists have joined with Dr. Southerton and Professor Murphy in a discussion of the problems DNA research poses for Book of Mormon claims.