Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organization from an Orderly Universe, by Margaret J. Wheatley (Berrett-Koehler, 1992)

Margaret Wheatley states that she is "at heart a lapsed scientist, still hoping that the world will yield up its secrets to [her] in predictable formulation" (6). Having harvested a number of secrets from recent popularizations of science, Wheatley applies these secrets as insights into her own field of organizational leadership. The result is an unabashed, almost euphoric, affirmation of quantum physics, self-organizing systems, chaos theory, and the philosophical lessons that are routinely drawn from those disciplines.

Most books can be experienced at more than one level of understanding; this book works best at the celebrational level. Although Wheatley deals with some abstruse concepts, she is not overly cerebral, and her larger message attempts to liberate us from outmoded ways of thinking. She postulates that the new science, in all its ideological upheaval, sends a clear signal to managers and organizational specialists: because attitudes shape organizations, no better way exists to achieve organizational reform than persuading people that their personal attitudes are not sacrosanct. Some may find this a frightening prospect, but, on the other hand, loss of rigidity can also be cause for exultation.

Wheatley ends her book by discussing chaos theory, a move that allows her to wrap things up with the assertion that while the universe is strange, uncertain, and bizarre, it remains "a universe of inherent order" (151)—a point that must be made if Wheatley is to establish her claim that we can learn about organization from an orderly universe.

—David Grandy


Now that Gospel Doctrine teachers are provided only a set of questions and a quotation for each lesson, many are on the lookout for additional resources. Other Church members are seeking new insights and "a wider appreciation of the life and ministry of the Savior" (ix). This relatively slim volume aims to provide such an appreciation via a discussion of many, but not all, of the episodes reported in the Gospels and Acts. Matthews draws primarily upon the Latter-day Saint cannon, the teachings of Joseph Smith, and, of course, his own observations.

The book is organized thematically instead of chronologically. But the reader can find specific discussions through the scripture index and a fairly detailed index. One valuable chapter is a collection of quotations from the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning Jesus.

The contributions or lack thereof of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST) are usually highlighted rather than those from the