

No Man Knows My Psychology

Fawn Brodie, Joseph Smith, and Psychoanalysis

Charles L. Cohen

Anyone (like me) approaching the study of Mormon history wet behind the ears soon confronts Fawn McKay Brodie's famous (or, in certain LDS circles, infamous) biography of Joseph Smith.¹ Quickly fulfilling Herbert Brayer's prophecy that it "will probably be one of the most highly praised as well as highly condemned historical works of 1945," *No Man Knows My History* elicited both wholesale acclaim ("the best book about the Mormons so far published," Bernard De Voto enthused; a "definitive treatment," seconded her friend Dale Morgan) and wholehearted condemnation ("the statement made by Joseph Smith that 'no man knows my history,'" Milton Hunter concluded, "is still true as far as Fawn M. Brodie is concerned").² Unsurprisingly, non-Mormons typically favored the book, while Mormons fulminated against it. The biography further strained Brodie's already ambivalent relationship with her father, an assistant to the LDS Church's Council of the Twelve, and hastened her excommunication.³

Over the years *No Man Knows My History* has more powerfully influenced how both professional historians and the wider public view Joseph Smith than has any other single text. Sydney Ahlstrom apotheosized Brodie in his magisterial synopsis of American religious history, deeming her "sympathetic and insightful account" of Smith's life and work "unequaled."⁴ The book's abiding presence—abetted by its release as a paperback in 1995—continues to generate strong passions, especially among Latter-day Saints, although their judgments are more diverse than was true a half century ago. Devout Mormons long ago relegated Brodie, the arch-heretic, to, in Richard Van Wagoner's words, the "outer darkness,"⁵ and some Mormon scholars, echoing Hugh Nibley's classic screed,

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Charles Cohen visited Brigham Young University twice in 2004, once in May while attending Mormon History Association meetings in Provo and again in July as a visiting fellow with the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History. As one of Professor Cohen's graduate students at Wisconsin, I was well acquainted with his work and had, along with another of his graduate students, Jed Woodworth, suggested both visits to MHA and Smith Institute officials as ways of providing him resources for his 2005 MHA Tanner Lecture. During his May visit, he purchased Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* and Bringhurst's *Reconsidering No Man Knows My History: Fawn M. Brodie and Joseph Smith in Retrospect* on a visit of ours to the campus bookstore. He presented the material published here during his second short stint in Utah, just a month and a half later.

His expertise in American history and psychology are evident in the essay (his first book is a careful study of the psychology of Puritan religious experience), but it is noteworthy that he wrote the piece as a relative newcomer to Mormon studies. The fact that this insightful comment on Brodie's work resulted from an initial foray into LDS historiography caught the attention of many in attendance at his presentation and David Whittaker, who had been asked to comment on the paper, expressed admiration that such a contribution had resulted from a mere month's work. In my view, Cohen's careful, perceptive analysis is characteristic of his writing generally and testament to his extraordinary capacity for scholarly work.

—J. Spencer Fluhman, Brigham Young University

No, Ma'am, That's Not History,⁶ continue to revile her, but others now adopt more sympathetic stances, her recreance notwithstanding.

Fifty years after the publication of *No Man Knows My History*, a group of historians from across Mormon (as well as, in one case, non-Mormon) traditions took its measure in a symposium whose papers, along with two previously published essays, Newell Bringhurst anthologized the following year.⁷ Adjudged by one reviewer to be “the first systematic, multifaceted evaluation of [Brodie’s] work in book form,”⁸ *Reconsidering “No Man Knows My History”* does indeed provide a balanced and comprehensive appraisal of Brodie’s

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oeuvre, yet reading it against the original suggests why—despite its manifest virtues—it may be time to lay her tome aside.

On one matter, at least, the anthology mirrors rather than illuminates a flaw in Brodie’s text. Within the ecology of American historiography as a whole, Mormonism has thrived in two niches, a “localist” one concerned primarily with the Church in its mountain Zion, and a more “externalist” approach incorporating the Saints into the larger story of the trans-Mississippi West. Bringhurst’s dedication to “two mentors who greatly influenced my fondness for American Western history”—A. Russell Mortensen, a specialist on Mormon Utah, and W. Turrentine Jackson, a pioneer in Western environmental history—emblemizes these perspectives.⁹

Absent from the dedication, however, and, far more significantly, from the collection and the literature more generally, is an equal appreciation of Mormonism’s place in the American *religious* past. The one article appraising *No Man Knows My History* “in this regard” was penned by Marvin Hill, who judged the biography “not entirely adequate” because Brodie neither considered Smith “to be religiously motivated” nor “trace[d] the religious forces” cohering his followers into a “movement.” Hill’s essay was not a new contribution, however, but had appeared originally in 1974. Defending its inclusion in the anthology is easy—a 1998 review accounted the article still “the most searching study [of Brodie’s book] by a Mormon scholar”—but one has to wonder why *Reconsidering* nowhere asks if the situation had improved subsequent to Hill’s article or, if it had not improved, why *Reconsidering* nowhere explains the inertia.¹⁰ Roger Launius closes the anthology by tasking both Brodie and subsequent Mormon writers for “wrapping” themselves “into a tightly wound set of considerations about Smith,” thereby contributing to the “insular nature” of a “field” that “did

not thrive as it might have, had new and different and challenging questions been asked that had application and interest beyond the narrow Mormon community.”¹¹ I would widen the circle of blame; Mormons are not alone in failing to contextualize their tradition historically.

The issue of how Mormon identities took shape within the currents of the nineteenth-century, and the perceived absence of a Mormon context within American religious culture warrants extended treatment elsewhere; in this article I want to tackle a small symptom of that perceived absence: the anthologists’ misconstrual of Fawn Brodie’s psychological expertise in *No Man Knows My History* and the inhibiting effect both her writing and the anthologists’ judgment may have had for subsequent explorations of the religiousness of Joseph Smith and his followers.

Although the Bringhurst volume illuminates *No Man Knows My History* from a variety of standpoints, the authors reach extensive common ground. All recognize—and rightly laud—Brodie’s achievement. A “skillfully” written tome whose narrative unfolds “swiftly and effectively,” a “legend” that is still the “standard work on the subject and the starting point for all analyses of Mormonism,” and the book that won Brodie “national stature” (at the tender age of thirty),¹² *No Man Knows My History* has wielded a “potent influence” that “served as a transition point” between a more “polemical” approach to Mormon history and one “more interested in understanding why events unfolded as they did.” To quote Mario De Pillis: Brodie “brought Mormonism into dialogue with the national culture.”¹³ At the same time, they charge her with making numerous factual errors, misusing evidence, and serving up questionable interpretations: besides blunting Mormonism’s religious edge, she rendered character and motive so as to make her work “simultaneously more literary [than historical] and also more problematic,” offered too narrow an explanation for Smith’s adoption of polygamy, and, her “objectivity” notwithstanding, assumed “a highly moralistic perspective” that biased her judgment.¹⁴ In Launius’s opinion, she cast a “long shadow” over Mormon historiography that “is both disturbing and unnecessary” but that nevertheless “remains a persistent tradition in the study of Mormonism’s first generation.”¹⁵

While I concur with the anthology’s authors on these and most other points, I would demur on one matter: Brodie’s facility in deploying psychology. “Brodie was a psychohistorian,” Todd Compton maintains, and her “pathbreaking” interest in documenting Smith’s sexuality “was entirely justified.” For Bringhurst, her book’s popularity stems in part from “its engaging methodological approach” whose “explicitly psychoanalytical” framework “set[s] it apart from other biographies of Joseph Smith.” De Pillis offers the most nuanced appraisal. While noting that,

“contrary to caricature, she used the psychoanalytic approach least in this first biography,” the “slant of *No Man Knows My History*,” he claims, “is unobtrusively but clearly Freudian.” Turning an analyst’s gaze on her, De Pillis contends that “most current appraisals would agree that her unconscious supplied whatever she had failed to do consciously,” adding that her “affinity for Freudian psychology could be seen, perhaps, as a surrogate belief system that replaced Mormonism for her.”¹⁶ The authors’ consensus seems to be that a skilled depth psychologist had scheduled Smith for a “fifty-minute hour” and systematically diagnosed him. This conclusion, however, conflates the 1945 edition of *No Man Knows My History*, in which psychoanalysis figured almost not at all, with the 1971 revision, which added a section entitled “Supplement” that, as Launius notes, “incorporated recent trends from psychohistory.”¹⁷ Only there did Brodie deploy depth psychology concertedly. In the original text, her disposition is unsystematic and the insights allegedly derived from it are inconsequential.

To designate the Fawn Brodie of 1945 a sophisticated practitioner of “psychohistory” is to read her later expertise and accomplishments backwards. Such a designation ignores contemporary witness and her own self-appraisal while also overestimating her knowledge of psychoanalysis, the degree to which she actually employed it, and the rudimentary level that theoretical applications beyond non-clinical settings had achieved to that point. Labeling the author of the original *No Man Knows My History* a “psychohistorian” applies the term anachronistically, since it first gained currency only in the 1970s. Inspired at the time by Erik Erikson’s biographies of Martin Luther and Mahatma Gandhi, scholars followed William Langer’s summons to make psychologically informed history their “next assignment.”¹⁸ Brodie deeply admired Erikson—“an authentic genius,” she adjudged, albeit not one of Sigmund Freud’s magnitude—and, according to Bringhurst, considered him “one of her mentors,” but she did not come under his influence until after Erikson had published *Young Man Luther* in 1958.¹⁹

Significantly, immediate reviewers of the 1945 *No Man Knows My History* detected no psychoanalytic scaffolding. Blake McKelvey stated that Brodie “paints [Smith] as a dynamic personality,” and Marguerite Young averred that she had “recaptured” his “spirit,” but even while commending her skill at rendering Smith as a vivid historical character, neither credited Brodie with displaying special psychological acumen. Vardis Fisher, in fact, faulted the book for “a lack of information” concerning “psychology and comparative religions,” while De Voto slammed her for “pretty consistently” avoiding the “crucial issue” of Smith’s life—“his visions, his revelations and his writings”—and for offering only an “odd and inadequate

theory, that he was basically an artist,” his “prose fiction” the “natural expression of his fantasies and religious perceptions.” Brodie, in other

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words, had opted for a literary interpretation rather than seconding De Voto’s own pet psychological theory that Smith “was a paranoid personality in process of becoming a paranoiac.” “The chapter on paranoia in any standard textbook of psychiatry,” De Voto huffed, “can be checked against the prophet’s career paragraph by paragraph.” Ralph Gabriel said simply, “She avoids psychological or psychiatric

analysis or speculation.”²⁰ Interviewed thirty years after the book came out, Brodie certified this assessment. There was no psychohistory or psychobiography “in the Joseph Smith book except by inadvertence,” she asserted, largely, it would seem, as a reaction against De Voto’s claims. “I did read a lot about paranoia,” she recalled, only to conclude that Smith “did not follow the classical picture of the paranoid at all.” As a result, she “moved back and out of the field of psychological investigation.”²¹

Such a disclaimer does not mean that Brodie brought no psychological interests to the biography or was ignorant of psychoanalysis. As an undergraduate at the University of Utah, she remembered, “I first began to learn important things. I had no anthropology but I had psychology and sociology.” Popular versions of psychoanalysis infiltrated American culture between the two world wars, and, as De Pillis notes, the University of Chicago “was becoming a major center” for its study just as Brodie arrived to take her M.A. Bringham records her as conversing in 1937 with Jarvis Thurston, a “college friend” who was the literary reviewer for the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, about James Joyce, William Faulkner, and Sigmund Freud. One of the judges who awarded her a prestigious Alfred A. Knopf Literary Fellowship six years later explained that he found her portrait of Smith ““very convincing,”” for although Brodie was cognizant of ““such special interpretations as those supplied by psychoanalysis, economic determinism, religious bigotry, worship and straight debunking, she steers a path that is not so much a mean between these, as [something] simply better than any of them alone.””²² Such evidence, however, does not in itself establish that she was necessarily well-equipped to employ Freud’s ideas systematically. Having earned both her baccalaureate and masters degrees in English, she had received no formal training in academic psychology and could not have acquired a rigorous background in psychoanalytic techniques at the time except by becoming a physician and studying in

Europe; psychoanalytic institutes in the United States, the number of which burgeoned after World War II, did not open their doors to humanists until the 1970s.²³ Brodie's serious engagement with Freudianism occurred only after she moved to California, where her husband, Bernard, introduced her to psychoanalysts whom he was meeting through his work at the RAND Corporation. At that point, she began consulting them about her biography of Thaddeus Stevens, the Radical Republican congressman. Her diagnosis of Smith as an "imposter" in the 1971 revision of *No Man Knows My History* took into account a "detailed and fruitful discussion in a seminar on leadership in Los Angeles" attended by several psychoanalysts as well as members of the UCLA faculty.²⁴ A quarter-century earlier, though, Brodie was a psychological autodidact with at best a passing familiarity with psychoanalysis who was not yet sufficiently adept at "listening with the third ear" and converting her soundings into history.²⁵

Even a more skilled practitioner would have had difficulty doing so, for psychoanalysts were only just beginning to elaborate ego psychology, which emphasizes the ego's capacity to adapt and channel the demands of id rather than being habitually overwhelmed by them. New also was object relations theory, which focuses on infants' psychological development as being guided more by their dynamic relationship with their parents (especially their mothers) than by the internal development of their psychosexual drives. By dwelling upon the more rational and adaptable aspects of human behavior along with the importance of social dynamics, these lines of inquiry gave psychoanalysis a social face and facilitated its incorporation into disciplines outside medicine and psychiatry: sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and history. In 1945, however, *Young Man Luther* lay more than a decade in the future, and, more than another decade beyond it, Fred Weinstein and Gerald Platt's seminal efforts to articulate a method for psychoanalytic history.²⁶ Aside from Freud's forays into cultural or historical subjects such as *Totem and Taboo* or *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, Brodie had few models for conducting full-scale psychoanalytic investigations outside a delimited clinical context. She later declared Freud's *Leonardo* to be "similar in spirit" to her "intimate history" of Thomas Jefferson, but she made no such claims for *No Man Knows My History*, and there are no apparent similarities between the Jefferson and Smith biographies.²⁷

Gauging how particularly Brodie may have appropriated psychoanalysis is difficult because there is no evidence detailing what she read. The bibliography of *No Man Knows My History* cites very few secondary sources in general, although it does include Isaac Woodbridge Riley's *The Founder of Mormonism*, a "pre-Freudian" work casting Joseph Smith

as an epileptic, a diagnosis Brody spurned.²⁸ The bibliography does not list a single psychoanalytic title, and even the interpretation of Smith as

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an imposter derives, as far as the 1971 Supplement indicates, from only a single article by Phyllis Greenacre.²⁹ Brodie disliked using clinical vocabulary,³⁰ and her literary stylishness certainly benefitted from avoiding Freudian metapsychology’s lugubrious cadences, but her discomfort with technical language does not excuse her failure to cite works that influenced her methodology—if she used them. The best one can do is to scan *No Man Knows My History* for some trace of psychoanalytic language, inter-

pretation, or techniques with which someone familiar with one or more of Freud’s works might have been conversant.³¹ One should expect to find at least some mention of the sorts of jokes and slips of the tongue that Freud deemed the “psychopathology of everyday life”; dream analysis based on the theory that a dream is the disguised fulfillment of a suppressed wish; attention to an individual’s sexuality, particularly its infantile organization; explanations of behavior as resulting primarily from conflicting impulses, especially unconscious ones; the mediation of such impulses by the intrapsychic agencies of id, ego, and superego; or examinations of neurotic etiology. Few such references jump out from the original text.

Brodie hardly even gestured toward Freudian theory, let alone employed it systematically, at one point even twitting “psychiatric analyses” (in general) for having “been content to pin a label” on Smith while ignoring “his greatest creative achievement [the Book of Mormon] because they found it dull.” Given her lifelong reluctance to brandish jargon, it is not surprising to find words like “introjection,” or “primary process thinking” absent, but Freud’s metapsychological infrastructure, notably the intrapsychic agencies of id, ego, and superego, do not appear even in plain clothes. The occasional sounds of psychoanalytic speech—for example, a reference to Smith’s “extraordinary capacity for fantasy”—do not reverberate diagnostically. Brodie characterized Smith’s “delusions of grandeur” in running Nauvoo as merely confidence that he acted as the Lord’s “anointed” prophet. Such a man, she affirmed, “sets up a kind of centrifugal force within himself that—by turning always away from the normal—may one day destroy him.” Otto Fenichel, who published his compendious *Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* in the same year that

No Man Knows My History appeared, would have pointed out that “belief in one’s own omnipotence is but one aspect of the magical-animistic world that comes to the fore again in narcissistic regressions,” the delusion that one is “king, president, or God” accountable by “the loss of reality testing.”³² Although noting that “Dream images came easily” to Smith,³³ Brodie forbore from delving into the differences between a dream’s latent and manifest content.

Her clearest debt to Freud might have been her discussion of Smith’s sexuality, yet Freud’s influence seems to have extended only insofar as making it the subject of hot intellectual conversation. *No Man Knows My History* does not mention the infantile organization of Smith’s drives, and, for that matter, Brodie hardly needed the good Viennese doctor to convince her that a man who married, by her count, dozens of wives might have experienced libidinal hyper-cathexes that overwhelmed his superego’s fragile defenses. Moreover, Freud could not have rendered her much assistance, since he never identified polygamy as a psychological problem and barely mentioned it.³⁴ Thus, when Brodie asserted that Mormon temple ritual, betraying the “close affinity of religious and phallic rites” that is a “commonplace in social history,” derived “doubtless” from “the same unconscious drives that led the prophet into polygamy,” she outpaced the master himself.³⁵

Just how little theory *No Man Knows My History* mustered in 1945 appears in stark contrast to Marion Starkey’s far more psychologically informed excursus on Salem witchcraft, *The Devil in Massachusetts*, published four years later. Like Brodie, Starkey preferred to avoid “analysis in the technical sense” and eschew “jargon” in “telling the story,” thereby “making psychological interpretation implicit” within the narrative “rather than a thing by itself,” but she also availed herself of “sound psychological counsel” from three doctors and cited several authorities, especially Freud.³⁶ To Starkey, Salem in 1692 suffered an outbreak of “mass hysteria” catalyzed by adolescent girls whose “natural high spirits,” turned inward by their culture’s puritanical strictures against instinctual gratification, “were concentrating in a force that awaited only the right moment to find explosive release” and that finally manifested themselves in a “frenzy” of demonic possession. Into her evocation of the victims’ afflictions she readably insinuated the classical psychoanalytic diagnosis that conversion hysteria translated sexual fantasies into somatic symptoms and repressed erotic thoughts—in Fenichel’s words, finding “plastic expression in alterations of physical functions.”³⁷ The girls’ fits resonated within a larger community that “craved [possession’s] Dionysiac mysteries. A people whose natural impulses had long been repressed by the severity of their belief,”

Starkey insisted, “demanded their catharsis.” Released, like *No Man Knows My History*, by Alfred A. Knopf, *The Devil in Massachusetts* gained extensive public notice and, eventually, substantial scholarly criticism. Arthur Miller drew upon it in writing *The Crucible*, which “bubble[s] with sexual tensions” credentialed by Starkey (as well as Miller’s own artistic license), but historians, finding little evidence of erotic phantasmagoria in Anglo-American (as opposed to European) witchcraft, have dismissed his rendition.³⁸ Nonetheless, Starkey exhibited a far greater command of psychoanalytic theory at the time than did Brodie.

The extent to which Brodie deserves any reputation for psychohistory in *No Man Knows My History* depends entirely upon the Supplement added in 1971, and even much of that essay is devoted to non-psychological matters.³⁹ In it she defended her previous thesis that Smith had manufactured accounts of his alleged “first vision” only long after the fact, stated that his family came to believe in his mission only after he had completed the Book of Mormon, related recent research showing that papyri Smith rendered into the Book of Abraham were in fact familiar pieces of ancient Egyptian religious literature, and chided the LDS Church for “racist practices” against Blacks, whose “theological basis” was derived from the Book of Abraham.⁴⁰ The kind of popular psychoanalytic terminology absent from the original volume clearly, however, suffuses the Supplement’s middle sections even before the explicit reference to the work of Phyllis Greenacre. Joseph Smith is said to have blurred the “distinction between his own dreams and fantasies and reality,” might well have “harbored unconscious or even conscious fantasies” that one of his brothers wanted to kill him, and may have been prey to “unconscious fantasies of guilt and fear” following the death of his oldest brother, Alvin.⁴¹ Joseph Smith in the Supplement personifies the psychoanalytic perspective on human life as fraught with psychic conflicts. Brodie offered two important arguments, although commentators have made far more of the second than the first.

The first is really an exercise in psychoanalytic literary criticism, in which Brodie reads the Book of Mormon as a site in which Smith therapeutically resolved his anxieties concerning his brother’s fratricidal intentions and worked out “unconscious conflicts over his own identity.” Reacting to his fears that one of his brethren may have tried to murder him and his agitation over Alvin’s mysterious death, Smith wrote a tale about a father and six sons who bore “an extraordinary resemblance” to Joseph Smith, Sr., and his progeny. Although the dark descendants of the two evil brothers destroy their siblings’ heirs “in a frightful scene of genocide,” in the end the “white heroes, Nephi and Mormon, with whom Joseph Smith clearly identifies,” secret away “their sacred history,” Smith’s discovery

of which at the Hill Cumorah harnesses “the whole marvelous fantasy of fratricidal strife” to his “religious ambition” and new prophetic “image.”⁴²

Yet, though the Book of Mormon “provides tantalizing clues to the conflicts raging within Joseph Smith,” Brodie professes, it does not explain their “intensity.” It is at this point that she turns to her second assertion, invoking Greenacre’s analysis of the “imposter.” Smith’s basic conflict, Brodie states, dealt not with “telling” or “not telling the truth, but rather between what he really was and what he most desperately wanted to be.” He was not a liar in any ordinary sense but rather suffered from a “personality disorder” in which the conflict between two identities, one “focused and strongly assertive,” the other “frequently amazingly crude and poorly knit.” The demands of the former force the latter into the role of an imposter, in which the individual may display sharp perceptiveness in some areas accompanied, however, by an impaired sense of reality over all. Brodie’s critics have not always noticed that she qualified her psychiatric portrait of Smith: Greenacre’s analysis “is not necessarily the decisive key” to his character, though, as a “clinical definition,” she maintained, it does seem “more adequate” than terms like “paranoid” or “parapath.” Nor is it “fair,” she remarked in 1975, “to describe [Smith] as a simple imposter.” Averse, as always, to “us[ing] models,” she averred that his was a “very special, complicated story.”⁴³

The Supplement revises the original explication of Smith in a fundamental way, depicting him not as a consciously dissembling author who, like some narcissistic Pygmalion, embraced and then became his own creation, but rather as an individual tormented by unconscious conflicts and struggling to reconcile two dissonant personalities. As Marvin Hill recognized, “The mature Brodie seems to be telling us that her old interpretation was too simple,” although Brodie herself did not go that far. “If I were to write [*No Man Knows My History*] over again, knowing what I know now about human behavior,” she once mused, she would have paid his childhood more attention, developed the book’s earlier portion “more thoughtfully,” and “discuss[ed] the nature of his identity problem, which I think was severe, in psychiatric terms.” Nevertheless, though believing that with greater knowledge she would have done “a better job,” she judged that the book “holds up quite well,” and she stood by “everything in it.”⁴⁴ Casting Smith as conflicted rather than mendacious may alter one’s appreciation of his character, but in itself it affords little utility to historians, who want to know why specific events turned out as they did.

The Supplement does deepen Brodie’s analysis in at least two ways, however. First, it adds another dimension to her earlier naturalistic portrayal of the Book of Mormon as Smith’s skillful and artistic concoction

of “local Indian origin theories, the religious controversies of the day, and political anti-Masonry,” all of which can explain elements of the book’s setting but not necessarily the details of its plot. Since, Brodie maintained, the Book of Mormon can, “like any first novel,” be read autobiographically “to a limited degree,” its story line of fratricidal lineages emerges from Smith’s transposing his family’s dynamics into sacred history. Second, the Supplement offers a coherent explanation for Smith’s actions at the end of his life. Besides being troubled by “megalomania”—now exacerbated by his stature as a lieutenant-general, presidential candidate, “King of the Kingdom of God,” and “secret husband of perhaps fifty wives”—as well as the persistent contest between “fantasy and reality,” Smith by 1844 was experiencing “a new and ever escalating moral conflict” fueled by concern that “his continuing denial of polygamy” would soon be exposed as a “flagrant deception.” When William Law exposed his deceit, Brodie surmised, Smith “must have felt a shattering of his own grandiose and wholly unrealistic image of himself and his role in history.” Having been called “to account” by “a man called Law,” Smith first “reacted with lawlessness,” though “he was not normally a destructive man,” then slid into “a sense of depression, foreboding, and doom” that “dogged the prophet thereafter, contributing inexorably to his destruction.” The rage and regret triggered by the collapse of his fantasy made Smith complicit in his own death.⁴⁵

Brodie’s insight into the Book of Mormon’s narrative structure can stand independently of psychological investigation and bears evaluating by literary scholars,⁴⁶ but her psychoanalytic explanation of Smith’s behavior is both inadequate in its own terms and incomplete as a guide to what truly made him tick. Psychoanalysis stresses the importance of childhood experience, even in the generation of neuroses that may not manifest themselves until adulthood, but since Brodie, as she admitted, failed to examine Smith’s childhood sufficiently, she could not account for the etiology of his imposter conflict. Whether she could possibly have done so even had she tried is debatable, since the historical record rarely—probably never—affords the dense evidence of childrearing and infantile development on which to base informed diagnoses,⁴⁷ certainly nothing like what an analyst can elicit during therapeutic sessions. Even what evidence does exist calls Brodie’s theory into question, since, as Hill pointed out, although Phyllis Greenacre located the source of imposters’ fantasies in their Oedipal conflicts, what knowledge of the Smith family we have suggests that Joseph, Jr., had a good relationship with his father (a point corroborated by Brodie’s identification of Lehi with Joseph, Sr.), and displayed “no evidence of abnormal oedipal turmoil.”⁴⁸ Furthermore, Brodie failed to give a psychoanalytic rationale—any rationale—for Smith’s spirituality.

If, as the Supplement suggests, he did not consciously fake his religious interest, then why (leaving supernatural explanations aside) did he believe in angels? Put another way, what is the psychology of religious genius? Brodie provides no clue.⁴⁹

But if psychoanalysis did not inform the original text in 1945, what psychology did? The answer seems two-fold. For one thing, Brodie employed “common-sense” psychology, an utterly atheoretical approach (though for all that the tool of perhaps most historians most of the time), which is based on a scholar’s own

knowledge of human actions as much as anything else, and that views peoples’ motives as conscious and their behavior straightforward. From this perspective, Smith’s reasons for certifying polygamy were as venerable as David’s for sending messengers to Bathsheba (or, to sauce the goose with the gander, Helen’s for shipping out to Troy): variety is the spice of life, certainly for a husband who had spent “eight years of marriage” with “a woman somewhat his senior.” To Brodie, who claimed Joseph had to “pray for grace” whenever he spied a pretty face, monogamy must have appeared, in Brodie’s estimation, “as it has seemed to many men who have not ceased to love their wives, but who have grown weary of connubial exclusiveness—an intolerably circumscribed way of life.” Still, Smith “had too much of the Puritan in him” and was no “careless libertine” like John Cook Bennett, who “had never been troubled by the necessity of rationalizing his own impulses or of squaring himself with God,” so Smith “redefined the nature of sin and erected a stupendous theological edifice to support his new theories on marriage.”⁵⁰ Such an approach has its virtues, and its limits. One may surmise that sexual appetite contributed to the doctrine of celestial marriage—but why, then, did Smith dogmatize lust? Most men fearful of being caught with their hands in too many cookie jars do not feel compelled to invent elaborate theological devices to circumvent Matthew 5:28,⁵¹ or, for that matter, provide ecclesiastical sanctuary for close associates who are strongly urged (not merely invited) to join him. Adverting to Smith’s “Puritan” inclinations merely substitutes an epithet for an explanation. Why, unlike Bennett, did he have to construct a rationalization that would “square himself with God”?

Brodie’s insight that Smith’s life must have become sexually stale, percipient in a matter-of-fact way, displays the kind of “intuition” for which critics commend her,⁵² yet it rests on inference rather than evidence: the

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sources tell us what Smith did but usually not why he did it. For Brodie to note that Smith had to pray for restraining grace does not prove that he considered monogamy circumscribing, only that female pulchritude revved his engines. A link is missing in the gap between his so-called admission of being stimulated and the not-so-foregone conclusion that being aroused without the possibility of sexual consummation is necessarily constraining. We do not know if Smith thought it was. This habit of insinuating herself into historical actors' minds constitutes the second part of Brodie's method.⁵³ "For weeks" after learning that Martin Harris had lost the 116-page translation of the golden plates, she stated, "Joseph writhed in self-reproach for his folly."⁵⁴ Lucy Smith described her son's distraught reaction when Harris told him the bad news, but, though one can well imagine Joseph agonizing over what to do, there is insufficient evidence to say in an unqualified declarative sentence what he actually did.

Examining passages in which Brodie uses the literary device of creating an identification between the reader and "various characters throughout the biography" to foster sympathy for Emma Smith, Lavina Anderson judges that "Brodie must frequently make up Emma's reaction out of guesses, lacking any reliable documentation." The following paragraph, which Anderson denominates "an important revelation of Brodie's technique,"⁵⁵ shows the artifice's capacity to arouse empathy—and to push the boundaries of historical method:

What passed through Brigham Young's mind as his prophet backed down [from fighting Sylvester Smith], one can only guess. His years of leadership lay ahead, stretching over endless wagon trails and across dusty plains. The man who was to bring thousands of wretched outcasts to the inhospitable mountains of the West and build a homeland there would not have yielded to a mutinous upstart. This lame retreat of Joseph's was weakness, boding no good for the company's discipline in the dangerous days ahead. Nevertheless, there was something in Joseph that made Brigham content to acknowledge himself the lesser man.⁵⁶

Here we pass from intuition to invention. Brigham Young had not yet led the great Mormon trek, of course, and we have no idea how he would have acted either in Smith's shoes at that moment or in his own a decade later. Nor do we know if he did "acknowledge himself the lesser man," not to mention that it is hard to fathom why he would have effaced himself had Smith's "lame retreat" truly disgusted him. Dominating this scene *sub rosa* is a completely unexamined assumption about nineteenth-century male gender roles: being a man means never having to admit that discretion might be the better part of valor. Absent any discussion of frontier mores, on what basis can we be certain that Young perceived Smith's

refusal to fight as a loss of honor? Anderson concludes that “to the extent Brodie’s tools of tone, motive, and characterization are successful as literary devices, they simultaneously undercut the historical effect”—or, one might say more concisely, that they undercut the history.⁵⁷

This critique of Brodie’s psychologizing matters precisely because her book once bestrode Mormon historiography like a colossus—to what effect might be gauged by again referring to work on seventeenth-century New England. When Perry Miller determined—after he had an epiphany while loading oil drums in the Belgium Congo—that he wanted to begin his study of American literature with Puritanism, his instructors, he later reminisced, warned him against wasting his career in a field from which all the wheat “had long since been winnowed” and only “chaff” remained. Miller rejected their advice and the reigning “progressive” paradigm, which emphasized the economic and social factors in New England’s development. Instead, he took what Puritan ministers thought seriously, and for forty years his reconstruction of their intellectual world dominated discussion. Miller almost singlehandedly rendered Puritanism one of the most vital topics in early American studies, and he made it central for understanding not only New England but the larger sweep of American intellectual history as well.⁵⁸ Historians so draped themselves in the fashions of Miller’s wardrobe—Ramist logic, covenant theology, the Jeremiad, and New England’s presumed declension from having been the City on a Hill to becoming just another market along the Atlantic littoral for English tinsel—that it took decades to realize the emperor had not always dressed his arguments fully, and even longer to decide that the garments themselves had worn thin. Miller, it finally appeared, had plumbed every depth of the Puritan mind except the one that mattered most—its bibliocentrism—and though he wrote a magnificent chapter on its “Augustinian strain of piety,” to a great extent he undid that insight by promptly construing Puritanism not as a religious temperament but as an intellectual edifice, thereby magnifying its impact on colonial New England culture while inhibiting its comprehension as a popular devotional movement and, in consequence, exaggerating its influence on the future of American letters while distorting its long reach over American religion.⁵⁹

Fawn Brodie exercised a similar hold over the history of Mormonism, for good reasons. With scholarly aplomb she presented Joseph Smith as one of nineteenth-century America’s pre-eminent figures (a “full-blooded human being” rather than a lunatic oddity), “demanded an increased

That Joseph could have hypnotized them all is scarcely credible.

openness about Mormon origins and about Mormon history generally,” and “succeeded in settling” some issues about the early LDS “with a finality which seems remarkable.”⁶⁰ *No Man Knows My History* made straight the way for a more objective historiography.⁶¹ At the same time, as Roger Launius suggests, her book has “straight-jacket[ed]” rather than inspired succeeding scholars, cossetting them into rehashing her questions instead of formulating their own.⁶² In the process, she directed historians towards the beginnings of the LDS Church while at the same time her disinterest in Smith’s spirituality shooed them away from exploring Mormonism as a faith. Brodie’s discussions of religion are perfunctory and shallow. “The true mystic is preoccupied with things of the spirit,” she remarked without any reference to scholarly studies of the subject, “and in so far as he concerns himself with worldly affairs he denies his calling,” more a verdict aimed moralistically at Smith for “somehow” melding what she considered “two antithetical principles”—the “goodness of God” and the “making of money”—than an “objective” commentary about his communion with the deity. When she did approach that subject, she remarked that Smith’s later description of his revelations as “‘pure intelligence’ flowing into him” was “such an unspectacular process” that it “must have disappointed his questioners”—as if (leaving aside her complete lack of evidence regarding the reactions of Smith’s interlocutors) to say that divine communication must be a spectacular affair, or that God speaks only out of a whirlwind, not in a still, small voice.⁶³ A biography should elucidate its protagonist foremost and his or her followers only secondarily, but *No Man Knows My History* does not help us understand why Smith’s religious message—however confabulated, mercenary, or ad hoc it may have been—drew people in. To say merely that he had an aptitude “for making men see visions” or an “unconscious but positive talent at hypnosis” spotlights only his capacity as a performer, ignoring both what he performed and what his audiences imbibed.⁶⁴ Smith possessed undeniable charisma, but Mormons kept the faith despite great hardships even in his absence: witness their colonization of Missouri while he remained in Kirtland or their successful missions in England, which he never visited. Mormon religion is a dry streambed in *No Man Knows My History* because Brodie treated its fountainhead so perfunctorily.

How could so bold yet sensitive a scholar have missed the spirituality animating Smith and the Saints? At least a few answers come to mind. The first adverts to the dynamics of her original argument: if Smith were initially a fraud unanimated by religious sensibility, there would be no reason to investigate further. Yet Brodie herself contends that Smith did come to believe in his fabrications, which warrants her attention, and even if Smith had continued his deception all his life, the Saints themselves took

him (and their faith) seriously. That he could have hypnotized them all is scarcely credible. Brodie misses the point because she failed to set Smith's activities adequately within their wider religious context and thereby misconstrued the nature of his personal crisis. In the heady air of independence, states cast off their establishments (except in Puritanism's ancient bastions), revivals fired up, and preachers—whether belonging to a denomination or proclaiming their own singular gospels—proliferated. This homiletic hubbub was good news if you were Thomas Jefferson, for it evinced the flourishing of religious liberty based on the rights of individuals to worship as their consciences alone dictated, but bad news if you were a young man sifting the ashes of a burned-over district for the gold of absolute truth. As Prot-

estants in America competed against each other for converts in a situation where, without state support, none could gain most favored status, they adumbrated a theory, denominationalism, acknowledging that no church held the complete truth,⁶⁵ a formulation that allowed them to live along side each other more or less comfortably but that opened a spiritual abyss under someone who would take the welter of contesting doctrines as evidence not that all churches offered a version of the gospel, but that they afforded none at all. The impulses that turned Joseph Smith toward Cumorah had little to do with conflicts about who he was and much with his dismay over the churches' babble of truth-claims. His confusion issued not out of bouts between discrepant personalities but from having been buffeted by competing gospels that seemed to obscure God's voice and drain all sources of religious authority away.⁶⁶

A second answer comes from Mario De Pillis, who, presuming that "no scholar escapes the prejudices of his or her own time," noted that Brodie came of intellectual age at the University of Chicago in an environment permeated by hostility to religion. He is certainly right that her exposure to "sweeping secularism, which replaced religion as a world view" during mid-century, and "the influence of Freudian psychology in presenting a different paradigm of human nature" from what religion portrays, provide "an important key to understanding *No Man Knows My History*," but such factors, while explaining how and where Brodie might hone the tools of abiding skepticism, do not by themselves indicate why she herself chose to pick them up. De Pillis answers that query by turning to Brodie

Presuming that "no scholar escapes the prejudices of his or her own time," it is interesting to note that Brodie came of intellectual age at the University of Chicago in an environment permeated by hostility to religion.

herself. Feeling confined by the LDS Church's insistence on adherence to all Mormon doctrines and hemmed in by cultural boundaries "strictly enforced by a powerful hierarchy," she, like so many other intellectuals of her day, "became completely irreligious" and disaffiliated from her faith. Brodie's doubts about her tradition had percolated for some time—"I was convinced before I ever began writing the book that Joseph Smith was not a true prophet," she said—and she found the "sense of liberation" at the University of Chicago "enormously exhilarating."⁶⁷ Yet quitting her Church seems to have led Brodie toward a disinterest in religion instead of vituperative rejection. De Pillis observes that many apostates leave their sanctuaries "more in sadness than in anger," and he considers the views of the Church that she expressed late in life "to be both remarkably even-handed and fair." A sense of moderation does typify both her attitude toward Latter-day Saints—she allowed in 1975 that "there are many things about the [Mormon] brotherhood that are very rewarding"—and, if one can circumvent her debunking attitude toward the Book of Mormon—admittedly an insuperable stumbling block for pious Saints—her approach to Smith, in which she intended to give him "credit for his genius as a leader as well as exposing his feet of clay," is equitable. Even Hugh Nibley averred that the book was "not animated by violent hatred."⁶⁸ Were *No Man Knows My History* merely a latter-day *Mormonism Unveiled*, it might have made a stir outside Zion, but it would not have attracted continuing attention from the entire historical community, much less eliciting a commendatory commemorative from Mormon scholars. Nor, had it portrayed Smith underhandedly, could it have attracted "converts to Mormonism, who," according to Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington, "say that their interest was first aroused by reading the biography." Thus, it is hard to posit that an ingrained animus toward Mormonism caused her to downplay Smith's religiosity.⁶⁹

Perhaps, then, the answer lies in an aversion to religion in general. She once called herself a "heretic" and allowed (to a Catholic priest) that religion had proved "only a complication in [her] life, its abandon[ment]" being a "wholly liberating experience."⁷⁰ Her daughter described her posthumously as an "agnostic," though her younger son thought her "an atheist by the end." Her biographer notes that she "remained unambiguous in her distaste for Mormon institutions and dogma," her "animosity" reserved not just for the LDS Church but, more capaciously, for "all forms of organized religion."⁷¹ There is no question that she treated religious claims very skeptically, but nothing in *No Man Knows My History* approaches the caustic atheism that saturates Freud, who regarded religion as a fantasy to be grown out of and a neurosis to be overcome.⁷² One can hardly see him writing a biography sympathetic toward any religious figure. Erik Erikson treated Luther and Gandhi far more humanely, and, though

tutored in psychoanalysis by Freud, Brodie as a biographer gravitated toward Erikson. Taking up psychoanalysis gave her a more rather than less nuanced view of Joseph Smith; the self-conscious fraud of the original version became, as we have seen, the conflicted man of the Supplement, always driven to determine his authentic self. Yet even if Brodie did loathe religion, or at least churches, that attitude nevertheless did not foreordain her missing Smith's spirituality, for heretics, after all, are not necessarily unbelievers, while both agnostics and atheists can write sensitively (if not apologetically) about faith.

In alluding to Smith's revelations as "unspectacular,"⁷³ Brodie assumed that soul-shattering, washed-in-the-blood-of-the-Lamb conversion constituted normative nineteenth-century religious experience. Though spawned in a revivalist heartland, Mormon devotional temperament was—and is—emphatically removed from that of evangelical Protestantism, and, in trying to assimilate it to the New Birth, Brodie misconstrued it. As a result, an author otherwise distinguished for handling her subject respectfully neglected the religious passion igniting her protagonist's soul.

Why she did so is something that no one knows for certain.

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1. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). The book was originally published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1945; a revised and enlarged second edition was published by Knopf in 1971.

2. Herbert O. Brayer, review in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 32, no. 4 (1946): 601; Bernard De Voto, "The Case of the Prophet, Joseph Smith," *New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review*, December 16, 1945, 1; Dale L. Morgan, "A Prophet and His Legend," *Saturday Review of Literature*, November 24, 1945, 8; Milton R. Hunter, review in *Pacific Historical Review* 15 (June 1946): 228.

3. Newell G. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie: A Biographer's Life* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma, 1999): on Thomas McKay's office, 82; on the relationship, 27, 93, 95, 103, 144; and on her excommunication, 112–13.

4. Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 1972), 504.

5. Richard S. Van Wagoner, "Fawn M. Brodie: the woman and her history," *Sunstone* 7, no. 4 (1982): 32.

6. Hugh Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History: A Brief Review of Mrs. Brodie's Reluctant Vindication of a Prophet She Seeks to Expose* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946); Louis Midgley, "The Brodie Connection: Thomas Jefferson and Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 20, no. 1 (1979): 59–67; Louis Midgley, "F. M. Brodie—"The Fasting Hermit and Very Saint of Ignorance": A Biographer and Her Legend,"

FARMS Review of Books 8, no. 2 (1996): 147–230. For an opposing view, see Glen J. Hettinger, “Hard Day for Professor Midgley: An Essay for Fawn McKay Brodie,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 32, no. 1 (1999): 91–101. Midgley discounts many of the positive reviews from 1945–46 since they issued from students of literature whose knowledge of history he rightly suspects, but I read the reviews by professional historians as more generally favorable than he does. Besides Brayer (and, for that matter, De Voto, a quite accomplished if “popular” historian), see Ralph H. Gabriel, review in *American Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (1946): 725–26; and Blake McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly* 19 (June 1946): 258–60. A one-paragraph descriptive review appeared anonymously in *Missouri Historical Review* 40, no. 3 (1946): 450.

7. Newell G. Bringhurst, ed., *Reconsidering “No Man Knows My History”*: *Fawn M. Brodie and Joseph Smith in Retrospect* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University, 1996). The republished essays were written by Marvin Hill (1974) and Bringhurst himself (1989).

8. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, review in *Western Historical Quarterly* 28 (Autumn 1997): 433; though see also Louis Midgley, “The Legend and Legacy of Fawn Brodie,” *FARMS Review of Books* 13, no. 1 (2001): 21–71.

9. Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, [iv]. Bringhurst’s aunt, Lois Cooper Allen, was the third dedicatee.

10. Marvin S. Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History? A Critique of *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 67, 63; review by Klaus J. Hansen, *Pacific Historical Review* 67 (Feb. 1998): 122; and see Roger D. Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History: Fawn Brodie and the Legacy of Scholarly Analysis of Mormonism,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 221n7. For a contemporary statement similar to Hill’s, see the review in the *New Yorker*, November 24, 1945, 102, and, for a recent example, Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2001), 47, 123.

11. Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 219.

12. Lavina Fielding Anderson, “Literary Style in *No Man Knows My History*: An Analysis,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 147; Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 220, 196; Newell G. Bringhurst, “A Biography of the Biography: The Research and Writing of *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 32.

13. Newell G. Bringhurst, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence: Varied Responses to *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 55; Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 195, 196; Mario S. De Pillis, “Fawn McKay Brodie: At the Intersection of Secularism and Personal Alienation,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 122. For similar assessments of the book’s lasting significance, see reviews of the anthology by Richard S. Van Wagoner in *Utah Historical Quarterly* 65 (Fall 1997), 391; and Marilyn S. Blackwell, *Vermont History*, 67, nos. 1–2 (1999): 74; as well as Sterling M. McMurrin, “A New Climate of Liberation: A Tribute to Fawn McKay Brodie, 1915–1981,” *Dialogue* 14, no. 1 (1981): 74–75.

14. Anderson, “Literary Style,” 148; Bringhurst, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence,” 55; Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History,” 62. On factual errors, see, for instance, Todd Compton, “Fawn Brodie on Joseph Smith’s Plural Wives and Polygamy: A Critical View,” in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 156–58, 166–71, and passim; on misused evidence: Bringhurst, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence,” 49–51; and Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History?” 75–76; on literary rather than

historical quality: Anderson, "Literary Style," 148; on explanation of polygamy: Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 79–82; Compton, "Brodie on Joseph Smith's Plural Wives," 158–60; and Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 209–10; on moralism: Bringhurst, "Biography of the Biography," 22–23; Bringhurst, "Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence," 53; Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History," 62; and Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 209, 214.

15. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 195.

16. Compton, "Brodie on Joseph Smith's Plural Wives," 155; Newell G. Bringhurst, "Introduction," in Bringhurst, *Reconsidering*, 2; De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 112.

17. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 196. For a recent view that does not distinguish between the 1945 and 1971 versions, see Walker, Whittaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 138, 156–57.

18. William L. Langer, "The Next Assignment," *American Historical Review* 63, no. 2 (1958): 283–304; Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: Norton, 1958); Erik H. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence* (New York: Norton, 1969). A search of the "America: History and Life" electronic database at <http://sb2.abc-clio.com> (which begins in 1964) uncovered the first use of the term "psychohistory" in 1970—revealingly, in a journal's inaugural issue—though a search for "psychohistory" in the subject index calls up one entry in 1967. See Bruce Mazlish, "Toward a Psychohistorical Inquiry: The 'Real' Richard Nixon," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1, no. 1 (1970): 49–105.

19. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 113; Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 4.

20. McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly*, 259; Marguerite Young, "Joseph Smith, Mormon Prophet," *The Nation*, December 8, 1945, 632; Vardis Fisher, "Mormonism and Its Yankee Prophet," *New York Times Book Review*, November 25, 1945, 112; De Voto, "The Case of the Prophet, Joseph Smith," 1; Gabriel, review in *American Historical Review*, 726.

21. Shirley E. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie: An Oral History Interview," *Dialogue* 14, no. 2 (1981): 109. Published a few months after Brodie's death, the piece excerpts a longer interview conducted by Shirley E. Stephenson at California State University, Fullerton, in 1975. Brodie also remarked that Smith had "baffled" her "even after the book was finished," and that "It wasn't until fifteen or twenty years later when I had done a lot of reading in psychiatric literature that I felt I had some more explanations," a "little bit" of which she included in the Supplement, Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 104.

22. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 100; Nathan G. Hale, Jr., *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917–1985* (New York: Oxford, 1995), 57–73; De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 111; Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 68–69, 80; bracketed word in original.

23. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 50, 59; Hale, *Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, 102–14.

24. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 138–41; Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 419n‡.

25. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 110. The phrase "listening with the third ear" comes from Theodor Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear: The Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst* (New York: Farrar, Straus, 1948).

26. See Hale, *Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, 231–46; Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, *The Wish to Be Free: Society, Psyche, and Value Change* (Berkeley: University of California, 1969), and Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, *Psychoanalytic Sociology: An Essay on the Interpretation of Historical Data and the Phenomena of Collective Behavior* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1973).

27. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 3.

28. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 497; T. L. Brink, “Joseph Smith: The Verdict of Depth Psychology,” *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976), 74. See also Stephenson, “Fawn McKay Brodie,” 110; and Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 4.

29. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 418–19; De Pillis, “Brodie: Intersection of Secularism,” 113.

30. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 4; De Pillis, “Brodie: Intersection of Secularism,” 113.

31. Freud’s most popularly accessible works in English at this time, one or more of which Brodie could easily have obtained, were *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, trans. G. Stanley Hall (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1920); *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, trans. W. J. H. Sprott (New York: Norton, 1933); and *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, trans. A. A. Brill (New York: Modern Library, 1938), which included “The Psychopathology of Everyday Life,” “The Interpretation of Dreams,” “Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex,” “Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious,” “Totem and Taboo,” and “The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement.”

32. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 69, 27, 354–55; Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* (New York: Norton, 1945), 421.

33. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 25.

34. Freud mentioned polygamy only twice, and then fleetingly: once in regard to the childhood sexual behavior of his patient “little Hans,” the other in conjunction with the concept of “sexual bondage,” some “measure” of which he deemed “indispensable to the maintenance of civilized [i.e., monogamous] marriage.” He seems to have regarded the institution of polygamy as a “primitive” practice, but in neither case did he disparage polygamous impulses as themselves perverse, neurotic, or impure. See Freud, “Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy,” and “The Taboo of Virginity,” in James Strachey, gen. ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1966–74), 10:15, 110; 11:193–94. Both works were readily available in English translations while Brodie was writing.

35. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 279; and see Walter, Whittaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 47. That Brodie deemed the alleged “close affinity” to be a “commonplace in social history” (emphasis added) is indicative of her “secularist” worldview: surely a discussion of rites and rituals belongs to religious history. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 279.

36. Marion L. Starkey, *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1949), xii, xv. For citation of Freud’s work, one of the three most important sources on which she based her “reconstruction,” as well as other “Psychological and Anthropological Sources,” see 284, 309–10.

37. Starkey, *Devil in Massachusetts*, 29, 14, 29; Fenichel, *Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*, 217. See also Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, *Studies in Hysteria*, trans. A. A. Brill (Boston: Beacon, 1937).

38. Starkey, *Devil in Massachusetts*, 30; Charles L. Cohen, "History and *The Crucible*," *Opera Prompter* [Madison, Wisc.], 23 (October 1989): 19; Charles Cohen, review essay on *A New Language for Psychoanalysis*, by Roy Schafer, *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History* 17 (Feb. 1978): 125–26.

39. See Gary James Bergera, "Toward 'Psychologically Informed' Mormon History and Biography," *Sunstone* 15 (December 1991): 30, who misses, however, Brodie's psychoanalytic reading of the Book of Mormon.

40. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*: on the first vision, 405–10; on the chronology of his family's believing, 410–13; on the Egyptian papyri, 421–23; and on the Church's racial policies, 423–25, quotations from 425, 423.

41. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 412, 414, 415.

42. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 416, 413, 415, 416.

43. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 417, 418, 419; Phyllis Greenacre, "The Imposter," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 27 (1958): 359–82; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 105.

44. Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 83; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 104, 105. See also Hill, "Brodie Revisited: A Reappraisal," *Dialogue* 7, no. 4 (1972): 75. In the "Preface to the Second Edition," xi, Brodie stated flatly that the "new discoveries" of which she took note "do not necessitate important revisions in the biography," but that, "On the contrary," they "support my original speculations about Joseph Smith's character."

45. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 413, 419, 420, 421.

46. For recent efforts to treat the Book of Mormon using depth psychologies, see William D. Morain, *The Sword of Laban: Joseph Smith, Jr. and the Dissociated Mind* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, 1998); Robert D. Anderson, *Inside the Mind of Joseph Smith: Psychobiography and the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999); and C. Jess Groesbeck, "The Book of Mormon as a Symbolic History: A New Perspective on Its Place in History and Religion," *Sunstone* 131 (March 2004): 35–45.

47. Cohen, review essay, 123, 126, 128.

48. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 414; Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 82.

49. Lawrence Foster, "The Psychology of Religious Genius: Joseph Smith and the Origins of New Religious Movements," *Dialogue* 26 no. 4 (1993): 1–22, advances one answer: Smith, like many creative religious figures, suffered from a type of manic-depression.

50. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 187, 297, 310, 297.

51. "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

52. Anderson, "Literary Style," 147.

53. See Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, 54–55, for examples of Brodie's suppositious language.

54. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 55.

55. Anderson, "Literary Style," 141, 146, 142.

56. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 151.

57. Anderson, "Literary Style," 148 (where she calls them "tools of fictional effect" [emphasis in original]). For a similar judgment, see Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1988), 113–14.

58. Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1956), viii. See also Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630–1650* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1933); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1939); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1953); and Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* ([New York]: William Sloane, 1949).

59. Charles L. Cohen, "The Post-Puritan Paradigm of Early American Religious History," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 54 (Oct. 1997): 695–97, 701–3, 705; Charles L. Cohen, "In Retrospect: Robert Middlekauff's *The Mathers*," *Reviews in American History* 29 (Dec. 2001): 635–46; and see De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 115.

60. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 111; Walker, Whitaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 47; Hill, "Brodie Revisited," 73.

61. On her "objectivity," see Bringhurst, "Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence," 41, 55; McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly*, 260; and Fisher, "Mormonism and Its Yankee Prophet," 112.

62. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 197, and see 233n93: "chasing the shadow of Brodie's Joseph Smith has been in many ways unnecessary and counterproductive."

63. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 263, 57.

64. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 74, 77.

65. Sidney Mead, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 16–37.

66. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1984), 53–56; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 1989), 114; Mario S. De Pillis, "The Quest for Religious Authority and the Rise of Mormonism," *Dialogue* 1, no. 1 (1966): 68–88.

67. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 99, 95, 114–115; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 106, 100.

68. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 115, 116; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 106, 109; Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, 7.

69. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 113. See also Lavina Anderson's personal reaction to reading *No Man Knows My History*, in "Literary Style," 128–29.

70. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 102; Van Wagoner, "Fawn M. Brodie: The Woman and Her History," 36.

71. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 258, 257.

72. See particularly Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, in Strachey, *Standard Edition*, 21:3–56. On his theories of religion, see Daniel L. Pals, *Seven Theories of Religion* (New York: Oxford, 1996), 54–87.

73. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 57.