

# Letters From Readers

To the editors: This letter responds to a reference in the article "Abstract Art to the Glory of God," in Vol. 7, No. 4, of SPECTRUM. On page 38 Henriksen is quoted as saying, "*The Ministry* had an article that talked of contemporary painting as a 'crude portrayal of disorganized oblivion,' and 'of human disorientation,' a 'product of man's apostasy.'" On page 39, under notes and references, my name appears in bold type.

Now, gentlemen, a casual reading of the brief article that was referred to would clearly indicate that the artist Henriksen either misread the article or exhibits what is a common failing of us all, "A memory dulled by the passage of time," not to mention the carelessness of the editors of SPECTRUM in their handling of the same.

A careful reading of my article in *The Ministry* magazine, page 64, May 1971, indicates: (1) that I did not refer to contemporary painting as a "crude portrayal of disorganized oblivion." My article says, "It is not unusual at an art gallery to see art lovers staring in puzzlement at a piece of contemporary painting, *as if it were but a crude portrayal of disorganized oblivion.*"

(2) I am accused of referring to contemporary painting as being "of human disorientation." My article actually says, "*And I have learned to live with the fact of human disorientation, so prophetically portrayed on canvass with paint and brush.*" Now this statement clearly does not classify modern art as being "human disorientation." It says that modern art prophetically portrays this, and there is the difference.

One would be tempted at this point to categorize the gentleman being interviewed or the editors of SPECTRUM as being rather careless

with their facts. I will, however, stop short of this accusation and simply suggest that "we all make mistakes," and this clearly is one of the mistakes of the editors of SPECTRUM in general, and Mr. Henriksen in particular!

(3) On the third point I plead guilty as charged! I do refer in my article to modern art "as a product of man's apostasy." The full statement is this. "So in a curious sense, a product of man's apostasy became a reflection of his dwindling image." Incidentally, nothing has happened in modern art since 1971 to change my opinion.

E. E. Cleveland  
Washington, D.C.

Jorgen Henriksen responds:

If the readers are concerned about minor semantical differences between Elder Cleveland and myself, I would encourage them to refer to the original and judge for themselves. (*The Ministry*, May 7, 1971, p. 64.) The reference to modern art as "a product of man's apostasy," which Cleveland concedes is accurate, seems sufficient by itself to justify my interpretation that Elder Cleveland identifies abstract painting with evil.

To the Editors: In his article, "The Trashy Novel Revisited: Popular Fiction in the Age of Ellen White," (Vol. 7, No. 4), John Wood says: "The author's study of every statement about fiction penned by Mrs. White suggests a basis on which to proceed, but that is outside the scope of the present article." I hope that future articles by Mr. Wood will appear in SPECTRUM, as I think they will be interesting and valuable.

Miriam Tripp  
Berrien Springs, Michigan

To the Editors: May I congratulate you on your five-part presentation in Vol. 7, No. 3: "China and Vietnam: Mission and Revolution"! This is a great service to the church and long overdue.

In your explanation of the issue you state in reference to the Lee and Lin Reports that they "are now published for the first time." This is practically, but not quite technically, true. In the 1961 April and May issues of the *Church Triumphant* magazine we published facsimiles of the Lin Report. In the April 1960, issue we republished sections of Edward Hunter's very fine book entitled, *The Story of Mary Liu*, and made the book available to our readers. In the September 1960 issue we published an "Exposition of the Reactionary and Secret Gang Hidden in the Shanghai Seventh-day Adventist Church," which was an article by Tan Yingmin, better known in Adventist circles as Shan Ying-min, and was taken from the Communist Christian Church magazine named *T'ien-feng (Heavenly Wind)* under date of Aug. 25, 1958, published in Shanghai, China.

A. L. Hudson  
Baker, Oregon

The writer, a Seventh-day Adventist, is connected with the lay publication referred to in his letter. It has appeared irregularly during the past few years.

The Editors

To the Editors: I want to say I feel words are not adequately coined in the English language to express my appreciation for Vol. 7, No. 3 of SPECTRUM. I will simply say thank you very much.

"Lawsuits and the Church," "Years of Heart-break: Lessons for Mission by a China Insider," and "How Many Tragedies—A Commentary," are just a few of the excellent articles that are good for mental health. It appears that the same type of "mis-approach" or "transplanting" instead of "planting" that took place in China might have taken place in other areas like South America and Africa. Will we have opportunity to read of such cases in SPECTRUM in the future from those areas?

What about a rebuttal or a point of view on

D. Lin's article from medical missionary, Harry W. Miller, M.D., a veteran of 70 years in the Orient?

Is it possible that the Seventh-day Adventist church is transporting more Westernism to mission areas of the world than Christianity or Adventism?

J. M. Hammond  
Columbia Union College  
Takoma Park, Maryland

To the Editors: The articles by S. J. Lee and David Lin on the communist takeover in China (SPECTRUM, Vol. 7, No. 3) emphasized that the reason leaders, workers, members and students lacked courage during the crisis was that they did not have Mrs. White's writings. Elder Lee states:

Had [these writings] been available before the liberation, they no doubt would have given our workers the courage to go through the testing time and would have provided them with much-needed sermon material, which they were forced to obtain from the literature of other denominations.

This is a tacit admission that Seventh-day Adventist ministers without the writings of Mrs. White are incapable of writing material that is equal to the work of non-Adventists who depend solely upon the Bible and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Lee's statement suggests that Mrs. White's writings are superior to the Bible as a faithbuilder. Yet with the Bible as their only source of inspiration in times past, millions died for their faith. That at least the leaders in China possessed copies of Mrs. White's writings, is admitted by Elder Lee when he states that "our leading ministers gave up their copies of Mrs. White's books" to be burned.

David Lin concluded that the reason "those who have made shipwreck of faith in the past five years . . . is because the lambs of God's flock were denied the strengthening, and quickening influence of the *Testimonies*." Yet some of the Chinese leaders in the publishing house, who had been educated in Adventist schools where surely they had been made thoroughly familiar with Mrs. White's writings, were among the first to cave under pressure.

On the other hand, David Lin writes that "The South Chekiang (usually called Wenchow)

Mission is a working miracle. Unlike the West China Union [that was “in the process of disintegration” when he wrote in 1952] which had the privilege of entertaining a large number of foreign missionaries during the war years, the Wenchow Mission saw comparatively few missionaries. But to this day it is the only local mission which has a working organization with regular income, regular reports, regular conferences, centralized control of finances and an active ministry.” He reports that during the period 1949 to the time he wrote “this mission has baptized hundreds of new converts, kept their meeting places in repair, and acquired two new church buildings, while in the process of building another one this year. And this was all in the tense atmosphere of land reform and rural organization.”

These faithful members had not the access to the writings of Mrs. White that those missions had where foreign “Spirit of Prophecy” trained missionaries had visited in “a large number,” and where the members largely apostatized. Those in the Wenchow Mission had apparently built a faith that would stand on the Bible only.

Here in America Seventh-day Adventists have been flooded with the writings of Mrs. White for well over a century and a quarter, yet the church has suffered the very same experiences as those pointed out by David Lin, especially a shocking number of apostasies. It has been frankly admitted by the leaders that for every three members added one will be lost through apostasy. And that is not caused by civil pressure.

Plainly, if the Word of God is not sufficient to sustain and guide Christ’s professed followers in time of peace, those who rely upon the writings of Mrs. White will utterly fail in time of stress.

Neil W. Northey  
Mariposa, California

**T**o the Editors: Roberta J. Moore’s article “Fact and Fiction About Women and Work” (Vol. 7, No. 2) eloquently describes the sexual stereotypes prevalent in our society in general, and within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular. It appears that she has also created some new fiction about women and marriage.

Dr. Moore’s major conclusion is expressed in the question, “When 23 percent of women do

not marry, when 21 percent find their marriages ending with divorce or a premature death, why can we not bring ourselves to look squarely at the subject of working women?” (p. 38)

Everyone knows that some women do not marry, but I was very surprised to read that “23 percent of women do not marry” so I looked for the source of this surprising information. No reference was cited for this statement, but a reference was cited for the earlier statement that “23 percent of the women *now working* in the United States are single and another 21 percent widowed, divorced or separated.”<sup>1</sup>

I don’t know what fraction of women do not marry, but in view of the fact that only 46 percent of (the noninstitutional population of) women 16 years of age and over work (compared with 78 percent of the men) and that of the women who work, 26.8 percent are under 25 years of age,<sup>2</sup> it seems extremely unlikely that single women in the working population are an accurate measure of women who do not marry. It certainly isn’t necessary to resort to shoddy journalism to demonstrate that the situation of working women needs to be considered and improved.

David Claridge  
Washington, D.C.

1. *Expanding Opportunities for Girls: Their Special Counseling Needs*. U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1967.

2. “Employment and Earnings,” U.S. Dept. of Labor, Vol. 21, No. 8 (Feb. 1975), pp. 28, 29.

#### Roberta Moore replies:

I object to Mr. Claridge’s reading as my “major conclusion” the question he cites, but perhaps I should let that pass since he is right about my use of the figures in it. Not 23 percent, but 21.8 percent of women in the United States did not marry in the late 60s, according to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Figures near the beginning of my article, from the U.S. Department of Labor publication (1967), were used correctly: that is, 23 percent of *working women* are single.

**T**o the Editors: A well-illustrated and thought-provoking paper on the fossil forests of the Yellowstone region has recently been presented by R. M. and S. L. Ritland (SPECTRUM,

Vol. 6, No. 1 and 2). Evidence was presented indicating that past attempts at explaining the 12 to 45 forest levels as the result of transport of stumps do not fit the physical evidence. Although I have not visited these sites, descriptions provided by the Ritlands' article and my experience as a forest ecologist lead me to propose the following model which fits a relatively short time scale.

1. Ancient forests developed on slopes formed by erosion through horizontal layers of volcanic strata.

2. Those forests displayed an altitudinal zonation of species and sizes as is characteristic of present-day forests in the western United States.<sup>1</sup>

3. Volcanic activity deposited ash over this area to a depth sufficient to cause death of the trees by asphyxiation, as so commonly occurs in housing developments when fill dirt is placed around trees.<sup>2</sup>

4. The portions of tree stems above the volcanic ash decayed away and the stumps below were fossilized.

5. Erosion of much of this ash reveals the fossilized stumps seen today.

Not only does this model fit a relatively short time scale, it also appears much more probable than alternating favorable and unfavorable conditions which would allow up to 45 different forests to follow one another over long periods of time.

The Ritlands note that the cross-sections of stumps show asymmetric growth in somewhat parallel directions. They indicate this may have been due to the effect of prevailing winds on crown development. On the other hand, this may reflect the fact that the trees grew on a steep slope. Trees on steep hillsides usually exhibit greater radial growth on the downhill side; the pitch is nearer the bark on the uphill side.<sup>3</sup>

Among findings which would prove this model inadequate would be excavations showing stumps extending far into the mountain at given levels. Such a test would be extremely costly and is not likely. If fossilized stumps are found vertically above other stumps and logs, but not near enough to have been growing on top of dead stumps or logs as often occurs in the forest,<sup>4</sup> this model is again questionable. It is

hoped that field tests of the model presented here can be conducted.

Harry W. Wiant, Jr.  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV

1. T. W. Daniel, "The Middle and Southern Rocky Mountain Region," *Regional Silviculture of the United States*, ed. by J. W. Barrett. (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1962), pp. 351-55.

2. J. W. Toumey, and C. F. Korstian, *Foundations of Silviculture* (2nd ed.: New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1947), p. 115.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

4. J. H. G. Smith, *Some Factors Affecting Reproduction of Engelmann Spruce and Alpine Fir* (British Columbia Forest Service Technical Publications, T43, 1955).

#### R. M. and S. L. Ritland reply:

The hill slope hypothesis outlined by Dr. Wiant is a reasonable suggestion that has been considered by nearly everyone who has studied the forests in the field. Most investigators have had to reject it because of tests like those suggested in Dr. Wiant's letter. There is, in fact, more than adequate exposure to make tests similar to those he suggests. We present below some evidence which appears inconsistent with the hill slope hypothesis.

1. Roots on living trees growing on steep slopes tend to follow the slope contours, that is, up slope and down slope rather than at approximately right angles [to the trunk] as when trees grow on areas of low relief. This is essential because roots must be in the aerated zone near the surface to breathe. By contrast the roots, the fossil leaves and detrital of the fossil trees [in Yellowstone] conform to horizontal bedding planes which go back into the mountains rather than conforming to present-day hill slopes. Hundreds of exposures where canyons cut near-vertical cliffs into mountains, seem clearly to indicate a cross section of volcanic strata on which the trees are formed.

2. From time to time fossil trees are observed in natural caves where soft strata have eroded out, forming a natural overhang. If the treetop continued, it would go into the rock on the roof of the cave.

3. In at least two instances, we have seen preserved trees (in vertical cuts) rooting in strata directly above trees on a lower level.

4. If one observes deposits laid down on steep slopes such as in talus accumulations, the bed-

ding plane is on a high angle. No remnants of high angle bedding plane strata are found around stumps that are only partly uncovered.

5. In addition to having the roots going up

slope and down slope, the trunks of living trees on slopes often naturally correct for movement down slope of the topsoil. Such basal irregularity is never seen on the fossil trees.

**Note to Our Readers:**

We take this opportunity to remind you that the Christmas season is approaching. We hope you will consider giving a SPECTRUM subscription to the persons on your gift list.

The Editors.