But Ketcham's intention is less to stretch the boundaries of our knowledge of the eighteenth-century Anglo-American intellectual world than to evaluate the specific influence of nonpartisan ideals on the evolution of the institution of the presidency.

Indeed, the greatest value of *Presidents above Party* is to remind us that the birth of the American presidency was a protracted affair. Washington and his immediate successors were not prescient. They had no models of a national executive. Monarchy was clearly unacceptable in Revolutionary America, but what were the other options? The Constitution was decidedly vague on presidential powers and responsibilities. Caught between their intellectual heritage, which frowned on partisan activities as corrupt and dangerous to the body politic, and the demands of governing a large, pluralistic, and expanding nation, the first six presidents were thus forced to improvise. It has been said in defense of King George III that he has been criticized for trying to rule like Queen Elizabeth when he was supposed to reign like Queen Victoria. The American presidents from Washington to John Quincy Adams faced a similar dilemma—they believed they ought to govern like Bolingbroke's idealized Patriot King when the realities of their job increasingly demanded that they act like Andrew Jackson.

Ketcham's major quarrel is with political scientists and historians who have described the first presidents as either hypocritical or ineffective party leaders. He would have us understand their sometimes contradictory behavior within the context of their perceptions of their task. Ketcham's work is too intellectual to capture the often rough world of politics in the early republic; he concentrates on what men thought to the exclusion of what they did. Still, he has accomplished well the goal he set for himself. *Presidents above Party* is a synthetic and often insightful study of the governing assumptions of the men who established the presidency as an integral part of American government.

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Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition. By Jan Shipps. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985. Pp. xviii, 211. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $14.50.)

Jan Shipps combines the methods of social history, intellectual history, and the phenomenology of religions to present a distinctive interpretation of Mormonism as an innovative religious movement. Drawing on conceptual tools developed by

phenomenologists of religion—sacred time, sacred space, ritual, the mythic, the prophetic, the canonical—she strives, with considerable success, to interpret Mormon history not as an idiosyncratic elaboration of the Christian story but as a recapitulation of the wider biblical history, especially of the Old Testament narratives. Such an account allows her to clarify the struggle between Mormons who viewed themselves primarily as expanding the earlier Christian appropriation of Israel's history and other Mormons, led by Brigham Young, who believed that the revelation to Joseph Smith inaugurated a restoration and expansion of Israel's story that stood in tension with the customary Christian appropriation.

Her story is complex, but three themes illustrate her argument. First, her observation that Smith's first vision in 1820 assumed increasing importance for Mormons after 1880 enables her to analyze the theme of legitimation. Shipps concludes that in the early years the *Book of Mormon* served to legitimate Smith's claims; in later eras, his claims served to legitimate the *Book of Mormon*. Second, she explores the theme of restoration, finding in Mormon history the recapitulation of Israel's sacred history. Because this sacred history did not correspond to the chronology of nineteenth-century Mormonism, historians have sometimes overlooked the extent to which Smith and his followers interpreted their movement as a reprise of the history of Israel. By noting the patterns of replication, Shipps can reevaluate the external chronology; her account, for example, accentuates the importance of the settlement in Kirtland between 1834 and 1838 because it was there that the movement established literal connections with Israel by inaugurating plural marriage and the ritual of patriarchal blessing (through which Saints learn their Hebraic genealogical lineage) and by erecting the first temple. Third, she explores the development of canonical documents as an illuminating clue to the tensions between Saints who located authority within the official structures of the Church and those who insisted on the prior authority conveyed by familial lineage.

Shipps has written a thoughtful, balanced account. Her struggles with the tensions between the historical and phenomenological methods are instructive. The phenomenologists isolated continuing patterns and structures—sacred space, visionary trance, prophecy, and others—that are believed to appear in diverse regions and different times. The historians have assumed that understanding a movement or event requires primarily that one locate it in its own cultural and social setting. Earlier historians of Mormonism normally worked solely with historical methods, which led them to accent the similarities between Mor-

monism and nineteenth-century evangelical Protestantism. Shipps supplements historical method with a phenomenology that emphasizes the continuities between Mormon experience and patterns of religious activity that long antedated the nineteenth century. The methodological issues are complex. Because Shipps explores them with insight and judgment her book should receive careful attention from historians of religion in America.

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To the Halls of the Montezumas: The Mexican War in the American Imagination. By Robert W. Johannsen. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. Pp. ix, 363. Illustrations, map, notes, index. $25.00.)

Once the United States reached the Civil War, Americans had difficulty seeing the Mexican War in its own right. Given the events of 1846, 1848, and 1850 there seemed to follow naturally if not inexorably the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Bleeding Kansas, the Harper's Ferry Raid, and worse. The Mexican War appeared as dress rehearsal for notable individuals such as Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, and more importantly as catalyst and accelerator for the sanguinary struggle between North and South. This regrettable myopia has been exacerbated in recent times by the ritual and tropistic spirit of cultural confession whereby our clash with Mexico has been depicted as disgraceful expansionism, pure and simple.

Robert W. Johannsen gives us a salutary historical reminder and embroidery of what the Mexican War meant to Americans in the setting of that war. He provides a spirited description and analysis of the impact the struggle had upon American attitudes and American thought. Working by and large with published sources such as books, newspapers, and magazines, Johannsen reconstructs the aura of pride and exhilaration that swept most if not all of the land as Scott, Taylor, and others swept through parts of Mexico. Here it might be noted that Indiana readers will encounter illustrative figures from their state's history such as General Joseph Lane and almost common soldier Benjamin F. Scribner.

The American imagination registered the war in various ways. For example, one chapter treats the travel literature which came from the Mexican experience. Another depicts the more or less self-conscious efforts at historical treatment that came during and just after the conflict. Cultural historians may be especially interested in a chapter on "A War-Literature" because of the rather concerted attention given there to Romanticism. Per-