

Executive Summary of the *Annotated Edition of the Book of Mormon*

David R. Hocking and Rodney L. Meldrum, eds., *Annotated Edition of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Digital Legend Publishing, 2018). 583 pp. \$69.95 (hardcover).

Part I: Introduction

The FIRM Foundation has published a new *Annotated Edition of the Book of Mormon (AEBOM)*. According to a description of the *AEBOM* offered by the editors, this edition “combine [sic] the original text of the ‘most correct book on earth’, with the secondary evidences of archaeology, artifacts, geology and geography in the “Heartland” of the United States.”¹ The goal of this edition is “to help readers understand the everlasting gospel as explained in the text, together with what the modern prophets and apostles have taught about it.”² Beyond this, the *AEBOM* seeks to defend the authenticity of the Book of Mormon and provide evidence for its historicity.

While these goals are laudable, the *AEBOM* is unfortunately problematic to a staggering degree. On almost every page there are inaccuracies, embellishments, fallacies, dubious and unsubstantiated claims, selective use of evidence, parallelomania, presentism, false claims, pseudo-scientific and pseudo-scholarly claims, and a host of other errors. Cited material in some instances is misrepresented so the implied meaning contradicts original authorial intent. These errors range from the insignificant (e.g. innocent typographical errors) to the significant (e.g. the use of archaeological forgeries, pseudo-science, and distorted historical sources).

¹ “Description” online at <http://bookofmormonevidence.org/bookstore/product/annotated-book-of-mormon/> (Accessed October 22, 2018).

² Ibid.

This executive summary gives a broad overview of errors and other problematic elements in the *AEBOM*. They are divided by category and numbered sequentially. An exhaustive review of each category is in preparation. In short, the overwhelming number of problems in the *AEBOM* are fatal to this project. Readers should be wary of the claims made in the *AEBOM* attempting to situate the Book of Mormon in the “Heartland” of the United States.

The reviewers call attention to the myriad of problems in the *AEBOM* not out of any personal animus towards the editors of the volume or towards those who subscribe to the so-called “Heartland” model. Rather, this summary is written to open a dialogue on objective grounds. The Book of Mormon deserves better treatment than it has received in the *AEBOM*. To that end, this report presents the following data plainly and concisely and raises questions and observations.




Part II: Image Issues

Copyright and Permissions

The reviewers are pleased to have been informed that all copyright and permission issues have been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

Part or Full Attribution Missing

The images listed below are featured in the *AEBOM* but are missing either part or full attribution to the original source of the image. While attribution is not required for images in the public domain or for images that have been given express permission, attribution is still the best practice in the publishing industry and expected in works of this nature. Many images in this book do not have their sources meticulously documented.

Page	Thumb	Description
vi		Diagram of the world with the Bible and the Book of Mormon
vii		Illustration of the Angel Moroni weathervane.
37		Big Bone Lick state park photo. No attribution given. Link below text of paragraph is dead link

39



Copper plate with residual textile fragment

39



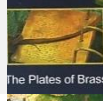
Breastplate and gorget made of copper from Ohio History Center Museum

46



Photo of torah scroll

50



Plates of brass photograph

50



Torah scroll

107



Diagram of grated branch

116



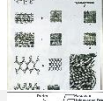
John Wampum 1870

131



Drawing of inscribed stone by John W. Emmert with "Hebrew" characters

161



Hopewell weaving patterns.

308



Diagram of Jewish Calendar cycle

312



Hanukkah menorah

353



Artist rendering of three vortices

357



Native Copper from Ducktown, TN is missing attribution, but appeared earlier in the book on page 65, where it was attributed.

357



Native Copper from Ontonagon County, MI

357



Native Gold Ore from Haile Mine, Kershaw, SC

357













Native Silver from Ridge Mine, Mass City, MI

357






The Hopewell copper celt does not contain attribution. If the attribution is the reference to the Archaeological Journal, then it is incorrect because this citation leads to an [article on Roman Suffolk](#) from 1900. Archaeological Journal 57, no. 3, 134.

383		Depiction of an Ancient Indian Village with Walled Fortifications. No attribution. The photo of the illustration was possibly taken by Rod Meldrum.
395		U.S. map of the New Madrid Earthquakes
398		Photograph of artifacts have no attribution.
459		The image of the man looking up at the skeleton has no attribution, it misleads the reader to thinking this image came from The Evening News newspaper article in question. The Evening News, San Jose, CA, Friday, Oct. 23, 1925.
474		Great Lakes map
485		Photograph of Temple Site sign
492		Photograph of Life of Heber C. Kimball
515		Hill Cumorah aerial shot
520		The Hill Cumorah monument erected in 1935
520		Close up of the nearly completed Angel Moroni statue
540		The bottom photo of a mound

Errors in attribution or image credits

These items are image credits with typos, incorrect source URLs, or incorrect source attribution.

Page	Thumb	Problem
xxv		The URL citation for the Three Witnesses panel is incorrect. Should be ".com" instead of "-com"
xxvi		<i>There Indeed</i> by Clark Kelley Price is attributed as page xx in the Picture and Illustration Index
5		The photograph of King Tutankhamun's dagger has the wrong URL citation. Dead link.

22



Statue of Liberty is misspelled as “statute”.

24



The URL for the photo of L. Tom Perry takes you to a completely different photograph.

46



The photograph of the crowd of people has the wrong URL citation. Dead link.

48



Statue of Liberty is misspelled as “statute.”

53



The URL for the photo of Far West Missouri leads to a completely different page.

393



The URL given for the Tornado on May 3, 1999 is incorrect. 404 error.

408



The Artist’s name should be Danquart Anthon Weggeland, not “Weggland”

473



The URL given for the images depicting “cureloms” is incorrect.

474



The URL for Hunting Woolly Mammoth is incorrect. This image comes from [Wikimedia Commons](#) under a CC BY-SA 4.0 license

554



The Haplogroup X map has an incorrect URL. They omitted the “png” extension

Part III: Categorical Listing of Substantial Errors and Factual Problems with the *AEBOM*

Forgeries, unprovenanced, and misunderstood artifacts, archaeology.

The editors of the *AEBOM* appeal to archaeological artifacts to bolster its case for a “Heartland” setting for the Book of Mormon. However, a substantial number of these pieces of evidence are unprovenanced, have been wrested from their proper archaeological context, or are suspected forgeries according to mainstream Latter-day Saint and non-Latter-day Saint archaeologists. For example:

Page	Note
3	No dating information is provided for the Amarna Letters, implying that they are more contemporary to Lehi than they really are.
5	The dagger of King Tutankhamun is pictured, but no source information is given, the year of discovery is incorrect (it should be 1922), and though not said outright, the caption implies its blade is steel (it’s meteoric iron).
30-31	The book incorrectly claims that the NHM altars were “stone markers” discovered as a burial place, garble other details about NHM/Nahom, and provides an incorrect transcription of the altars’ text.
37	Pictures of artifacts with no sources cited, nor any dating or archaeological context provided.
63	Claims limestone mortar/cement is widespread in the promised land, but no examples or sources are cited.
65	Discusses copper use among Native Americans, but no dating information is provided, and no sources are given for the artifacts pictured.
120	Several comparisons are made to Lamanites and Native American artifacts and village replicas, with no provenance or dating provided for any of the items (except on pictures of clearly modern Native Americans).
123	Several artifacts are pictured with no sources, dating, or provenance provided. Unsubstantiated claims that one is an “oil lamp” similar to those used in ancient Israel.
124-125	Several iron, copper, lead, and gold artifacts are pictured, mostly without any sources, provenance, or dating provided. An amateur from the 1950s is cited as an authority.
130-131	The Los Lunas and Bat Creek stones, both very likely forgeries, are cited.

161	Unprovenanced Hopewell fabrics claimed to illuminate Nephite “linens” are provided.
162	Metal blades (implies sword blades) are presented with no provenance given.
251	An Iron Sword from the Ohio State Museum is pictured with no provenance given. Without a description the book implies the sword was found in Ohio.
287	An “Ancient stone wall” used to illuminate Moroni’s defensive fortifications dates to ca. AD 600, well beyond Book of Mormon times.
289	The breastplates cited are ceremonial, not used for warfare.
289	The head plates cited are ceremonial, not for battle.
290	Arm shields are cited but no provenance is given.
303	The Newark Ohio earthen structure ditch is on inside of the wall, not the outside as in Book of Mormon.
311	Claims that Fort Hill, Ohio is an example of ancient Nephite fortifications. However, “Fort Hill was not an actual fort used for warfare, but more likely a ceremonial gathering place” according to one authority. ³
349	Claims that the use of stucco “cement” in North America satisfies Helaman 3:11.
385	Unprovenanced “lamb carvings” are cited.
383	Claims of the use of “cement” at the Angel Mounds site. However, the site was “built between A.D. 1000 and 1450,” ⁴ much too late for the Book of Mormon.
450	Use of the (strongly suspected) forged Decalogue Stone.
459	Use of an unprovenanced “giant skeleton” with unrelated photograph of another unprovenanced discovery is provided to bolster Book of Ether’s description that the Brother of Jared was a large man.
460	Use of an unprovenanced “giant” axe head to bolster claims of large-sized Jaredites.
473	Use of the (strongly suspected) forged Lenape Stone.
473	Use of elephant effigy pipes, whose authenticity and meaning are disputed amongst scholars (i.e. whether the animal is an elephant or a tapir).

³ “Fort Hill Earthworks & Nature Preserve,” online at <https://www.ohiohistory.org/visit/museum-and-site-locator/fort-hill-earthworks> (Accessed October 22, 2018).

⁴ “Angel Mounds,” online at <https://www.indianamuseum.org/angel-mounds-state-historic-site> (Accessed October 22, 2018).

Misrepresentation of historical sources

The editors of the *AEBOM* selectively pick and choose certain historical sources over others in order to give the impression that the Heartland model of Book of Mormon geography enjoys a sort of long-held historical approval by Church leaders. The editors likewise impose presentistic readings on many of these sources in order to force them to conform to the Heartland theories. In so doing they badly misrepresent these sources. The sources misrepresented include:

Page	Note
x	Implies that Joseph only had Native Americans in Illinios (and nearby areas) in mind in the Wentworth Letter.
x-xi	Letter VII by Oliver Cowdery is presented as setting forth “the fact” that the Hill Cumorah is in New York, as if that was the purpose of the letter
xiii	Use of D&C 28, 30, and 32 as proof texts that Indians of the “Heartland” are the Lamanites
xiii	Quotes President Nelson talking about North America as a “choice land,” ignoring other statements from leaders stating that all of the Americas are the promised land/Zion.
xxv	Quotes the <i>Times and Seasons</i> Sept. 1842 article about “circumstantial evidences” proving the Book of Mormon, but cover up the fact that it’s talking about ruins in Guatemala.
24	Quotes Elder L. Tom Perry talking about the USA as the promised land, ignoring other statements from Church leaders stating that all of the Americas are the promised land/Zion
76	Quotes LeGrand Richards on Isaiah 2:3, ignoring other interpretations, even those coming from other General Authorities.
117-118	Quotes sources from Joseph Smith about local Native Americans, with the implication that only Natives in the “Heartland” were thought to be Lamanites by Joseph Smith.
127	Claims that the location of Zarahemla is revealed in D&C 125:3
202	Claims D&C 125:3 is speaking of the ancient Nephite city of Zarahemla.
287	Claims the location of the city of Manti was “revealed” to Joseph Smith.

231	Implies that Joseph Smith's March 6, 1834 entry on Zion's Camp marching over Native American burial mounds is linked to the Desolation of Nehors.
321	On the Zelph incident, the book reproduces the Manuscript History and leaves out significant editorial cross outs (such as "Hill Cumorah" "last" "and Nephites") which contradict the Heartland model.
321, 538	Incorrectly attributes a reference to a "Nephite Altar" at Adam-ondi-Ahman to Joseph Smith.
329, 524	Concerning the Manti Settlement in Missouri, the book leaves out sources suggesting Manti was <i>to be</i> the name of a <i>future</i> settlement rather than the ancient Book of Mormon location.
363	Misrepresents Orson Pratt as thinking "the choice land of America" only meant the US Heartland.
370-371	Claims Abraham Lincoln was significantly influenced by the Book of Mormon.
373	Misrepresents Heber J. Grant as accepting the Heartlander view that only North American Indians are Lamanites.
408	Misrepresents Joseph Smith's 1842 Wentworth letter as saying "this continent" means <i>only</i> the USA.
415	Misrepresents Joseph Smith's March 1844 discourse on Zion ("The whole of America is Zion from north to south") to mean "northern states" and "southern states" of the United States
446	Misrepresents Joseph Smith's 1842 Wentworth letter to mean that "the remnant" of Lehi and "the Indians that now inhabit this country" mean <i>only</i> Indians in the USA.
479	Quotes Elder Orson Pratt that the "ancient mounds of North America" are referenced in Ether 11:6, misrepresenting the fact that Elder Pratt believed in a hemispheric North and South American geography.
480	Misrepresents annotations by Orson Pratt from the 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon.
484	Misrepresents W. W. Phelps' views on America being the promised land.
485	Misrepresents quotes from the D&C about the New Jerusalem being upon "this land" as referring exclusively to North America.
485, 524, 537	Misrepresents a revelation to go on a Lamanite mission to the borders of Missouri to mean <i>only</i> Indians in USA are Lamanites (not other Native Americans).
487	Claims the Lord identifies specifically Missouri as "this land."
491	Quotes Oliver Cowdery as placing Ramah in Western New York but fails to acknowledge other sources attributing hemispheric views to Cowdery.

505	Misrepresents a quote by David Whitmer about the Indians of “this country” as referring only to the USA.
516	Uncritically cites only selective sources on the “Cumorah Cave” episode.
517–518	Selectively quotes past church leaders on the location of Cumorah while ignoring evidence that they accepted a hemispheric geography.
524–527	Selectively quotes General Authorities to give the impression that they accept the Heartland model.
524	Joseph Smith’s 1833 <i>American Revivalist</i> Letter (“America is a promised land”) is represented as meaning <i>only the USA</i> is the promised land.
525	Misrepresents Joseph Smith’s 1842 Wentworth letter as saying “this country” means <i>only</i> the USA.
528–529	Misrepresents the sources on the location of Zarahemla.
530–531	Misrepresents the sources on the location of Lehi’s landing.
537	Misrepresents the sources on the Lamanite mission.
545	Joseph Smith’s 1833 <i>American Revivalist</i> Letter (“western tribes of Indians”) is represented as meaning only some Indians in the USA are really Lamanites.
553	Highly selective “key North American Documents” for Book of Mormon geography are presented.

Misrepresentation of the Church’s position on Book of Mormon geography

The editors of the *AEBOM* misrepresent the Church’s position on Book of Mormon geography by selectively quoting statements from former General Authorities while ignoring other statements which contradict those views. For instance:

Page	Note
524	Editors claim latter-day prophets and other Church leaders have consistently taught and viewed that <i>only</i> “North America was the promised land of former days and in these latter days.”
522	Claims Joseph Smith in the Wentworth letter rejected the hemispheric view of geography.
x-xi, 524-525	Editors claim the current position of the Church is that there is only one Hill Cumorah (i.e. the one in New York), and that this was the location of the final battle. Various statements from past Church leaders are cited reflecting this traditional understanding, ignoring more recent statements from Church leaders that the location of the ancient site has not been revealed.

524	Indians outside the USA are said to be lost tribes, not descendants of Lehi, contradicting decades of Church teaching.
525	Editors cite a 1938 editorial from Elder Joseph Fielding Smith as coming from “President” Smith, presumably to give his views on Book of Mormon geography and the Hill Cumorah more weight, although Elder Smith was not President in 1938 when he made this statement and never revisited the issue after he became President of the Church in 1970.
440-441, 491, 517, 525, 527	An 1938 editorial from Joseph Fielding Smith is repeatedly cited to show that the New York Hill was the site of the final battlefield of the Jaredites and Nephites while ignoring later comments from Elder Smith that he had “never paid any attention whatever to Book of Mormon geography” and that his views were, like others, a matter of “opinion.”
22, 417, 462, 486, 498, 518, 524-525, 549	Several General Authorities are misrepresented as teaching “this continent,” “this country,” or “America” refers solely to the United States.

Problematic internal geography and chronology

The editors of the *AEBOM* provide geographical maps and chronological timelines in an attempt to situate the Book of Mormon in a plausible Heartland setting. These maps and chronology, however, are inconsistent with the Book of Mormon text in the following ways:

Page	Note
xxxii	Dates Lehi’s ministry to 600-599 BC, but the first year of Zedekiah (1 Nephi 1:4) is well-known to date to 597 BC. All the rest of the dates given in this table are dependent on this incorrect date.
xxxii	Editors date several specific events from Lehi’s journey to 598 BC, which, as noted, is impossible (see above), but also problematic because there is insufficient information in the Book of Mormon to precisely date those events within the 8-year wilderness journey.
22	Accepts Columbus as the man referred to in 1 Nephi 13:12, but ignores the fact that he never set foot in the USA/North America.
35	Claims growing conditions in Florida/Southeastern US are the same as Israel, but ignores the fact that Israel’s climate is arid and Mediterranean while Florida and the Southeastern USA are sub-tropical.
399	Claims that Christ arrived at the end of year AD 34 (the chronology of Christ’s appearance to the Nephites is disputed).
452	Claims that 1000 BC to 200 A.D. is “a time-frame that nearly matches the Jaredite Nation as recorded in the Book of Ether” with no qualifying arguments.

455	Claims Zarahemla and Hill Ramah are “known and validated locations” in the Heartland of the United States.
260, 522–523	Internal map proposed with “pins in the map,” as if the matter is settled, thus begging the question of a particular Book of Mormon geography theory (the Heartland model) being true.
537	Claims Lehi arrived in the New World “around 590 BC.”

Parallelomania

The editors of the *AEBOM* attempt to prove Hebrew origins for select North American native tribes by constructing illusory parallels with no real historical or logical basis. In academic settings, this phenomenon is called “parallelomania.” The *AEBOM* engages in parallelomania in the following instances:

Page	Note
x	Lack of punctuation in the original manuscript given as a parallel to lack of punctuation in Hebrew.
xiii	Draws parallels to the Indian Removal Act being enacted in May 1830 and the publication of the Book of Mormon earlier that same year.
64	Draws parallels to Solomon’s temple based solely on the 19th century drawings of Squier & Davis, specifically claiming the dimensions are the same, without giving any actual dimensions.
91	Compares the characters on the Anthon transcript with Mi’kmaq, a writing system invented by Europeans in the 18 th century for use by Native Americans.
120	Vague parallels are drawn between Native Americans and Lamanites & Hopewell and Nephites.
132	Pictures of Cherokee from late-1800s/early-1900s are provided with a “note” about their “European” or “Middle-Eastern” features.
142	Uncritically cites 17th century sources to show Native Americans descend from the Lost Tribes.
146	Attempts to draw parallels between Jewish <i>tzitzit</i> and modern Native American dress.
152	Draws broad parallels between the Book of Mormon and American “promised land” events.
175	Depicts the 18 th century execution of Col. William Crawford by burning faggots as analogous to Abinadi’s death by fire.
193	Draws parallels between Medieval Jewish Hamsa symbol and unprovenanced Hopewell artifacts.

206	Draws parallels between modern Native Americans painting their faces red and the red mark placed on Amlicite foreheads.
250	Draws far-fetched parallels between Newark earthwork patterns and Latter Day-Saint Plan of Salvation.
253	Draws parallels between Hebrew <i>payot</i> and <i>teffillin</i> with modern Native American hairstyles and dress.
312	Claims the “Hanukiah Mounds” of Ohio are evidence for ancient Jews in North America.
450	Quotes sources on Iroquois Indian battles with no immediate relevance to the Book of Mormon.
538–539	“50 correlations” between the Hopewell and the Book of Mormon offered.
540	The Great Serpent effigy mound is used as evidence for the Bronze Serpent episode from the Old Testament.
542	Draws parallels between words and phrases from the “Indians of America” and Hebrew (many of the words are not actual Hebrew).
544	Claims the discovery of Hebrew texts in North America. The texts mentioned are either considered outright frauds or are disputed by mainstream archaeologists.
556	Claims that a North American mound resembles the Hebrew letter <i>shin</i> .

Unsubstantiated claims and arguments

The editors of the *AEBOM* make sweeping and unsubstantiated historical, archaeological, and scientific claims. This includes:

Page	Note
16	References to “driven snow” are made out to require the Nephites were familiar with blizzards.
34	Claims the existence of artifacts from North and South America that bear signs of Phoenician traders, but no artifacts are actually provided as examples, and no sources are cited.
36	Claims that “curious workmanship” is an idiom from Nephi’s day.
38	Claims God provided Lehi a land “filled” with all the animals needed to fulfill the Law of Moses
40	Claims that the New Madrid earthquake caused 3 days of darkness.
60	Claims the Hebrew word <i>yam</i> (“seas”) can refer to a “mighty river” like the Mississippi.

75	Uses the “all the ships of the sea/tarshish” lines from 2 Nephi, but the authorities cited, Seely and Pike, have shown that this argument is problematic.
157	Claims the “east wind” of Mosiah 7 must be hurricanes.
177	Claims that there are no “migratory land animals” in Mesoamerica.
186	Claims that Hopewell agriculture was sufficient for the large-scale populations described in the Book of Mormon.
196	Attempts to equate Mosiah’s reforms with modern American liberal democracy.
246	Uses evidence from the Late Holocene buffalo migration in North America as evidence for migratory land animals in the Book of Mormon.
300	Claims there are four distinct seasons in the “promised land” and in the Book of Mormon.
320	Claims the “plains” spoken of in Alma 52 are the “plains of the Nephites” identified by Joseph Smith.
344	Claims that “many large skeletons of Native peoples in North America . . . parallel the descriptions of men ‘large in stature’ in the Book of Mormon.”
408	Speculates about astronomical phenomena at a site that can be dated no more firmly than 100 BC - AD 400.
250	Claims that Newark earthen structures depict the plan of salvation.
393	Claims that “whirlwinds” in 3 Ne 8:16 are tornadoes unique to North America and not found in Mesoamerica.
395	Claims that the New Madrid Fault earthquakes of 1811–1812 parallel the destruction in 3 Nephi.
472	Claims that mastodons and mammoths were hunted to extinction “during the time frames of the Adena culture, which corresponds to the Jaredite time frames.”
474	Uses an uncritical source from the 19 th century to argue that Mastodons and Mound Builders were contemporary.
492	Uses a second-hand account from Heber C. Kimball as sufficient to establish the identity of the Hill Cumorah in New York.
492	Claims a publication from 1849 establishes the plausibility of the final battle taking place at Cumorah.
532	Claims each of the items needed to keep the Law of Moses have been discovered in North America.
557	Claims that “two sets of plates” were used by Joseph Smith in the recovery and translation of the Book of Mormon (as needed to accommodate Heartlander claims).

Misuse of DNA science

The *AEBOM* makes pseudo-scientific claims about DNA evidence supporting the historicity of the Book of Mormon and the identity of Lamanites in the Midwestern and Northeastern United States. This *AEBOM* pseudo-science is evident in these examples:

Page	Note
554-555	Claims DNA evidence proves the Hopewell descended from Israelites. Both Latter-day Saint and non-Latter-day Saint population geneticists refute this.
555	Uses President Hinckley's 2002 cautionary statement that all the DNA evidence was not in yet to claim that such evidence was found in 2013.
91, 554-555	Presents outdated claims about DNA Haplogroup X as evidence of Middle Eastern Influence. Population geneticists now believe this view is wrong and that this haplogroup came from Siberia, not Eurasia or the Middle East. Kennewick Man (ca. 7,000 BC) is ancestral to North American X linages.
554-555	No mention of the Church's Gospel Topics Essay on DNA and the Book of Mormon which does not support their view.

Improper or inadequate citations

The *AEBOM* does not adequately or properly cite many of its sources, such as:

Page	Note
n/a	The editors are not forthright in the introductory material, not telling the reader which edition (1920) of the Book of Mormon they are using.
xv-xvii	Includes the "Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith" verbatim from 1981/2013 edition of the Book of Mormon.
xx	"A Brief Synopsis of the Book of Mormon" copies several sentences from the Church's 1981/2013 edition "A Brief Explanation about the Book of Mormon" with only slight modifications.
3	No reference to past scholars who have pointed out Hebraisms.
4	No reference to past scholars who have pointed out the up/down terminology.
6	States that the chart "Figures of Speech" is adapted from Richard Rust's <i>Feasting on the Word</i> , but no page numbers are given, and nothing like the information provided there can be located by searching key terms in the index.
29	No page number given for Nibley's "Shazer" quote.

83	Cites a quote as coming from <i>Reexploring the Book of Mormon</i> “as reviewed by David Rolph Seely,” but the review’s citation information is not provided. Incidentally, the review is being misrepresented, as Seely is making the opposite point than the <i>AEBOM</i> .
135	Follows the arguments of Lyons and Minson concerning Words of Mormon 1:12-18, without citing or acknowledging them.

Miscellaneous

The *AEBOM* contains the following miscellaneous errors:

Page	Note
xix	The Hebrew is scrambled and the vowels are misplaced.
1	Claims that several prophets were contemporary to Lehi in the reign of Zedekiah, but none other than Jeremiah and Ezekiel were active during Zedekiah’s reign, and some were not even contemporaries of Lehi’s.
42	Incorrectly dates the Masoretes to the 7th-10 th century BC. (They date to the 7–10 th centuries AD.)
202	Identifies Noah Webster’s dictionary as being printed in 1826, when it was printed in 1828.
324	The Hebrew is scrambled and the vowels are misplaced.
432	Presence of the “mystic symbol” from the fraudulent Michigan Relics found on a painting by Ken Corbett.
446	Editors provide the phonetic transcription, not the actual name, of John Ross’s Indian name.
508	Claims the existence one massive supercontinent ca. 4,000 BC.
559	Infers that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland was talking about Heartlanders in his remarks at the Book of Mormon Central conference on chiasmus.

Part III: Conclusion

The main danger of the *AEBOM* lies in the fact that individuals are going to be misled on a host of important topics: archaeology and anthropology, Latter-day Saint history, scriptural exegesis, and doctrine. They will walk away with a false impression that there is an overwhelming abundance of evidence for the Heartland model at the expense of other viable theories, and might easily adopt the unfortunate attitude

that Church members who do not accept the Heartland model are somehow less than committed to the Book of Mormon or unfaithful to past and present Church leaders. Many will undoubtedly walk away with the impression that science “proves” the Book of Mormon is true (e.g. with DNA or archaeology). It won’t take long for these individuals to discover that this is emphatically not the case. This, in turn, could create mistrust and disillusionment for those who put their confidence in dubious claims.⁵

In matters such as this, it is worth keeping in mind that Elder M. Russell Ballard counseled CES instructors: “not to pass along faith-promoting or unsubstantiated rumors or outdated understandings and explanations of our doctrine and practices from the past. It is always wise to . . . consult the works of recognized, thoughtful, and faithful LDS scholars to ensure you do not teach things that are untrue, out of date, or odd and quirky.”⁶ When it comes to scholarly claims made in the *AEBOM*, an overwhelming number of them are untrue, out of date, or odd and quirky. It is not just a matter of the *AEBOM* having a different perspective on Book of Mormon geography. Rather, the *AEBOM* makes several demonstrably erroneous claims and many other questionable or dubious ones. Until its many problems are corrected, readers should be highly cautious of the claims made in the *AEBOM*.



BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

⁵ This is not merely a hypothetical. This very thing has, tragically, happened before. See the example in J. Michael Hunter, “The Kinderhook Plates, the Tucson Artifacts, and Mormon Archaeological Zeal,” *Journal of Mormon History* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 65–70.

⁶ M. Russell Ballard, “By Study and By Faith,” *Ensign*, December 2016, 27.