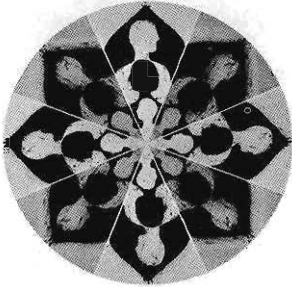


THE MORMON FAMILY IN A CHANGING WORLD

Guest Editor, Lowell Bennion



THE MORMON FAMILY IN A CHANGING WORLD: AN INTRODUCTION

Lowell Bennion

Not only is the family the primary social institution in Mormonism, it is also much too large a theme for a special section in one issue of *Dialogue*. Hopefully, the Journal will be able to publish some interesting articles turned down for this issue because of limited space and because they would have weighted the emphasis too much in one direction or another.

The family theme is so large and authorities on the subject so busy that vital areas of family life today among Latter-day Saints go unmentioned in this section. These too should find a place in future numbers of *Dialogue*. We are thinking of such subjects as "The Mormon Case for Chastity," "Large Families in an Overpopulated World," "Love in Marriage," "Wisdom in Courtship," "Family Functions Today," and many others. And though the articles here presented do not and cannot possibly cover the modern family adequately, we are pleased to present them as provocative introductions to this significant aspect of contemporary Mormon life.

Garth Mangum's "Technological Change and Erosion of the Patriarchal Family"—written from the broad perspective of academic study and high level government administration—brings clearly into focus the realization that problems which confront the Mormon family must be seen and understood in the total historical and societal setting of which Latter-day Saints are a part. Technology has had its impact on Mormon family life, an impact which is conditioned by the peculiar character of the Latter-day Saint family.

Stanton L. Hovey in his "Church Influence on the Family" makes a case for a close working relationship between the Church and the behavioral sciences and social agencies in the interest of approaching more closely the realization of L.D.S. ideals in family life. Readers will be surprised perhaps at the many professional social welfare services offered by the Church and stimulated by Mr. Hovey's probing into social science means of realizing family goals.

Several articles deal with specific problems, some of which may be quite acute in the Mormon family. Veon Smith, speaking from a wide experience in both professional and Church marriage counseling, points up the critical, ever-present dilemma the Latter-day Saint parent faces in keeping the command-

ment to teach and indoctrinate his children in the ways of the Lord and at the same time to respect their free agency. Chase Peterson, a physician, addresses himself to the adjustment the L.D.S. woman must make when she graduates from the immediate role of motherhood, which is often made the more difficult because her husband is occupied not only with his everyday work but with Church responsibilities as well. Deon and Ken Price, on the basis of a survey in an area in California, suggest with some interesting, realistic data why L.D.S. girls marry out of the Church. And, finally, Gayle Norton describes the difficulties a divorced person experiences in functioning in the Church and in living among his own people.

In sharing with *Dialogue* readers the intimate story of the death of a son, Carole Hansen adds a new and personal dimension to this issue which is appropriate and deeply appreciated.

The section on the family closes with Carlfred Broderick's article, "Three Philosophies of Sex Plus One," in which he discusses many aspects of sex in today's world and in the lives of Latter-day Saints. His treatment reflects his specialized study and his wide experience as a counselor in the Church and in his profession. Despite our high regard for the rich content and points of view in his article, we are taking the liberty in a brief response at the end of the section—and with the author's approval—to disagree with one of his major theses.

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