SAINTS, CITIES, AND SECULARISM: RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR OF MODERN URBAN MORMONS

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> The fertility of the [Utah] land has been outstripped by the fertility of the people. The sons and daughters born so strangely stalwart from the loins of Eastern and European converts . . . today are migrating from the state, bringing their strength, their vigor, and their eager ambition to the great cities of either coast. They go like a lifeblood, from wounds that Utah hopes one day to close.[1]

This poignant observation by Dale L. Morgan was written even before World War II, and the erstwhile Utah sons and daughters spoken of are themselves now grandparents. Moreover, it is doubtful that anyone any longer has any hopes of closing the "wounds" through which they departed. Indeed, the "wounds" have long since come to be regarded instead as gateways to worldly opportunity. With worldly opportunity has come worldly achievement, which has in turn brought worldly respectability; and respectability is always a problem for a "peculiar people."

As we approach the sesquicentennial of the origin of Mormonism, we might well wonder how the Latter-day Saints have changed since the days when the Prophet Joseph Smith characterized us (in Peter's terms) as "a peculiar people." Some would say that Mormons have remained peculiar in the sense of being *eccentric* (or quaint) in the modern secular world, what with our no-coffee-and-no-tea, tithing, temples, fertility, and "unliberated" women. Odd as such Mormon traits may appear to some outsiders, they are generally regarded on the inside as symbolic of a profound religious and theological separation from the world, a separation that makes us truly "peculiar" in the sense of being *unique*. But just how unique are we now in the ways that really count, and how unique are we likely to be a generation hence?

Secularization and Survival

If Mormonism has not been changed noticeably by its encounter with the modern urban world, then it will certainly have to be considered an unusual historical phenomenon on that grounds alone, for few religious movements have survived without coming to terms with their surrounding culture (except, of course, by prolonged geographical separation). O'Dea developed the intriguing and plausible thesis that Mormonism escaped the fate suffered by most new sects largely through its relative isolation during the second half of the last century in remote Utah, where it came near to developing a separate

sense of nationality.[2] This constituted, however, only a temporary exception to the rule that historically secularization has been the only alternative to annihilation; yet, ironically, secularization is itself part of the process of annihilation (loss of unique identity), especially given the seemingly irresistible assimilationist tendencies of modern urban societies.[3]

Like many other terms in the currently popular jargon, "secularization" means somewhat different things to different people, and some commentators question whether it means anything at all.[4] For the purposes of this article, I shall use the term to refer to the process of assimilation to worldly conventions by Mormons originally separated from the surrounding society and at odds with its conventions. In other words, secularization is a loss of "peculiarity," as the price for survival and respectability. In a society which rewards rationalism, pragmatism, and materialism, secularization implies not only compromise and accommodation, but also "demythologization" and an orientation *primarily* to *this* world as opposed to the other world. Secularization implies further an attitude on the part of individuals as well as organizations which looks *mainly* to science and to the "wisdom of men" for guidance, rather than to revelation; an attitude which defines even the ministry of the churches themselves as relevant to *this* world rather than to the next world. The "social gospel" takes precedence over spiritual rebirth.[5] Recent empirical research and social commentary have made abundantly clear mainstream Christianity's increasing secularization in the terms described in this paragraph.[6] Most of the literature on secularization would lead us to expect the same to be true of Mormons. But is it?

Empirical Research on Mormon Secularization

Little research on the Mormons relates to this question. Systematic *empirical* research, indeed, is practically non-existent, and what there is leaves the secularization question unanswered. Two Mormon sociologists, Glenn M. Vernon and Wilford E. Smith, conducted pioneering empirical work on Mormon religious beliefs and behavior in the 1950's. Vernon, using northern Idaho data, looked at the relation between social background and orthodoxy. He found that orthodoxy is in large part a function of age, sex, social class, convert background, and missionary experience. While Vernon was not dealing with the issue of secularization as such, he did identify certain factors which, because they are *negatively* related to *orthodoxy*, are, in my terms, *positively* related to secularization (e.g., certain levels of age and income). Of course, he identified other factors (e.g., missionary experience) as negatively related to secularization because they are positively related to orthodoxy.[7] Smith's work, on the other hand, bears directly on the question of secularization. In the earlier of his two studies, he compared Utah Mormons and non-Utah Mormons with regard to a number of religious practices and beliefs (e.g., Word of Wisdom, tithing, sexual behavior, etc.) and concluded that little or no difference existed between the two samples.[8] As Smith pointed out, however, confidence in these findings is severely limited by the small sizes of the samples and by their limited base (all college students). His later work, based on much larger and more variegated samples in Utah, Arizona, and California, found that a secular urban environment definitely threatens observance of the Word of Wisdom.[9]

Nels Anderson and William DeHart found such Mormon family norms as large families and a patriarchal division of labor intact a generation ago.[10] However, a few years later (in the 1950's) Lowry Nelson found that family size was tending to decrease with greater education among Mormons, as has been the case with other Americans, and Victor Christopherson found some waning of patriarchal authority.[11] As for Mormon economic norms, Leonard Arrington has argued that the early Mormon emphasis on cooperation and stewardship has long since given way to the private property orientation of the general American culture.[12] In a complementary finding by C. L. Anderson, we have evidence also that Mormons no longer differ from non-Mormons on social welfare policy.[13] Furthermore, from a political standpoint, while Mormons probably have rather a conservative national image, their actual party affiliations do not seem to be distributed very differently from those of Americans in general, according to a 1965 report by Victor Cline and James Edwards.[14]

Much of the above-cited work, then, provides evidence of growing Mormon secularization. On the other hand, evidence exists for considerable *resistance* to secularization in some important respects, particularly in matters of family, sex roles, and sexual morality. Concerning sexual morality, Harold T. Christensen's comparisons (a decade ago) of Mormons, other Americans, and Scandinavians, showed that traditional chastity norms were still comparatively strong among Mormon youth, in both belief and practice. Moreover, the gap between belief and practice caused more guilt for Mormon youth than for others.[15] More recently, Phillip Kunz found divorce rates quite low for Mormons, particularly for those with temple marriages,[16] while Wise and Carter found Mormon daughters *at least* as traditionally and domestically oriented as their mothers in the homemaker role and in the tendency to defer to their husband's expectations.[17] And Kunz elsewhere found Mormon parents rather traditional in their child-rearing patterns.[18]

Beyond family matters, a study by C. H. Anderson on "community" among Mormons (i.e., in-group friendships, marriages, etc.) shows that the sense of community and the inner bonds (which help to resist secularization) are stronger among Mormons than among Protestants or Catholics, even in cities where each is dominant and therefore free of discrimination.[19] In a study of religious beliefs among various denominations and the non-affiliated, Glenn Vernon found Mormons comparatively high in their belief in God and in their tendency to report spiritual experiences, all of which would be counterindicative of what I am calling secularization.[20] At the same time, however, it is apparent from an intensive study by Cline and Richards (with a mostly Mormon sample) that the *connection between* belief and behavior is a highly problematic one affected by certain variables such as sex. The connection is much weaker for men.[21]

All in all, then, there is evidence pro and con on the matter of secularization among modern Mormons. The findings of all of the work surveyed above (either pro or con) must be considered and qualified in the light of the kinds of samples on which they were based, the kinds of indicators and measures used for the factors being studied, and many other contingencies.[22] Quite aside from empirical evidence, we must be cautious not to apply my hypothesis indiscriminately without regard for time and place. For example, John Sorenson has suggested that Mormons who live in California and in other regions outside

the mountain "heartland" might be affected by a "colonial" or "enclave" mentality, which would slow down the secularization process.[23] Reference has already been made to Thomas O'Dea's contention that two generations of Utah isolation prevented "sectarian stagnation" from occurring among the Mormons by the early part of the present century,[24] and O'Dea elsewhere has emphasized the importance of geographic isolation from the heartland as a deterrent to secularization.[25] He reviewed a somewhat earlier (and classical) work by Lowry Nelson on the Mormon village, in which Nelson had found extensive secularization occurring even in rural areas of traditional Mormon territory.[26] O'Dea then contrasted the circumstances of Nelson's village with those of "Rimrock," an isolated Mormon village in New Mexico, and concluded that the strongly traditional (and I would say "anti-secular") religious style of Rimrock was a function largely of its isolation, which not only prevented its assimilation into the larger culture, but also encouraged a high degree of social solidarity and homogeneity within the village. Clearly, then, it makes a difference whether one is speaking about isolated Mormon enclaves or urban Mormon wards. I shall be dealing with the latter, which comprise the overwhelming majority of the modern Church.

Recent Survey Data on Urban Mormons

The following data on secularization have been collected from Salt Lake City and from a Pacific coastal city.[27] Their chief interest lies in the comparison between Salt Lake City and "Coastal City" Mormons,[28] plus the contrast that will occasionally be made between those two Mormon groups, on the one hand, and some Catholic and Protestant data from Northern California, on the other hand. The *meaning* of those contrasts and comparisons (especially the intra-Mormon ones) is a critical point here. We shall see that in general the Coastal City saints show noticeably higher levels of secularization, and lower levels of traditional religious commitment, than do the Salt Lake City saints (at least as these tendencies are operationally defined here). We shall see also that in certain ways the beliefs of the Coastal City saints more closely resemble those of "mainstream" Protestants and Catholics than do the beliefs of the Salt Lake City saints. But what do such findings *mean*, particularly in light of the secularization issue? In large part, the reader's answer to that question will determine for him the significance of this entire article.[29]

On Being "Religious" and Being "Secular"

To speak of being "secularized" or "secular" is usually to imply being something other than "religious." Rather than engage in semantic arguments, let me point out that in the process of data gathering and analysis, *operational* definitions of a concept are more important, and my operational definitions will shortly become clear from the data presented herein.

Perhaps the most comprehensive operational definition of "religious" in contemporary sociological literature is to be found in the work of C. Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, who demonstrate both theoretically and empirically that there are different *ways* of being religious; and while these different ways might be quite highly intercorrelated, their degree of overlap is small enough

TABLE 1:

LDS Samples Compared

Denominations:	Congreg.	Meth.	Episc.	Disc. of Christ
Percents saying, "I know God really exists and I have no doubts about it."	41 %	60 %	63 %	76 %
Percents saying "definitely true" to "God is a real, glorified person with a body of flesh and bone." (LDS only).			—	—
N (100 %) =	151	415	416	50

*Data on Protestants and Catholics come from Rodney Stark and C. Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley, U.C. Press, 1968), page 28.

TABLE 2:

Denominations:*	Congreg.	Meth.	Episc.	Disc. of Christ
Orthodoxy Index:				
High 4	4 %	10 %	14 %	18 %
3	18	20	23	36
2	18	23	21	23
1	12	17	18	7
Low 0	48	30	24	16
N (100 %) =	141	381	373	44

*Data on Protestants and Catholics come from Rodney Stark and C. Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley, U.C. Press, 1968), page 60.

to justify treating them as essentially independent factors.[30] Glock and Stark have devised measures (based on questionnaire items) for five "dimensions of religiosity:" belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and consequence. We will be dealing here primarily with the first two of these "dimensions." Let us begin with *orthodoxy*, which is defined strictly in terms of belief.

The simplest indicators of orthodoxy (though these are not sufficient) are responses to individual statements of belief. Take, for example, the orthodox Mormon statement about God which I used in my questionnaire: "God is a real, glorified person with a body of flesh and bone." Table 1 shows the proportions of my SLC and CC samples which responded "definitely true" to that statement, compared to the percentages of Roman Catholics and certain Protestant denominations who gave correspondingly definite responses to

BELIEF IN GOD

with Other Denominations*

Presb.	Am. Luth.	Am. Bapt.	Mo. Luth.	So. Bapt.	Sects	Total Prot.	Rom. Cath.	LDS SLC	CC
75%	73%	78%	81%	99%	96%	71%	81%		
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	77%	58%
495	208	141	116	79	255	2,326	545	958	296

ORTHODOXY LEVELS

Presb.	Am. Luth.	Am. Bapt.	Mo. Luth.	So. Bapt.	Sects	Total Prot.	Rom. Cath.	LDS SLC	CC
27%	43%	43%	66%	88%	86%	33%	62%	64%	43%
29	20	20	21	9	10	21	19	10	11
16	12	18	7	3	3	16	6	5	6
12	12	7	5	0	0	12	4	4	6
16	13	12	1	0	1	18	9	10	26
457	195	130	111	76	247	2,155	500	898	273

equivalent (traditional Christian) statements about God in the Glock and Stark survey.[31] Summarizing the findings in Table 1, about *one-fourth* of the SLC saints, and *two-fifths* of the CC saints, have at least some reservations about the traditional Church teaching on God, and cannot be classed as "orthodox." Since these proportions are comparable to those of the "mainstream" American denominations generally (and, in the CC case, well below the American average), one could regard the Table 1 figures as indicative of some degree of Mormon "secularization." It is interesting that in comparing the two Mormon samples with the other Christian samples, the Mormon samples maintained almost as high a frequency of belief in the Devil as of belief in God — rather somewhat counterindicative of secularization.[32]

Any one belief, however, is a rather limited measure of orthodoxy. A much

TABLE 3:

Q: HAVE YOU EVER HAD —	Congreg.	Meth.	Episc.	Disc. of Christ
"A sense of being saved in Christ"?				
Percents answering				
"Yes, I'm sure I have"	9 %	18 %	20 %	34 %
"Yes, I think I have"	19	28	24	38
"A sure testimony, through the Holy Ghost, of the truth of the Restored Gospel?" (LDS only).				
Percents answering				
"Yes, I'm sure I have"				
"Yes, I think I have"				
N (100 %) = (same as Table 1)				

*Data on Protestants and Catholics come from Rodney Stark and C. Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley, U.C. Press, 1968), page 133.

more comprehensive measure is provided by a *composite index* based on several beliefs. Table 2 shows the distributions on such an index of the two Mormon samples in comparison with other denominational samples taken again from the Glock and Stark study.[33] The Index of Orthodoxy for Mormons is based upon four items: belief in God, belief in the literal divinity of Jesus, belief in an actual personal Devil, and belief in Joseph Smith's first vision. For the other denominations the composition of the Index is somewhat different but comparable. Note in particular the changes in the figures from Table 1 to Table 2. Most denominations, however, drop much more drastically than do the L.D.S., indicating that the maintenance of traditional beliefs *aside from* belief in God is much more problematic for those other denominations than for Mormons. In this kind of comparison, then, Mormons appear much *less secularized* than others.[34]

Spiritual experiences, much emphasized in the Mormon tradition, are certainly indicative of resistance to secularization; they are probably among the first elements of "religiosity" to disappear under the onslaught of secularization (even before an intellectual change of actual belief). The most common spiritual experience of which Mormons are likely to speak (especially on Fast Sunday) is that of testimony. One part of my questionnaire asked the respondents whether they had ever had certain spiritual experiences (including the acquisition of a testimony), and how certain they were of such experiences. When compared to Stark and Glock's data, both Mormon samples would be somewhere in the middle with their responses about "testimony," which would make them appear more "secularized" in this respect than the evangelical denominations. If waning certainty about the witness of the Spirit is an indi-

*SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES**

	Presb.	Am. Luth.	Am. Bapt.	Mo. Luth.	So. Bapt.	Sects	Total Prot.	Rom. Cath.	LDS SLC	CC
	31%	37%	56%	52%	92%	85%	37%	26%		
	27	25	20	31	5	9	23	22		
									51%	36%
									22	20

cator of secularization, one would have to regard the CC saints as more secular than their SLC brothers and as equally secular to other Christians on the average.[35]

Still another aspect of religious belief and attitudes is "personal pietism," referring to certain obligations of a behavioral kind which a believer feels he owes the Lord as His disciple. For Mormons these obligations would include observance of the Word of Wisdom, keeping the Sabbath Day holy, paying tithing, and the like. My questionnaire contained a section in which the respondent was asked to indicate "how serious" he thought each of several kinds of infractions might be in the Lord's eyes. He could answer for each infraction in one of four categories ranging from "very serious" to "scarcely matters at all." The infraction most frequently rated "very serious" was "Having sex relations after marriage with someone other than spouse" (90% in SLC and 79% in CC); the one least frequently so rated was "Watching ball games on TV on Sunday" (6% in SLC and 4% in CC). Middle range infractions included "Drinking coffee" (22% in SLC and 15% in CC); "Paying an incomplete tithing" (43% in SLC and 29% in CC); and "Taking the Lord's name in vain" (68% in SLC and 50% in CC). Table 4 shows the distributions of the SLC and the CC samples on a composite *Index* of Personal Pietism, based upon responses to *nine* pietism items in which respondents were given a score of 2 for each "very serious" answer and a score of 1 for each "fairly serious" answer.

Once again we find the CC saints occupying a much more "secular" distribution than the SLC saints on the index. At the highest level of the index are those respondents (23% in SLC *vs.* 10% in CC) who found *almost all* of the infractions "very serious." Table 4, incidentally, demonstrates the lack of

concensus on the importance of pietistic observances among Latter-day Saints in *either* city.[36] (No comparable figures on pietism for other Christians are available at this time).

TABLE 4: *LEVELS OF PERSONAL PIETISM**

Pietism Index:		SLC	CC
Very Low	(0-4)	15 %	33 %
	(5-8)	17	15
	(9-11)	19	16
	(12-14)	18	11
Very High	(15-18)	23	10
N (100 %) =		958	296

*In this and other tables involving an index, percents will often fail to total 100 % because incomplete responses by some of the cases make them non-ratable on the index.

So far we have been treating "secularization" *operationally* as simply the relative absence of *adherence to traditional religious beliefs* regarding theology, spiritual experiences, and personal pietism. The inference has been drawn quite explicitly that such adherence has a kind of "reciprocal" relationship with secularism, so that as the one goes down the other goes up. In other words, one is defined as "secular" to the extent that he is *not* "religious" according to the measures and criteria here employed. It is possible, however, to devise a more *direct* measure of secularism from some of the items in my questionnaire. On one item the respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement to the proposition: "The LDS and other churches must adapt themselves and their teachings to the findings of modern science and modern developments." This is a "secular" statement by most definitions because it clearly

TABLE 6:

*Denominations:**	Congreg.	Meth.	Episc.	Disc. of Christ
Percents claiming attendance at "worship services" (or, for LDS, "Sacrament Service") weekly or nearly weekly:	45 %	51 %	56 %	68 %
N (100 %) =	151	415	416	50

*Data on Protestants and Catholics come from Rodney Stark and C. Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley, U.C. Press, 1968), page 84.

TABLE 5: *LEVELS OF SECULARISM*

Secularism Index:	SLC	CC
Zero 0	59%	41%
1	22	22
2	8	16
High 3	5	15
N (100%) =	958	296

changes the focus of religion away from divine revelation and toward "worldly wisdom." Of the SLC saints, 33% agreed with that statement "fully" or "somewhat," compared with 46% of the CC saints. As usual, however, it is preferable to have a more comprehensive and composite measure than a single question will provide. Accordingly, the SLC and CC saints have been compared by means of an *Index of Secularism*, as shown in Table 5. This Index is a composite of three items: (1) the statement quoted just above on adapting to modern science, etc. (2) a statement that the church should give less attention to preparing for the next life and more attention to contemporary social issues; and (3) a statement affirming the truth of the Darwinian theory of evolution.[37] Only persons agreeing *fully* or *definitely* to one or more of these statements was registered on this index, since agreement "somewhat" is open to too great a range of meanings. As we can see from Table 5, high standing on this index (i.e., definite agreement with all three "secular" statements) is unusual in both SLC and CC. Comparable measures are not available at this time for other Christians, but there is every indication that both Catholics and at least "mainstream" Protestants would exhibit much higher levels of secularism than do the LDS on this kind of measure.[38] One would accordingly have to regard the Latter-day Saints as essentially "other-worldly" in their religious outlooks, with large majorities of even the CC saints scoring either zero or 1 on the Index of Secularism.

ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH SERVICES

Presb.	Am. Luth.	Am. Bapt.	Mo. Luth.	So. Bapt.	Sects	Total Prot.	Rom. Cath.	LDS SLC	CC
58%	65%	75%	73%	84%	93%	63%	80%	58%	33%
495	208	141	116	79	255	2,326	545	958	296

The earlier reference to the theoretical work of Glock and Stark should perhaps be reiterated. Let us recall that they postulated (with considerable empirical support) at least *five* distinguishable "dimensions of religiosity" (i.e., five different ways of being religious).[39] We have so far dealt almost entirely with only one of those dimensions (belief), with some attention to a second one (experience). In the interest of space, we will limit our discussion of religiosity vs. secularism to one *additional* "dimension," that of *practice*. Of interest here are questions about a respondents' *behavior* (rather than beliefs), with special reference to what might be called the "ritual observances" through which one expresses his religious commitments. Perhaps the most common of these is church attendance.[40]

In this case, even the SLC figures are lower than those for other Christians (on the average), and not particularly high even among the range of the various Protestant denominations. It should, of course, be remembered that for many Latter-day Saints, "going to church once a week" means going a total of *2 or 3 times* on Sunday alone, whereas a single morning mass or service might be the norm for the other denominations. At the same time, however, many of the more evangelical denominations meet as many times on Sunday (and during the Week) as do Mormons.

Rather than rely on a single indicator of religious observance, however, let us once again apply an *Index of Ritual Practice* to our data. Since many different such observations are expected of active Latter-day Saints, this index is quite a complex one. It is derived from the frequencies of participation in sacrament services, temple sessions, private prayers, and mealtime prayers, with different weights being given in the scoring to different levels of participation in each of these activities. The most points, for example, went to those respondents who reported *at least weekly* attendance at sacrament services, *monthly* attendance at temple sessions, and daily (or nearly daily) participation in the various kinds of prayers. Lesser degrees of participation in each category received smaller scores. The result was an index with a range of zero to 18, with 12 or more points (i.e., at least 2/3 of those possible) being considered "high" in ritual practice.

TABLE 7: *RITUAL PRACTICE*

Ritual Practice Index Scores:	SLC	CC
Low (0-4)	14 %	32 %
(5-11)	14	15
(12-16)	28	12
High (17-18)	18	8

As Table 7 indicates, the results of comparing the SLC and the CC saints are similar to those of previous comparisons: much lower levels of "ritual religiosity" are apparent for the CC saints. Realistically, however, scores of 12 points or more are quite high. An item-by-item investigation of the responses of the two samples on the various questions making up the index showed that they were quite close in their frequencies of private prayer and of temple

attendance, (both groups live near to temples), but in all the other practices the CC saints were much lower.

A full comparison with other Christians in the Glock and Stark study is not possible this time, because the latter study employs a somewhat different (and much simpler) index of ritual observance. However, roughly comparable figures from their index (i.e., 2/3 or more of the possible points) show a range of 64% to 97% across the various Protestant denominations, with an average of 77%, and 84% for the Catholics.[41] Compared to these the L.D.S. figures do not seem very high. However, the index used for the L.D.S. samples was a more elaborate and probably harder standard against which to score high.

The Impact of Social Background Factors on Religious Commitment

Our discussion so far has dealt with Mormons as though they were one homogeneous group, except for regional differences. We have compared one sample of Mormons in Salt Lake City with another sample in "Coastal City," but *within* each sample we have made no comparisons across categories of age, sex, education, or any of the other factors which make for differences among Mormons as surely as they do among other people. To be sure, the regional factor (SLC vs. CC) has been shown to have a considerable impact, demonstrating, among other things, the hazards of making generalizations about "Mormons" without regard to where they live. We can expect certain other factors also to create important differences among Latter-day Saints. Space does not permit an elaborate analysis here, but at the most superficial level the CC sample (on the average), when compared to the SLC sample, was somewhat more female (57% in CC vs. 51% in SLC), younger (45% under 36 years of age vs. 27%), and better educated (79% with some education beyond high school vs. 67%).

With respect to the influence of these factors upon religious commitment, certain clear patterns are emerging: first of all, women are noticeably (but not overwhelmingly) more likely than men to score high on all the measures of religious commitment used here. Age too appears to be related to all of these measures, with younger Mormons somewhat less likely than older ones to be "religious" in the traditional sense, especially where church attendance is concerned. In the Glock and Stark study, education level is more highly related to declining religiosity (and advancing secularization) than is any other single factor.[42] From my data, this is not nearly so true for Mormons, for whom high religious commitment characterizes clear majorities across all levels of education. The exception is the area of pietistic observances (e.g. Word of Wisdom, tithing, etc.), where the highly educated are not only about half as likely as the poorly educated to feel that these observances are important. While the generalizations made in this paragraph are applicable to *both* the SLC and the CC samples, they are more true of the latter.

Much of what has been said here is in accord with the findings of others concerning the influence of age, sex, education, and other such social background factors upon religious commitment, but thus far such factors do not seem to weigh as heavily among Latter-day Saints as among others.[43] Many other questions about social and cultural influences remain to be investigated. One important question would be whether the CC saints are affected by sex,

age, and education in the same ways as are the SLC saints; or, in other words, what is the *combined effect* of regional differences with education, sex, and/or age. It could well be that the effect of these factors (and others such as social class) would be intensified outside the Utah environment, where Church traditions are part of the general cultural milieu. Some evidence for this suggestion comes from another study, in which it was determined that education was not nearly so important a "neutralizer" of traditional attitudes as was exposure to non-Church environments outside Utah.[44] Such would also seem to be the implication of the material presented in this paper comparing the beliefs of SLC saints with CC ones. In short, we have every reason to believe that among Mormons, as among others, the least "religious" and most "secular" church member is the highly educated young male living outside of Utah, a numerous and rapidly increasing type of Latter-day Saint. That he is probably not nearly *as* "secularized" as his Protestant or Catholic counterpart is important also, but it does not alter the apparent fact that he is headed in the same general *direction* as they are, even if more slowly.

Church Programs and Resistance to Secularization

There are, of course, many new or rejuvenated church programs intended to cope with the problem of growing secularization among the saints. Two of these in particular, the Seminary-Institute Program and the Family Home Evening Program, are attacking the problem in probably a strategically sound fashion — i.e., in those social institutions that have the greatest socializing

impact (family and education). Just how *effective* these programs are, however, is another question. According to the responses given in my survey, only 20% of the SLC saints and a mere 5% of the CC saints claimed to be holding Family Home Evening as often as weekly or almost weekly. In both samples, about one-fourth of the respondents failed to answer that particular question, which might mean that they did not think the question applicable to them (because they were single, childless, older, or for some other reason). Of course, additional respondents claimed monthly, twice monthly, or some other occasional frequency for their Family Home Evening participation, but the *most frequent* single response to the question was *"seldom or never"* (30% in SLC and 62% in CC). The data for these figures were gathered about 4 years ago, and it may well be that levels of participation in Family Home Evening have increased considerably since then, but such low figures even at that time do not augur well for the program. A Master's thesis which investigated the subject much more deeply with the same data identified the major correlates of participation in Family Home Evening among the SLC saints. Among the more interesting findings were: (1) the saints most likely to participate regularly in Family Home Evening were those who were high on the Index of Ritual Practice, or in other words, those who were also participating regularly in the other meetings and programs of the Church (but *not* necessarily those who were highest in orthodoxy or the other "dimensions of religiosity"). (2) Even among those in the highest category of ritual practice (i.e., those most "active" in the Church), the level of regular Family Home Evening participation did not exceed 40%.[45]

With respect to the religious education program of the Church (seminary and institute), there is again a rather moot question as to real effectiveness in the struggle against secularism. Leaving aside questions concerning the nature and quality of the instruction (which also need to be answered, of course), *quantitative* (i.e., statistical) questions can be raised and, in part, answered. For example, with what *proportion* of L.D.S. students does seminary and institute have an *independent* impact in promoting testimonies and religious commitment generally? By "independent impact" we mean *beyond* what can already be attributed to other agencies such as the home, church auxiliaries, etc. This is a question which is never really addressed in the statistics that are so often cited by the Church Education Department during their seminary recruitment drives. These statistics often purport to show that students who attend seminary are much more likely than other L.D.S. youth to go on missions, get married in the temple, etc., presumably *because* of the seminary experience. There is an element of spuriousness in this reasoning, however, unless one is comparing seminary youth with non-seminary youth *from equally active homes*. In other words, there is reason to believe that L.D.S. youth from active homes go to seminary *and* go on missions *and* get married in the temple, and that seminary itself has no *separate* or independent weight in the process beyond that which already comes from the home. Such, indeed, was the general conclusion of the Catholic sociologist Andrew Greeley, who researched this question with respect to *parochial schools*. He found that Catholic youngsters from devout Catholic homes were likely to become devout Catholic adults themselves, *whether or not* they went to parochial schools; and that the opposite outcome could be expected from non-devout homes, again with or without parochial education.[46]

My own survey data enabled me to investigate the influence of seminary and institute experience from this same point of view. I devised an index to measure the activity and devoutness of the childhood home background of my various respondents, and then I "controlled" for that factor in checking the relationship between youthful seminary participation and later adult religious commitment. In other words, I analyzed the impact of seminary (upon adult religious life) *at each level* of religious activity of the home background, and my results were very similar to what Greeley had found for the Catholic parochial school graduates. That is, I found that respondents who had come from active L.D.S. homes were very likely to be active L.D.S. adults (and to have had missions, etc.), *without regard* to how much *seminary* experience they had had. On the other hand, those who had come from religiously inactive homes were much more likely to be inactive as adults, again without regard to seminary experience. There was strong evidence, however, that *institute* experience *did* have an impact beyond that of the family or other agencies, probably because institute is voluntary in the real sense of that word and tends to recruit students with a greater receptiveness to its educational efforts than seminary students are likely to have. Interestingly enough, the *greatest* single impact upon adult religious devoutness, beyond the home influence itself, (according to these data and measures) came from *missionary experience*, which was much more likely *than seminary and institute combined* to have an independent influence on a person's adult religious attitudes. This finding suggests that the major components in the socialization or indoctrination process for Mormon youth are the *home* and the *mission*, with some independent input from institute, but almost *none* from seminary.[47] This is not to say that seminary is not a critical factor in certain *individual* cases (it undoubtedly is), but if so, its effect would seem to be negative about as often as it is positive, for *on the average* its impact is negligible according to these particular measures.

The data and observations presented in the last few paragraphs are in no way intended as an indictment of the Church's family and educational programs. (Indeed, my family and I have all been active participants both in seminary and in family home evening). The questions of effectiveness which I have raised about these programs come from hard data, not from the carping criticisms of the disaffected, nor from the syrupy, spurious statistics of self-interested apologists. To those, above all, who are interested in resisting the secularization process so evident among Mormons as among others, it would seem that factual data, even if it hurts, should be of the most critical importance. If there is evidence that participation in Family Home Evening runs well below 50% especially in the outlying urban areas where (presumably) it is "needed the most," then that is worth knowing and investigating with some care. If the seminary program (which I take to be an extremely expensive one) is having minimal independent impact on the religious socialization of Mormon youth, then the educational administrators of the Church, more than anyone else, might do well to raise and investigate thoroughly the question of whether the seminary program should be abolished or be fundamentally revised. The data from my surveys, as well as the historical experience of the Latter-day Saints and other religious bodies, all suggest clearly that the secularization process is having its effect on all of us; and if the church programs (e.g., for family and

for religious education) which are intended to cope with that process are not maximally effective, they will be regarded by history not as fortresses of the faith, but merely as additional symptoms of the inroads of secularization.

Concluding Observations

The readers who have been generous enough to follow me this far have been exposed to a great variety of data and observations about the "state of the saints" in the late 1960's. To those who (understandably) are feeling a certain degree of intellectual indigestion, let me say that time and some re-reading should bring a more thorough and satisfying assimilation.

I began this article with a theoretical framework which would postulate that the Latter-day Saints, like other surviving religious movements, are joining the great American "melting pot." The data presented here (and in my previous *Dialogue* article) seem generally to have supported such a postulate. While Mormonism continues to show an immense vitality and comparative resistance to the secularization process, yet Mormons are coming to resemble other urban Americans increasingly (1) in levels of belief in traditional religious doctrines, (2) in political outlooks, and (3) in crucial social attitudes such as those regarding ethnic minorities.[48] My claim for such a trend rests primarily upon the findings that (1) the proportion of the Mormons living in urban areas outside the Mountain West is large and is increasing; that (2) such "outlying urban" Mormons rate much higher on measures of secularization than do their Utah brethren; and that (3) the Mormons of the future (i.e. those now young) demonstrate higher levels of secularization than do their parents and grandparents. The varieties of data which I have presented in this paper have sometimes born directly upon these questions and have supported the secularization postulate convincingly; at other times, the data have been more suggestive or indicative than conclusive.

An extensive geographical study of the Mormons a few years ago concluded with a summary that is perhaps equally appropriate for this paper:

> Geographically, the most significant trend in Mormon culture is the fact that the greatest growth in membership is taking place beyond the limits of the historic Mormon culture region, that is, in areas which it cannot hope to dominate. It does not take much foresight to realize that California will someday have more Mormons than Utah . . . , but it is essential also to realize that California cannot be captured, for it can only be adjusted to.[49]

I, for one, take no particular delight in the contemplation of this projection. Today, as in Nephi's time, it will be only at the peril of oblivion that the "peculiar people" will murmur "all is well in Zion."

[1]Dale L. Morgan, "The Contemporary Scene" (1941), in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1958), p. 474.

[2]Thomas F. O'Dea, "Mormonism and the Avoidance of Sectarian Stagnation: A Study of Church, Sect, and Incipient Nationality," *American Journal of Sociology*, 60 (November, 1954), 285-293.

[3]I have elsewhere proposed a modest theoretical scheme for understanding the assimilation process in the United States as it occurs to radical *political* movements, but the scheme is equally applicable to religious movements. (See Armand L. Mauss, "On Being Strangled by the Stars and Stripes: The New Left, the Old Left, and the Natural History of American Radical Movements," *The Journal of Social Issues*, 27:1 [1971], 183-202). While one may not be justified in equating secularization with assimilation *in general*, I do so here on the basis of an assumption that increasing secularization is the trend in American society. To the extent that one can accept that assumption, one can also hold that increasing assimilation and secularization for American Mormons are at least *concomitant* (if not identical) processes.

[4]See, e.g., entire issue of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 6 (Spring, 1967), including various articles on the secularization question; also, in the *same journal*, Richard K. Fenn, "The Process of Secularization: a Post-Parsonian View," 9 (Summer, 1970), 117-136; and section entitled, "The Sacred Canopy Becoming the Mantle of Man: More Observations on 'secularization'," 10 (Spring, 1971), 1-36.

[5]The process that today we call "secularization" has long been recognized in social theory. More than a half century ago, Ernst Troeltsch (drawing upon the thought of his colleague and mentor, Max Weber) set forth his classical dichotomy of *sect* vs. *church*, and since then a sizeable body of theoretical and empirical literature has accumulated to refine and elaborate upon the original scheme. See Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon (New York: Macmillan, 1931), Vol. 2. See also the splendid review of more recent literature on the topic in Benton Johnson, "On Church and Sect," *American Sociological Review* 28 (August, 1963), 539-549; and Paul M. Gustafson, *et al.*, "Reappraisal of Church-Sect Typology," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 6 (April, 1967), 64-90; also, Benton Johnson, "Church and Sect Revisited," and J. K. Benson & J. H. Dorsett, "Toward a Theory of Religious Organizations," both in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 10 (Summer, 1971), 124-151. Among the main characteristics of the "church" type of religious organization are a formal bureaucratic structure (usually implying a professional clergy), highly developed liturgy and ritual, membership growth mostly from natural increase, a high degree of affluence both individually and collectively (as a church), and an accommodation with the "establishment" such that the church members generally hold the prevailing social and political values of the society. The "sect" type of religion, by contrast, emphasizes informal and charismatic leadership, emotional fervor, active proselyting, working-class and lower-class social base with a general lack of affluence, and a separation and renunciation of the world and of the "establishment" (including established churches), rather than compromise or accommodation.

In one sense, "church" and "sect" can be regarded as theoretically "pure" abstractions or "ideal types" against which to compare actual religious bodies according to their degrees of "churchness" or "sectness," which is to imply that the various denominations and groups in the real world would form a kind of *continuum* between the church/sect poles. In another sense, however, this scheme can be conceived as a *chronological* or historical continuum describing the typical "natural history" of a religious body from its inception as a sect to its eventual emergence as a church which has made its peace with the establishment. Many intervening variables would determine the pace and the style of this evolutionary process (e.g., O'Dea's treatment of the Mormon experience above mentioned), but this conceptualization postulates that every new religious sect (or new political sect, for that matter) which is not simply des-

troyed by its "host society" will have to make its accommodation with that society as the price for survival and respectability. It is in this last postulate, of course, that we have the connection between "sect-church theory" and the notion of "secularization."

[6]See, e.g., W. Seward Salisbury, "Religion and Secularization," *Social Forces*, 36 (March, 1958), 197-205; and Rodney Stark & Charles Y. Glock, *American Piety: the Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), esp. Chapter 11.

[7]Glenn M. Vernon, "Background Factors Related to Church Orthodoxy," *Social Forces*, 34 (March, 1956), 252-254.

[8]Wilford E. Smith, "A Comparative Study of Indulgence of Mormon and Non-Mormon Students in Certain Social Practices which are Authoritatively Condemned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1952).

[9]Wilford E. Smith, "The Urban Threat to Mormon Norms," *Rural Sociology*, 24 (December, 1959), 335-361.

[10]Nels Anderson, "The Mormon Family," *American Sociological Review*, 2 (October, 1937), 601-608; and William DeHart, "Fertility of Mormons in Utah and Adjacent States," *American Sociological Review*, 6 (December, 1941), 818-829.

[11]Victor A. Christopherson, "An Investigation of Patriarchal Authority in the Mormon Family," *Marriage and Family Living*, 18 (November, 1956), 328-333; and Lowry Nelson, "Education and the Changing Size of Mormon Families," *Rural Sociology*, 17 (December, 1952), 335-342.

[12]Leonard J. Arrington, "Property Among the Mormons," *Rural Sociology*, 16 (1951), 339-352.

[13]C. LeRoy Anderson, "A Preliminary Study of Generational Economic Dependency Orientations," *Social Forces*, 45 (June, 1967), 516-520.

[14]Victor Cline and James M. Richards, Jr., "A Factor-Analytic Study of Religious Belief and Behavior," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1 (1965); 569-578; see also my "Moderation in All Things" in the last issue of *Dialogue*.

[15]Harold T. Christensen, "Scandinavian and American Sex Norms: Some Comparisons, with Sociological Implications," *Journal of Social Issues*, 22 (April, 1966), 60-75; see also the same author with George R. Carpenter, "Value-Behavior Discrepancies Regarding Premarital Coitus in Three Western Cultures," *American Sociological Review*, 27 (February, 1962), 66-74.

[16]Phillip R. Kunz, "Mormon and Non-Mormon Divorce Patterns," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 26 (May, 1964), 211-213.

[17]Genevieve M. Wise and Don C. Carter, "A Definition of the Role of Homemaker by Two Generations of Women," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 27 (Nov., 1965), 531-532.

[18]Phillip R. Kunz, "Religious Influences on Parental Discipline and Achievement Demands," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 25 (May, 1963), 224-225.

[19]Charles H. Anderson, "Religious Communality Among White Protestant, Catholics, and Mormons," *Social Forces*, 46 (June, 1968), 501-508.

[20]Glenn M. Vernon, "The Religious 'Nones': A Neglected Category," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 7 (Fall, 1968), 219-229.

[21]Cline and Richards, *op. cit.*

[22]I might add, incidentally, that while I have gone through the relevant published literature, there may have been more research that I should have considered in my discussion, including some unpublished dissertations or theses which might have had some bearing upon the questions I have raised, particularly those by G. Byron Done and John L. Sorenson.

[23]John L. Sorenson, "The Recent Growth of the LDS Church in California" (1967), an unpublished paper, much of which was presented at the August 28, 1967, meeting of the Mormon History Association at Stanford University.

[24]Thomas F. O'Dea, *op. cit.*, fn. 2.

[25]Thomas F. O'Dea, "The Effects of Geographical Position on Belief and Behavior in a Rural Mormon Village," *Rural Sociology*, 19 (December, 1954), 358-364.

[26]Lowry Nelson, *The Mormon Village: A Pattern and Technique of Land Settlement* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1952).

[27]Please refer to my article in the last issue of *Dialogue* for a more thorough description of

the samples and the sampling system. ("Moderation in All Things: Political and Social Outlooks of Modern Urban Mormons," *Dialogue*, 7 (Spring 1972), note 3). The sampling and methodological procedures used in my work are modeled after those of C. Y. Glock and Rodney Stark in their large study of Northern California Protestants and Catholics. (See esp. the appendices to Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism* [New York: Harper and Row, 1966]).

[28]For reasons mentioned in my previous article, I will not identify "Coastal City," but in light of some of the concerns expressed about this sample by pre-publication editorial critics, let me assure readers that the city in question is neither Berkeley nor any other East Bay city.

[29]The meaning which I shall attach to these findings for purposes of this article is simply that the Salt Lake City saints represent Mormonism of the contemporary "establishment" *type* (i.e., where the *church* is part of the establishment and strongly influences the social, political, cultural, and ideological environments); Utah Mormonism might also be conceived as a kind of residue of the earlier sect-like faith that was brought there from Nauvoo. Coastal City Mormonism, on the other hand, represents the outlook of contemporary "outland" saints, who are very much in the minority in their respective areas and are subjected to much stronger assimilationist pressures from the surrounding society than are the Utah saints. Furthermore — and this is the most crucial point — the Coastal City saints may represent "modal Mormonism" of the future (Mormonism being here considered as *what most Mormons believe*, rather than what the Church has traditionally taught), if only because the proportion of Mormons living in such settings is now approaching two-thirds and is still growing. (D. W. Meinig, "The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847-1964," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 55 (June, 1965), 191-220). That the Coastal City saints are, on the average, a much *younger* population than the Utah saints also argues for looking at them as the harbinger of the future. In other words, Coastal City Mormons stand toward the right-hand pole or *extremity* of a continuum of secularization along which the whole Church is moving (and probably has been moving during this entire century).

To be sure, my assertion for this kind of meaning in the comparison of Salt Lake City and Coastal City saints is arguable, and one reason, I might admit, that it is arguable is that Coastal City has the reputation generally of being a rather liberal cultural setting, so it may be too extreme an example of the *near* future; but even so, it may well define the *direction* of the evolution of Mormonism. Of course, the *ideal* kind of data for establishing this direction would be "longitudinal" data — i.e., data gathered at intervals over time from the same sample. Almost as good would be *historically comparable* data, in which measures of secularizing tendencies applied to a sample in the past could be replicated with a similar sample in the present. My own rather extensive research convinces me that no data are in existence that would make possible either of these two preferable approaches. What I am here proposing, then, with the theoretical rationale on which it is based, constitutes the "best available" approach to the question of growing Mormon secularization, rather than the "ideal" approach. If the reader can accept my rationale, then he can accept my conclusions; if not, he is welcome to offer his own meaning for my findings.

Any body of empirical data must be subjected to *some* kind of theoretical framework if it is to be invested with *meaning* or *interpretation* (as opposed to mere information). Obviously, alternative interpretations of my findings are possible, and I welcome dialogue over them. To my critics I respectfully suggest that neither my data nor my theoretical perspective can be very effectively impeached simply by pointing to their deficiencies. Far more constructive will be the offering of alternative theoretical schemes, and/or bodies of data. One alternative meaning which I had hoped I would never have to confront from (of all people!) *Dialogue* readers was offered me by an editorial critic who, fortunately, remains anonymous to me. He suggested, in effect, that Coastal City Mormons were almost bound, by definition, to be less "religious" (or more "secular") than their Salt Lake City counterparts because of a kind of self-selection process, according to which the less committed L.D.S. have "moved out of the system" by leaving Utah and going to the coast! This "explanation" strikes me as not only naive, and scarcely confirmed by Church statistics on the relative support given the church by its coastal saints, but it is also clearly a *regional* version of the same "ethnocentrism" which holds that *American* Mormons are the *real* ones!

[30]Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*, 177-178, fn. 6.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 28. The Glock and Stark survey data came from a large urban sample in Northern California. The figures on orthodoxy levels would probably run somewhat lower for a national sample of Christians (see p. 30). While the questionnaire item about belief in God is obviously different for Mormons and for other Christians, I say that the items are comparable because each represents the *most that is demanded* in the respective denominations in order for a member to be considered "orthodox" on that particular item.

[32]Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*, Chapter 3. The figures on levels of belief in such items reported by Glenn M. Vernon in *op. cit.* (1968) are similar to those for my Salt Lake City data, as were those reported to me in a private communication from James L. Clayton (July 8, 1971) regarding another Salt Lake City ward with a somewhat "liberal" reputation.

[33]Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*, p. 60. For an explanation of meaning and construction of an "index," please see fn. 7 of my recent *Dialogue* article, "Moderation in All Things."

[34]Incidentally, the reduction in levels of belief, when we employ an *index* as opposed to a *single item* (e.g., 77% down to 64% in SLC), demonstrates the improvement in discriminating power that an index provides.

[35]Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*, Chapter 6, esp. p. 133.

[36]Questions about "pietistic" observances by Latter-day Saints drew similarly mixed responses from the "liberal" Salt Lake City ward from which James L. Clayton sent me the limited data available (see fn. 32 above), and which I acknowledge gratefully.

[37]I regard belief in the Darwinian theory as an indicator of secularism in the L.D.S. setting because: (a) the preponderance of *authoritative* theological opinion in the Church has always been against it (i.e., among the General Authorities who have addressed the issue, many condemnations of Darwinism can be found, but little, if any, acceptance); furthermore (b) in my surveys, most L.D.S. rejected the theory of evolution as either surely or probably false (72% in SLC; 54% in CC). A Mormon who can accommodate the theory is certainly going against the theological "mainstream" in his religion and is, to that extent, a more "secular" person.

[38]This statement is inferred from the concluding chapter of Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*

[39]Stark and Glock, *op. cit.*, Chapter 1.

[40]*Ibid.*, p. 84 *et passim*. These figures are well above the church attendance averages of Americans in general, since they deal with *church members* only, and Mormon definitions of church membership are more inclusive than those of most other denominations.

[41]*Ibid.*, 105.

[42]This observation was made to me by Rodney Stark in a personal conversation, but it is borne out also in Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), Chapter 11.

[43]Charles Y. Glock, *et al.*, *To Comfort and to Challenge*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), presents data on Episcopalians congruent with what my Mormon data have shown on the effects of these various social factors. Howard M. Bahr ("Aging and Religious Disaffiliation," *Social Forces*, 49 (Sept., 1970), 59-70, in summarizing a variety of studies, has shown that church *attendance* in urban areas *declines* with advancing age, which provides scant hope for later increased religiosity among the youth in my samples.

[44]Armand L. Mauss and Ella D. Lewis Douglas, "Religious and Secular Factors in the Race Attitudes of Logan, Utah, Residents," *Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters*, 45 (Fall, 1968).

[45]Gordon E. Mauss, "Religious and Secular Correlates of the L.D.S. Family Home Evening Program," unpublished Master's Thesis, Provo: Brigham Young University, 1969.

[46]Andrew M. Greeley and Peter H. Rossi, *The Education of Catholic Americans* (Chicago: Aldine, 1966).

[47]These and other related conclusions are presented with statistical support in my (as yet) unpublished paper, "Seminary and Salvation: Religious Instruction and Religiosity among the Mormons," presented at the annual meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association, Seattle, April, 1969.

[48]The resemblance between Mormon Americans and other Americans in political and social outlooks is the chief point of my previous article in the last issue of *Dialogue*, to which reference has here been made several times.

[49]Meinig, *op. cit.*, p. 220.