"One Flesh:" A Historical Overview of Latter-day Saint Sexuality and Psychology

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THE ISSUE OF SEXUALITY, its expression or non-expression, even questions about its very nature, torments American culture. Various philosophies and systems of morality abound which advocate chastity, promiscuity, sex solely for procreation, sex for recreation, and every possible variation imaginable. Within the LDS community, the primary values which have defined the boundaries of sexuality are procreation and chastity. In 1975 church president Spencer W. Kimball reaffirmed these values:

> The union of the sexes, husband and wife (and only husband and wife), was for the principal purpose of bringing children into the world. Sexual experiences were never intended by the Lord to be a mere plaything or merely to satisfy passions and lusts. We know of no directive from the Lord that proper sexual experience between husbands and wives need be limited totally to the procreation of children, but we find much evidence from Adam until now that no provision was ever made by the Lord for indiscriminate sex.[1]

Of all the values which Mormons try to live, the value of chastity is probably one of the most difficult. In the early 1970s a member of the church's First Presidency estimated that "75 percent of the problems crossing his desk each day were sex-related."[2] The prevalence of sexual issues is certainly not unique to the LDS community, but rather reflects the obsessions of mainstream America.

The focus of psychotherapists and our society on sexual issues is not

1. Spencer W. Kimball, "The Lord's Plan for Men and Women," *Ensign* 5 (Oct. 1975): 4.
2. Kenneth L. Cannon, "Needed: An LDS Philosophy of Sex," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1976): 58.

just a byproduct of Freud and his psychosexual theory. Western society, so focused on religious issues in the nineteenth century, turned to sexual issues in the twentieth century. This widespread cultural focus is reflected in the preoccupations of institutionalized schizophrenics. A study comparing patients admitted into the Bethlem Royal Hospital in England during the years 1853-62 and 1950-60 found that "three times as many patients of both sexes had religious preoccupations in the nineteenth century as compared with the twentieth century," and "approximately twice as many patients of both sexes had sexual preoccupations in the twentieth century group as compared with the nineteenth century group." The authors tentatively concluded: the preoccupations of schizophrenics, almost certainly suffering from an organic illness, are "culturally determined."[3]

Obviously, the mainstream sexual values of nineteenth-century America and early-twentieth-century America are in sharp contrast to post-World War II America. The traditional prohibition of sexual relations outside of marriage has faded among an onslaught of explicit sexuality in all forms of media and everyday discourse. Historian John C. Burnham argues that the acceptance of what had once been defined as sexual misbehavior is interconnected with the other minor vices: drinking, smoking, taking drugs, gambling, and swearing. This constellation of "bad habits" has moved from being socially condemned to being tolerated, even accepted. These "pleasurable 'misdemeanors' are (within very broad extremes)" nowadays considered to be "harmless, natural, spontaneous, sociable, and without significance."[4] A key contributor in this dramatic social change was the opportunism of the "merchandisers of the minor vices," who through gradual stages cultivated their markets.[5] "Central to the new standards was the idea that individual, not community, standards should be the basis for judging conduct."[6] Since the LDS community considers its communal values to be superior to any individual, such a contrary emphasis in American values was bound to create disagreement.

The LDS community generally views contemporary American society as disordered. The values which Mormons hold dear bring order to their lives. Chastity brings order to a culture, a community, an individ-

3. Franklin S. Klaf and John G. Hamilton, "Schizophrenia—A Hundred Years Ago and Today," *Journal of Mental Science* 107 (Sept. 1961): 827.

4. John C. Burnham, *Bad Habits: Drinking, Smoking, Taking Drugs, Gambling, Sexual Misbehavior, and Swearing in American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), xvii.

5. Ibid., 294.

6. Ibid., 22. An interesting consequence of this emphasis on individuality is the rise of New Age spirituality, where each person is the sole arbitrator of religious truth and meaning, a consumer of a wide variety of ideas from all religious traditions.

ual's own psyche, and keeps him or her in the correct relationship with deity. Breaking the value of chastity brings disorder in the form of sin, guilt, venereal diseases, unwed pregnancies, and a fraying of family bonds.

Birth Control

The convenience and effectiveness of new forms of birth control was a major contributor to the change in sexual values within America. It is instructive to examine the changing attitudes within the LDS community towards restricting fertility. During the first century of Mormonism, birth control was commonly associated with abortion, and both were anathema. Latter-day Saints were encouraged to produce as many children as possible. A belief in a pre-existence promoted the idea that eager spirits waited to be born.[7]

When the birth control movement started in the United States, Mormon leaders reacted with horror. The prophet at the time, Joseph F. Smith, wrote in 1908: "I do not hesitate to say that prevention is wrong ... It destroys the morals of a community and nation. It creates hatred and selfishness in the hearts of men and women ... it disregards or annuls the great commandment of God to man, 'Multiply and replenish the earth.'"[8] Smith recognized that there were circumstances where "weak and sickly people" should avoid child-bearing, yet in his "estimation no prevention, even in such cases, is legitimate except through absolute abstinence."[9]

The church hierarchy had cause for concern. The birth rate among Mormons was declining, mirroring a national trend. The birth rate among Latter-day Saints has always exceeded the national rate, but in 1910 each Mormon family contained, on average, four to five children. Twenty years earlier the rate had probably been above five children; by the mid-1960s that average dropped to below four children.[10] Regardless of the attitudes of the church hierarchy, members of the LDS community were practicing fertility control.

During the late 1930s and 1940s, the attitude of some LDS general authorities changed, allowing the rhythm method as a suitable option.

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7. See Brigham Young, "The People of God Disciplined By Trials," *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4 (Liverpool, Eng.: S. W. Richards, 1857), 56.

8. Joseph F. Smith, "Editor's Table: A Vital Question," *Improvement Era* 11 (Oct. 1908): 959-60.

9. Ibid., 960.

10. Lester E. Bush, Jr., "Birth Control Among the Mormons: Introduction to an Insistent Question," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1976): 23. See also Tim B. Heaton and Sandra Calkins, "Contraceptive Use Among Mormons, 1965-75," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Autumn 1983): 106-109.

Other leaders remained loyal to the old position.[11] In 1969 a compromise was published as a formal statement.

> We seriously regret that there should exist a sentiment or feeling among any members of the church to curtail the birth of their children ... However, we feel that men must be considerate of their wives who bear the greater responsibility not only of bearing children, but of caring for them through childhood. To this end the mother's health and strength should be conserved and the husband's consideration for his wife is his first duty, and self-control a dominant factor in all their relationships.
>
> It is our further feeling that married couples should seek inspiration and wisdom from the Lord that they may exercise discretion in solving their marital problems, and that they may be permitted to rear their children in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel.[12]

In essence, the church asked its members to exercise personal inspiration and be responsible for their own decisions. Surveys have shown that a large percentage of Saints practices birth control, though the ideal of the large family remains firmly entrenched.[13]

The attitude towards abortion has also changed. In a 1976 statement the First Presidency wrote:

> The Church opposes abortion and counsels its members not to submit to, be a party to, or perform an abortion except in the rare cases where, in the opinion of competent medical counsel, the life or health of the woman is seriously endangered or where the pregnancy was caused by forcible rape and produces serious emotional trauma in the victim. Even then it should be done only after counseling with the local bishop or branch president and after receiving divine confirmation through prayer ... As far as has been revealed, the sin of abortion is one for which a person may repent and gain forgiveness.[14]

Sexuality has always been considered a good. Those Saints who "inherit" the highest kingdom of heaven, the Celestial, assume the roles of gods and goddesses (D&C 132:19). In this state they continue to procreate, thus transforming the power of procreation into a divine attribute. This is usually viewed as a continuation of physical sexuality.[15] To be

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11. Bush, 24-25.

12. First Presidency Statement, 14 Apr. 1969, quoted in Bush, 27.

13. Bush, 32.

14. "Church Issues Statement on Abortion," *Ensign* 6 (July 1976): 76. For a review of the church's stance on abortion, as well as other issues, such as sterilization and artificial insemination, see Lester E. Bush, "Ethical Issues in Reproductive Medicine: A Mormon Perspective," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Summer 1985): 41-66.

15. For a view which questions if procreation within the Celestial Kingdom is a physical act, see Lowell L. Bennion, "This—Worldly and Other—Worldly Sex: A Response," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Autumn 1967): 106-108.

married and attempting to produce children is a religious duty. This is in contrast to the monastic tradition of older forms of Christianity, which clearly promoted celibacy as a higher form of spirituality. Within the LDS community, the highest spirituality is found in motherhood and fatherhood.

Creation of an LDS Philosophy of Sexuality

Rhetoric from the pulpit at church conferences has changed over time on the issue of sexual immorality. Very little was said about the topic in the church's first century because it was by and large a value that converged with contemporary mainstream American values, though nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints diverged considerably in their values toward marriage. The widespread practice of polygamy, especially among leaders, was considered the ideal form of matrimony. The acrimony this caused with the United States government is an interesting study in divisiveness. This divide was healed in 1890 when the church renounced polygamy, moving the LDS community into even more complete harmony with the mainstream values of America.[16]

American society did not remain static, but began its own transformation in sexual values. This revolution began in the lower classes within urban areas and gradually spread to find its culmination in post-World War II baby-boomers. The value of chastity was cast aside in favor of sexual liberation.[17] LDS church leaders reacted by emphasizing more often and more strongly the value of chastity.[18]

Mormon understanding of the ramifications of chastity has been expanded through the efforts of LDS psychotherapists, though LDS therapists have found the process difficult because of the inherent shyness within the LDS community about sexuality. There are numerous accounts by therapists of inadequate sexual knowledge discovered in clients and

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16. See Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Louis J. Kern, *An Ordered Love: Sex Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Utopias—the Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981); and Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987).

17. See John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988).

18. See Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed: Themes in the Development of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 253. See also Harold T. Christensen, "The Persistence of Chastity: A Built-in Resistance Within Mormon Culture to Secular Trends," *Sunstone* 7 (Mar./Apr. 1982): 7-14; and Marvin Rytting and Ann Rytting, "Exhortations for Chastity: A Content Analysis of Church Literature," *Sunstone* 7 (Mar./Apr. 1982): 15-21.

students.[19] Surveys have found a dramatic difference between the rates of non-marital sexual experiences between Mormons and mainstream Americans. The LDS community does strive to adhere to the principle of chastity, yet, in a paradox similar to the consumption of alcohol among LDS teenagers, a sociologist found "that Mormons are somewhat more promiscuous when they *do* have premarital coitus."[20] A 1972 survey of LDS college students found that 19 percent of men who regularly attended church had engaged in "intercourse outside of marriage," while only 1 percent of comparable women had. For Latter-day Saints who did not regularly attend church, the statistic was 63 percent of men, 52 percent of women.[21]

A survey in 1976 found few books for sexual education in the LDS community.[22] Mormons had not yet responded to the strong drive within mainstream society to provide material on sexuality. In an article published that same year, Kenneth L. Cannon, a professor of family relations at Brigham Young University, called for an LDS philosophy of sex. He wanted to penetrate the fog of confusion and, through the cooperation of "family life educators and enlightened church members and their leaders," develop "clear guidelines" for the LDS community.[23] This call was answered in a variety of ways.

At Brigham Young University an Institute for Studies in Human Behavior and Values was founded in 1976 to make psychology more gospel-centric. The institute disbanded in 1981, though the scholars involved have continued to work towards integrating the gospel with modern psychologies. One of the projects which grew out of the institute was a book by Victor L. Brown, Jr., *Human Intimacy: Illusion and Reality.* Brown had earlier served as Commissioner of LDS Social Services.[24] The book was published in Salt Lake City by Parliament Publishers, and not the church's publishing arm, Deseret Book, to distance the work from the official church, thus encouraging its acceptance among non-LDS therapists. Even so, church headquarters sent copies of the book to every bishop and stake president, thus promoting its contents as a quasi-official LDS phi-

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19. See Cannon, 58.

20. Harold T. Christensen, "Mormon Sexuality in Cross-Cultural Perspective," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1976): 71, emphasis in original.

21. Wilford E. Smith, "Mormon Sex Standards on College Campuses, or Deal Us Out of the Sexual Revolution," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1976): 77.

22. Shirley B. Paxman, "Sex Education Materials for Latter-day Saints," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1976): 113-16. An early attempt at sexual education occurred in the 1960s with Ernest Eberhard, Jr., *Sacred or Secret? A Parents' Handbook for Sexuality Guidance of Their Children* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967).

23. Cannon, 61.

24. Victor L. Brown, Jr., *Human Intimacy: Illusion & Reality* (Salt Lake City: Parliament Publishers, 1981).

losophy of sex.[25]

Brown argued that the views of contemporary American society on sexuality are illusions. The

> Realities of human intimacy are love, trust, service, sacrifice, and discipline. Opposed to these realities are the glamorous illusions marketed by our society that equate intimacy with an obsession with self, an insistence that every appetite is legitimate and must be gratified, and, most tragic of all, the belief that the laws of human relations can be violated without damaging consequences.[26]

Brown condemned American values which, he said, thrive on fragmentation rather than promote a holistic sexuality. "Through fragmentation, the larger matter of human intimacy is reduced to the smaller part of sex."[27] Sexual fragmentation enables "its users to counterfeit intimacy" and "can be particularly harmful because it gives powerful physiological rewards" when its users "mentally and physically use parts of another's body to gratify their appetite for power."[28]

Brown decried the emphasis on technique which the newly emergent sex therapies of the 1970s often promoted. Furthermore, he condemned the "careless acceptance of masturbation as an inconsequential natural function."[29] He argued that the incidence of chronic masturbation is much less than Alfred Kinsey's misunderstood report suggested. Furthermore, habitual masturbation has negative consequences because

> the individual cannot develop the attitudes and behaviors which will help him develop and retain close and rewarding relationships. Masturbation's consequences are social-emotional isolation and erotic obsession. As two proponents of masturbation said—ironically, with approval—it "means that one need not please anyone else or take another person's needs into consideration."[30]

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25. Carlfred B. Broderick, review of *Human Intimacy: Illusion and Reality,* by Victor L. Brown, Jr., *AMCAP Journal* 8 (Jan. 1982): 26. AMCAP is the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists, founded in 1974. It publishes the *AMCAP Journal*, newsletters, and holds semi-annual conferences on applying LDS values and theology to psychotherapy.

26. Brown, xii. Brown published an earlier book using the insights of the modern psychologies as a primer on life: Victor L. Brown, Jr., and Regenia Moody Chadwick, *On Being Human* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971).

27. Ibid., 6.

28. Ibid., 5.

29. Ibid., 73.

30. Ibid., 75. The quote is from Suzanne Sarnoff and Irving Sarnoff, *Sexual Excitement, Sexual Peace* (New York: M. Evans and Company, 1979), 28.

Brown feared that the attitudes honed in the solitude of masturbation contribute to an eroticization of relationships. "Couples ... who see each other primarily as instruments of erotic gratification literally ignore personality and character while sensual pleasures dominate."[31] Instead, the ideal to which sexuality should be harnessed is an intimacy between husband and wife based on the use of "relationship skills" to create a complete relationship, of which physical sex is only a part. This is "an enduring relationship between whole people. It includes communion with one's innermost self and union with others in social-emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual ways ... Lasting, rewarding intimacy with self and others is the result of wise and disciplined living, not the quick and easy indulgence of appetite."[32]

Brown wrote a hard-hitting polemic. Ironically, for a work which sought a wider, non-LDS audience, it is somewhat confusing. Brown's entire set of assumptions is hidden because they are based on the values of the LDS community. The value of chastity is implicit in such passages as:

> Proponents of premarital sexual activity argue that sex before commitment is a valid test of the future relationship. This is illogical to the extreme. There can be no valid test of the relationship without the weight of a very formal commitment ... Either the commitment is considered binding—in which case it amounts to something like marriage and might as well include the ceremony—or else it is a "yours-mine" contract with limitations, qualifications, and escape clauses.[33]

For a Mormon, Brown's work provided clarity; for non-Mormons, only confusion.

Brown's work was ignored by outside reviewers, yet prompted considerable discussion within the LDS therapist community.[34] Marybeth Raynes, a clinical social worker, used her review of Brown's ideas to voice broader concerns regarding LDS culture. "We have experienced collectively in the Church a winter season of buried feelings, ideas, actions.

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31. Ibid., 117.

32. Ibid., 2, 3.

33. Ibid., 116.

34. Brown applied his approach more clearly to the LDS context in Victor L. Brown, Jr., "Healing Problems of Intimacy by Clients' Use of Gospel-based Values and Role Definitions," *BYU Studies* 26 (Winter 1986): 5-29. The only non-LDS psychologist to review Brown's approach was in response to this article; see H. Newton Malony, "Facilitating Intimacy: The Process and Product, A Response to Victor L. Brown, Jr.," *BYU Studies* 26 (Winter 1986): 31-36. Two issues of the *AMCAP Journal*, 8 (Jan. 1982) and 8 (Oct. 1982), also contain articles addressing Brown's book.

Discussing sexuality openly has been difficult."[35] In other essays Raynes has argued that certain social structures within the church inhibit the creation of non-sexual intimacy between the sexes. In most circumstances church organizations for teenagers are separated by gender and only occasionally participate in activities together. Raynes draws from this an "ironic" implication.

> The policy that the sexes must be segregated only underscore the belief that all male-female relationships are basically sexual, not spiritual or social. Although I am sure that the intent of the policy to segregate men and women is to deemphasize sexuality, in fact it highlights sex all the more. Regular social interactions such as a service project, tracking membership charts, planning a ward dinner or conducting a meeting become sexual not only because they are generally assigned only to one sex or the other, but because there are explicit prohibitions to doing such activities between the sexes alone. A premise of danger and difference underscores many male-female relations in the Church, whether as teens or adults. And when sex is perceived as dangerous or unpredictable, all forms of interactions between women and men must be limited in prescribed ways.[36]

This segregation creates a chilly environment, and as a consequence "cross-sex friendships are rare in Mormon culture."[37] The emphasis on chastity and the LDS community's reluctance to discuss sexual matters can, from a certain perspective, be ascribed to fear. It can also be ascribed to an attitude of sacredness. Sex is a sacred mystery, to delve too deeply would compound the mystery and tarnish the sacred.

Another reviewer thought that Brown's book would not appeal to "most academics and therapists specializing in intimacy." With respect to the central theme of the book, illusion and reality:

> What makes me suspicious, however, is that reality always comes down on the side of traditional Mormon values, while every other point of view ends up being illusion. It seems as if the conclusions precede the analysis. Most disturbing is the way in which Brown oversimplifies and distorts opposing points of view, making them into straw men which can easily be dismissed

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35. Marybeth Raynes, "Perspectives on Human Intimacy: A Response," *AMCAP Journal* 8 (Jan. 1982): 24. This has been a common theme in Raynes's writings, see Raynes, "Issues of Intimacy: Dilemmas of Marital Sexual Intimacy," *Sunstone* 7 (Sept.-Oct. 1982): 59-62; Raynes, "Issues of Intimacy: Guilt and Intimacy," *Sunstone* 7 (May-June 1982): 62-63; and Bonnie Shaw, "Mormon Sexuality: An Interview with Mary Beth Raynes," *Exponent II* 9 (Fall 1982): 3-4.

36. Raynes, "Issues of Intimacy: Sexual Segregation," *Sunstone* 11 (Jan. 1987): 32. This essay is one of a regular column, "Issues of Intimacy," which Raynes wrote for *Sunstone* for a period of years.

37. Ibid., 33.

> as illusions. But for me, *his* illusions are illusions—misrepresentations of the real thing.[38]

Brown's arguments are not without parallel in the broader American community. Edwin M. Schur, writing as an academic sociologist, critiqued modern America's sexual mores from a much different base. He tried to explain "why the apparent expansion of sexual choice and pleasure continues to be accompanied by such high frequencies of rape, sexual harassment, prostitution, and pornography."[39] Schur, a humanist and a feminist, asserts that "much of pornography's content features a systematic degradation of the individual that any real humanist would deplore."[40] He finds that larger trends within American life, such as a "general tendency toward depersonalization" and "our characteristic preoccupations with techniques and results," have led to an Americanization in how we approach sex.[41]

Depersonalization occurs because often "individuals view actual or potential sexual partners as replaceable objects and use them for their own purposes." The act of sex has been commercialized and commoditized, with "sexual responses and goals ... governed in large measure by abstract (culturally manufactured) images and associations."[42] Prostitution and pornography are examples of this widespread value system. Sex becomes a "transaction" between individuals, with no personal obligation beyond the obligation to oneself to maximize pleasure.[43] If a transaction cannot be found, then coercion is used, of which rape is the most recognizable form.

Schur also takes to task the "depersonalizing impact" of modern sexology.[44] Though sex research, such as the type engaged in by Alfred Kinsey or William Masters and Virginia Johnson, has taught us much, its methodology holds dangers.

> By emphasizing physiology, sexual technique, and measurable results, it encourages us to view sexual relations as a mechanical process. As a result ... sex has been robbed of its natural spontaneity and joyfulness. It has been

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38. Marvin Rytting, review of *Human Intimacy: Illusion and Reality*, by Victor L. Brown, Jr., in *Sunstone Review*, July 1982, 25, 33, emphasis in original. See also the book review by Phyllis Barber, "Intimacy in a Three-Piece Suit," review of *Human Intimacy: Illusion and Reality*, by Victor L. Brown, Jr., *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Spring 1984): 159-61.

39. Edwin M. Schur, *The Americanization of Sex* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 5. For a counterpoint which does not view prostitution in a negative light, see Nickie Roberts, *Whores in History: Prostitution in Western Society* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992).

40. Schur., 197.

41. Ibid., 199.

42. Ibid., 33.

43. Ibid., 34.

44. Ibid., 51.

> endlessly analyzed and quantified, disinterestedly observed and taught, and in the process it has been trivialized as well as depersonalized. Modern sexual science has thus led us to view sex as an abstraction, divorced from the immediacy and particularity of human relationships.[45]

Sexologists have significantly affected American attitudes towards sex. For instance, in the nineteenth century masturbation was viewed with horror and all sorts of side-effects were attributed to it.[46] Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), arguably the first sexologist, transformed masturbation from "a malignant vice into a benign inevitability" in his writings. Masters and Johnson proceeded to elevate masturbation to the "ultimate criterion of correct sexual behavior." They even "suggest that the masturbatory orgasm is in some ways superior to that achieved in sexual intercourse."[47] Why should masturbation be thought of so highly? Should not sex be a social act? For both Schur and Brown, the social context is too often neglected when scholars and others turn their attention to the complexities of sexuality.

Schur provides a more convincing case than Brown for a number of reasons. Schur's agenda is visible, not veiled. Schur does not address the issue of chastity, which is not relevant to his value system. For Brown, chastity is the fundamental value upon which sexual expression rests. They both decry the divorce of sex as a physical act from an interpersonal emotional context. They both also argue that contemporary attitudes toward sexuality are based on illusion, not reality.[48]

Another LDS therapist who has been developing an LDS philosophy of sex for more than three decades is Carlfred Broderick.[49] A nationally

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45. Ibid., 49. See also André Béjin, "The Decline of the Psycho-analyst and the Rise of the Sexologist," in *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in Past and Present Times*, eds. Philippe Ariès and André Béjin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 181-200. Béjin portrays sexology as being preoccupied with orgasmology, and "on the ethical level" the orgasmologist "lays down a simple norm, the *orgasmic imperative* (not only the right, but the duty, to have an orgasm) plus the conditions for achieving this norm, which consist in a respect for the principles of 'sexual democracy' (a social contract which climaxes on a fifty-fifty basis)" (197).

46. For a review of this topic, see H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., "The Disease of Masturbation: Values and the Concept of Disease," in *Sickness and Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health*, eds. Judith Walzer Leavitt and Ronald L. Numbers, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 13-21. For a contemporary example of LDS counseling with respect to masturbation, see Wesley W. Craig, Jr., "Counseling the LDS Single Adult Masturbator: Successful Application of Social Learning Theory: A Case Study," *AMCAP Journal* 6 (Jan. 1980): 2-5.

47. Paul Robinson, *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 13. For a general overview of the history of scientific interest in sex, see Vern L. Bullough, *Science in the Bedroom: A History of Sex Research* (New York: BasicBooks, 1994).

48. Schur, 67.

49. See Carlfred Broderick, "Three Philosophies of Sex, Plus One," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 2 (Autumn 1967): 97-106.

prominent marital and family therapist, Broderick has published numerous professional works including a leading textbook and a prominent popular guide on marital relationships.[50] Broderick applied his knowledge for the LDS audience in a book, *One Flesh, One Heart: Putting Celestial Love Into Your Temple Marriage.* Despite believing that "the basic principles of psychology" are "telestial," Broderick finds "that people in the Church have the same sexual problems exactly as people outside the Church because they have the same sexual apparatus and attitudes, generally speaking, as others do. The same therapies work, the success rate is the same."[51]

Broderick also draws upon the Christian concept of stewardship when he urges members to consider their marriage and their sexuality as stewardships. And as with all stewardships, a person should nurture and expand that stewardship. This implies that a couple can exist at different levels within their sexual relationship, not only physically, but also emotionally and spiritually.[52]

Other LDS therapists and many lay members of the LDS community have also written articles and guidance books promoting an LDS view of sexuality.[53] There is an active graduate program in marriage and family therapy at Brigham Young University, an appropriate emphasis considering the LDS accent on those areas of human life. In 1985 the church published *A Parent's Guide* for members to use when teaching their children about sex.[54] The content of this guide includes information reminiscent of Brown's approach. The thirst in the mid-1970s for an LDS philosophy of sexuality has been partially quenched. Theories have been presented and

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50. Carlfred Broderick, *Marriage and the Family,* 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988); and Carlfred Broderick, *Couples: How to Confront Problems and Maintain Loving Relationships with a Consumer's Guide to Marital and Sexual Counselors* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979). For a personal essay on the basis of his faith, see Carlfred B. Broderick, "The Core of My Belief," in *A Thoughtful Faith: Essays on Belief by Mormon Scholars,* comp. and ed. Philip L. Barlow (Centerville, UT: Canon Press, 1986), 85-101.

51. Carlfred Broderick, *One Flesh, One Heart: Putting Celestial Love Into Your Temple Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), ix; Carlfred Broderick, "New Wine in New Bottles," *AMCAP Journal* 1 (Oct. 1975): 33.

52. Broderick is particularly drawn to the idea of stewardship. See Carlfred Broderick, "President's Message: Will There Be Therapists in the Millennium?" *AMCAP Newsletter,* Spring 1983, 1, for the idea that psychotherapists also have a stewardship.

53. For example, see Kenneth R. Hardy, "An Appetitional Theory of Sexual Motivation: Its Contemporary Status and Applications in an Approach to Change," *AMCAP Journal* 15 (1989): 21-41, which expands his article of a quarter-century earlier, "An Appetitional Theory of Sexual Motivation," *Psychological Review* 71 (Jan. 1964): 1-18. See also the numerous books co-written by Wesley R. Burr, Brenton G. Yorgason, and Terry R. Baker, including their textbook, *Marriage & Family Stewardships* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982).

54. *A Parent's Guide* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985). For a critical review of this guide, see Terence L. Day, "*A Parent's Guide*: Sex Education or Erotophobia?" *Sunstone* 12 (Mar. 1988): 8-14.

elaborated upon, all centering around the core value of chastity. Many have continued to echo Raynes's pleas: "It is time for Church leaders to adopt a comprehensive approach to sexuality that includes positive messages emphasizing the joys and rewards of physical intimacy rather than focusing exclusively on the pitfalls of immorality."[55] These other voices, while still acknowledging the primacy of chastity, want to expand the potential of sexual and emotional intimacy. One area where voices have also been calling for change is homosexuality. The voices here have usually been irreconcilable.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality is a special case of the complexity of sexuality and a topic which American psychology has grappled with during the last three decades. The decision in 1973 by the American Psychiatric Association to redefine homosexuality as nonpathological represented a major shift in psychiatric thinking.[56] Moving from the definitions of pathology which Freud had put forward, mainstream psychology has reached a point where sexual orientation is seen as mostly a non-issue, certainly not a sign of mental illness. Because American culture had previously defined homosexuality as abnormal, as a disease, most of the ensuing debate has centered around the etiology of homosexuality. Entire books have been written on this topic, and its difficult nature is reflected in the realist-essentialist debate that affects contemporary gay historiography. Suffice to say that "most of the evidence collected by sociologists and social anthropologists is inconclusive as far as questions of the etiology of an individual's sexual preferences or orientation are concerned."[57] Even with this uncertainty, historians can examine a community's attitudes toward this behavior and how self-identified homosexuals have banded together to form communities of their own.

The modern psychologies have been harnessed by both sides in this debate to lend support to preconceived views. If one accepts that homosexuality is nonpathological—a view which does not find much support within the LDS community—then therapy is not called for, except for the

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55. Romel W. Mackelprang, "'And They Shall be One Flesh': Sexuality and Contemporary Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Spring 1992): 64. This article is a good review, especially of the book by Rodney Turner, *Women and the Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), the issue of birth control, and whether sex should be enjoyed within marriage.

56. For an explanation of the social pressure, especially by gay activists, which prompted this decision, see Ronald Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

57. David F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 489.

extent in which a gay person must learn to cope in a culture which has labeled him or her as a deviant. Certainly, this siege-like environment takes its emotional toll. Studies have found a much higher incidence of suicide among homosexuals. Those opposed to homosexuality have thrust forward these statistics as evidence of unbalanced personalities. Those defending the normalcy of homosexuality respond that the near-constant pressure of homophobia and the alienation from traditional support systems, like family and church, push people into suicidal behavior.[58]

Latter-day Saint attitudes toward homosexuality within their own community have gone through three phases. The first, lasting until after World War II, is characterized by indifference. Non-heterosexual orientation was considered a sin but not a serious concern. This changed after World War II as homosexuality gained greater prominence in both mainstream American culture and in the attentions of the church hierarchy. Homosexuals were excommunicated and rhetoric from the pulpit portrayed sexual orientation as a voluntary decision to follow a road of sin. Under the influence of LDS therapists, this view softened somewhat in the 1980s. A greater appreciation of the limitations of moral agency developed. Now homosexuals are usually excommunicated for being unrepentant and acting on their impulses, not for merely feeling homosexual urges.[59]

Though LDS theology has always condemned homosexuality as a sin, based on biblical injunction, this was an issue which attracted very little attention for the first century of the LDS community's existence. In 1947 a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve, Spencer W. Kimball, was assigned to handle interviews with members involved in sexual transgressions, including homosexuality. These experiences prompted him to make admonishments of chastity a frequent theme of his sermons.[60]

> Despite the frequent claim by homosexuals that they had no control over their sexual orientation, Spencer [Kimball] believed that this problem, like all others, would yield to the consistent prayerful exercise of self-restraint. He

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58. Christopher J. Alexander, "Suicidal Behavior in Gay and Lesbian Mormons," in *Peculiar People: Mormons and Same-Sex Orientation*, eds. Ron Schow, Wayne Schow, and Marybeth Raynes, 257-63 (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991).

59. For a useful history of homosexuality within the LDS community by a self-defined gay historian, see Rocky O'Donovan, "'The Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature': A Brief History of Homosexuality and Mormonism, 1840-1980," in *Multiply and Replenish: Mormon Essays on Sex and Family*, ed. Brent Corcoran (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 123-70. See also D. Michael Quinn, *Same-Sex Dynamics Among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

60. Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), 271-73.

> pointed out that homosexuals rarely were excommunicated for their past acts but usually only for their unwillingness to make the effort to change.[61]

While many church authorities have compared homosexuality to the other sexual sins of fornication and adultery, they usually go further and refer to homosexuality as a "perversion" or a "crime against nature" in addition to a sin.[62] Fornication and adultery, as heterosexual sins, are thought to be more understandable.

In 1959 Kimball and another apostle, Mark E. Petersen, received a special assignment to counsel homosexuals.[63] The church hierarchy noticed that the problem was appearing more often, and by 1968 the number of cases was considered so large that more general authorities were assigned to counsel homosexuals. A pamphlet, *Hope for Transgressors*, was published in 1970, encouraging homosexuals to repent. With the help of "a kindly Church official who understands," a "total cure" could be affected.[64] While the pamphlet does not refer to gender, the cover is of a man with bowed head resting on one hand. The focus of the church was on the male homosexual. Lesbians were always referred to in passing and never focused on as a separate issue in their own right.

In 1972 responsibility for counseling homosexuals was turned over to LDS Social Services. Two approaches were adopted: the development of literature and assistance for local priesthood leaders as they dealt with the problem on a ward or stake level, and the development of a "professional" therapy model to be used by the staff of Social Services. Robert L. Blattner, a special assistant to the LDS Commissioner of Personal Welfare, delivered a report on this research at the first AMCAP conference in 1975. He presented a portrait of the homosexual as a pathological individual, who usually came from a "disturbed family background," had a "lack of relationship with peers," and manifested "unhealthy sexual attitudes."[65] Homosexuality was "a symptom of a more basic difficulty within the individual that he has grown up with." Blattner took care to point out that the homosexual should be treated as "an individual in total."[66]

The entire presentation focused on male homosexuality, since very few cases involving females had come to the attention of Social Services.

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61. Ibid., 381.

62. *For the Strength of Youth* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1990), 15; Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 77.

63. The year 1961 has also been reported as when Kimball and Petersen were given this assignment. See Robert L. Blattner, "Counseling the Homosexual in a Church Setting," *AMCAP Journal* 1 (Oct. 1975): 6.

64. *Hope for Transgressors* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1970), 1.

65. Blattner, 6.

66. Ibid., 7.

The rhetoric coming from the pulpit also continued to focus exclusively on males. One area of therapy that Blattner concentrated on was teaching the client control over masturbation, since "Masturbation and fantasy seem to be a key in the maintenance of the problem of homosexuality." His final conclusion: "Homosexuals can be counseled with success if he so desires to accomplish this."[67]

In a question-and-answer period following his presentation, Blattner was asked, "What is the church's feeling about electric shock and other forms of behavior modification?" The church employee responded that as far as he knew the church had made no "statement" on the issue other than its use should be "propriety with the standards of the church." His experience was that "most people coming to us can be helped" by "aversion therapy, relaxation or desensitization."[68] This exchange referred to research going on at Brigham Young University at that time.

Aversion therapy is based on the idea that if a "conditioned stimulus (CS) is followed by an intense unconditioned stimulus-unconditioned response combination," then "according to learning theory, after an appropriate number of pairings the CS will no longer elicit pleasure but displeasure (pain and anxiety)."[69] This therapy has been used to treat alcoholism, exhibitionism, and pedophilia, and some researchers had used this procedure in dealing with homosexuality prior to the research at BYU.[70] Experiments using this technique were conducted at BYU during the 1970s, where a male homosexual subject was shown homosexual pornography and given a variable electrical shock in association with these pictures. The erotic pictures are associated with anxiety in the subject as he anticipates the shock. After six sessions, the procedure was changed so that the subject could avoid the shock by pressing a button. This button instantly replaced the homosexual pornography with a picture of a nude female. A doctoral study at BYU determined, combined with the evidence from another study, that this form of electric aversion treatment was "an effective treatment for male homosexuality."[71] Certainly this is not true from the one known written account of a person who experienced electric aversion therapy at BYU. Though he had only experienced homosexual feelings and had not acted on them at the time of the therapy, he later acted on his feelings and joined Affirmation, a gay rights group formed by excommunicated Latter-day Saints.[72]

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67. Ibid., 8.

68. Ibid., 9.

69. Max Ford McBride, "Effect of Visual Stimuli In Electric Aversion Therapy," Ph.D diss., Brigham Young University, 1976, 3.

70. Ibid., 2.

71. Ibid., 82.

72. Don D. Harryman, "With All Thy Getting, Get Understanding," in Schow, Schow, and Raynes, 23-35.

Robert D. Card, an LDS therapist in private practice, also used aversion therapy with his clients during the 1970s. Card defined a male homosexual as a person experiencing "conditioned avoidance of an adult female in a domestic setting." His entire therapeutic approach was to recondition the client not to avoid adult females. He used "aversion therapy," where the client suffered pain when he was aroused at the sight of explicit homosexual pictures. Card viewed this as "a trade off—they are trading some physical pain for some control of the obsessions that have been dominating their life."[73] Card measured his success by whether his clients married after treatment. This was a common goal which, prior to the mid-1980s, dominated the LDS approach to homosexuality.

> When we started out working with homosexuals, the criteria for successful treatment as reported in the literature was a reduction in homosexual activity. I suppose if you stop the homosexual activity, this is some measure of success, and I think it has been the measure that has been used in many cases. I'm afraid that the measure of success that I'm looking for is marriage.[74]

Card later abandoned aversion therapy in favor of "hypnosis in the context of ego-state therapy."[75]

In 1977 a student in a BYU psychology class found himself outraged by the insinuations of the instructor that homosexuality is chosen. He wrote in response an anonymous fifty-seven-page pamphlet, *Prologue: An Examination of the Mormon Attitude towards Homosexuality,* and took the LDS community to task, detail by detail, for its stance against homosexuality. Arguing on the behalf of the numerous gay Latter-day Saints who hid in fear, the author asserted that homosexuality was not a matter of choice, but had a biological basis. Furthermore, *"very few psychiatrists claim any more that they can cure the homosexual."*[76] The same year that *Prologue* was published, one of Allen Bergin's students, Elizabeth C. James, completed her dissertation, "Treatment of Homosexuality: A Reanalysis and Synthesis of Outcome Studies." Her analysis of 101 studies from 1930 to 1976 led her to find that 37 percent of clients were "not improved" by therapy, 27 percent were "improved," and 35 percent were "recovered." A basic assumption of these studies and of James's own study was the pathological nature of homosexuality.[77]

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73. Robert D. Card, "Counseling the Homosexual in a Private Practice Setting," *AMCAP Journal* 1 (Oct. 1975): 12, 13.

74. Ibid., 10.

75. "Panel of Professionals Present Ideas," *AMCAP News,* Feb. 1988, 4.

76. Anonymous, *Prologue: An Examination of the Mormon Attitude towards Homosexuality* (Provo, UT: Prometheus Enterprises, 1978), 23, emphasis in original.

77. Elizabeth C. James, "Treatment of Homosexuality: A Reanalysis and Synthesis of Outcome Studies," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1978, 182.

The publication of *Prologue* was part of a growing national gay movement, which promoted an acceptance of the gay lifestyle and legal rights for gay citizens. Having successfully campaigned for the 1973 APA decision, the gay movement continued to press its case with psychotherapists. LDS gay activism paralleled the rise of mainstream gay activism and assertions of gay pride. In 1977 a group of gay men and women in Los Angeles founded Affirmation, a support group for excommunicated Latter-day Saints. Satellite groups were formed in other locations, including Salt Lake City. A year later they began publishing a regular newsletter, *Affinity.* An original purpose of the group was to "work toward influencing Church leadership to change its perception and treatment of the homosexual in the church."[78] A basic premise was that "homosexuality is not learned or acquired; it is not something chosen."[79] Many members of Affirmation hoped that by educating the church leadership in the true nature of homosexuality, the prophet would then seek a revelation from God to sanction homosexuality.[80]

Many members of Affirmation have been excommunicated. Church policy dictated excommunication for anyone who engaged in homosexual behavior or who did not actively seek to change his or her sexual orientation. A pamphlet published by Affirmation, *All About Excommunication for the Gay & Lesbian Mormon,* provides guidance for gay Latter-day Saints during these traumatic proceedings.[81]

The 1987 fall AMCAP conference focused on homosexuality. AMCAP president Clyde A. Parker did not want the conference to be confrontational: "It is not intended to 'take a stand,' to challenge, contradict or to oppose. The difficulty, it seems to me, is finding some reconciliation of individual needs and gospel principles ... acceptance of others, pursuit of truth, obedience to principle, compassion rather than judgment."[82] For the first time, a general authority was not asked to give the keynote address. Instead, AMCAP invited Carol Lynn Pearson, an LDS feminist and

78. Gordon Miller, "Open Letter to Members and Friends of Affirmation," in *Affirmations: A Select Anthology of Writings for Gay and Lesbian Mormons,* eds. Gary Booher and Paul Mortensen (Affirmation, 1985), 43. A copy of this document is available at the Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

79. Ibid., 45.

80. This point of view is well-expressed in Antonio A. Feliz, *Out of the Bishop's Closet: A Call to Heal Ourselves, Each Other, and Our World: A True Story* (San Francisco: Aurora Press, 1988).

81. T. Robert Axelson and L. Paul Mortensen, *All About Excommunication for the Gay & Lesbian Mormon* (Affirmation, 1985). A copy of this document is available at the LDS Historical Department Library. Information on the number of Latter-day Saints who have been excommunicated for homosexuality is not released by the LDS church. Records of church disciplinary hearings are kept confidential, even if the person on trial requests that they be released.

82. Clyde A. Parker, "President's Message," *AMCAP News,* Aug. 1987, 1.

writer. Pearson had written a book about her experiences with the death of her ex-husband to AIDS.[83] She asked for people to understand and sympathize with the emotional toll that homosexuality took on homosexuals and on the people around them as they struggled with their sexual identity.

Besides presentations and panel discussions on therapy and etiology, a gay Latter-day Saint and his mother shared their experiences. Members of Affirmation presented their perspective. The opposite point of view was provided by Brian Page, who described himself as a homosexual who was excommunicated and later rebaptized. While he acknowledged that "he still has homosexual feelings," Page had undergone a spiritual rebirth. He still did not have heterosexual feelings, but he retained hope that he would eventually marry. He also spoke directly to the hopes of Affirmation: "The gay lifestyle is carnal. The Lord will never bring about a revelation saying it is OK to be gay."[84]

Parker thought the conference "was received most favorably. To some it was 'the best thing AMCAP has done in recent years.'" To others, the perceived acceptance of homosexuality by the presenters caused disconcertion. At least one member withdrew his membership.[85] Both sides of the issue had been discussed, from those who thought homosexuals were born with their sexual orientation already cast to those who thought that homosexuality was a result of nurture. Members of AMCAP were also divided over whether therapy could be useful. Jan Stout, a psychiatrist, did not "feel that sexual orientation is a treatable disorder," whereas Thomas Pritt thought that it was.[86] A presentation on "Lesbianism and Women" at another AMCAP convention two years later prompted an AMCAP member to complain:

> We were very subtly led to believe, though not directly told, that homosexuality is something one is born with and that the task of the therapist is to help individuals come to grips with what they are and to find ways to reconcile themselves to the Church and gospel teachings ... It distresses and amazes me when, even in AMCAP, we seek the solutions of the world ... We should not have to defend gospel principles and Church standards at AMCAP meetings. In our charter, they are a given.[87]

Despite the efforts of the LDS gay community to promote a view of homosexual orientation as innate and unchangeable, LDS Social Services

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83. Carol Lynn Pearson, *Goodbye, I Love You* (New York: Random House, 1986). See also "Author Stresses Need for Compassion," *AMCAP News*, Feb. 1988, 2.

84. "Plea Is Made for Morality," *AMCAP News*, Feb. 1988, 7.

85. Clyde A. Parker, "President's Message," *AMCAP News*, Feb. 1988, 1.

86. "Panel of Professionals Present Ideas," *AMCAP News*, Feb. 1988, 4.

87. Sheldon G. Lowry, "Letter to the Editor," *AMCAP News*, Fall 1989, 4.

has continued to treat homosexuals who express a desire to change. A professional development booklet was published in 1981 for use by LDS Social Services personnel in counseling homosexuals. The booklet describes homosexuality as resulting from a four-stage process: "confusion, filling the void, sexual identity crisis, and resolution."[88] A variety of motivational and spiritual therapy approaches was suggested as cures, though "teaching a homosexually oriented man to lust after women instead of men is inappropriate."[89] LDS Social Services has continued to be active in this area into the 1990s.[90]

Private LDS therapists have also engaged in efforts at reparative therapy for those homosexuals who do not want to accept a gay lifestyle. Thomas Pritt and Ann Pritt are two LDS therapists who specialize in "compulsive sexual disorders, particularly homosexuality."[91] Drawing on the work of English psychoanalyst Elizabeth R. Moberly, the Pritts have promoted a theoretical model to explain and treat homosexuality.[92] In common with many other LDS therapists, the Pritts believe that "social learning etiological factors" are more important than "biological" factors in the origin of homosexuality. Furthermore, "homosexuality involves social role and identity issues more than problems of sexuality per se."[93] To believe in biological causation would seriously call into question LDS assumptions about sexuality.

A common assumption about homosexuals is that they have difficulty relating with the opposite sex. Moberly and the Pritts reverse this assumption. It is an inability to relate with members of their own sex in a non-erotized manner that defines the homosexual. Homosexuals who "are encouraged to get aroused by women and marry to become straight" are likely to be miserable because *"the primary and most critical problem facing homosexuals is not how to be sexually attracted to members of the opposite sex, but how to satisfy unmet, legitimate affectional needs with those of their own sex."*[94]

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88. LDS Social Services, *Understanding and Changing Homosexual Orientation Problems* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 6.

89. Ibid., 11.

90. See A. Dean Byrd and Mark D. Chamberlain, "Dealing with the Issues of Homosexuality: A Qualitative Study of Six Mormons," *AMCAP Journal* 19 (1993): 47-89.

91. Thomas E. Pritt and Ann F. Pritt, "Homosexuality: Getting Beyond the Therapeutic Impasse," *AMCAP Journal* 13 (1987): 64.

92. See three works of Elizabeth R. Moberly: *Homosexuality: A New Christian Ethic* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1983); *Psychogenesis: The Early Development of Gender Identity* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983); and *The Psychology of Self and Other* (London: Travistock Publications, 1985). For an additional non-LDS perspective, see E. Mansell Pattison and Gala S. Durrance, "Religious Contexts for Change in Sexual Orientation," in *Psychiatry and Religion: Overlapping Concerns*, ed. Lillian H. Robinson, 133-54 (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, 1986).

93. Pritt and Pritt, 38, 39.

94. Ibid., 48, emphasis in original.

The roots of homosexuality are laid in childhood emotional trauma when the child is emotionally separated from its same-sex parent. This separation can lead to the "parent-child affectional bond" being "damaged or disrupted and the child is left emotionally sensitized, vulnerable, and needful."[95]

This inability to form attachments to the same sex leads to difficulty in "sex-role identification." Men who later become homosexual "generally report that during their childhood they had not felt competent or happy and successful in many of those sports and rough-and-tumble bonding activities that preadolescent boys commonly enjoy together." Later, with adolescence, these boys experiment with masturbation and sexual fantasies: "Their unresolved needs, when paired with self-gratification, can facilitate entrance into the addictive world of sexual deviation. Although these behaviors do nothing to improve self-esteem or counter relational deficits, they do easily become habitual and lead to compulsive, ritualized interactions."[96]

Experiencing an "impoverished identity" and "role dysphoria," they compensate through "sexual interest" in same-sex interactions.

> Though in adult bodies and expressing forms of adult sexuality, homosexuals are, in one facet of their personality, emotionally damaged children. Early in life they withdrew from relationships that were critical for the development of their sense of role-appropriate wholeness and worth, that is, their sex-role identification. Although the gap between gender dysphoric individuals and others of their sex widens, and the normal social channels for same-sex relating become less available, the need for intimacy, belonging, and identity persists. As their self-devaluation continues, homosexuals first admire others who ably express the desired role competencies, then envy them, and finally lust after them.[97]

These are not conscious choices. Rather, the inability to find a masculine "identity and relational deficits and needs are developed long before these children reach eight years of age." Within LDS theology, children are not capable of sin before the age of eight, the age of accountability. These children go on to "gradually discover their orientation rather than consciously choose it."[98] The Pritts emphasize that

> the homosexual drive has been misunderstood. Rather that being a voluntary expression of evil and moral depravity, it is the natural growth force operating within that is impelling the person to move toward maturity. It is the

95. Ibid., 49.
96. Ibid., 50.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid., 45-46, 46.

> undeniable urge to wholeness. That drive for self and for unity with those of their own sex will never be denied but will persist until the individual's identity is fully and appropriately internalized and capable of normal expression with members of both sexes. The very strength of the homosexual drive affirms that person's heterosexuality ... It is unfortunate, that as wounded and vulnerable children, many equated sex with love, and that as adults, they were habituated to expressing their needs for intimacy in sexual terms.[99]

Having explained a theory of etiology, the Pritts also offered a method of treatment. Since homosexuality is a behavior, brought on by inadequate relationships skills, change is possible. "Adults are not locked into sexual patterns because of past choices alone, but because reaffirming choices are continually being made. Behaviors that are not reinforced in one manner or another tend to diminish in strength and value" as time passes.[100] In order to overcome their "arrested development," homosexuals need to learn to satisfy their needs for same-sex relationships through non-sexual interaction.[101] Male homosexuals should work with male therapists and lesbians with female therapists.

As part of therapy, homosexuals are taught that their "needs are legitimate" and that they are really misdirected heterosexuals. Hard work combined with a belief that the "Savior's divinely decreed order for sexual relationships" is the correct path. Because of the prevalence of homophobia, the Pritts discourage their clients from "coming out of the closet." If a person self-identifies as a homosexual, "their opportunities for same-sex heterosexual relationships are diminished." "Rather than their being seen and treated as normal persons and thereby helped to thus become, knowledge of their prior homosexual orientation would more than likely make proper same-sex emotional closeness very difficult to attain." The Pritts hope that one of the results of their work will be a reduction in homophobia. This "would encourage heterosexuals to more comfortably establish healing relationships with identity-impaired individuals." Homosexuals and heterosexuals must "share" in efforts at reparation.[102]

The Pritts emphasize throughout their therapy that their clients are really heterosexual. When their clients accept this view, "their self-esteem can take a quantum leap forward."[103] The Pritts also teach their clients to "look and act more like heterosexual men," though without "compromis-

99. Ibid., 55.
100. Ibid., 46.
101. Ibid., 57.
102. Ibid., 58, 59, 39.
103. Ibid., 59.

ing" their personal integrity, so that they can more easily integrate into the company of heterosexual men.[104] The clients also "learn to recognize their many and varied forms of defensive detachment, the defense mechanisms which maintain emotional distance from heterosexual men."[105]

Alternative modes of behavior must also be taught. When tempted by "an overwhelming compulsion" to engage in homosexual relations, the client is taught to resort to "a series of alternatives," such as "visiting a heterosexual friend or family member or engaging in sports or some other distracting activity." These alternatives are facilitated by "mainstreaming themselves as exclusively as possible with heterosexuals."[106] A "healthy self-esteem" will develop when the client begins to value the masculine attributes within themselves instead of seeking out those attributes in fragmented sexual relationships. They learn that heterosexual friends can "satisfy emotional needs and that the comfort of these relationships can replace the pull toward debilitating sexual intimacies."[107]

Having resolved the issue of same-sex attraction, the Pritts do not need to encourage opposite sex attraction because "as healthful, same-sex affections have grown, these men have also come to experience new appreciations for women." Their experiences with "cured" clients have taught the Pritts that there is "no need to artificially graft in heterosexual responsiveness. As the heterosexual child within matures, the individual will take care of his own responsiveness."[108]

In keeping with their LDS focus, the Pritts argue that in order to become whole, homosexuals need the friendship of heterosexuals and the healing power of repentance and redemption. The homosexual must "become convinced in their hearts" of the truthfulness of the scripture, "the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Ne. 3:7). It is through such faith, based on an "application of gospel truths," that "a healthy sex-role identification will indeed occur." After therapy, the clients should not be encouraged to recount previous homosexual behavior. "To have a client return to the details of his errant behavior under the mistaken notion of proving progress is gravely countertherapeutic."[109]

If one accepts the Pritts' explanation of not only the origins of individual homosexual behavior, but also the desired form of therapy, then previous approaches within the LDS community have been sorely mis-

104. Ibid., 59, 60.
105. Ibid., 60.
106. Ibid., 61.
107. Ibid., 60.
108. Ibid., 63.
109. Ibid., 64, 63.

guided, even harmful. Concentrating on marriage and heterosexual arousal as a solution would only lead to widespread misery. One homosexual Latter-day Saint who wished to change his orientation described the results of reading the Pritts' article as "one big turning point for me."[110] This understanding helped him on his quest for reparative therapy.

Other LDS psychotherapists have also written extensively on homosexuality.[111] In 1993 an entire issue of the *AMCAP Journal* was dedicated to the treatment of homosexuality. Twice as many copies were printed than usual and the journal was completely sold out within a year.[112] Latter-day Saint advocates of reparation now felt increasingly under siege. Not only had mainstream psychotherapy adopted a position of viewing homosexual behavior as normal, but some professional groups had been moving to declare reparative therapy unethical. One LDS psychotherapist, P. Scott Richards, responded to this movement by declaring:

> I now find myself unwilling to accept the notion that gay affirmative therapy is the only treatment option we should offer clients, just because this is currently the "politically correct" thing to do. I believe that Latter-day Saint (and other) therapists have a right to offer reparative therapy as a treatment option to those who request help in understanding, controlling, and/or overcoming their homosexual tendencies. In fact, if we do not inform such clients of this option, I believe we are letting them down.

Richards also believes that "homosexual people have a right to live their lives free from discrimination and violence," and should not have reparative therapy forced upon them.[113]

Private practitioners and LDS Social Services continue to work extensively with homosexual reparation. Private associations have also been formed to help LDS homosexuals who want to change.[114] One of these

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110. Byrd and Chamberlain, 72.

111. See Victor Brown, Jr., "Male Homosexuality: Identity Seeking A Role" *AMCAP Journal* 7 (Apr. 1981): 3-10; and Richard H. Anderson, "A Retreat From Hypersexuality: The De-Emphasis of Overt Sexuality in Homosexual Change Therapy," *AMCAP Journal* 8 (July 1982): 15-20, 28.

112. P. Scott Richards, "Editorial," *AMCAP Journal* 20 (1994): xiii.

113. P. Scott Richards, "The Treatment of Homosexuality: Some Historical, Contemporary, and Personal Perspectives," *AMCAP Journal* 19 (1993): 40. Gary M. Watts reviewed this issue of the *AMCAP Journal* and found the arguments of its articles unconvincing; see Gary M. Watts, "The Burden of Proof," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (Fall 1994): 307-13.

114. *Sunstone* occasionally publishes a guide to LDS organizations and periodicals. In a 1994 guide it listed fifteen such organizations or periodicals which focused on homosexuality. Most of them were support groups oriented toward gay rights, like Affirmation, and a few were like Evergreen International. See Bryan Waterman, comp., "A Guide to the Mormon Universe: Mormon Organizations & Periodicals," *Sunstone* 17 (Dec. 1994): 44-65.

organizations, Evergreen International, was founded in 1989 in Salt Lake City by twelve men.

> Evergreen is a confidential, independent non-profit organization of homosexual men and women. Our purpose is to gather and disseminate relevant information and to refer men and women who desire to change to support groups and counselors. Each member of Evergreen stands personally as a statement that it is possible to overcome homosexuality.[115]

Four years later Evergreen consisted of multiple chapters which sponsored weekly "transition group meetings" to offer mutual support for homosexuals trying to change; sports groups to help "develop a sense of belonging and identification with other men in a new and non-sexual setting"; support meetings for "families and friends of homosexual individuals who need support and information to cope with their own and their loved one's issues"; and an annual conference.[116] A testimonial from a member of Evergreen expressed his gratitude:

> In early 1989, I was in serious trouble. I was married with children, active in church, and yet very involved in homosexual activity ... I couldn't deal with the tremendous conflict going on inside me. I had decided to either take my life or leave my family. Although I was not close to the Lord, and avoided prayer, He heard the cries of my heart, and literally lifted me out of the mire. I knew I could not succeed without some kind of support system. In addition to some good therapy, Evergreen came into my life. I was then able to experience the beautiful principle of repentance ... I could not have done it without the love and support of my wife, the Lord and His church, and Evergreen.[117]

The attitude of the LDS community towards homosexuality has not changed. It is still officially condemned as a sin, a view with which nine out of ten Latter-day Saints agree.[118] Since homosexual feelings and acts are seen as pathological, the LDS psychotherapist community has tried to provide counseling and a cure. In the 1960s and 1970s, homosexuality was thought to be a learned behavior, which aversion therapy might help. The guiding philosophy was a belief in the inability of homosexuals to relate effectively with the opposite sex. The act of marriage was seen as

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115. *You Don't Have to be Gay* (Salt Lake City: Evergreen Foundation, 1990). This one-page flyer is available at the LDS church Historical Department Library.

116. David Matheson, "The Transition from Homosexuality: The Role of Evergreen International," *AMCAP Journal* 19 (1993): 106, 107.

117. Ibid., 108.

118. "Apostle Reaffirms Church's Position on Homosexuality," *Church News* [supplement to the *Deseret News*], 14 Feb. 1987, 10, 12; Stephen J. Bahr, "Social Characteristics," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1373.

proof of a cure. Carol Lynn Pearson's life demonstrates that this approach did not work well. Along with others, the Pritts and other psychotherapists have advanced a new model which teaches that homosexuals can relate to the opposite sex, they just cannot relate to their own sex in a non-sexual manner. This theory came from outside the LDS community in the work of Elizabeth R. Moberly and success with this approach is being asserted.[119] While Moberly and the entire LDS approach are diametrically opposed to the conventional wisdom of mainstream psychology, their approach does offer the potential to create more tolerance within the LDS community towards homosexuals.

Sexual Abuse

Numerous presentations at AMCAP conventions during the 1980s and early 1990s discussed the issue of sexual abuse.[120] The spring 1993 AMCAP convention focused exclusively on "Partners in Healing: Treating Victims of Abuse."[121] This emphasis paralleled the increasing attention sexual abuse and other forms of abuse were receiving in mainstream American psychology and a rising awareness within popular American culture. The influence of the modern psychologies and of feminism, with its emphasis on women's issues, helped create an environment where sexual abuse could be talked about and treated.

The LDS church also responded to this issue. A 1985 booklet, *Child Abuse: Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders,* contains considerable guidance for bishops and stake presidents on how to handle sexual abuse. If an abuser confesses his or her activities within the confidence of confession, the ecclesiastical leader is to urge that person to report the activities to the proper authorities. If that person refuses, the incident should be reported to the Area Presidency if "local law seems to require the Church official to report the information to public authorities."[122] A booklet for the general membership followed in 1989, *Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse.* The different forms of abuse were defined, and some points of pre-

119. See Byrd and Chamberlain, and Matheson.

120. See Gerry Hanni, "Heritage of Nightmares: Therapy for the Adult Molested in Childhood," *AMCAP Journal* 11 (Mar. 1985): 78-83; Barbara Snow, "Mild to Wild: Assessment and Treatment of Sexually Abused Children," *AMCAP Journal* 11 (Mar. 1985): 84-88; "Overreaction to Sexual Abuse? Alarmist Reaction Decried," *AMCAP News,* Summer 1985, 7; Trish Taylor and Dennis E. Nelson, "Reported Child Sexual Abuse: Subjective Realities," *AMCAP Journal* 11 (Nov. 1985): 74-80; Dennis E. Nelson, "Combating Child Sexual Abuse: A Cautionary Essay," *AMCAP Journal* 11 (Nov. 1985): 81-86; and "Spiritual Issues in Child Sexual Abuse," *AMCAP News,* Spring 1987, 4.

121. See "AMCAP Spring Convention," *AMCAP News,* Spring 1993, 13-15.

122. *Child Abuse: Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 6.

vention were given with the following admonition: "any person who has knowledge or cause to believe that a child has been or is currently a victim of abuse is responsible to immediately follow government procedures to obtain assistance for the child."[123]

The authors of an autobiographical book on sexual abuse and repressed memories cautioned their LDS readers:

> Child sexual abusers adapt to any culture like chameleons: they use protective coloring. Mormon neighborhoods provide peculiar access to children due to the trusting and communal nature of the ward structure. Unfortunately this same system can reinforce denial of anything "wrong" in a Mormon home or neighborhood. It is not surprising that good Mormons find it difficult to believe their fellow "saints" could be engaging in horrific behavior. All of us find it difficult to believe.[124]

Cautions like this are illustrative of the climate of distrust that awareness of sexual abuse tends to foster. That is not to say that the distrust is unwarranted.

A book, *Confronting Abuse: An LDS Perspective on Understanding and Healing Emotional, Physical, Sexual, Psychological, and Spiritual Abuse,* was published in 1993 by the LDS church publishing company.[125] While being informative, this book also taught a message of hope that survivors of abuse could be healed. This type of optimistic message is typically LDS.

In 1985 LDS Social Services created a program to treat LDS sexual abuse offenders and their families. The program only treated incest offenders, not "fixated pedophiles," which were seen as much more difficult cases with "higher rates of recidivism." For "a year prior to the program's beginning," members of LDS Social Services examined what mainstream psychotherapy had to offer. They visited "other agencies," participated in "community meetings," attended "local and national workshops," and studied "the latest literature on the subject.[126]

Members are only accepted into the program if they "allow their

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123. *Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 6.

124. April Daniels and Carol Scott (pseuds.), *Paperdolls: Healing From Sexual Abuse in Mormon Neighborhoods* (Salt Lake City: Palingenesia Press, 1992), x. For another autobiographical account of recovery from abuse, see Michele R. Sorenson, *Chainbreakers: A True Story of Healing from Abuse* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993).

125. Anne L. Horton, B. Kent Harrison, and Barry L. Johnson, eds., *Confronting Abuse: An LDS Perspective on Understanding and Healing Emotional, Physical, Sexual, Psychological, and Spiritual Abuse* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1993). See also Carri P. Jenkins, "Toward the Light of Hope: Understanding the Healing Process for Victims of Abuse," *Brigham Young Magazine* 37 (May 1993): 32-39.

126. Dorthea C. Murdock and S. Brent Scharman, "A Program for Treatment of Sexual Abuse: Essentials for Responsible Change," in Horton, Harrison, and Johnson, 297.

bishop to be involved in the treatment process," will "admit their guilt," and "are willing to be appropriately involved in the legal process." The treatment program is family-oriented, "both the spouse and the victim, as well as the offender, agree to participate in treatment." Other children are also "expected to participate as needed to make certain that the code of secrecy typically present in incest families is eliminated," as well as to ensure that further abuse does not occur. The LDS context provides several advantages for the LDS client and victim. For the victim, questions like the following can be discussed: "how their father could abuse them while holding a significant church calling, why their prayers for the abuse to stop were not answered as quickly as they wanted, why they were born into an abusive family, why inspired leaders could not perceive what was happening, or why God allowed the abuse to happen."[127] The resulting program is considered a success.

Repressed memories and ritual abuse are perhaps the most controversial aspects of the nationwide movement to increase awareness of sexual abuse. Some victims have come forward with stories of abuse that they remember years after the abuse, either as a result of therapy or prompted by a flashback. These repressed memories are often vague or ambiguous and the details usually increase with time. The issue of repressed memories is controversial because conventional memory research has not arrived at a mechanism for how repression could occur. Some zealous therapists have been accused of leading their patients to believe that abuse occurred when it really did not.[128]

Ritual abuse is often associated with repressed memories. These fragmented memories, like snapshots taken by a strobe light, tell horrific stories of satanic-like cults where victims are forced to participate in evil rituals as children.[129] A confidential memo written by a member of the LDS church's Presiding Bishopric in July of 1990 was obtained by the press a year later. The memo detailed allegations of satanic sexual abuse by over fifty members.[130] The memo became yet another ingredient in the debate over whether or not ritual abuse really exists to a significant degree. Detractors find the stories too incredible and perverse in content, and verification too elusive.

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127. Ibid., 297, 298, 301.

128. See Frederick Crews, "The Revenge of the Repressed," *New York Review of Books* 41 (17 Nov. 1994): 54-60; Frederick Crews, "Victims of Repressed Memory," *New York Review of Books* 41 (1 Dec. 1994): 49-58; and Theresa Reid and others, "'Victims of Memory': An Exchange," *New York Review of Books* 42 (12 Jan. 1995): 42-48.

129. See Noemi P. Mattis and Elouise M. Bell, "Ritual Abuse," in Horton, Harrison, and Johnson, 180-200.

130. See "Leaked Bishop's Memo Spotlights LDS Ritual Satanic Sexual Abuse," *Sunstone* 15 (Nov. 1991): 58. See also Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 185-88.

In 1992 an apostle addressed the issue of abuse from the pulpit during a general conference talk. Richard C. Scott told victims that "Unless healed by the Lord, mental, physical, or sexual abuse can cause you serious, enduring consequences. As a victim you have experienced some of them. They include fear, depression, guilt, self-hatred, destruction of self-esteem, and alienation from normal human relations."[131] He said that victims *"are free to determine to overcome the harmful results of abuse."*[132] Stressing that victims should not remain passive, he urged them to withhold judgment of the abuser and strive to forgive. It would not be easy, "healing can take considerable time," but "bitterness and hatred are harmful." He also alluded to repressed memories when he warned against the fallibility of "adult memory of childhood experiences ... Remember, false accusation is also a sin." With the care of "a trusted priesthood leader and, where needed, the qualified professional" that the leader "recommends," the victim could "close an ugly chapter and open volumes of happiness."[133]

The reaction to the issue of sexual abuse demonstrates that the LDS community is now much more responsive to national trends in psychotherapy. The institutional church and LDS psychotherapists both have dealt with the issue. While abuse in all its forms is a grotesque crime that spawns broken adults, it is consistent with the LDS predilection for optimism that a message of hope and healing, not anger and bitterness, is now being promoted by LDS psychotherapists and the general authorities.

Latter-day Saint psychotherapists have shepherded a subtle expansion in attitudes toward sexuality within the LDS community, driving the effort to create an LDS philosophy of sexuality, and contributing in the struggle to cope with the implications and consequences of homosexuality. Latter-day Saint psychotherapists have served as a bridge between their fellow Saints and that wisdom contained in the modern psychologies which is compatible with LDS community values.

131. Richard C. Scott, "Healing the Tragic Scars of Abuse," *Ensign* 22 (May 1992): 31.
132. Ibid., emphasis in original.
133. Ibid., 32, 33.