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*DIALOGUE: A Journal of Mormon Thought is an independent national quarterly established to express Mormon culture and examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The Journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to insure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Mormon Church or of the editors.*

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# THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: LIBERATION OR DECEPTION?



ALL AMERICAN  
WOMANHOOD  
MORMON DIVISION  
GREAT SEAL

KNOWLEDGE

EXIT FROM EDEN

LOVE & DREARY

INDEPENDENCE  
POWER  
IDENTITY  
AUTO-NOMY  
CAREER  
FREEDOM  
SELF SYSTEM

LIBERATION

SUSTAIN YOUR HUSBAND  
BE LOVING  
STRENGTHEN HOME  
BE TENDER  
PATIENCE  
SERVE GOD  
BE UNDERSTANDING  
OBEY PRIESTHOOD

© WDP '71



## WOMEN IN DIALOGUE: AN INTRODUCTION

Claudia Lauper Bushman

In June of last year a dozen or so matrons in the Boston area gathered to discuss their lives. The Women's Liberation movement was then in full flower, making converts and causing all women to search their souls before reaffirming their traditional commitments. Our group was not particularly down-trodden, and actually we felt somewhat freer than usual. Revisions for a new edition of a Relief Society-sponsored guidebook had just been completed. This book, *A Beginner's Boston* (22,000 copies sold, current price \$3.), had been such an artistic and financial success, that the collaborators felt emboldened to begin new projects and confront big problems. By late summer we had bound ourselves to do an issue of *Dialogue*.

While to all outward appearances we had nothing to complain of, the first meeting was an impassioned exchange of frustrations, disappointments and confessions. We had expected some serious confrontations because all attending are not in complete agreement on various issues, and there were some. More notable, though, were the shared feelings and mutual support that emerged. The effect was cathartic. We decided to meet again and have come together irregularly ever since.

The original dozen or so are women in their thirties, college-educated with some graduate degrees, mostly city-bred, the wives of professional men and the mothers of several children.\* While this group remains, we have added another dozen or so, including several young professional wives without children and some singles. This amorphous group is officially open to anyone interested and we try never to mention it without proffering an invitation. We have no officers, no rules and no set meeting time. During the dainty refreshments provided by our hostess of the day we decide when next to meet.

Although we sometimes refer to ourselves as the L.D.S. cell of Women's Lib, we claim no affiliation with any of those militant bodies and some of us are so straight as to be shocked by their antics. We do read their literature with interest. Several people who have been invited to join us have declined, and rumors persist that we are involved in heretical activities. One doubter who visited admitted she saw no harm but felt the meetings

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\*Of those families with children, the current average is three and two-thirds each. Of the four children born to group members this year, one increased the family's children to five, one to six and one to eight.

were a grievous waste of time. Others who came to scoff have stayed to join in. While some members admit that they return home shattered and with headaches, others consider the meetings positively therapeutic and rely on them for mental health.

We try to speak honestly and openly, but otherwise the scene resembles a Primary preparation meeting or morning brunch with ladies chatting together while toddlers trip over their feet and infants demand attention. In truth these are the same ladies who man the Church auxiliaries and volunteer for clean-up committees. Several women are involved extensively in community and educational programs as well as in Church work. We currently have no working mothers among us, but those who are now childless definitely plan to combine work and child care. Although it is poor form to identify wives by their husbands today, three of our group are married to bishops.

We spend no time railing at men. In general, members affirm the family as the basic unit in society and hope to work out strong partnerships with husbands to provide the best possible upbringing for their children. The programs of the Church are appreciated in working toward these goals.

The standard model for Mormon womanhood is the supportive wife, the loving mother of many, the excellent cook, the imaginative homemaker and the diligent Church worker, a woman whose life is circumscribed by these roles. This model has been so clearly presented to us in sermon and story that we feel strong responsibility to cleave to that ideal and guilt when we depart. And so our group, largely made up of supportive wives and loving mothers who are also excellent homemakers and Church workers, has discussed the genesis of that model, how much of it is scriptural and how much traditional, and whether other models have met with acceptance in Church history.

We looked for diversity because, in all honesty, we are not always completely satisfied with our lives as housewives. Our families are of primary importance to us, but they do not demand all our time. We benefit from outside interests and can usually manage them without skimping on the baked goods. Our educated intelligence, which we have been taught is the glory of God, sometimes cries out for a little employment. Does it undercut the celestial dream to admit that there are occasional Japanese beetles in the roses covering our cottages?

We have also been concerned with the problems of single women and of women with strong career orientations. The Church emphasis on the standard model makes deviants defensive. Our society puts terrible pressures on single girls to marry while allowing them very little initiative in the process. Career women pursue their special interests but feel frowning disapproval from on high. Although these women may build happy and satisfactory lives, they continually need to justify their positions. Housewives may complain of their tedious treadmill, but at least they have official approval. The singles chastize them for not counting their blessings.

While doctrinally it is perfectly clear that wives should support their husbands, indeed are pledged to them as their husbands are pledged to the Lord, and that having children and lots of children is a good rather

than a bad thing, we question whether these priorities preclude other varieties of behavior. Looking for help in pronouncements from Church leaders and in Church history, we were delighted to discover that women have always played a vital role in our society, often outside the house. Brigham Young, pained by the sight of strong young louts doing light work instead of clearing sagebrush, pressed women into jobs. More interested in utilizing every available pair of hands than giving women fulfillment and satisfaction, he required that they make themselves useful in shops, schools and telegraph offices. And it was he who made this revolutionary pronouncement:

As I have often told my sisters in the Female Relief Societies, we have sisters here who, if they had the privilege of studying, would make just as good mathematicians or accountants as any man; and we think they ought to have the privilege to study these branches of knowledge that they may develop the powers with which they are endowed. We believe that women are useful, not only to sweep houses, wash dishes, make beds, and raise babies, but that they should stand behind the counter, study law or physics, or become good bookkeepers and be able to do the business in any counting house, and all this to enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large. *In following these things they but answer the design of their creation.* (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, pp. 216-17.)

The heritage of Mormon women is impressive in its complexity. How ironic that polygamous wives, the very epitome of mistreated and down-trodden femininity in the eyes of the world, should have been among the most independent, liberated women of their time. Those poor women whose husbands courted sweet things beneath their eyes and married them with or without the wife's permission were also the managers of their own farms, the sole support of their children and sometimes professional women as well. The frequent government crack-downs on the oft-wed elders gave some ambitious women a chance to skip town and to be educated in the East, leaving their children with their sister wives in the day care centers of the past.

We can say of polygamy that we wouldn't want to live it, and that it was probably as hard on the men as women, yet the dedication of those early saints is impressive indeed. And if many polygamous wives suffered bitter torments, others apparently schooled their feelings and genuinely accepted the other wives as loved sisters. While a woman's role as a mother was increased, her wifely duties were lessened, and she was forced to manage her own family as head of the household. Few Mormon wives lead such autonomous lives today.

The independent lives of nineteenth century Mormon women give us pause, but we don't argue that women should be "freed" from their traditional home-centered commitment. All women should not be out working at careers, and those who choose to stay at home probably need more support today than their working sisters. In our day the career woman is increasingly justified for her good use of her faculties and her service to mankind, while the housewife is depicted as dowdy and dull; not only oppressed, she is so dumb she doesn't know it. Housewives deserve our unqualified defense. As members of the Church we have knowledge of eternal priorities, and surely housewives are devoted to these. If some women find themselves in

prison at home, others consider it heaven on earth and make it that for their little angels. It is as serious a fault for women who need outside involvements to berate housewives as for housewives to feel threatened by working women.

We argue then for acceptance of the diversity that already exists in the life styles of Mormon women. We have too many native differences to fit comfortably into a single mold. Though the ladies of our group love each other dearly and have much in common, we are unable to agree on many things. Some feel themselves censored and oppressed by conservative members, others refuse to have their names linked with our too liberal production. We make the usual disclaimer of group responsibility for individual effort. Despite lengthy discussions to forge a platform for the liberated female Mormon, we could not come to an agreement. We could only conclude that a wide range of life styles and opinions should be allowed.

In assembling this issue we have looked for examples of widely varying life styles possible within an orthodox gospel framework. We have invited several noted people to write for us and have welcomed contributions from friends and strangers the Church over. But mostly we have encouraged the efforts of our local sisters. Our major achievement, if we can claim any, is that ordinarily silent women have examined their lives and written about what they have seen. As a result our *Dialogue* issue is remarkably intimate. Even when Big Subjects are being examined, the treatment tends to be personal. We have plenty to say, but most of it is illustrated by our own lives. We offer our issue of *Ladies' Home Dialogue* without apology. For a woman eager to do something unique and meaningful, but bogged down with the minutia of everyday life, the pattern of another woman who has surmounted the same obstacles has real worth. Women have always been valued in the Church but not encouraged to say much. We hope that now and in the future more ladies will speak out and, what is more, be heard.



REGARDLESS OF WHATEVER ANY WOMAN ACCOMPLISHES OUTSIDE THE HOME, NO ONE WILL HAVE A GREATER REWARD IN HEAVEN THAN A FAITHFUL, DEVOTED MOTHER WHO HAS HELPED HER CHILDREN TO KNOW GOD AND JESUS CHRIST WHOM HE SENT, AND TO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE GOSPEL, CONTRIBUTING WHEREVER SHE CAN TO THE WELL-BEING OF MANKIND.

*NATHAN ELDON TANNER*

Go To sleep, my little oaf,  
Mama's little Sugar Loaf,  
Go to sleep & stay THAT way  
For at least a Night & day.  
I'm No angel up above  
Don't abuse my mother love.  
I CAN STAND so MUCH & THEN  
MAMA WANTS MATURER MEN...

... DOROTHY PARKER

## FULL HOUSE

Jaroldeen Asplund Edwards

I wake up in the morning to the sound of my husband's voice. But it is not really an awakening, rather it is a continuing. For night as we used to know it no longer comes to our home. There is a lull in activity, yes; but in the way of our youth, when night and sleep were a total experience that blocked the chain of days, a precious all-in-one piece of unconsciousness, an ending and a forgetting — in that sense night does not come. Even in sleep there is a consciousness of caring, a wakefulness that tests the murmur of the house through the darkened hours. The hum of the refrigerator, a last dryer of clothes with one clonking sneaker, water flushing, a cough, children padding on pajamaed feet through the always lighted halls, requests for drinks, solace from bad dreams, or a short diagnosis of unidentified aches.

Sometimes I open my eyes in response to an eerie sense of presence and see a face an inch from mine, staring. Child standing, me lying, eye to eye. "I can't sleep," and then the blissful snuggle in. Or there will be a gentle arising to the surface of sleep, a sudden awareness of silence, a listening . . . listening . . . listening . . . and settling back to sleep in the wonder and reassurance of our burgeoned home.

Not yet six in the morning. My husband is shaving and calls over the running water — something from the train of his thoughts. He assumes that I am (a) awake and (b) fully aware of his mental preamble, even though he knows that we have an unspoken agreement: "I never wake to the sound of an alarm, and he never wakes to the crying of a baby." He cannot resist this brief empty piece of time — no more can I, so I rouse and prop in bed and we continue the delicious conversation of our marriage. Fifteen minutes. Then up, make the bed, hair, slippers, robe, and a quick rich glance at our baby sleeping like a moist rose. Such beauty in our cluttered bedroom!

Morning husbands are so elegant. He comes from the dressing room in his starched white shirt, bright tie, polished shoes, face shining from shower and shave. All the beautiful odors, soap, shaving lotion, starch, and the masculine smell of his suit, mingle in that early morning embrace.

Breakfast with our seminary daughters is eggnog, toast and orange juice. Never time for more. The girls hurtle into the kitchen, shoes in hand, long shining hair, books a-clutter, hunting for gym suits or brushes or pens. Their day fresh and new. I never get used to seeing them grown so tall

and beautiful. I love their becoming, but I miss the little girls gone. It is a constant challenge to keep my relationship to them in the proper balance since it must change and develop as they do. Too often the childhood mother rises to the surface and makes a flat evaluation, "Change those stockings!" "Skirts too short." "Please take a sweater." "Do you have your homework and lunch?" Compromises reached, plans exchanged. As they fling out the door, coats, books, purses, I give each a brief kiss and a careful compliment, the ritual that says, "I love you. Hurry home."

Then one last apostrophe of time with my husband. Six-thirty a.m. He looking like Brooks Brothers and me like the Earth Mother.

The next half hour is my own sweet time. It's gorgeous to read in a still-sleeping house, prepare a church assignment, or spend quiet minutes with an early-awakened baby. At seven I must be fully dressed with makeup and hair done, ready for the official day of the family to begin. The children are wakened, first time cheerfully, second time, firmly, and if a third time is necessary, sharply.

I dress the pre-school children and babies in my bedroom. This bedroom is the hub of our home in the morning and evening. Here I keep a drawer with the stockings for the entire family. This serves two purposes. Naturally it saves a lot of sorting time, but it also makes it necessary for each child to come from the corners of the house to this room to complete dressing. I can make all the necessary checks — hair, teeth, clothes, homework, and morning chores. The stocking drawer is a siphon and it draws all the early morning family to me while I am busy changing diapers, tying shoes, and snapping trousers for the four youngest.

Breakfast and lunches are prepared with practiced swiftness. Simple meals. Bowls of hot cereal, milk and oranges. Lunches crackling in brown paper sacks with each name in marker pen, Catherine, Charles, Christine, Robin, Carolyn. Sandwiches all the same ("Sorry you don't like cheese, Robin; I'll make peanut butter tomorrow." Carolyn says she doesn't like peanut butter and we all laugh. "Tuna on Wednesday!" I promise.), cookies, an apple and milk money. Gathered around the kitchen table the children and I cram these last minutes with talking, facts, ideas, compliments, appointments, schedules. Family prayer and momentary silence as they start to eat.

The clock is inexorable. So is the school bus. Again at the door the farewells. My cheek is kissed and I forget to wipe off the cereal and milk. Midday I will sometimes touch my cheek and find it still sticky.

Catherine's Junior High starts later and so we do dishes and have a rare private talk. She practices flute or piano and, long dark hair bouncing, strides off to school. It would be wonderful to have eleven children and have each an only child.

Bless Sesame Street! That psychedelic learning feast! My three little boys sit in a rapt row. Fifteen minutes of hard exercise for me while they watch; the misery of middle-age, eleven children, and all that car-driving is that muscle tone is no longer inherent, it has to be earned.

Sunlight floods the kitchen windows and the lawn and patio sparkle. I fill the sink to bathe the baby. It is a time of savoring. Maybe it has

taken me all these children to appreciate how short these first months are. The glories of a new baby are beyond description. Hardly mortal! I revel in this tactile, subtle, exquisite and complex experience. One unexpected bonus of motherhood is the visual beauty. I am enchanted by the sights of my children, the tones of skin, the clear eyes, the grace, the curve of hand and cheek — to see them racing across the back lawn in a certain slant of light.

At about ten o'clock the baby is cared for and the discretionary part of the day begins. There is no one to tell me what I must do, only my own sense of responsibility and achievement. People often ask me how I manage with such a large family and I reply, "By a simple method of selective neglect." Which is just a way of saying that I manage through a system of compelling priorities. My present life as a mother has three profound purposes. (This aside from the relationship with my husband, which is my eternal and consistent preoccupation.) The first is to fulfill all my spiritual obligations as I understand them. The second is to educate my children. Educate in the broadest sense, not just helping them achieve skill and success in school, but giving them a sense of awareness, responsibility and joy. By far the greatest amount of my time is spent in this endeavor. Third, is my responsibility to give the best possible physical care to children and home. If any of these three purposes is neglected the balance and richness of our family is impaired.

Basic order is essential. This to me means beds, dishes, and general pick-up must be done consistently and directly. Each child makes his bed on rising and clears his own dishes. Clothes washing is done early and late. Hurrah for the men who invented dishwashers, dryers and permanent press! I am a compulsive picker-upper and throw-awayer; ask any child who has made the mistake of leaving a valuable piece of paper lying around. So the house is mostly neat. Once a week the house is cleaned royally by the entire family. The rest of the time no real cleaning except for accidents or VIP company.

Because the center of the day is too important to be expended on unending things, all the routine must be compressed into the early and late hours. Then we can spend the rest of the morning, my little ones and I, reading, doing projects, going to Relief Society, visiting friends, gardening or singing. The pattern of life is greatly shaped by the houses in which we live. This California house, with its large open kitchen, adjoining family room and glass walls, is ideally suited to supervising and developing activities with my preschoolers and still working in the kitchen preparing food, folding clothes or doing dishes. Our great round table is piled with papers, crayons, books, and glue. One wall has a large blackboard and bulletin board. So much for them to learn . . . "There are four seasons" "Rains happens this way" "Who is Abraham Lincoln" "Catch the ball, ride the tricycle" . . . so many to teach.

I always hold at least one church job, not only because it is essential to feed my individual needs, but also because it is an example to the children. Mostly it is selfish! How I love to teach adults, to be involved, to be busy, to be serving my Heavenly Father in different ways. Often there are meet-

ings during the day. We go together. My children are at home in the church.

At three o'clock the children burst in from school and the house becomes vibrant with them. Imagine how many sheets of school assignments seven children bring home! We are inundated with smudged, gray, blue-lined papers. Practicing, homework, roller-skating on the patio, friends, basketball, rides to lessons, Primary — and always the talking, talking, talking.

At 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. my husband arrives home. There is a crescendo of delighted welcome. The baby in his arms and children clinging to his legs, pockets, and coattails, he goes in to change. An audience congregates in the bedroom as he struggles into his indestructable "home" clothes assailed by simultaneous accounts of daily activities, demands for justice, homework problems, and general claims for attention. Those nights when he is gone (traveling, working, or church), the excitement is gone too.

Supper is special because it is the one time we are all together. My recipes are easy and served in stove-to-table cooking pots. I prepare meals with a minimum of utensils and time, using many prepared products in order to buy time with money. Cakes are all made from mixes with home-made icings to make them "mother's." Casseroles in enormous oven dishes, placed in the oven at five, are a complete dinner at seven. I do not know how to fuss. I cannot complicate food preparation — when I do it is a disaster. Hot yeast rolls are made from mixes with lots of butter, cinnamon and sugar added. Delicious! Or canned spaghetti with added cheese, hamburger, onion and catsup, served with bread, fresh salad, or jello, milk and a frozen vegetable. The table is set by the children, with a red bowl filled with leaves or flowers and candles in the center. Our nod to gracious living. Evening prayer is held kneeling around the table.

All the children are bathed each night (except on Primary day). It is the easiest way to say, "That's the end of the day, my dears!" Our biggest bathroom is awash with clothes, shoes, sand, water, wet towels and suds. After the little ones are storied to bed, the school children and I gather in a circle on the living room floor. That is the theory anyway. There is always a feeling of coming and going. We take turns reading from the New Testament and then a short chapter from an older children's book.

Thus begin the long good-nights. Suffice it to say that no one goes to bed without individual encouragement. Gradually the house begins to settle. "I have to finish this page." "I have to give a talk this Sunday." "My report is due." "What shall I wear?" "I need another drink." "I forgot my prayer." Another round of kisses. "Goodnight we love you." "Go to sleep." "Go to sleep." "Go to sleep."

When my husband is not traveling, we close the day as it began, sharing, laughing, discussing, recreating one another's enthusiasm, love and joy. One last reassuring look in each room. We love you. We are here.

Precious commitment, eternal vigilance, limitless caring: I think this is the essence of Mormon parenthood. It is the Latter-day Saint concept of eternity which shapes our commitment, sharpens our satisfactions and enlarges our responsibility. We know the endless nature of parenthood and live with a profound knowledge of the bitter cost if we fail.

Of course not all days follow this pattern. Weekends are another world,

and sometimes the whole system comes to a grinding halt. Illness, an unusual church or community job, a child with a special need, or just an overwhelming day of weariness or frustration can destroy the whole chain. Some days I choose to ignore routine and steal a day for my own use. That is always the day visitors drop in. I wade through the toys, dishes, and children to greet them knowing that they cannot know all the things I have done that day because what I have not done is so apparent.

It is an irony that motherhood is the one profession that a dedicated and educated adult can practice for a decade and yet still not be considered an expert. Yet I confess I have confidence in myself and in my role. I believe I do it as well as I am capable of doing anything. I have chosen this life, it does not master me, I master it. I am not its victim, I am its recipient. And if there are times when I wistfully read a university catalogue, or wish that I could run instead of pushing a stroller and observing each leaf and stone, or if I get tired of the litany of "No's" and "Do This's," those times are not frequent and they just serve to confirm that life is a banquet and, even when filled, we hunger and thirst.

My triumphs are measured in moments. Marianna plays Bach, Julia smiles at a new friend, Catherine organizes Family Home Evening, Charles serves Sacrament, Christine brings home a stray animal, Robin shows us what it means to persevere, Carolyn skates like a princess the first time, Westy reads a new word, Malcolm prints his long name, William holds his hand and looks up at my face, or Jarolee laughs in delight as I walk toward her crib.

So it is that each day runs its course, filled with being, many things undone, many just begun. And thus to bed . . . and a continuing into the night.

**MANY OF THE SISTERS  
GRIEVE BECAUSE THEY  
ARE NOT BLESSED  
WITH OFFSPRING.**

YOU WILL SEE THE  
TIME WHEN YOU WILL  
HAVE MILLIONS OF  
CHILDREN AROUND YOU.

IF YOU ARE FAITHFUL  
TO YOUR COVENANTS,  
**YOU WILL BE MOTHERS  
OF NATIONS.** BRIGHAM YOUNG



## I MARRIED A FAMILY

Juanita Leavitt Brooks

I often spoke in jest of our “Compound-Complex Family,” but I was firm in my resolution to make this marriage and our family life a success. I well knew that I could never have the complete love of my husband, Will, if I could not in some way earn the love of his children. At the time of our marriage, Will’s oldest son, Walter, was on a mission. The three Brooks boys at home were Bob (16), Grant (14), and Clair (8). My son, Ernest Pul-sipher, was 13. How to establish good relationships among us all was a continual challenge.

Clair was mother-hungry. He needed to be loved and approved of and encouraged, and was in turn affectionate himself. I won him completely on the day Will and I returned from our brief honeymoon. Clair, Ernest, and a cousin, Waldo, had spent all afternoon playing in the river. There was hardly enough water to swim. Clair’s skin was thin and tender, so that when we got home, he was, as Will expressed it, “burned to a frazzle.” Will reached for the mentholatum — his favorite remedy for everything, I was soon to learn — and started to apply it with a heavy hand. Clair screamed with pain.

“Don’t you know better than that?” I said, taking the jar. “Let me show you how to treat sunburn!”

I hurried to the cellar and came back with some cream skimmed from a pan of cool milk. This I carefully patted on, Clair lying on his stomach. It was soothing and he was so worn out that he fell asleep almost instantly. He never forgot it; from that time on he saw me differently. One day he came home from school with his shirt torn and his hair disheveled. He had been in a fight with a kid who said that I was his step-mother. I was nothing of the kind! I was his real mother. And so I have been to this day.

As a gesture to win them all, I presented the family with a new refrigerator, which I called a wedding gift to us all, myself included. They took pride in showing it to their friends, for very few families in Dixie owned one at that time. Now ice cream could be a daily dish.

Grant was our problem child. He disliked school and took every chance to play truant. After one full day’s absence, which he had spent roaming the fields and wading the sloughs in search of birds’ nests, I asked Will not to punish him and to let me deal with him. I told Grant some of my own experiences robbing birds’ nests, and encouraged him instead to make a collection of nests and eggs, selecting them carefully and putting them

into a glass case. I would buy the case, and type a card for each nest with full information about where and when it was found and by whom.

He took this very seriously. I would put up a lunch for his expeditions, praise his work to visitors in his presence, and let him show off the collection. A set of tools and a few weeks' training with a local taxidermist enlarged the scope of his activities, until he had a worthy display. After that instead of being the biggest problem in school, he even co-operated in getting his routine lessons.

Bob was our musician, playing wood-wind instruments in both band and orchestra. He was very clean and fastidious in his dress, so for his first Christmas I fitted his room with new curtains, bedspread and matching rug and table lamp. He still says it was the best Christmas gift of his life.

My own son, Ernest, had a harder time than any of the other boys, for my new marriage meant a complete change for him. It troubled me that for the first year he did not live in the Brooks home, but with his grandparents in Bunkerville. I wrote quite often; I didn't know that his new "Dad" wrote also, and enclosed a dollar bill in every letter. In those days a dollar meant a lot to a teen-age boy.

We had bought the old homestead on the hill, rented the house, and proceeded to clear and plow the back lot for garden and clean the corral, chicken house and pig pen. We brought up a splendid milk cow, an offspring of one given me at my first marriage, and bought a couple of young pigs, a dozen hens, and a rooster. Ernest took over all the chores. The run of three blocks up-hill night and morning conditioned him to become a distance runner for both Dixie College and B.Y.U.

I had my own problems adjusting to life in another woman's home. Will had cleared out all Nellie's personal things and put her pictures away. Yet wherever I turned, I seemed to feel her there. To help overcome this I brought down my new bedroom set from the house on the old homestead.

Two months after Will and I were married, I was appointed Stake Relief Society President, a position I held for seven years, through the births of four babies. This made me conscious of the families in need, especially widows with children, and resulted in a "make-work" program started in 1935. At the suggestion of Dr. Nels Anderson, of whom I will speak later, we copied diaries and records I collected for the W.P.A. Program.

My first real difference with Will came in the fall, as time for the annual deer hunt approached. Preparations began weeks in advance. Boots were dragged out and oiled, guns were stacked out by the back door to be cleaned and oiled, shooting expeditions to Red Hill tested the sights and loosened up trigger fingers.

I didn't enter into the spirit of it at all. The tales of past years' exploits left me cold. My sympathies were all with the deer; in my opinion, beef was better than venison and much cheaper. At last Will sat me down, pulled another chair up close and said, "Now you get this! Some men get their recreation one way, some another. They get drunk, gamble with cards, chase the women. I hunt deer. I have gone every year since I could carry a gun. I'll take care of all the preparations, but it would be pleasanter all around if you would cooperate just a little. If you can't help, at least don't fight it."

So that was that. I helped, but not with enthusiasm. I did introduce the Brooks family to jerkie or dried venison. That fall we had a flour sack almost full of it hanging from a wire in an unfinished part of the upstairs. Toward spring I remembered it and went up to get some to pound up and put into a gravy. The sack was totally empty. A small hole had been made right in the corner where the stitching thread had come loose, and one little piece after another had found its way out at night as boys went to bed. I didn't blame anyone, for I was happy that it had been put to such good use. Dried deer meat is best disposed of in just such a way.

Deer hunts notwithstanding, Will was always helpful and understanding. His admonition to the boys that "Your Mother is always right," placed a great responsibility upon me. He was always quick to cover up for me if the occasion demanded it. I remember the incident of the curdled tomato soup, for example.

One evening the group was having a basketball game in the back yard. They had only one backboard and were divided two on a side, Will and Ernest against Grant and Bob, with Clair a spectator. I was preparing supper on the big wood range, the only stove we ever had in the big house. I had a good supper going for them: a fresh apple cobbler in the oven and tomato cream soup on top of the stove. A large pan of bread cubes (croustons) was waiting to be slipped in on the top rack at the last minute.

I had made the white sauce, with a generous amount of butter, in the large skillet, and had a quart of homemade tomato juice simmering on the back of the stove.

I went to the back door and called, "Supper is ready!"

"O.K.," Will answered. "We'll be right in."

But they didn't come in. Somebody had made a basket, and they wanted to even the score.

I pulled the cobbler out of the oven and slipped the croustons in. Again I went to the door and called, and again they said, "Coming!" This time I believed them.

Then I poured the tomato juice into the white sauce. Too late I remembered that I should have added a pinch of soda to the homemade juice; too late I knew that I should have waited until the very last minute to combine them. But I did neither. I dumped it in and began to stir. Horrors! It curdled! It was simply awful! To me, it looked like something the dog had rejected. I wanted to heave, for I was pregnant and my times of nausea — what few I had — came in the evening when I was tired. Now when I went to call I was furious. Will knew a storm was brewing.

"If you had come when you said you would, I might have had a decent meal," I said. "Now you can just get your own. Go ahead and play as long as you want. I'll just dump this into the toilet!"

Will got possession of the ball and held it.

"Soup's on!" he said. "Get in and wash up! Quick!"

He washed his own hands at the sink, while the boys all trooped into the bathroom. He gave the soup a few vigorous stirs and began serving it up in generous helpings into the bowls, putting a handful of the browned croustons on the top of each.

After the blessing was asked, Will began. "This soup is just extra spe-

cial tonight, soup like you've never tasted before. Clean it up good and you can have your cobbler in the same bowl and save on the dishwashing."

He ate his with evident relish, and the boys followed suit. The game had sharpened their already healthy appetites. The apple cobbler was always a favorite dish. I stayed away until the soup was gone, but joined them for dessert.

"You are excused," Will said to me. "You relax in the front room while two of these boys wash the dishes and the other two clean up that bathroom. They left quite a mess in there, and we must have things clean for morning. Be nice if you felt like playing the piano."

With Will as inspector, things in the kitchen and bathroom were soon put straight. A week or so later Clair asked in all seriousness, "Mother, why don't you ever make any more of that good *lumpy* soup? That was the best soup I ever tasted!"

Will was very easy with his children; I never saw him strike one. I might slap little hands that got into mischief or swat a little behind if its owner disobeyed an order. But not Will.

We had a rule that the boys could go to only one show a week. If they wanted to see more, they must earn their own money. And one thing was sure, when their father said "No," that was it; it was useless to coax or cry.

One evening Clair said, "Daddy, may I go to the show?"

"Have you been to one already this week?"

"Yes." Will seemed to be waiting for me to comment, but I did not.

"If you've already had your show for this week, that about answers it. You'll have to stay home tonight, son."

Clair didn't say anything, but he looked pretty dejected. He leafed through a book a little, but he really didn't enjoy reading. After a few minutes he said, "Well, good night, Daddy," and kissed his father, "Good night, Mother," kissed me, and went upstairs.

About half an hour later, I went upstairs. Clair's bed was empty. Without saying a word to Will, I went to the telephone and called Bob, who was then working at Penney's store. In as pleasant a voice as I could muster, I asked, "How long has it been since Clair left there, Bob?"

"Oh, about fifteen minutes."

"O.K. Thanks," still in a voice that would not indicate that anything was wrong. The picture show was just through the vacant lot and across the street from our house. I called and asked the manager to page Clair Brooks and tell him that he was wanted at home.

In an incredibly short time Clair, all out of breath and crying, came through the back door. I said nothing. Will was in his easy chair.

"Come here, Clair," he said, reaching out his hand. Pulling the boy onto his lap, he went on, "Now stop crying, and tell me what this show is that you wanted to see so bad."

Clair explained that it was a skiing show, and his friends were all going, and they planned to sit together.

"I wondered what could be important enough for you to lie to us and deceive us. You might have told us a little more about it; we want to be fair with you. But if you lie to us and deceive us, we'll not be able to believe you at times when maybe you are telling the truth. We are your parents.

We want you to have what is good. Here, take this quarter and go back and see that show.”

Though I married one family and had another, none of them knew much of my writing activities. My daughter, Willa, was at B.Y.U. when the *Mountain Meadows Massacre* appeared, and was much surprised when she was told about it. I did not talk about it and did not work at it while they were around. In fact, my experiences have provoked laughter from some of my friends; they think I am slightly “teched.” Maybe I am.

I kept my ironing board set up in the living room of the big house, a rack with an ironed shirt or two on it and damp ones in the basket. I would type blissfully along until someone came to the door. Then I'd throw a fancy cloth over the machine, plug in the iron, and go to the door. I'd seat my caller with her back to the typewriter, facing me as I ironed. The minute she left, I'd finish what I was on and go back to the typewriter. A neighbor spoiled that by telling it to the club I belonged to.

It was during this time that I published my first major article. I had placed an article or two in local church magazines, and I had been made correspondent for *The Salt Lake Tribune*, with a base salary of thirty dollars a month and extra per inch addition for all stories above a certain minimum. But this was different.

After many years away, Dr. Nels Anderson came back to St. George searching for material for a book on the Mormon frontier. It appeared several years later as *Deseret Saints*, an excellent study.

Nels wanted to include a chapter on polygamy in the book, and when he found that both my grandfathers had plural families, he asked if I would like to write about it. He would include my work as a chapter in his book and give me a credit line. Indeed, I *would* like to do it! My Grandpa, John G. Hafen, for many years Bishop in Santa Clara, had four wives; Dudley Leavitt had five, one of whom was an Indian. I would gather facts about each: number of children born, number who grew to maturity, offices held in the Church, missions filled, etc.

I became much involved in assembling the facts regarding the two families, but when I took my first draft to Nels, he didn't like it at all. “Do it over,” he said, “and write in an easier, more conversational manner. How was it in the different homes? Were the wives friendly with one another? How did the children feel about this kind of set-up? You know, just sort of visit about it all.”

His time here was up, but I could mail it to him when it was finished. By this time, Will was postmaster, so Nels stopped at his office to leave a forwarding address. Will put the card into the pocket of his white shirt and promptly forgot it, and by the time it had been run through my Maytag washer and wringer, it was totally illegible. Here I was, ready to mail the article, and no place to mail it. Why not offer it to *Harper's* while I waited for Nels to write again?

I could hardly believe it! A prompt acceptance! Evidently the title, “A Close-up of Mormon Polygamy,” caught the eye of Frederick Lewis Allen. He said a check would follow. We tried to guess the amount, and settled at \$25 or may \$30. When it was \$150, I could hardly believe my eyes. Never had money seemed more important to me. The things I stretched it to

cover: part of the layette, a second-hand typewriter, a set of silver for the table, and a new Temple apron. The magazine appeared while I was in the hospital. A baby girl and an article in *Harpers!* It was almost too good to be true!

I was so thrilled with this first success that I kept on writing. I sent many articles which were rejected. These I hid away; I think I never sent one out a second time. I did place quite a few, though, over the years.

I undertook another project upon orders from my father. Someone had told him that I was writing a biography of Jacob Hamblin, so he came to St. George at once.

"I want you to write the life of my father, Dudley Leavitt," he said. "Everybody keeps talking about Jacob Hamblin! Jacob Hamblin! I know that Uncle Jacob was a good man, but when he had something too hard for him, he sent Dudley Leavitt and Ira Hatch! Who was it that sacrificed his horse when the company was freezing and starving at Pipe Springs? Dudley Leavitt!"

"He didn't learn to read much, and he could only sign his name. His family left Canada when he was small, and traveled to Kirtland and the Nauvoo area, then across to Winter Quarters, on across the plains to Utah to Tooele, then Santa Clara and Hebron and Gunlock, and the lower Virgin Valley; he was always on the frontier with his large family. Now I want you to do this, and get it into print before I go."

I did just that, and I have been thankful ever since. At that time there were at least twelve of his children living, and I interviewed every one to collect incidents that each remembered. I had the journal of his mother, Sarah Sturdevant Leavitt, to provide early incidents, and family genealogies to supply names and dates of all his children. I was never very proud of the book, but now each year it seems more valuable.

There is one incident connected with my writing which I'll never live down. My first baby boy was a good-natured, healthy child. As I prepared him for bed one night, sponged him off and rubbed him down and fed him, I noticed that he had been sweating. The house was too hot; we had no air conditioning. So I wheeled his crib out onto the front porch, but even there he couldn't get any breeze. I pushed him down the steps and out the short walk and parked him near the thick hedge along the sidewalk. He stretched out and immediately went to sleep.

Soon everyone else was abed and asleep. It was one of those times when my writing seemed to be going so well that I was almost drunk from my own wine. It is a pleasure like nothing else, and rarely felt.

By two a.m. I had finished, dead tired. I stripped, pulled on my nightgown, and rolled in, asleep almost before I hit the pillow. At six a.m., by signs which every nursing mother would easily know, it was time to feed the baby. I reached blindly for the crib. Horrors! He wasn't there!

"Where's the baby?" I said, jumping up.

"I don't know," said Will, rousing. "Where did you put him?"

"I don't know!" But once on my feet, I did know, and ran through the house to the hedge. He was sleeping peacefully as an angel, his little hands above his head.

Another story I have often told had to do with Frederick Lewis Allen

of *Harper's* magazine. During the years following my first acceptance, I sent several items to him. He always returned them with a warm, cordial letter that kept me writing. Finally, after copying the diary of the water-master at Bunkerville, it occurred to me that most people do not realize how precious water really is. It just might appeal to him. I sent a query, but received a negative answer.

In the meantime, I had worked over the article carefully, and I felt that it *was* good. I wrote the last draft sitting on the oven door of my wood range, my portable typewriter on the kitchen stool in front of me. My four young children were all asleep; their father and all the older boys were at a basketball game.

When they trooped in, all excited and playing the game all over again in their discussions, I entered into the spirit of the thing, got out snacks from the fridge — left-over roast, home-made bread, butter, jam and milk — and learned who went out on fouts, who made the high score, and how, in spite of everything, Dixie had won!

After they all went to bed, I returned to my machine, and wrote on through the wee hours, all pepped up and wonderful. The next morning I got a new manilla envelope, put on an address sticker and air mail stamps, attached a self-addressed sticker and stamps to the article, and wrote something to this effect:

Dear Mr. Allen:

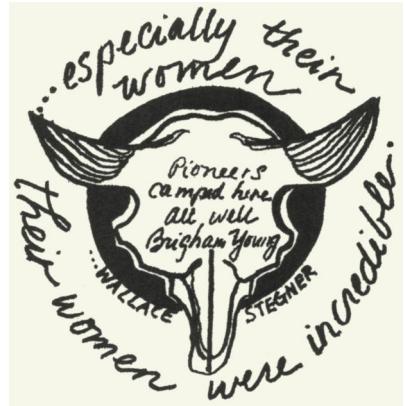
You remind me of the kind old lady who warmed the water in which she drowned the cat. You say NO so beautifully.

I know you said that you would not be interested in this, but glance through it and fire it back to me in the same envelope. Address and stamps are supplied.

Very sincerely yours,

This time I really expected him to accept it, and he did. It was later condensed in the *Reader's Digest* and included in an anthology. This was in 1941, seven years after my first article.

As I read over what I have written thus far, I think I might, with a little different slant, have called it "A Corner of My Own." We moved a number of times, trying as best we could to accommodate the needs of our numerous children. Soon the older boys were all gone — on missions, to school, married, in the military (we had four of them in World War II). Walter had finished college and was teaching. We traded the big house for a home and farm in Hurricane where we lived through one season; we renovated the little home on the hill, and found it very adequate for the four little ones; we operated a motel for two years, living in the comfortable house attached. Finally we came back to the old homestead where, after some years of indecision, we added more spacious living quarters, and Will lived out his long life. In each place I had a small room, if only shoebox size, which all the children knew was not for them. What Mother did there was none of their concern, unless, by chance, she sold an article. Even then she usually forgot to mention it.



## BLESSED DAMOZELS: WOMEN IN MORMON HISTORY

Leonard J. Arrington\*

Historians have long recognized the role of women in the development of Western civilization and culture, but for some reason the role of women in Mormon history has been overlooked. Among both Mormon and non-Mormon writers the idea seems to have prevailed that Mormon men held all the important policy-making positions, and were therefore the ones who determined the course of events. In addition, there has been what might be called a male interpretation of Mormon history.<sup>1</sup>

Where authors do mention women, as in the case with contemporary novels and accounts, they are usually depicted as depraved and ignorant dupes; or they are stereotyped, as in their granddaughters' eulogies, as unbelievably saccharine angels; or they are conventional objects of coarse humor. Mark Twain, in *Roughing It*, has the following to say of Mormon women.

Our stay in Salt Lake amounted to only two days, and therefore we had no time to make the customary inquisition into the workings of polygamy and get up the usual statistics and deductions preparatory to calling the attention of the nation at large once more to the matter. I had the will to do it. With the gushing self-sufficiency of youth I was feverish to plunge in headlong and achieve a great reform here — until I saw the Mormon women. Then I was touched. My heart was wiser than my head. It warmed toward these poor, ungainly, and pathetically “homely” creatures, and as I turned to hide the generous moisture in my eyes, I said, “No — the man that marries one of them has done an act of Christian charity which entitles him to the kindly applause of mankind, not their harsh censure — and the man that marries sixty of them has done a deed of open-handed generosity so sublime that the nations should stand uncovered in his presence and worship in silence.”<sup>2</sup>

In an attempt to determine the role of women in Mormon history, I have spent a pleasant few months reading women's diaries, autobiographies, and letters, as well as their novels, poetry, and non-fictional works. I am now able to say with confidence that among the early Mormons who passed most of their

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\*Adapted from Leonard Arrington's presidential address to the Western History Association's annual convention at Omaha, Nebraska, 10 October 1969.

<sup>1</sup>See my article “The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 3 (Summer 1968), esp. pp. 61-62.

<sup>2</sup>Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (2 vols., New York, 1913), I, 101.

adult lives in the Great Basin there were a number of formidable, intelligent, resourceful, and independent women who deserve to be remembered.

Mormon women were probably more independent than most Western women. For one thing, the men were often away on missions of one kind or another so that the women had to provide a livelihood for themselves and their children, as well as send occasional expense money to their husbands. For another thing, the practice of plural marriage insured that, in the case of many families, the husband could not manage his farms and other enterprises on a day-to-day basis; this had to be done by his various wives and their children. The women often held cooperative "bees" to build houses, canals, and fences and to make quilts. Finally, the inhospitable nature of the Great Basin and the isolated character of most of the settlements must have required women to be more self-reliant and self-sustaining than settlers in less harsh areas. Three examples illustrate this womanly spirit of independence.

The first is found in the diary of Christina Oleson Warnick. It is evident from this diary that Mrs. Warnick helped build her house, being primarily responsible for the fireplace and chimney. She dug irrigation ditches; she plowed, planted and fertilized the land while the men put in the dam; she cut the wild hay along the river bottoms and stacked it for the cows for winter; she grubbed the brush and sheared the sheep; she took in washings and spun and wove cloth; and she always walked from one village to the next with her knitting in her hands.<sup>3</sup>

A second example comes from the diary of Mary Julia Johnson Wilson. She tells the story of a young man who was leaving in one week on a mission, but had no suit to wear. When the neighbor women heard of this, they went to work with the result that "one Sunday the wool was on the sheep's back, but by the next Sunday it had been clipped, cleansed, corded, spun, woven, and made into a splendid suit and was on the back of the missionary as he delivered his farewell address in the little church house."<sup>4</sup>

The third example is based on an entry in the diary of John D. Lee. One day when Lee was away from home, John Lawson, one of his neighbors, and George Dodds, Lawson's son-in-law, commenced to chop down the trees and willows that grew along a creek that ran through Lee's property. This was just behind the house occupied by Emma and Ann, Lee's two youngest wives. They both went out and asked Lawson to stop, stating that they needed the shade for their ducks and chickens. But Lawson paid no attention to their protests, so they sent for their husband. Lee and his son Willard came on the run, took Lawson's axe away, and ordered him off the place. Early the next morning Lawson returned with additional help and began once more cutting away the brush from the creek bed. This time Ann had no time to send for help. She filled a pan with boiling water and when Lawson disregarded her protests, she threw it at him. She was so far away that it fell harmlessly in front of him, and he said, "Pour it on," and continued his chopping.

Desperately, Ann ran back to the house and returned with Emma and

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<sup>3</sup>"Miscellaneous Pioneer Interviews and Sketches: Christina Oleson Warnick," p. 4, Mormon Diaries, Journals, and Life Sketches, Box 12, Library of Congress.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, "Mary Julia Johnson Wilson," Box 10, p. 31.

a pan of hot water each. Seeing that they were determined, Lawson held up his ax, and told them to stand back. Emma threw her water at him, and when his attention was diverted, Ann sprang at him and grabbed the arm that held the ax. They both fell, with Ann on top. "When I with several others reached the scene of action," wrote John D. Lee in his diary,

I found them both on the ground & Ann with one hand in his hair & with the other pounding him in the face. In the mean time Emma returned with a New Supply of hot water & then pitched into him with Ann & they bothe handled him rather Ruff. His face was a gore of blood. My son Willard finally took them off him.<sup>5</sup>

Self-reliance among Mormon women is evidenced not only in such individual experiences as these, but in organized group efforts as well, a number of which were instituted over a hundred years ago. The first of these was the reorganization of the Relief Society and the establishment of a group in each ward or settlement in the years 1867 and 1868.<sup>6</sup> These groups carried out a variety of cultural, educational, and economic programs. Among other things, they mobilized support for young women to go east to study music, law, art, and medicine. Some groups specialized in programs to help the Indian women of the region. Under the direction of the Relief Society, a Young Ladies' Cooperative Retrenchment Association was organized in 1869 to promote habits of order, thrift, industry, and charity. Realizing the high responsibilities resting on them, the young ladies said, "We feel that we should not condescend to imitate the pride, folly, and fashions of the world." "Real beauty," they declared, "appears to greater advantage in a plain dress than when bedizened with finery. . . . We shall avoid and ignore as obsolete . . . all extremes which are opposed to good sense, or repulsive to modesty." The young women resolved to retrench in dress, in table settings, in speech, in light-mindedness — "in everything not good or beautiful." This organization still exists today as the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association.<sup>7</sup>

Later, the women of the Relief Society organized Primary Associations for children in each of the wards and settlements. In this way, through the Primaries, Retrenchment Societies, and Relief Societies, there existed a program for training women in matters of health, in economics and business affairs, in literature, and in politics. The women were trained to support the men, to be sure, but also to be self-reliant, when necessary, in thought, word, and action.

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<sup>5</sup>*A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848-1876*, Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds. (2 vols., San Marino, California, 1955), II 129-130. Compare also Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee: Zealot-Pioneer, Builder-Scapegoat* (Glendale, Calif., 1961), p. 282.

<sup>6</sup>The women who originally organized the Relief Society in 1842 had shown their independence even in the naming of the auxiliary. Joseph Smith, John Taylor, and Willard Richards suggested that they call it the Nauvoo Benevolent Society. The women, however, were of a different opinion. They excused the elders from the meeting and then unanimously agreed to name it the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo. See "History of the Relief Society," *The Woman's Exponent*, 31 (February, 1903), 69; also original minutes in the library of the Relief Society Building, Salt Lake City.

<sup>7</sup>Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association* (Salt Lake City, 1911), pp. 5-13.

These beginnings were significant in four movements: (1) the movement for economic independence, (2) the movement to establish an indigenous literature, (3) the movement to provide medical services, and (4) the movement for greater political expression.

#### *MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE*

The success of the drive toward economic independence within each home, village, valley, and within the territory is illustrated by the following report of the Sanpete Stake Relief Society for 19 May 1879. According to this report, these women, in a two-to-three-year period, had done the following:

Gathered 21,507 dozen Sunday eggs to use for charitable and philanthropic purposes.

Made 504 quilts.

Made five rugs and 3,633 yards of rag carpet.

Gathered 11,093 bushels of wheat.

Collected 111 books for their library.

Acquired four acres of land.

Manufactured 1,084 yards of cloth.

Donated \$5,310 to temples.

Helped 399 families of missionaries, and sent off \$2,925 to missionaries in the field.

Made 52,550 visits to the sick.

Clothed and prepared for burial 299 corpses.

Built seven Relief Society halls.

Held two bazaars or fairs.

Built one co-op store, acquired shares in three stores and two mills and one thresher.

Made 11,199 pounds of cheese.

Donated \$5,965 to the emigration fund.

Spent \$2,159 for surprise parties for the poor.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly, the women of the Relief Societies were heavily involved in the economic life of the Mormon community.<sup>9</sup>

#### *MOVEMENT TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN LITERATURE*

In the year 1870, two young converts who had been teachers in eastern schools came to Utah. They were Mary and Ida Ione Cook. They came from Oneida County, New York, where their father was a noted doctor and educator. Trained at Syracuse (New York) Teachers College, they had accepted positions to teach at St. Louis, Missouri, where they were converted to Mormonism. Upon reaching Utah they set up a model school with which Brigham Young was much impressed. In 1872, when John R. Park, the leading Utah educator who taught the President's children, went to Europe as a missionary, Brigham Young incorporated his own family school as well as classes of the University of Deseret and Deseret University High School into the school operated by the Cooks. Among other things, the Cook sisters introduced the principle of grading.

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<sup>8</sup>Susa Young Gates, "General Relief Society Movement," in "History of Mormon Women," MS., Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City. Cited from *Woman's Exponent*, 1894.

<sup>9</sup>See also Leonard J. Arrington, "The Economic Role of Pioneer Mormon Women," *Western Humanities Review*, 9 (Spring, 1955), 145-164.

Before they came, the children all sat in one hall, the little ones in front, the larger ones back according to size and age. Classes recited as they were called to the front by the tap of the teacher's bell. The one teacher gave instructions in A.B.C.'s, geography, arithmetic, spelling, history, and back to "C.A.T. spells cat, children."<sup>10</sup>

Two of the remarkable students of the Cook sisters during these years were Louisa Lula Greene and Susa Young, both of whom came to play a major role in initiating literary work among Mormon women. Louisa Lula Greene founded the *Woman's Exponent*, said to have been the first "permanent" woman's magazine west of the Mississippi and second in the nation after the Boston *Woman's Journal*. Lula later became the plural wife of Levi Richards, raised a notable family, and published numerous poems, children's fiction, editorials, and feature articles in Salt Lake City periodicals. Her successor as editor of the *Woman's Exponent* was Mrs. Emmeline B. Wells, mother of eleven, who served as editor for more than forty years.

Lula's companion, Susa Young, founded and edited the *College Lantern*, said to be the first Western college paper, and later the *Young Woman's Journal*. She also married and bore thirteen children.

Through their magazines, Louisa and Susa encouraged the writing of literature; under their stimulus, more than three dozen books of poetry, autobiography, and history were published by Latter-day Saint women in the 1870s and 1880s. Literally scores of women wrote creditable autobiographies and diaries which were never published. Susa herself wrote nine books, including the first Mormon novel by a Mormon and a major biography of her father, Brigham Young. Also active in politics and women's organizations, Susa helped organize the National Household Economics Organization, served as a delegate and speaker to five Congresses of the International Council of Women, served as a delegate and officer of the National Council of Women, and was the Utah organizer of Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, and National Woman's Press Club. She attended several Republican National Conventions, served as an officer of the Relief Society and Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, and was a member of the Board of Regents of Brigham Young University and Utah State Agricultural College. In Utah she entertained such prominent American women as Ella Wheeler Wilcox, May Wright Sewall, Clara Barton, and Susan B. Anthony; carried on correspondence with Tolstoy, William Dean Howells, and other literary figures; published several woman suffrage pamphlets; and left many shelves of unpublished dramas, novels, short stories, and biographies. Twenty-two pages are required just to list her writings. After a miraculous cure from a debilitating illness in middle age, she also went daily to the Salt Lake Temple and wrote the first Mormon genealogical treatises. Unquestionably, the prolific and assertive Susa Young Gates was a versatile and talented writer and organizer.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Gates, "Women in Educational Fields," in "History of Mormon Women," pp. 68-88.

<sup>11</sup>See the Susa Young Gates papers in the Utah State Historical Society Library. See also Paul Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1951).

## MOVEMENT TO IMPROVE MEDICAL SERVICES

From the Mormon pioneer belief that women ought to be attended by women doctors, the Mormon community in the 1870s and 1880s produced the most remarkable group of women doctors in American history. Romania B. Pratt, an early student of the Cooks at the University of Utah, was the first young Latter-day Saint to go east to study medicine. Her interest stemmed from having seen a friend die for the want of medical assistance. She writes,

I saw her lying on her bed, her life slowly ebbing away, and no one near knew how to ease her pain or prevent her death; it was a natural enough case, and a little knowledge might have saved her. Oh, how I longed to know something to do, and at that moment I solemnly vowed to myself never to be found in such a position again, and it was my aim ever afterward to arrange my life-work that I might study the science which would relieve suffering, appease pain, prevent death.<sup>12</sup>

The wife of Parley P. Pratt, Jr., and the mother of seven children, Romania Pratt went to Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1873, and graduated in 1877. She served as an intern in, among other places, Boston and Philadelphia, after which she returned to Utah to practice and teach. She returned to the East in 1881-1882 to the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, and became a specialist in performing operations on the eye. In Utah she held classes in obstetrics twice a year or more, and eventually some seventy-five women received instruction from her. She worked for the establishment of the Deseret Hospital and became its first Resident Physician.

The second Utah woman to go east to study medicine was Margaret Curtis Shipp, who went to Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1875. She returned after a month — homesick. Immediately thereafter, Ellis Shipp, a sister-wife — for this was a polygamous household — left home, and received a degree in 1878.

Ellis Shipp is a little-known but fascinating Mormon woman. She was married at the age of nineteen to Milford Shipp. Nine days after her third son was born her husband was called on a two-year mission to Europe. Ellis supported her little family with no more than a cow, an orchard, and a garden plot. She sewed and knitted and took in a student boarder, but was not satisfied with her ability to care for and educate her children. She had had only one year of formal schooling, and so she developed a plan of study, arising every morning at 4 a.m. so she could put in three solid hours of study before her household began to stir. She continued this practice after her husband returned from his mission. Various entries in her diary relate her early morning program of studying poetry, history, English grammar, hygiene and health. When her sister-wife Margaret returned from Woman's Medical College homesick and lonely, Ellis decided to go in her place. On 10 November 1875, she wrote:

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<sup>12</sup>Annie W. Cannon, "The Women of Utah: Women in Medicine," *Woman's Exponent*, 17 (1 September 1888), 49.

What a strange fatality! This morning I start for Philadelphia to attend the Medical College. Oh, Heavenly Father, give me strength to endure the separation from my loved ones, and power to succeed in my endeavors to gain a knowledge of Medicine — that my life may be noble and useful upon the earth.<sup>13</sup>

After almost a year of study, Ellis found it necessary to return to her home in Salt Lake City for health reasons. After three months of recuperation, she was ready to go again. But by then she was pregnant, family finances were exhausted, and it seemed impossible for her to return to her studies. She wrote:

September days of 1876 brought many hours of conflicting emotions. The urge to complete that which under the circumstances seemed an impossible thing to do still lived within my tenacious soul. I listened to the protests from those I loved, which I felt were made in loving concern for me. And yet I could not turn from inner convictions of what I felt the beckoning forces. As far as I was personally concerned I had no fears. I knew the trying ways of strict economy and could endure cold and hunger and, yes, the mortal sufferings of Motherhood which in Maytime would come inevitably to me. My faith had driven every fear and dread from out my soul and all I lacked was Milford's word to go. However, everything seemed so far away from that desired accomplishment. I suffered silently, and yet prayed to One in whom I trusted perfectly and felt He knew and would overrule for what was best.

And now, the morning of September 26, 1876, my husband, scanning the morning news, suddenly read aloud, "Tomorrow morning Utah students take the train for eastern colleges along with missionaries going to many eastern lands!" I hid my face to hide my tears when a kind voice said, "Ellis dear, would you really like to join this company?" My answer, "Yes, yes, I truly would." (pp. 238-39)

She then writes:

Then, as the morning hour was near and I whispered pleading words to the father of our precious ones I left for him, that he should most tenderly love and guard and shield them, a painful silence came. . . . Suddenly he grasped my hands and said, "I cannot give my sanction to such a momentous thing — under such circumstances to undertake what really is impossible, the unwise thing to do." At once I jumped to my feet and spoke to my husband as I ne'er had spoken to him before! "Yesterday you said that I should go. I am going, going now!" It seemed it could not be that I could ever do such a disrespectful thing. (pp. 239-40)

Ellis did leave home on 17 September 1876 to start for Philadelphia, suffering guilt feelings for having defied her husband. She wrote that night in her diary:

Oh, never did I suffer as I have today. I have parted from my darlings before but never under such circumstances. Oh, Heaven help me to endure this agony. Oh, I pray my Father to preserve them, keep them safe till I return. My dear, dear husband and

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<sup>13</sup>*The Early Autobiography and Diary of Ellis Reynolds Shipp, M.D.*, Ellis Shipp Musser, ed. (Salt Lake City, 1962), p. 172. Subsequent references will appear in the text.

my darling children – oh, how fondly do I love them. How can I live from out their presence? I have been urged on by a something, I know not what, to take this step. Heaven grant that it may prove a wise one. . . . Oh, if Milford had only felt differently, if he had but pronounced upon me his blessing, how much stronger I would feel. (pp. 240-42)

A few days later, after arriving in Philadelphia, Ellis wrote:

What I suffered the first day and night after my arrival my pen can never tell. How bitter, how great was my remorse. I feared I had been rash, that I should have paid more heed to the advice of my friends and especially of my own dear husband. . . . When I left home last September it was under very peculiar circumstances. Milford gave me all the money that he had, so noble and generous that he was, I was loath to take it, still it was my only alternative. I felt something impelling and urging me on, a feeling that I could not resist. I felt that I must return to Philadelphia and complete my studies, and I came although I had but one hundred and fifty dollars to pay my fare here, pay for my professors' tickets, my rent, board, and not knowing where the next was to come from. (pp. 244-46)

New Year's morning of 1877 came, and Ellis had but one dollar left. She wrote:

I was just reflecting what I should do and had concluded that I would be obliged to give up some of my lectures and try and sell some models, when I heard the postman's well-known ring. . . . I opened the letter and was surprised to see it was from my dear Sister Lizzie [Elizabeth, her husband's plural wife], for I know she had been home for some time visiting her mother and I had not yet learned of her return. But what was my astonishment on opening still farther to have fall into my lap a *fifty dollar order*, all the result of her own patient labor, and all for me. (247-48)

A few months later she received another \$50 order from her "noble sister Lizzie":

How grateful do I feel and how much increased do I feel my responsibilities. . . . How pure and heavenly is the relationship of sisters in the holy order of Polygamy. Even the kindred ties of blood could not be more pure and sacred, nor more unselfish and enduring. How beautiful to contemplate the picture of a family where each one works for the interest, advancement and well being of all. *Unity is strength*. (pp. 252-53)

In May, Ellis gave birth to a daughter, Olea. Then at the end of her second year, her sister-wife Maggie came to work toward her degree:

A day never to be forgotten for it has brought such glorious news from my dear husband. For months he has been studying *law* and will be admitted to the bar next March. He has kept this a secret, thinking to surprise us in the spring, but he concluded to allow us to share in the hopeful joy that fills his heart. Oh, how thankful, how happy I am to know . . . that that noble loved one has at last entered a field wherein he will have full scope for exercise of his rare and brilliant talents. Heaven bless him. (p. 276)

Finally, in early 1878, she experienced "joy inexpressible" when she received news that her husband was admitted to the Salt Lake Bar as an Attorney and Counselor at Law. A few days later Ellis herself graduated from Woman's Medical College.

As Utah's second woman M.D., Dr. Shipp treated patients in the Salt Lake Valley as well as her own family (she had seven children). She became a member of the General Board of the Woman's Relief Society and the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association. She attended the National Council of Women as a Mormon delegate, and read papers on the care and training of children. There she became intimately acquainted with Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth C. Stanton, Clara Barton, and other well known women. Her life exemplified an idea expressed in an editorial in the *Woman's Exponent*:

Whatever other qualities it may engender, it [polygamy] develops strength in character. Women are left to depend more upon their own judgment and to take more fully the charge of their own home and affairs. It brings out latent and dormant powers. A wife becomes literally the head of her household.<sup>14</sup>

#### *MOVEMENT FOR GREATER POLITICAL EXPRESSION*

On 12 February 1870, the Utah territorial legislature passed without opposition an act to grant suffrage to the women of Utah.<sup>15</sup> Although the Wyoming legislature had previously passed a similar measure, Utah women were the first in the nation to vote for municipal and territorial or state officers. At a municipal election held just nine days after the approval by the legislature of the woman suffrage bill, Seraph Young, a niece of Brigham Young, voted in the Salt Lake City election and was thus the first woman in the nation to vote in such an election.

The Utah act, however, did not provide that women could hold political office; their expression was limited to serving on party central committees, attending party caucuses and precinct nominating meetings, and voting at regularly scheduled elections. Agitation for further rights, and encouragement in the exercise of such rights, was conducted regularly by the *Woman's Exponent*, which carried on its masthead throughout most of its history the slogan: "The Rights of the Women of Zion and the Rights of the Women of all Nations." The *Exponent* carried articles about woman's suffrage and other women's activities in almost every issue. Beginning in 1879 Utah women took an active part in the National Woman's Suffrage Conventions.

Unfortunately, conflicts between Mormons and the federal government led the national Congress to pass the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 which prohibited Utah women from voting. When Utah held its Constitutional Convention in 1895 in anticipation of statehood, however, a clear majority voted to restore woman suffrage to the state constitution, and this was rati-

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<sup>14</sup>*The Woman's Exponent*, 13 (1 November 1894), 81.

<sup>15</sup>The best treatment of this is found in Thomas G. Alexander, "An Experiment in Progressive Legislation: The Granting of Woman Suffrage in Utah in 1870"; and Jean Bickmore White, "Gentle Persuaders: Utah's First Women Legislators," in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 39 (January 1970).

fied by Congress. Grover Cleveland signed the constitution and full suffrage including the right to hold political office was conferred upon Utah women in 1896. Shortly after that Mrs. Lillie Pardee was appointed clerk of the Utah Senate, and was the first woman to sign the credentials of a United States Senator.

The first woman state senator in the United States was Mattie Hughes Cannon, who was elected in 1896 and served two terms in the Utah upper chamber. Mrs. Cannon, intellectual and witty, studied medicine under Dr. Romania B. Pratt in Salt Lake City. Then, in 1878, she went to the University of Michigan, graduating in 1880. Not content, she went on to earn an M.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, and then attended and graduated from the National School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia. Upon her return to Salt Lake City she was appointed resident physician at the Deseret Hospital.

In the elections of 1896 after Utah had become a state, her husband Angus Cannon (to whom she was a plural wife), was chosen to stand as one of the Salt Lake City Republican candidates for the Utah State Senate. Mrs. Cannon agreed to stand as one of the Democratic candidates. In the election, she received 11,413 votes to 8,742 for her husband. She proved to be a brilliant and energetic senator. She championed the measure creating the State Board of Health, and was appointed one of its members. She sponsored the state's first Pure Food Law, and defeated the lobby that tried to abolish the State Board of Public Examiners which prevented incompetents from practicing medicine. She secured passage of a bill to authorize Utah to educate the deaf, mute, and blind, and became a member of the board of the Deaf and Dumb School. She sponsored and secured passage of a bill requiring seats for women employees; a bill to erect a hospital for the State School for Deaf, Dumb, and Blind; and a bill to create a Vital Statistics Law.

### *CONCLUSION*

Having made positive contributions in economics and business, in literature, in the professions, and in politics, the Latter-day Saint women set a record of which the area can be proud. Moreover, the Mormon tradition of womanly independence and distinction should inspire a later generation of women who are seeking their rightful place in the world. Our pioneer women's success in combining Church service, professional achievement, and family life, while somewhat intimidating, should awaken modern Latter-day Saint women to their own opportunities and responsibilities.



*Lenore Romney  
Dr. Ellis R. Shipp*

*Alice Buehner*

*Eliza R. Snow*



*Susa Young Gates*



*Maude Adams*



*Laraine Day*

*Joan Fisher*



*Jesse Evans Smith*

**THE VISIBLE MODELS**  
A Photographic Essay



*Roberta Shore  
(Jymme Christensen)*

*Lorena Chipman Fletcher*



*Esther Peterson*



*The King Sisters*

*Emma Lucy Gates Bowen*



*Rose Marie Ried*



*Emma R. McKay  
Annie Asenath Adams*



*Barbara Lockhart*





*Jeanne Ashworth*

*Colleen Hutchins*



*Vera Miles*

*Martha H. Cannon*



*Maude May Babcock*



*The Singing Mothers*

RISE UP,  
YE WOMEN  
THAT ARE  
AT EASE.  
ISAIAH 32:9

**HAVING ONE'S CAKE  
AND EATING IT TOO**

**Christine Meaders Durham**

It has occurred to me that the one element most likely to insure success in marriage is that element most discouraged by dating and courtship norms: honesty. Too many young women who feel themselves capable of career activities submerge their ambitions and conform to "acceptable" expectations to achieve their primary goal — marriage. Similarly, many young men, attracted to a girl for her ambition and self-sufficiency, maintain an inner conviction that these attributes will receive adequate expression in a mainly supportive, totally home-directed life. This basic dishonesty is responsible, in my opinion, for a great many frustrated wives and disillusioned husbands, both inside and outside the Church. Although our own marriage certainly has its share of frustrations, my husband George and I were at least quite sure of what we were getting into.

The foundations for our hectic enterprise were laid during the earliest days of our relationship. We met as college students and shared the fascination of intellectual exploration. Perhaps because I wasn't really husband-hunting, but more likely because I trusted George enough to be open about my feelings, I was always very confident about my ambitions and hopes for the future. I believed that women were the equals of men in ability and talent and assumed (rather naively) that their opportunities for achievement were also equal. In any case, my husband took me seriously and accepted my goals as being as important as his own. I must admit that at the time this didn't impress me particularly; I can remember feeling that it was as normal a thing for a young woman to plan upon some constructive contribution to society at large as well as to family and children as it was for a man. My plans were gloriously vague but oriented toward teaching or the law. They included college, graduate school, a year or two of independence, then marriage, temporary or part-time hiatus from outside pursuits while "launching" my children, and a return to an active career in my young-middle years. The best laid plans . . .

We were married during my senior year of college, and for want of the wherewithal to finance law school and certainty concerning our location for the next few years, I accepted a teaching job which afforded numerous challenges but little in the way of personal growth. George, behind me in school because of a two-year mission, decided on medical school and spent his spare time in the chemistry labs during the spring and the following year.

As we talked about beginning a family, we settled several things between us. Our marriage had been the result of mutual attraction based on intellectual challenge, emotional *élan*, and an ever-increasing spiritual rapport. It was the latter in particular which provided the values and framework for our life together. For both of us our success as human beings depends upon closeness to essential Christian principles and the happiness of our family in a gospel context. Given this primary goal, it seemed inappropriate to postpone the arrival of children for too long, since we looked upon our roles as future parents as being the most important we would fill. To wait until the completion of our mutual educational plans would mean too many years of postponed association with our children. On faith, then, since George's plans for medical school made finances a touchy subject and my hopes for graduate school even touchier, we prepared for the arrival of our first child. Subsequent events have never made us regret that we decided to see to that priority first. In fact, it was, in a way, my pregnancy that forced me to focus my plans and get busy. Law school began to seem an ideal choice for the kind of flexibility and scope I needed, besides being well-suited to my contentious nature. However, with a child now well on the way and only six months to a year more in Boston before medical school, I felt stymied. During the long, hot summer spent in Phoenix before the baby's arrival (while George studied enzymes in a laboratory) as I grew larger and larger around the middle, I began to feel more and more like Littlechap in "Stop the World": L\*U\*M\*B\*E\*R\*E\*D. I had visions of long days in small apartments full of diapers, dishes, and slow death by boredom. George, sensitive as always to my needs and pointing out most emphatically that he had no intention of being held responsible for my inactivity and resultant mental state, pushed me into action. The result was that in mid-August of 1968, with a baby due in Phoenix on the thirtieth, I secured a place in law school in Boston, classes due to begin on September sixteenth. During the next four weeks, we had Jennifer (now nearly three), drove cross-country, borrowed the first semester's tuition from my parents (I have since managed to secure scholarships and federal loans), and set up our own three-ring circus in a one-bedroom apartment.

My classes were in blocks so that I could nurse my baby. George organized his schedule to be home two mornings a week, a friend and I traded for two more mornings of babysitting, and my sister-in-law offered her valuable time for the fifth. Jennifer did her part by sleeping while I was gone and fitting her feeding times in with my schedule. Although we soon began to feel that our family slogan should be "If there's a harder way to do it, we'll find it," we gained a great deal by working together for things important to us. I think that some of our friends at the time felt sorry for George, who stayed home with Jennifer two days, but the joy and pride he took then (and does now) in caring for and learning about the child he helped bring into our home are more significant than the results of any other activity.

When we returned to Arizona in January of that year, George taught chemistry while I finished my first year of law school at A.S.U. Again our schedules made an almost-equal division of Jennifer-care possible, although I continued nursing until she was nearly nine months old and was therefore

around *per force* at mealtimes. The love and sharing of that particular unpressured time in our lives have left warm and happy memories.

Those who believe that small children and fathers don't want or need the same kind of companionship that small children and mothers more often have are cheating themselves of a tremendous opportunity in a baby's life. Jennifer and her father developed a very special closeness, and I found my respect and appreciation for my husband growing daily. A useful side effect of this period was that George also learned something about how those daily hours at home are spent. He will never take my child-raising efforts for granted and is grateful for my willingness to shoulder the greater responsibility for running our home. His attitude is that my professional talents are as significant as his and that the time I devote to our family is given of love and free choice, not of ancient duty or biological fitness. When George's months of helping care for Jennifer were ended to begin medical school at Duke University, the break was rather traumatic for both of them. Jennifer at one year was so annoyed about her father's constant absence she refused to go near him for two days! We all adjusted, however.

The new routine left George freer and me busier. I found a happy babysitting situation for the two-to-four hours a day I had classes; Jennifer stayed with a young L.D.S. mother, a student wife with small children of her own. This arrangement, as opposed to full-time child care, which we couldn't afford anyway, left me a good deal of time with Jennifer and very little time to study. I must admit to occasional twinges of professional jealousy; my family responsibilities put me at some disadvantage with my fellow students. For example, my second-year transfer to yet another law school (my third) meant that I was unable to accept a position on the law review at one school and unable to devote the time to gaining and keeping a position at my new school. I felt I would simply have to sacrifice too much of my daughter's babyhood. This kind of compromise has often been necessary. I have never studied as much as I have wanted to, nor have I ever had the time to indulge in the more creative aspects of being at home. Achievement of my primary goals has necessitated ignoring numerous secondary ones, probably the greatest frustration in my experience as a professional student and mother.

Perhaps this frustration accounts for the underlying resentment I sense within myself of the "way things are" in our society. Our roles in life are decided for us by tradition, convention, and socio-economic institutions, rather than by individual differences, talents, and inclinations. This seems to me to be in basic contradiction to the gospel's teachings of free agency. As a woman, I must perform by definition the total home-child care function, and yet educational institutions and employers make few concessions to this demanding dual role. A young husband with small children does not expect to rush home from classes to cook, clean, and change diapers, however well-suited he may be as an individual to such tasks. A young wife with equal abilities and opportunities is expected nevertheless to do all these things, no matter how well or ill-suited *she* may be. This state of affairs was made painfully clear to me during my third year of law school when the arrival of daughter number two — Meghan Christine — coincided with

George's first year of clinical work. Since he was gone from 12 to 20 hours a day for several months, I was forced to carry a double load, often by myself, a situation guaranteed to produce dark circles of fatigue and Excedrin headaches. George, on the other hand, regretted deeply the months of Meghan's life that he missed. She was nearly three months old before he had an opportunity to hold her for longer than a few moments.

From the beginning we agreed upon equal responsibility for the success of our marriage and the rearing of our children. In a better society, I believe we could be very happy equally dividing work within and without the home. George is a marvelous father — gentle, patient, and completely involved with the life and happiness of his family. It seems ironic that, because he is “only” a father, society will expect him to devote the bulk of his active hours to professional pursuits. A man is made to feel guilty if he wants too much time with his family — a woman if she does not!

It is not surprising that I have found the pressures of my own personal merry-go-round oppressive from time to time. “Ah, but why do you do it then?” I hear a cynical (male) voice inquire from inside my head. Because I am healthier this way and happier; but I can still dream of a better time and place where neither men nor women have to sacrifice home and family for career, or vice versa, where marriage is more of a true partnership. Many economists are presently predicting that the three-day, half-time work week will shortly be upon us. It seems to me that families might capitalize on this development by eliminating some of the stereotypes that have accompanied the concept of the forty-hour job. Why not divide bread-winning and child-raising along neutral rather than sexual lines? A wealth of undeveloped talent and training could be uncovered and tapped for society's good, both in the marketplace and in the home. Of course, I am talking about a world in which profound social changes will have taken place — but we do believe in eternal progression!

I have heard of many members of the Church who feel that gospel teachings require women to stay home full-time while their husbands work at least full time, if not time and a half. For many couples, this arrangement is happy and adequate. For others, however, it is inadequate and even, I believe, damaging to the full growth and fulfillment of their spiritual selves. President McKay taught that “no success can compensate for failure in the home.” My husband and I believe that statement to be an expression of the Lord's priorities and have adopted it literally for our own. It seems strange to me, in light of this belief, that so many L.D.S. priesthood bearers are satisfied with a social system which denies them the companionship of their children for all but a few hours each week, while they pursue success in myriad other forms. Not only do they remain satisfied with such a system, but many appear to feel threatened by the possibility of changing it. Leaving aside the radical and irrational fringes, it seems to me that what the best of women's liberation is all about is not the emancipation of women, alone, but of the family. It seems illogical for two people who set out to bring spirit children to this earth under an everlasting covenant to be limited by arbitrary requirements as to who shall do what when. The division of labor in most families is made not on the basis of individual talents but on

the basis of sex. Many women are far better suited to deal with small children than their husbands; many, if they are honest about it, are not — at least not always. Assuming the existence of the *spiritual* leadership and authority of the priesthood in the home, I feel very strongly that husbands and wives should be able to exercise their free agency in working out their respective social and family functions.

Given, however, the fact that our free agency is still limited in this respect by societal demands and stereotypes, those who attempt to shape new roles and new life styles will have to compromise. Since I cannot consider compromising my children's need for close parental association, I must compromise for the time being the extent of my professional activities. This means part-time work and taking what I can get in the way of experience.

Perhaps I am wrong in claiming to have my cake and eat it too. Perhaps one can only save the icing and enjoy the crumbs — but the effort is nevertheless enriching, worthwhile and, for me, very necessary. I have been blessed in many ways — with a magnificent husband, healthy, loving children, and the help and moral support of many people, including family, bishops and friends. People in general have been willing to let me “do my thing” however different from their own.

The family has been and will remain the first priority in our marriage. I feel that we are living close to the Lord and that we can depend upon his help in meeting the demands of our complicated lives. We married in order to share, and for us that means sharing educational and professional opportunities as well as the unique opportunity to raise our children. I feel that our experiences will be limited only by the narrowness of our spirits and hopes. With the gospel as a yardstick, we expect to fill our measure of joy upon this earth.

### **SELECTED SKETCHES**

**BARBARA CLARK**, Seattle, Washington, is a pediatrician and mother of three children, ages two to five. For the past three years she has worked from twelve to twenty hours a week for the public health department doing well-child work. She has had live-in sitters, two L.D.S. girls from Germany. “I have had to settle for something less than my main interest in medicine, but the compromise has been worth it. I would not consider full-time work until my children are fully grown. . . . It is not only my children's attitudes which are important, but my conception of them, which varies according to my own mood and level of self-esteem. Rebecca, my oldest, is very aware of my profession and has often accompanied me to work, yet she has expressed desires to be a nurse and a mother, but never a doctor. When I feel low I think she is not identifying with me, but when my self-esteem is higher, I think she is identifying with my most important roles as woman, wife, and mother. My husband (who is a psychiatrist) refuses to analyze it for me!” Barbara served as Relief Society secretary in New Haven before moving to Seattle.

**DELLA MAE RASMUSSEN**, Provo, Utah, is a psychologist, Primary General Board member, and mother of six children, eight to nineteen. She completed her doctorate part-time and now works at the B.Y.U. Counseling

Center. "Child care has been no problem. The last child leaves for school at 8:30; I work from about nine to one and am home before the first child arrives at 2:30. While I was taking classes, my husband and I could almost always arrange schedules so he could be home when I was not. My parents have also helped in various ways. . . . I like being a woman in the Church. I feel we have untold opportunities to give service and develop abilities and talents. I need to be involved in many things to be really happy. We don't have time for TV at our house, but life could hardly be more rich and sweet."

**SUE KOHLER**, Watertown, Massachusetts, is a Junior Sunday School coordinator and mother of three children, ages one to seven. Three years ago she became "a light manufacturer of hand puppets." She sells only to big department stores, mostly in New York, and has gone from a part-time, year-round business to an intensive pre-Christmas operation. "During the few months I concentrate on puppets, I keep up my Church commitments but let my house go. There is one month when I don't read to my children and do not give Bern the supervision he needs with piano practicing. But they know it is for a limited time. They look upon it as a family project and enjoy our business trips to New York. . . . If I felt I *had* to do the work, I don't believe I would enjoy it so much. There is a tremendous market for homemade and small shop products; when my children are grown I hope to expand my business."

**CAROLE BILLIN**, Laconia, New Hampshire, is a veterinarian and mother of eight children, ages two to thirteen. For several years she and her husband, also a veterinarian, practiced together in the hospital they built, adjoining their house. "My children didn't know they had a 'working mother'; they could find me as easily in the hospital as in the house. I loved my work, but gradually I began to feel torn, to question if I were doing a good job in either place. It was a spiritual decision for me. I decided I was needed full-time for awhile as wife and mother." She now helps out at the hospital when needed and tries to attend professional conferences with her husband. "I feel it is important to keep my mind aligned with my profession. Because we have our hospital, I can move back at my own pace. It would have been hopeless had I married a dentist!" Carole is on the Relief Society stake board in Merrimack Stake.

**RUBY PUCKETT**, Gainesville, Florida, is Director of Dietetic Services for the health center and hospitals of the University of Florida. Except for four years when her daughters, now twelve and fourteen, were babies, she has worked full-time. Her children were cared for by a "hand-picked" housekeeper and attended private nursery schools. "It is difficult to know what effect working has had on my family. I have always felt it important to share time with our children on an individual basis each day. I have helped with school parties and Scouts. We have all been involved in Church activities since our girls were old enough to walk. . . . When I am asked if women should work outside of the home, I always say, 'What women and what work?' For some it is excellent mental therapy; for others it is a source of anxiety, guilt and frustration. A lot depends on a woman's ability to organize and, very basically, how much energy she has." For the past five years, Ruby has taught in Relief Society and Sunday School.

**THERE ARE MULTITUDES  
 OF PURE AND HOLY  
 SPIRITS WAITING TO  
 TAKE ABERNICLES,  
 NOW THAT IS OUR DUTY?  
 ... BRIGHAM YOUNG**

**AND WOE UNTO  
 THEM THAT ARE  
 WITH CHILD IN THOSE DAYS**

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

It isn't easy these days to be a Momon mother of four. In the university town where I live, fertility is tolerated but not encouraged. Every time I drive to the grocery store, bumper stickers remind me that Overpopulation Begins At Home, and I am admonished to Make Love, Not Babies. At church I have the opposite problem. My youngest is almost two and if I hurry off to Primary without a girdle, somebody's sure to look suspiciously at my flabby stomach and start imagining things. Everybody else is pregnant, why not I?

Open a woman's magazine and I'm told that the most responsible step I can take is to limit the size of my family. I can't do much about the four I've got, but obviously having a fifth would be blatantly irresponsible. Open the *Ensign* and I am warned of the woeful consequences should I "wall up the path of life over which new spirits must cross to enter a mortal body." Clearly, to prevent the birth of a fifth child would be sinful.

I apparently have two choices. I can selfishly gobble up more of the earth's scarce resources by having another child when I know that in the time it takes you to read those words four children will have died from starvation; or, I can selfishly refuse to bear more children when I know that there are spirits languishing in the pre-existence waiting to enter mortality.

To a non-Mormon it might seem more responsible — and even more Christian — to take care of hungry babes on earth before worrying about those in heaven. It's not that simple, however, it being much easier to get pregnant than to figure out how to share the food on your plate with the starving masses in India. As for the United States, there are signs of dissension among the population experts. Conrad Taeuber, supervisor of the 1970 census, argues that our population problems "are and will be much more a matter of geographic distribution and the way we use our resources than of the rate of increase in our total numbers."<sup>1</sup> Affluence, selfishness, and a madcap rush to the cities are creating the crisis — not our one per cent rate of growth. Limiting one's family might be a futile gesture, simply helping to relieve the pain while Americans amass more and

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<sup>1</sup>"Census Sense," *Newsweek* (January 25, 1971), 78. Troubled Mormons have been quick to note the growing number of "anti-explosionists" among the experts. See, for example, Philip F. Low, "Realities Of The Population Explosion," *The Ensign*, 1 (May 1971), 18-27.

more goods for fewer and fewer people at greater cost to our environment and with little noticeable effect on the world's problems. In this view, genuine patriotism combines with orthodox Mormonism in asking that we become less materialistic, more willing to share.

A Mormon mother, then, shouldn't feel guilty about having more than two children, especially if she is willing to:

1) ride a bicycle; 2) bathe less often; 3) use non-phosphate detergents; 4) move to North Dakota, Mississippi, or Wyoming; and, 5) live the Word of Wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

Even the most stringent ecological housekeeping has its limits, however. By teaching love and brotherhood I can put three children in a bedroom instead of one; with thrift and ingenuity I can stretch my share of the earth's resources to feed eight instead of two, but do I have the Godlike perfection to invite not only my own children but their children and their children's children to share my one acre? And if not my acre, whose? On the personal level, an exponential rate of growth is everybody coming home to Thanksgiving dinner at Grandma's house and staying to reproduce. At a certain point you run out of space.

While the "anti-explosionists" argue that the U.S. growth rate, 17.6 births to 9.6 deaths per thousand, is not excessive and can be managed, what would they say of the Mormon performance — 28.41 births to 4.78 deaths per thousand,<sup>3</sup> giving us a population increase on a par with most of Asia and only a few percentage points under Africa and Latin America, a rate of growth which, if applied universally, could only result in disaster?

The earth's population reached a billion in 1830,<sup>4</sup> a rather slow rate of increase even allowing for a clean start after the Flood, but the second billion took only a hundred years — until 1930, and we had added our third billion by 1960, thirty years later. Even conservative estimates predict six billion people by the year 2000.<sup>5</sup> According to demographers, we have multiplied and replenished and now threaten to overwhelm the earth. The more hopeful population experts point to low birthrates in developed countries and insist that as nations become industrialized and educated the birthrate will fall into balance with the death rate. The Mormon record, however, seems to deny that hope. With more than our share of educated parents, we have achieved a fertility only slightly less alarming than our longevity. Applying the Kantian imperative can only result in discomfort.

Yet the First Presidency, in a signed statement dated 14 April 1969, has urged Latter-day Saints not to limit their families<sup>6</sup> One might assume

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<sup>2</sup>Latter-day Saints may have overlooked the ecological significance of Doctrine and Covenants 89:12-13. Note that Paul Ehrlich in chapter five of *The Population Bomb* lists as "inalienable right" number three, the right to eat meat.

<sup>3</sup>From April Conference annual statistical report, *Church News*, 10 April 1971, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Eschatologists can make of that date what they will. It occurs to me that the prophecy of Daniel might be helpful.

<sup>5</sup>"1970 World Population Data Sheet," Population Reference Bureau, 1755 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C.

<sup>6</sup>This letter was not published, as far as I can determine, but was mailed to Bishops and Stake Presidents for use in counseling members. Philip Low, in *The Ensign* article mentioned above, quoted part of this letter. He omitted the section which seems to sanction

that in the Lord's eyes there is no population problem. Perhaps the number of spirits destined to come to earth is finite and about to run out. Or perhaps the population problem, like so many of the crises man has created for himself, is so beyond our ability to solve that the best we can do is build our own homes and let God take care of the rest. Is the population question, then, one more example of the classic confrontation between faith and reason? Must we choose to follow the prophets or the experts? Intellectual Mormons, by cultivating a little righteous hypocrisy, might be able to hearken unto both.

Notice that the First Presidency addressed themselves to Latter-day Saints through their Bishops, not to the world at large. Unlike the Catholic hierarchy our leaders have made no attempt to fight world population control; they have simply ignored it, directing their pronouncements to their own people.

To a haggard mother of four in a fledgling stake in the mission field, the reason seems obvious. While there are unquestionably too many Indians in India and too many commuters on Boston's Route 128, there are simply not enough Mormons. Who, while driving 45 miles to church meetings, can find dismaying the possibility that the Church will double by the year 2000 simply by continuing to reproduce at the rate of two per cent a year? Now, one may argue that our population problem is more a matter of distribution than numbers, that more babies will not make life easier in New England if they all grow up and move to California. There is some truth in this. Yet in the pioneer era, with some help from our neighbors, Mormons showed real talent for population redistribution. There is no reason why it couldn't be done again, given sufficient numbers.

Of course, we don't need more *people* in New Hampshire, just more Mormons. That explains why having babies is not enough. We've got to persuade other people to stop having them. To take a familiar example, I can have four children without upsetting the national average of 2.5 because Paul Ehrlich, convinced that mindless people like me would produce four, was patriotically sterilized after one child. When we compute how many sterilized males will be required to offset those champion Mormon families of nine or ten, it becomes clear why we must enthusiastically support such organizations as Zero Population Growth and the Campaign to Check the Population Explosion.<sup>7</sup>

The proponents of Z.P.G. suggest adoption to those who want a large family. At first look this seems like an ideal solution for Mormondom. Our belief in the pre-existence suggests that in a real sense even natural children are adopted; with sealing in the Temple they are as much ours as if they had been born to us. Parents with ten adopted children can't seriously be accused of having limited their family.

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birth control when the "health and strength" of the mother are threatened. "Health and strength" are rather broadly defined among Mormon women I know.

<sup>7</sup>Some readers of this paper have objected to the suggestion that Mormons support Z.P.G., insisting that my modest proposal is outrageous. I can only answer that in my opinion certain champions of the two groups have a lot in common. They are only apparently attacking each other. What they are really attacking is a common enemy — the attractive but misguided notion that family size can safely be left to personal choice.

Such a solution, however, is based on the premise that those who don't want children will continue to produce them for those who do. With liberalized abortion laws, healthy white infants are becoming harder and harder to find. At this writing, children of minority races are still available, yet many Mormons will think twice before adopting a Negro child, not because of racial prejudice but because of a realistic understanding of the problems such a practice might bring. Parents can give a child love, but not acceptance by society, not the Priesthood. Yet, even this hurdle could be overcome by traditional Mormon cooperation. If enough families adopted minority children, social acceptance would come. We have been told many times that Negroes will eventually have the Priesthood. Certainly if they were our own children, we would pray harder for that time to be shortened.

There is a serious objection to adoption, however, when compared with conception. Adoption requires not just one act but a series of acts, a sustained commitment. During the long months of waiting for their child, adoptive parents are allowed, even encouraged, to change their minds. You have to be sure you want a baby to adopt one. It's therefore an unreliable way for a group to grow. How would the Mormon birthrate look if people had to think that hard about getting pregnant?

Now, critics may point out, and rightly so, that through more effective missionary work we can increase the number of Mormons without increasing the number of people. This is easier said than done. I for one can testify that it's easier to produce a baby a year than a convert. It is apparent, however, from a look at Church population data that converts and babies are equally important in determining our growth rate. In 1970 we converted 79,126 persons, about the same rate of increase as by births.<sup>8</sup> Taken together, these two forces can result in spectacular growth. Assuming a constant conversion rate and a constant rate of natural increase, there could be twenty-three million Mormons in forty years. In just ninety years we could number 300 million, a striking achievement in and of itself, but even more astounding when we consider that if the goals of Zero Population Growth are attained, the population of the United States will have stabilized at 300 million by the year 2000.

Our converts will have to come from the general population, of course. And for this reason it may be important to encourage reversible forms of birth control; sterilized converts won't do us much good. The political implications must also be considered. Won't Mormon fertility be discovered and penalized before it threatens to take over the country? We'll just have to hope that by then there will be enough Mormons in high places to protect us. On the other hand, a certain amount of persecution might be helpful in uniting the Church and convincing parents of the righteousness of this cause.

Some people may doubt our ability to maintain the present level of production under normal conditions. So far there seems no cause for worry. Still, pressures from society at large will probably affect some women. Should the birthrate show signs of slipping, Church officials, in the mission field

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<sup>8</sup>April Conference Report, *Church News*, 10 April 1971, p. 11.

at least, might achieve good results by releasing mothers from one church job for every child after the fourth.

But what of those women who don't want a big family, who believe that such decisions are personal, not to be determined by pressures from government or Church, who are convinced that each woman is unique, that what stretches the capacity of one breaks another, that talents are variously given, that each woman is judged, not by the size of her family, but by how she makes use of her total endowment as a human being?

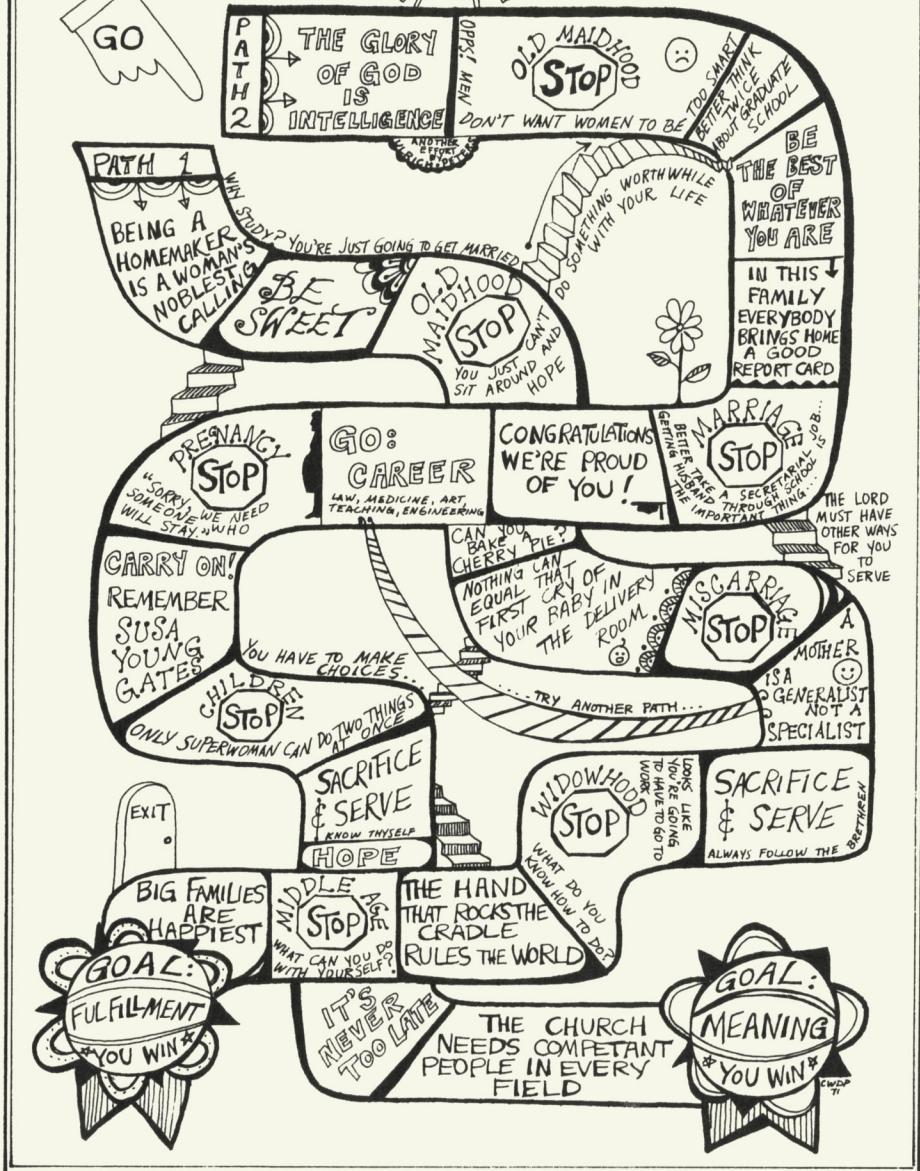
They have a point. Having children is one thing; raising them is another. What good can be accomplished by mothers who explode with the population? To these women I say: fast and pray and take comfort in statistics. To belabor a previous example, I can stop at four children without affecting the Mormon birthrate because my sister-in-law, who does a better job of such things than I, has eight.

Will I have more children? I might. Yet right now four seems like a nice, independent number — just twice too many for Zero Population Growth and only half enough to fill a row in Sacrament Meeting. All things considered, I think I can be quite comfortable just where I am, as long as Mormons keep having babies and the rest of the country stops.



# THE FIND-THE-STRAIGHT- $\&$ -NARROW-PATH GAME

...FOR WOMEN PLAYERS ONLY...



**WHAT MAN CAN MATCH  
A WOMAN WHO IS  
REALLY CONVINCED?  
... JOSEPH F. SMITH**

**THE MORMON WOMAN  
AND PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY:  
THE OTHER VOICE**

**Cheryll Lynn May**

While engaged in some research the other day I ran across a commentary on the Lutheran doctrine of “justification by faith” that lies at the heart of the Protestant Reformation. The doctrine was described as heralding a reemphasis upon spirit as opposed to empty form; a reaffirmation of the fact that man could be saved only through the righteous desirings of the heart. No matter how many Pater Nosters were recited, or indulgences purchased, or sins confessed, if a true change of heart had not taken place, the absolutions granted by the Church authorities meant nothing. As the old protestant homily goes; “Question, ‘Is there any angel, any virgin, any patriarch or prophet among the dead that can understand or know the reason of the heart?’ Answer, ‘No . . . Only I know . . .’” Thus the Protestants established (or re-established) two ideas that were indeed revolutionary in the Christian world of the 16th century; first that the spirit, or motive behind a deed was far more important than its visible content, and second, since God alone could know that spirit or motive, the Catholic Church’s claim to be an indispensable intermediary between God and man was rejected. The confirmation of one’s righteousness came not from the Church, but through direct, individual communion with the Divine.

To me, the “personal confirmation” doctrine had a comfortable and familiar ring. It seemed to be most compatible with my Mormon upbringing. Mormons are constantly reminded of Moroni’s exhortation and promise at the end of the Book of Mormon that the Lord, through the power of the Holy Ghost, would manifest the truth of his words to all sincere supplicants, and that “. . . by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). The scriptural references to a “burning in the bosom” as evidence of the authenticity of any authoritative pronouncement further support the idea that we have the right, and indeed the duty to seek and expect confirmation of the truth of gospel doctrines from the Lord Himself, and not from any intermediary authority.

The compatibility of certain essential protestant doctrines with those of the Church is hardly surprising. Mormons often point with pride at Luther as a necessary and honored forerunner of the Restoration. It is equally clear, however, that only in the nineteenth century, to Joseph Smith, was the Gospel restored in its fullness. While some of the insights revealed to Joseph Smith merely enlarge upon Protestant themes, others quite flatly

contradict them. So while we as members of the Church can warmly applaud the "personal confirmation" theme espoused by Luther and his followers, we cannot join him in the repudiation of the power and authority of an earthly priesthood, however logically this step might follow from his premise. The existence of a hierarchically organized priesthood with wide-ranging authority to act in God's name is obviously a central pillar of the Gospel. It is through the priesthood that the membership of the Church is organized, and only through priesthood authority can most of the ordinances and covenants of the Church be performed.

Since we find in the Gospel a reaffirmation *both* of the "Catholic" authority principle and the "Protestant" principle of personal confirmation, the two must be intended to complement each other, or at least not to contradict each other. However, from our admittedly narrow earthly perspective, the implications of the two principles are not always easily reconcilable. It seems to me, rather, that an emphasis on one or the other principle lies at the heart of many differences within the Church concerning both doctrine and practice. Whether the disputants call themselves "conservatives" and "liberals," or "iron rods" and "liahonas," or use other titles, a basic root of their differences seems to lie in their attitude toward priesthood authority. The first group tends to stress the importance of unquestioning obedience to priesthood authority and letter-perfect compliance with all commandments, while members of the second group accept pronouncements of Church Authorities as general guides to conduct which become valid for the individual when he receives a personal confirmation or testimony that the stated policy or commandment is indeed the word of God.

The frequent passion and mutual intolerance displayed by both liberals and conservatives on this authority question might indicate a degree of insecurity on both sides — a nagging feeling that considerable merit might lie on the other side of the argument, spurring the antagonists to renewed vigor in the struggle, not only to convince the unenlightened, but to quiet the restive whisperings in their own souls. In any case, for whatever reason, the "dynamic tension" both within and between individuals in the Church caused by friction between the priesthood authority and personal confirmation principles remains at a high level. The tension becomes most acute, of course, when the signals from priesthood authorities and those received in personal communion with the Divine appear to conflict with one another.

For men in the Church, the danger of running into a situation where priesthood authority says one thing and the "inner voice" another may be reduced by a sort of built-in doctrinal "escape hatch." While the Mormon priesthood organization is similar to the Catholic in regard to the central role it plays in Church affairs, the Mormon model is a much more democratic one. Rather than a small, specially trained elite, the L.D.S. priesthood is composed of practically all active adult males. Thus within the Church, in a certain sense, each man becomes his own priest, the individual supplicant and the priesthood intermediary become one in the same person. While the hierarchical structure of priesthood organization limits the authority or jurisdiction of most priesthood holders to a rather narrow area, the double role of layman-priest played by most Mormon men provides a

comforting justification for exercising a good deal of independent judgment concerning Church doctrine and policy. Since the Mormon elder is himself the holder of particular priesthood keys, he can, ostensibly without guilt or anxiety, rely on his own resources in making any gospel-related decisions rather than turning to some higher authority.

For women in the Church, however, the lines of division between the two versions of the authority principle are drawn much more sharply. While both priesthood authority and reliance on personal confirmation can point a man toward his inner resources and individual communion with the Divine, for a woman, reliance on priesthood authority *must* involve reliance on another person. Often, of course, the voices of “inner authority” and priesthood authority coincide, and the potential problem is eliminated. Some would insist that indeed the two authorities, if properly in tune with the Lord, *must* agree. But all of us know either from personal experience, or from accounts of others, incidents where at least an apparent conflict between the two voices existed, and I am of the opinion that this conflict is more *likely* when the two sources of authority do not reside within the same person. If the two authorities *should* differ, what is one to do? Where does priesthood authority end and personal responsibility begin? These questions for many women in the Church are more than interesting theological exercises; they are matters of urgent personal concern.

Carol’s story is a good case in point. She was brought up in a loving and devoted L.D.S. family, and was eager to continue her education at B.Y.U. Once at the “Y” she found the academic atmosphere even more stimulating than she had imagined, and with great relish she plunged into her work and other campus activities. She appeared to be a model B.Y.U. student, but by her sophomore year she was increasingly beset by guilt and anxiety. She found within herself deepening resistance to the model of proper Mormon womanhood most often outlined in Religion classes and Devotional Assemblies. The Mormon woman, many authorities repeated, was violating her most sacred calling if she pursued any interests and ambitions beyond those of helpmate and mother. Graduating from B.Y.U. without the “MRS” degree was considered, at the very least, unfortunate. Desires in a Mormon woman for continuing graduate education (except as an excuse to pursue eligible Mormon men) or for independent professional careers were condemned as selfish and unnatural. As the months went by Carol came increasingly to the realization that *she* was one of the selfish and unnatural women these authorities were condemning. She wanted to be a political scientist. She wanted to teach in college. She wanted to help train young people to be good citizens and responsible leaders. Where had she gone wrong? Not that she rejected the ideal of marriage. She had come from a loving family and wanted to help raise one of her own. She anticipated interrupting her career or at least gearing it down to a part-time basis during the children’s pre-school years, and thought that this sacrifice of her career was far outweighed by the rewards of parenthood. She realized that duties to her husband might involve other interruptions and disruptions of her professional life, but life is full of such trade-offs, and she felt that as long as she kept the right priorities in mind, the combination of

roles she wished to play was basically compatible. Why did the prospect of such a combination raise such scorn from any Church authorities?

She made a concentrated attempt to eliminate the conflict. With the preponderant weight of priesthood authority on one side, and her single inner voice on the other, surely the priesthood authorities were correct and she merely needed to more rigorously put herself in tune with the Holy Spirit. So she worked at it. She fasted and prayed and read scriptures. She visited a B.Y.U. counselor every week for two years to try to exorcise these unnatural ambitions. But the message of the inner voice only became more loud and insistent. She still wanted to be a wife, a mother and a college teacher. Finally, Carol made her choice. Perhaps the advice of these authorities was right for many women; it was wrong for her.

It would appear, if the wisdom of decisions is measured by degree of happiness and fulfillment, that Carol's choice was a good one. She has not found the role of wife and helpmate incompatible with that of college teacher. She is expecting a child soon, and when it comes, as she is well aware, the role conflicts will become more acute. But her husband actively encourages her career and is more than willing to give the kind of support that will allow her to at least "keep a hand in it" while the children are young. While Carol does not regret the decision she made to disregard the advice of some Church authorities, it has not been an easy one to maintain. She sometimes wonders if she has merely done a good job of rationalizing a personal desire that in reality contradicts the wishes of the Lord. Dependence on a personal confirmation can obviously make one more susceptible to immediate social and cultural pressures than reliance on authority residing in an institution, which, by its very nature, must move slowly. Is the "inner voice" upon which she has placed ultimate reliance a voice other than her own? The qualms of guilt and self-doubt continue. The decision to counter the admonitions of many of the elders was not just a "one shot" affair. She feels constantly compelled to re-examine her motives and conclusions. The priesthood authority principle was much too integral a part of her religious training for her to do otherwise.

Carol's story is but a variation on a theme which I have found surprisingly common among women of the Church in recent months. For some, the realization that they did not possess a personal testimony of the universal validity of the "Kinder-Kueche-Kirche" role for all Mormon women came during their early teens. For many others, this realization dawned, or at least came into focus for the first time, only after they had married and begun to raise their own families. Women have reacted to this apparent inconsistency in a variety of ways; some by trying to ignore it, some by repenting their way out of it, some by having another baby to get their minds off the problem, some by actually rejecting the role as invalid for them. In any case, few of them have escaped a good deal of confusion and anxiety in trying to cope with the problem.

In trying to analyze the source of this apparent disparity and its implications, several points come to mind. First, not *all* priesthood authorities are equal in their prescriptions of proper roles for Mormon women. Feminine roles that might be condemned in the abstract as incompatible with

woman's highest duties are often accepted in good grace if the woman in question has managed to play the role of wife and mother effectively while at the same time performing yeoman service for the Church and community or making contributions in the arts and professions. One can also note this divergence between general condemnation and particular approval in publications such as the *Church News*, which often points with pride to an outstanding L.D.S. woman as "one of our own." While all elders would perhaps agree that the primary responsibility of Mormon women (and, of course, Mormon men) is to spouse and family, the amount of leeway allowed in interpreting that responsibility varies considerably.

Second, it is interesting to note that the view of many priesthood authorities concerning the proper role of women has *narrowed* over time. The winter 1970 issue of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* gives many examples of the scope of "women's work" during the first two generations in Utah. Leonard Arrington's article in this issue provides further documentation of this point.

The model of womanhood held up today by some Church authorities may be dictated more by transient social and cultural pressures than by eternal principles. If this is the case, its failure to evoke a confirming testimony for each woman of the Church is not necessarily an indication of her lack of receptivity to the Spirit. In other words, this is a matter about which faithful members might differ without the sincerity of their faith being brought into question.

But I think that most of the Elders are motivated today in their insistence on woman's exclusive place in the home by a growing alarm at the apparent disintegration of the institution of the family both within this country and throughout the western world. Many authorities have observed that ours is a century characterized both by large numbers of women working outside the home and by weakening family structures and have concluded that the former must have in some way contributed to the latter. But a cause and effect relationship between these two factors is far from proven. Even a brief look at the past history of this country, and indeed of every previous human society, would indicate that whatever has held the family together for the last several thousand years, it has not been the prodigious amount of time spent by the mother "developing" her children. While most women have stayed "at home" in the broadest sense of the term during most periods of recorded history, the great majority of them were forced to tuck childcare duties into spare minutes when more pressing breadwinning and household duties weren't calling them. I do not wish to imply that since families in the past have remained strong despite the relatively small amount of undivided attention given to children, that this model cannot be improved upon. I believe that in most cases children *do* benefit during their early years from the lion's share of mother's care and attention. But this proposition varies greatly from the view that the only way to keep the family together is to keep mother at home at all times and at all costs. After the children start to school, it is increasingly difficult to maintain that a woman's singular devotion to the motherhood role will make the most positive contribution either to her development or to that

of her children. Several experts have suggested, as a matter of fact, that in extremely child-centered homes where mother is always there to help with everything, children can tend to be deficient in initiative, effort, and self-reliance.

Some Church authorities seem to assume that as long as a specified number of hours per day is spent with one's children, that they will automatically gain all the benefits of a loving family environment. This assumption loses sight of the fact that time spent with children has a qualitative as well as a quantitative dimension. While some women are serenely contented with a life devoted exclusively to serving their families, many others find their zest for childcare and homemaking greatly increased by spending a certain number of hours each week outside the home. The likelihood of discontent with the exclusive maternal role becomes greater as children grow older and the mother's heaviest time demands are lifted. The great majority of Mormon women have their last child in first grade by the time they are forty and yet few of them have the training and support to use during the ensuing thirty years of their active lives any but a small fraction of their potential for contributing to culture and society.

This paper began with the introduction of two gospel principles, that of personal confirmation or testimony, and that of priesthood authority. Both principles are supported by a broad foundation of scripture and modern-day revelation. Yet, particularly for a woman in the Church, adherence to one or the other principle might at times lead her in different directions. When a conflict arises, to whom should she listen? This is far too weighty a question for one individual to decide for another. I will close with my personal and tentative conclusions on the matter.

First, priesthood authority, whether embodied by a father, a home teacher, a bishop or an apostle, is a special gift from God and not to be taken lightly. If one finds within himself no confirming testimony of a particular authority's words, he has the duty to diligently seek to reconcile the conflicting signals through study, prayer, and every other method likely to increase his spiritual receptiveness. But, second, authorities sometimes disagree, and, being human, some of their preferences might be motivated by social and cultural conditioning rather than by immutable gospel imperatives. So, if after all attempts to bring the inner and outer voices into accord, one still does not succeed, I would choose to follow the inner voice. For me, the central core of the Gospel is the individual personal relationship between God and man. In most cases, priesthood authority acts to promote and enrich this relationship; when it does not, it must, for me, take second place.

# WE GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS ALSO: KNOWING THAT TRIBULATION WORKETH PATIENCE.

ALL CHILDREN ARE  
ALIKE UNTO ME

Almera Anderson Romney

*“And I am filled with charity, which is everlasting love; wherefore, all children are alike unto me; Wherefore I love little children with a perfect love; and they are all alike and partakers of salvation. For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being, but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity.” (Moroni 8:17-18)*

“I’m sure that you wouldn’t be interested in the only position I have to offer you. We do need a teacher in our Negro school but the problems are insurmountable. The children are undisciplined and can’t learn, the parents are ignorant, and the school’s as dirty as a pigpen.”

This pronouncement by a school superintendent amazed and challenged me. I had made a hurried decision to return to teaching because of my husband’s illness and had applied for a position in several districts a few days before the opening of school. In spite of the grim picture presented by the superintendent I asked him for the assignment. Unknowingly he opened a door for me into a fascinating, challenging but frustrating world. I thought that I loved and understood all children, but I was totally ignorant of the problems that beset our racial minorities. Having grown up in a small Utah town, I had little experience with Negroes and, worse, I had not thought seriously about their problems. I am appalled that I could have been so blind and ignorant, so indifferent and unconcerned. Twenty-five years later I am still baffled by the complexity of the problems of the Negro in our society.

As I faced my first class of twenty-four fifth graders on the opening day of school, I experienced something completely new to me. There was absolutely no response to me as a person. No matter what I did or said there was dead silence. If I turned my back for a second, there was flagrant misbehavior.

We dismissed the children early and I decided to seek advice from the principal. There was a hodge-podge of books and trash in every cupboard and I needed help in identifying the current state textbooks. I hoped that he might also give me some insight into the particular problems of these children. He dismissed me abruptly stating that he had been informed that I had formerly been a teacher and a principal and as far as he was concerned I could solve my own problems. Angry and perplexed, I returned to my classroom and began the dreary task of cleaning cupboards and organizing books and materials.

I found an amazing number of fifth grade readers — all with the same title. I took one of them, chose a story, and put a set of questions on the blackboard. I also prepared arithmetic and language assignments. The next day I passed out paper and pencils, explained the assignments, and told the children to go to work, hoping I could evaluate them as they did so. Nothing happened. The entire class simply sat and stared into space. I was at a complete loss. It never occurred to me that most of the children could not read a word I had written and were too proud to tell me so. After my abrupt dismissal of the day before, I felt I could not ask advice from the principal. So at recess time I sought out a kindly-looking older teacher who had been in the school a number of years. She laughed and explained to me that very few Negro children *could* be taught to read. A few of the brighter ones catch on but as far as the rest are concerned, “the less you worry about them the better. Put in a day’s work, close the door and go home and forget about them.” This advice deeply troubled me and raised some serious questions. Why couldn’t they read? Was it lack of motivation? What relationship did the color of one’s skin have to do with one’s reading ability? Lack of cultural opportunity would certainly influence the children, but native ability must be there.

It was apparent that before I could experience any degree of success I must establish a basis of mutual love and respect. The children didn’t trust or respond to me in the way that children always had. Some of them would cringe when I put my hand to touch a shoulder or to give a pat. James even fell to the floor one day and begged me not to hit him. They were convinced they were not likeable human beings.

My solution to his problem came about inadvertently. The annual P.T.A. carnival was held on Halloween eve. I decided to dress as a forty-niner. I marvel now that I had the courage to appear in such an outlandish costume. But it was a great success as far as my pupils were concerned. They began to see me as a person. Years afterward they would laugh with me about the night I “let down my hair.”

But it was my little blond three-year-old son who brought love and understanding. He came to the school for a brief time one Friday afternoon and his visit was such a success that it became a weekly event. The boys would ride him piggyback around the school yard, teach him to throw and catch a ball and vie for the privilege of sharing their seats with him. Their love for him was sincere and wholesome, and he reciprocated their feelings.

Now I felt that the pupils and I understood each other, and that we could discuss their problems frankly. I tried to make them realize how many opportunities they would miss and how narrow their lives would be if they could not read. Would they work hard and cooperate with me? They would and they did!

It was fortunate that my group was as small as it was that year. The five or six children who could read were given individual assignments and also worked as helpers. I bargained for some pre-primers from the first grade teachers and we began at the beginning. There was not a single library book in the school. Each of the children tried to bring a quarter and we built up a library of Little Golden books.

These were not too satisfactory because the vocabularies were difficult. I secured an application card from the public library for each child and told them we'd walk to the library together as soon as their cards were signed. They looked at me dubiously. "We can't go there," they said.

"Of course we can. The walk will be good for you."

"But we can't go there. The lady won't let colored kids use the library."

With wrath I confronted the librarian a few hours later.

"We've never admitted those children. They can't read, they're noisy, and they're dirty."

I was infuriated. I contacted the superintendent and the city fathers and a week later we had our trip. The librarian glowered while we happily selected books. It was a magical incentive!

The children worked hard and I wished desperately for more know-how and even more for suitable books. It was sad to see those big boys and girls working on silly little primers that bore no relationship to their lives or experiences. I'll never forget Bernice. She was very unattractive physically, wore glasses and had been considered hopeless. When the world of books opened up to her, she wouldn't leave them alone. She walked out of the room with her head bent over a book, read on the playground and walked back to the classroom still engrossed. "I can read!" she'd exclaim to anyone she might meet.

The children's progress was solid and satisfactory and we did many interesting things together. There were a few low achievers whose learning was slow but the rest of the children read at grade level or above by the end of the year. Their gratitude was touching. How I learned to love those children! David and Jonathan, Betty and Mimi, Dickie and Ellis, shy little Mexican born Margaret, and on down the list.

David and Jonathan, twin sons of a minister, loved my young son and often came to play with him on Saturdays. He reciprocated their love and envied their "sun tan." One day our next door neighbors, two Victorian spinsters, made derogatory remarks to my children about their "nigger" friends. The boys never returned. When I urged them to do so they refused, saying that they did not want to do anything that would reflect on my children.

Dickie, too, had great affection for my son. He worshipped him, he who had never known parents or love. How could I reprimand him when he arrived at our home with his pockets full of trinkets — source unknown? Dickie was learning to live and each day becoming less of a problem to me.

During the year the girls in my room joined a Girl Scout troop. They wore their uniforms proudly. I was horrified one morning when Betty and Mimi announced that they had been chased by a white woman with a gun when they were out selling Girl Scout cookies the night before. "We crossed the line," they said.

"What line?" I asked.

"You know, the line where the white folks live." It was unbelievable to me that Betty, the joy of my classroom, and fun-loving Mimi could have been so threatened.

The first year came to an end. It has always been difficult for me to

lose my pupils at promotion time. I sadly approached my classroom that last afternoon, and when I entered the entire class arose. David eloquently declared that they were standing in tribute to the first teacher who had loved and truly helped them. Then he presented me with perfume and a lovely bouquet of flowers. I had learned much and so had they.

Many of those children have done well. Betty is a master teacher in the Los Angeles public schools. David is a graduate of an eastern school of divinity and is now a minister in a neighboring city. Dickie was a runner on the United States Olympic team. Ellis was the athlete of the year when a senior at our local high school. The success of these youngsters is an indication of the potential we have wasted in our segregated areas.

## II

That year was just the beginning. We moved to the city where the school was located and it became an integral part of our family life. My husband and children shared my joys and sorrows, my frustrations and my successes. The pupils and staff were a very real part of our family for seventeen years and the school almost a second home. I was appointed principal after my third year of teaching and the dedicated teachers who served with me have become my lifelong friends. Before long the school was shining clean and brightened by flowers and plants and artwork. We had the beginning of a fine library housed in a large closet at the end of the auditorium. Good teachers, both Negro and white, helped me set high standards of honesty, behavior, and achievement and they were maintained with a reasonable degree of success.

Through the years I succeeded in attracting a number of outstanding Mormon teachers to the school. Their contributions cannot be measured. One teacher, in particular, profoundly influenced the lives of those she taught. She was a genius in teaching children to read. This same teacher helped me present a beautiful Christmas program my last year at the school. We taught the children to sing my favorite Christmas carol, "Far, Far Away on Judea's Plains," with my secretary (who was also our ward organist) as accompanist. I love to recall the strains of "Glory to God" as it resounded that night in the large Junior High School auditorium. I wish the whole world could have heard their "Peace on earth, good will to men."

And then there was an earlier Christmas. Blanche and her brother Joel were both bedfast with rheumatic fever when the holidays were approaching. They lived with their grandparents in a tiny house. The grandfather had been an invalid for years and the grandmother did domestic day work. What better opportunity for service could there be than for their classmates to give these children a happy Christmas? Pennies, nickles and dimes were collected and a committee appointed to shop. Robes and pajamas for both children were selected as well as a doll for Blanche and a game for Joel. There were also books, trinkets and a tree trimmed with goodies to eat. It was a wonderful project. School closed a week before the holiday and the children wanted me to deliver the gifts on Christmas Eve. That home became radiant to me because of the gratitude and faith of the dear little seventy-year-old grandmother. I had said goodbye to the family — there were four younger children in addition to Blanche and Joel — and

the grandmother followed me out to the rickety porch. I commented to her about the lovely view she had of the mountains. "Oh yes," she replied. "Every morning I come out here and thank my Heavenly Father for all my rich blessings and for the opportunity I have to serve Him in caring for these dear children. How can one person be so blessed?"

*"Yea, blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* (III Nephi 12:3)

It was during my fifth year at this school that my husband died and my world turned bleak. Several days after the funeral dear Mrs. Gates came to see me. "I'm so glad that they chose me to attend your husband's funeral," she said.

She self-consciously replied that the Negro community had feared that I might be embarrassed if too many of their number attended the services, so three were appointed as representatives. She was one of the three. Her statement devastated me. These friends of mine, many of them tied to me with deep spiritual bonds, had felt that I might be embarrassed by their presence! How could I make them understand that I truly believe that "all are alike and partakers of salvation." The hurt became more acute when Mrs. Gates continued, "That was the most beautiful spiritual experience I have ever had. A door was opened just a crack and I had a brief glimpse of heaven. Do you know how rich you are?"

*". . . and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female, and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God. . . ."* (II Nephi 26:33)

I recall with deep emotion the first Christmas Eve after my husband's death. Getting things in readiness for Christmas morning had always been such a very special time for us, a brief period that we treasured throughout the year. This night my loneliness was almost more than I could bear. A close friend had come to help me carry in the sewing machine that was the long planned-for surprise for my daughters. His departure heightened my feeling of aloneness. It was almost midnight when I heard a soft knock on the door. I hesitated opening it until I heard a familiar voice calling my name. It was my Negro custodian and his wife bearing a freshly baked, beautifully decorated cake. "We knew this would be a difficult time for you. We've come to visit for a little while." How could they know? What special intuitive sense had given them such insight? I retired after their visit with a sweet feeling of peace.

*"And again, blessed are all they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."* (III Nephi 12:4)

### III

And so the memories crowd my mind. There were highlights and great joys generously interspersed with times of such overwhelming discouragement that I felt crushed and defeated. There were problem teachers, ignorant, misinformed laymen, disinterested parents. Do-gooders who became a nuisance, overcrowded classrooms, and shortages of suitable books and materials. But the hardest of all were the unfulfilled needs of neglected children. I wanted more for these children than I could possibly give.

Educators speak glibly of the need for love and security for every child. I can still recall the repugnance that swept through me when I had an intimate look at the rental that had housed eight children who attended our school. The District purchased property that adjoined the school for the purpose of expansion. One house on this property had been owned by a prominent local businessman. The upstairs, or ground level "apartment," had three rooms. The floor was full of gaping holes caused by termites. Most of the windows were broken and paper or boards replaced the glass. The plumbing on this floor consisted of a toilet and a sink with one tap. The semi-basement "apartment" was one room with unpainted concrete walls and floor. One tap extended from the wall and there was a drain in the middle of the floor. A single light dangled from the ceiling. The rentals had netted the landlord over a hundred dollars a month. The two unwed mothers of the families who had just been evicted worked as domestics in the more affluent section of our city, leaving early in the morning and returning late at night. There was far more security in the streets for these children than in their own homes. How could we possibly fulfill the desperate needs of such children?

The most crushing defeats that I suffered came through the failure of some of the children to live up to my hopes for them, just as a parent suffers over the sins of wayward children. There was Ruth, extremely bright, musical and artistic. Her work, even in the first grade, was remarkable. She was an only child and her parents were delighted to hear of her great potential. Both were employed and I urged them to begin saving for Ruth's college education. I loved that modest little girl. I was able to pave the way for her at the high school and a generous four-year scholarship was awarded to her in her junior year. The future looked bright for Ruth, but in the early part of her senior year she became pregnant and quit school. Her paramour, also a former pupil of mine, was a married man with two children and several arrests for dope peddling. What environmental factors contributed to this sad situation? How had we failed Ruth? I had no answers, but my sorrow was great.

And then there was Philip — intelligent, fun-loving, and affectionate but always mischievous. His parents were extremely devout, to the extent of denying him many simple pleasures enjoyed by the other children. As a young teen-ager he began associating with a gang involved in petty crime. One thing led to another and the end was inevitable. After serving his first prison sentence, Philip came to see me, "You're terribly disappointed in me, aren't you?" he said.

"Disappointed and sad. How could you get so deeply involved?"

"It was exciting at first," he said — this boy who had been deprived of watching a simple cartoon movie. Then he told me he had come to make me a promise. He was beginning a new life. He would still make me proud of him. But two days later he was involved in an armed robbery just a few blocks from the school. Gang pressure was undoubtedly too much for him. His young but old face still haunts me.

Eight years ago I was transferred from the predominantly Negro school. Since then much needed help has come to such schools through reduction

of class size, use of teacher aides, provision of new and exciting books and materials, and programs for the pre-schoolers. The greatest need, however, is still for well-trained, dedicated teachers who can set high ideals but yet be able to face reality, because many of the old and troublesome problems remain. There are still neglected children who are the product of promiscuity. There is ignorance, hatred, prejudice and even violence. But I have great faith in the future for I have experienced so much that is wonderful and good.

John came to see me the other day. He looked neat and well dressed and wore his usual infectious smile. He is now employed by the gas company and announced proudly that he has two young children and has made a down payment on a home. He saved the money while serving in the Army for six years with a two-year tour of duty in Viet-Nam. "I'm happy and grateful for my opportunities," he said. "I hate the war but I'm proud that I could serve my country."

John's visit was significant to me because he opened up a vista of memories — amusing, sad, and at times quite incredible. I even recalled the day he entered Kindergarten, because of his unforgettable smile and lovely manners. He lived with his twelve brothers and sisters down the street from the school, in extreme poverty. His father, a chronic alcoholic, was a liability to the family. Bertha, his mother, a local high school graduate, gave birth to thirteen children. All lived with their blind grandmother in a two room shack with a chicken coop converted into a boys' dormitory. Most of the children were academically unpromising but John and one sister had a divine spark. Their story cannot be told here, but John survived the death of his mother, then that of his beloved grandmother. He was shifted between relatives from California to New York and back again, and finally he joined the Army. Through it all he remained clean and honest, devoted to his brothers and sisters and loyal to his own little family.

*"Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God."* (I Nephi 17:35)

Three years ago I attended the local high school graduation ceremonies. My heart almost burst with pride as I congratulated the student body president, the senior class president, the honor student with a four-year scholarship to a top university, and the athlete of the year — all my boys! "We owe much to you," repeated many times, has made me deeply humble for the unique opportunity I had to serve these, my "black and beautiful" friends.

*"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"* (I John 4:20)

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## LDS WOMEN LEADERS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Present Address: City..... State.....
2. Are you serving on a Church General Board?..... If so:
  - a. Age at which appointed to Board .....
  - b. Length of service .....
  - c. Marital status at time of appointment to Board .....
3. Current marital status .....
4. Children: Number of .....
- Ages .....
5. Church service (past and present, including missionary service if experienced):  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 Which Church jobs have been the most rewarding for you? .....  
 Why? .....
6. Special interests or talents .....
7. Community involvements: Past .....
- Present .....
8. Occupation .....
9. Past work experience .....
10. Professional affiliations .....
11. Number of years of schooling (or highest educational degree) .....
12. In which part of the country were you raised?  
 Urban (including suburban) area ..... State.....  
 Rural area ..... State.....
13. Average time spent on Church work:
 

0-5 hours/week	.....
5-10 hours/week	.....
10-20 hours/week	.....
20-40 hours/week	.....
40 hours or more/week	.....
14. If your children have required baby-sitters or day-care arrangements while you were performing Church assignments, would you please describe how you handled this need?  
 .....
15. For the future, which activities would you *most* like to pursue?  
 Family and home involvements.....  
 Check as many as apply: Career development .....
- Church service .....
- Community service .....
- Private pursuits (e.g. travel, hobbies) .....
- Other .....
- Please elaborate on your choices: .....
16. Do you anticipate further training for any of the pursuits listed in #15?.....  
 What kind? .....
17. Please describe ways in which you feel the Church has most helped you to grow and develop as a woman. Be specific. ....  
 .....  
 .....
18. Are there Church programs and/or are there attitudes found among Church members which you would like to modify in order to better promote your growth and development as a woman? If so, what? .....

(Please use reverse side for additional comments or elaboration on above questions.)

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SISTERS OF THE SOCIETY,  
SHALL THERE BE STRIFE AMONG YOU?  
I WILL NOT HAVE IT.

Joseph Smith

## A SURVEY OF WOMEN GENERAL BOARD MEMBERS

Dixie Snow Huefner

In February, 1971, the questionnaire found on the opposite page was mailed to the 175 women who were then serving on the Relief Society, Primary and YWMIA General Boards of the Church. The following explanation accompanied the questionnaire:

I am researching and writing a profile of women in L.D.S. leadership positions, largely General Board members, and I am therefore soliciting your response to the enclosed questionnaire. As you already know, there are many kinds of women in leadership positions in the Church today — some married, some single, some grandmothers, some new mothers, some with large families, others with small families, some with professional careers, others with heavy community involvements outside the home, others almost completely immersed in family responsibilities, etc. I would think that what these women share in common is a testimony which sustains their Church service rather than a unanimity of life style or personality. I am convinced that Church members across the country can benefit by seeing the range of women in top Church posts and by viewing them as individuals and not stereotypes.

My article is being prepared . . . for a forthcoming issue of *Dialogue* which is to be devoted to exploring feminine, Mormon responses to some contemporary concerns regarding the role of women. . . . Women today (men too) are interested in the patterns evolved by other women, especially those in leadership positions. The mass media already make available many kinds of female "models" to emulate (some good, some less so). I believe it would be healthy to share with an audience such as *Dialogue's* both the diversities and similarities of interest and feeling which exist among some of our admired Church women.

Forty-five Board members responded. Of these, 39 (or 23%) sent completed questionnaires, a respectable though not a dramatically gratifying return.<sup>1</sup> Since the numbers involved are small, and since those who answered

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<sup>1</sup>The Relief Society rate of return was highest. Eighteen questionnaires were received from the 48 Relief Society Board members (37.5%), seven from the 61 Primary Board members (11.5%) and 14 from the 66 YWMIA Board members (21%). Of the six women who declined to fill out the questionnaire, yet still responded, two explained that the timing was inconvenient. One simply returned the postage stamp from the self-addressed envelope which had been enclosed with the questionnaire. Two acquaintances explained that they had been discouraged from giving out information for publicity purposes. A last, and candid woman stated:

I have delayed sending the information you requested for the article in *Dialogue*

may not represent a random cross-section of Board members in some respects,<sup>2</sup> this article is cautious in generalizing about the make-up of the Boards as a whole. Instead it concentrates on introducing readers to 39 Board members — both as a group and as individuals — giving information about the life styles of at least a portion of our women leaders.

A composite “typical” respondent is an urban Utahn from the east benches of Salt Lake County. Middle-aged (45) at the time of her appointment to the Board, she has served seven years to date. She is married with four children. Her interests are those traditionally associated with women and focus on musical, artistic and literary pursuits, along with home and family. She has served on a Stake Board. Her community involvements are peripheral. She is college-educated, has had some past work experience (usually as a teacher or secretary) and is as likely to be working now as not. She averages ten to twenty hours a week on Church work, receives great satisfaction therefrom, and in the future would like to pursue family and Church activities before all others.

The composite is misleading, however. It represents, no single respondent accurately. All deviate from it in some respect, some in many respects. And the deviations are as interesting as the mean. They remind one that, although a group can be categorized in certain ways and can be seen to possess a personality of its own, no one individual therein is likely to be explained or defined satisfactorily in those same group terms. As will become more apparent later on in the article, the individuality of Board members must make the Board meetings livelier and the Board leadership more tolerant of differing views than one might assume from public pronouncements of consensus or from the above composite.

The following sections summarize the most important questionnaire findings, both highlighting the individual differences and elaborating on the uniformity already cited.

### *VITAL STATISTICS*

Information from respondents on geographic background, age, marital status, family size and educational level reveals a fairly even age distribution overall but considerable uniformity in the other areas. Respondents

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because I am not in agreement with the intellectual liberalism that is projected through that publication. I would not like to have any information concerning myself used to further a cause that is not in complete agreement with the words of our prophets or other Church doctrine. The information requested on the form could well be used in this way. . . . Sincerely, I hope that you understand.

<sup>2</sup>It was possible to determine that the sample is representative in terms of geographic distribution and marital status, because it parallels information on the Board mailing lists. Conversely, the high percentage of returns from working women on the M.I.A. Board does not parallel the percentage of M.I.A. Board members listing business phones on the mailing list, suggesting the sample over-represents working women on that Board. The other two Board mailing lists do not have a separate category for business phones, but if the M.I.A. responses over-represent working women for some reason, the Primary and Relief Society samples may also. As working women tended to have more schooling, were a little younger and expressed somewhat different interests than non-working women, the sample may be unrepresentative in the areas of educational level, age and avocational interests also. In most other areas, there is not enough evidence to suggest whether the sample is representative or not.

appear to have a common cultural background: Utahn, middle class, urban-suburban and educated.

Overwhelmingly, respondents were raised in urban areas of Utah; a mere handful list rural areas in Utah or bordering states. However, for at least part of their youth, seven were raised in non-Mormon urban areas on the east and west coasts or outside the continental United States.

Currently, 27 of 39 respondents live in Salt Lake County. Ten others live elsewhere on the urbanized Wasatch Front. Two who were raised in Utah now live out of the state. This corresponds to the geographic information found on the Board mailing lists.<sup>3</sup> For a world-wide Church, such uniformity on the part of its female Boards may appear paradoxical. Responsiveness to the needs and interests of sisters around the globe must depend to a considerable extent on the travels of Board members to the various stakes and on the sensitivity and cosmopolitanism of the Boards' urban Utahns, rather than on the actual diversity of Board representation. This naturally places a heavy burden on Board members, and Church members can cite examples of the communication problems which often ensue when a visitor from Salt Lake travels to outlying stakes. In partial explanation, one can assume that under present organizational requirements of weekly meetings and frequent sub-committee meetings, geographic access to Salt Lake City remains of considerable importance. Interestingly, however, the Relief Society mailing list reveals that the four Board members who live outside Utah are drawn from such widely distant points as Mexico, Missouri, Arizona and Washington, D.C.<sup>4</sup> One can speculate that perhaps its organizational structure is modifying somewhat to accommodate more geographic diversity.

The present ages of respondents range from 28 to 72; they were appointed at ages ranging from 28 to 62. They have served anywhere from three months to 33 years. Near 60 on the average, Relief Society respondents are the oldest; at 45, MIA respondents are the youngest group. However, it appears that there is a trend toward younger appointments for all three Boards.<sup>5</sup>

Eighty-five percent of the respondents are married, a figure comparable to the percentage on the Boards as a whole.<sup>6</sup> That there is any diversity at all in marital status is largely attributable to the MIA Board respondents,

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<sup>3</sup>Forty-four of the 48 Relief Society Board members live along Utah's Wasatch Front. Of the 35 from Salt Lake County, only two live west of 7th East. (For those unfamiliar with Salt Lake County, it divides east and west at approximately 7th East along socio-economic lines, east representing the higher socio-economic level.) The YWMIA pattern is similar. Sixty-four of 66 Board members live on the Wasatch Front; of the 50 who live in Salt Lake County, one lives on the west side. Exhibiting an even narrower geographic range, none of the 61 Primary Board members lives off the Wasatch Front. Of the 42 who live in Salt Lake County, three live on the west side of the Valley.

<sup>4</sup>Since the questionnaires were mailed, a fifth non-Utah resident has been added to the Board: a Japanese woman living in Hawaii. (What, if any, additions have been made to the other Boards is not known to the author.)

<sup>5</sup>The median appointment age is 42 years for those who have served five years or fewer, compared to 51 for those who have served longer.

<sup>6</sup>The mailing lists reveal that the figure is 12.5% for Board members overall. Sixteen of the 66 M.I.A. Board members, one of the 48 Relief Society Board members, and five of 61 Primary Board members are single.

five out of 14 of whom are single. There was one unmarried respondent from the other Boards.

In family size there is amazing uniformity — respondents from each Board average slightly over four children, whose births were spaced over an eleven-year period (or between three and four years apart). Sixty percent of the respondents have four or five children. There are few mothers with less than three<sup>7</sup> or more than six. Only one had as many as seven. More than half the mothers did not have their first child until the age of 25 or over. Nearly seventy percent were still producing at age 35 or over; however, eighty percent had quit before the age of 38. There was no evident shift in family size by generation, i.e. the older sons did not have bigger families or vice versa. The average age of the youngest child at the time of the mother's appointment is nine years for the Primary and MIA, 16 for the Relief Society, reflecting the older appointment age of Relief Society respondents. Five Primary and MIA respondents actually had pre-schoolers when they were appointed.

Respondents are an educated group. Two-thirds have a bachelor's degree; more than half have undertaken graduate work as well. Primary and MIA respondents have the most schooling, but they are also younger than the Relief Society respondents, and the two facts relate.<sup>8</sup> Four-fifths of those with graduate work are married.

<i>Highest Educational Level Attained</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>
High School graduate	1
1-3 years college	9
Bachelor's degree	12
Other post high-school degree (business, etc.)	3
Some graduate work	6
Master's degree	6
Doctor's degree	2

#### *PAST AND PRESENT PURSUITS AND FUTURE HOPES*

Within the framework established by their uniform cultural background, the respondents have developed different interests and talents, ranging from water skiing to publishing poetry and from public speaking to composing music. Cited interests fall into the following categories:

Music, fine arts and dance	45% of respondents
Writing and literature	40% of respondents
Home Economics (sewing, cooking, decorating, etc.)	30% of respondents
Speech and Drama	20% of respondents
Working with People	20% of respondents
Teaching and administrative affairs	20% of respondents
Family	15% of respondents
Sports	10% of respondents
Other	5% of respondents

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<sup>7</sup>Those with less than three children all have passed child-rearing years, however, and will not be adding to their families by natural increase.

<sup>8</sup>Respondents with graduate work are nine years younger (age 47) on the average than those without it. Those who completed college are six years younger (age 51) on the average than those with less schooling.

It is worth noting that some respondents were unwilling to have their professional or family pursuits taken for granted as important interests and instead listed them specifically in the interest and talent category.

The questionnaire reveals that General Board members have participated in such community activities as P.T.A., fund drives, political and civic causes, health and welfare organizations, educational boards, professional societies, and art, music and dramatic groups. One third of the respondents have held responsible positions in these organizations. Board work may have limited such activities, since half of the respondents list no current community service. Some state specifically that Board service consumes time which in the past was spent in community service. Less than one-fifth of the respondents now cite current positions of responsibility in community organizations.

Perhaps the biggest surprises in the responses were in current occupational status. Half the respondents have a professional career which they are pursuing on a full or part-time basis. Ten come from the M.I.A. Board (70% of its respondents), five from the Relief Society (28% of its respondents) and four from the Primary Board (57% of its respondents). It seems unlikely that these high percentages of working women would hold for the Boards as a whole. (See footnote 2)

In contrast to the previous work experience of those who are now full-time homemakers, the occupations of those who are currently employed are not limited to those which have been traditionally associated with women, such as teaching and secretarial work. Eight of the 19 have secured positions on university faculties or in male-dominated business fields. The occupational breakdown follows:

University teaching and administration	6 respondents
Elementary-secondary teaching and administration	5 respondents
Business jobs	3 respondents <sup>9</sup>
Secretarial or Office Work	3 respondents <sup>9</sup>
Music Teaching	2 respondents
Homemaker	20 respondents

Of the 19 working women, 13 are married. They have as many children as do the full-time homemakers, and at least ten of these women have worked while their children were growing up. Of the eight who still have children at home, four are part-time and four full-time teachers, i.e. pursuing careers which probably are among the simpler ones to combine with homemaking.

The working women are more highly educated than respondents as a whole. Seventeen have college degrees and 12 of these have done some graduate work. That means that only two of the 14 respondents who have undertaken graduate work are not working, whereas of the 12 with only college degrees, 7 are not working, and of the 13 with less schooling, 11 are not working. Apparently, the more schooling a woman has, the more likely she is to be working, which may mean that the encouragement within Mormon culture for acquiring as much education as possible actually helps direct women toward multiple roles similar to men's.

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<sup>9</sup>Two of the six in these combined categories work for the Church. One other who gives the Church 40 hours a week in service listed her occupation as housewife.

Respondents were asked to check activities which they would *most* like to pursue in the future. Nearly everyone checked family and Church, but it was interesting to note that half checked four or all five options: family, Church, career, community and private pursuits. Those doing so apparently felt they could handle a number of roles simultaneously and balance the competing demands. Characteristic of those replies were the following:

I have a thousand interests and have to continually set priorities and organize my time and activities. I honestly am involved in improving my contribution and participation in *each* of the above areas. However . . . community service at this time must take a backseat to my family and church obligations.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have a firm conviction that my most important task is to teach my children the Gospel. I have found that my General Board work and the limited professional involvement I have had in the past few years have helped me to be a better gospel teacher in my home. My children are very young but they are learning to assume responsibility and to be independent because their help is genuinely needed if Mother is to accomplish her tasks. I am able to do most of my work at home, however. I feel this is important with a family like ours.

\* \* \* \* \*

The world is an exciting, stimulating place. Working in many areas makes it more so.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would like to marry, yet I believe all should continue to learn all possible. Life would not be worth living without Church service. Travel and hobbies needed.

One woman who chose community service above all else explained.

Most L.D.S. members need to be more involved in community — training we receive in Church positions is invaluable in community.

Characteristic of those checking three or fewer areas were the following:

The Church and my family and home have been my life. They always will be.

\* \* \* \* \*

Interested in all types of handcrafts and anything to improve home and surroundings. Child care and development. Would like to be a theologian.

\* \* \* \* \*

Home seems most desirable after many years of community service. [This response was characteristic of a number of older Relief Society respondents, who cited their desire to spend time with grandchildren, traveling, etc.]

### CHURCH ASSIGNMENTS

As might be expected, three-fourths (30) of the respondents have served at some point in all three Church auxiliaries in both administrative and teaching positions. One fourth have served in the Church music programs. One fourth have mission experience (either Stake, full-time or as wife of a Mission President). Four-fifths list Stake Board service; one third have

been president of a Stake auxiliary. Several cited service on a general board other than the one on which they were currently serving.

In terms of the amount of time respondents spend on Church work per week, approximately a sixth average over 20 hours, half average 10-20 hours, and a fourth average 5-10 hours. For most of them, obviously, Board work consumes as much time as would a part-time job. From other tabulations hints emerge of flexibility and pragmatism in Board demands. For instance, the M.I.A. Board respondents, who together have the most young children, average less hours per week on Church work than do the other respondents. Conversely, of the seven respondents who listed 20-40 hours or more per week, six have grown children.

Two-thirds of the respondents described their child-care solutions while performing Church assignments. The other third either declined to do so or cited no need for sitters while performing Church work. The most popular sitters were relatives (apparently still plentiful and accessible in Utah, in contrast to the situation confronting most Mormon emigrés from Utah) and immediate family (husbands, older children), but half of those responding still found some need for paid sitters. Three cited trading with friends, and four cited live-in help.

#### CHURCH INFLUENCES

Respondents were asked to describe ways in which the Church had most helped them to grow and develop as women. Approximately a third said the Church had made them better wives, mothers and homemakers. The rest of the responses mentioned ways the Church helped respondents in their role as human beings rather than as females, e.g. by providing opportunities for leadership growth, talent development, Gospel knowledge, goal setting and pursuit of individual identity and self-worth. The following is a sample of the responses to this question:

[It] developed leadership qualities, good grooming habits. Helped me to be a lady.

\* \* \* \* \*

My husband's example and activity in Church assignments have encouraged similar effort on my part. The greatest single blessing has been his honoring and magnifying his priesthood so that its influence permeated our home and lives, and encouraged us to grow and develop similarly.

\* \* \* \* \*

I rather balk at the phrase "as a woman." My experience in the Church has affected my development and role as an individual, as a human being.

\* \* \* \* \*

Its broad outlook for the eternal development of a person; its emphasis on continuing education and achievement, its stress on group relationships . . . , its in-depth understanding of love, compassion, tolerance.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Church has given me confidence in my ability and talents. It has helped me in homemaking, in giving talks, in meeting people and conversing with them.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Church is responsible for giving me the proper understanding of woman's role and the responsibility of being a wife and mother.

\* \* \* \* \*

As a person, the Church has given me leadership experience which is invaluable. But as a woman, I don't really see that the Church has made a great contribution to my life.

\* \* \* \* \*

The teaching auxiliaries of the Church . . . have been a constant stimulus for growth.

\* \* \* \* \*

I believe that when you have a strong testimony and are called to do something you have never done before, you reach and struggle. In that reaching, you grow and develop. The Church challenges its women.

The last question on the questionnaire asked if there were Church programs and attitudes of Church members which Board members would like to modify in order to better promote their growth and development as women. This question proved troublesome. Nine respondents left it blank, four gave unqualified "No's," and seven gave elaborated "No's," some of which follow:

I am totally committed to the church program. I like being a woman, have no negative feelings about male authority. I think women are given tremendous opportunities to promote growth and development.

\* \* \* \* \*

If women took advantage of the opportunities now provided, they would have ample growth and development.

\* \* \* \* \*

I wouldn't modify the programs, only modify me to more nearly conform — then I'd guarantee my happiness, success and salvation.

\* \* \* \* \*

I feel women at *all* times should respect the Priesthood.

\* \* \* \* \*

No, I don't feel there are any particular items — maybe the feelings concerning pants suits?

One respondent, who left the question blank, expressed the following concern:

The Church has faced considerable criticism and negative attitudes throughout its history, and it is only natural, I suppose, that orthodox members should have a defensive attitude. Even though we realize that truth can weather any storm, half-truths can do much to undermine faith and even prevent an acceptance of truth. Even *Dialogue*, which I am sure intends to be fair through its articles, has at times done the Church disservice through innuendos or half-truths. . . . Many of the Board members may not reply to your questionnaire . . . not knowing what interpretation you might put upon the information.

The wording of the last question seemed the most serious flaw in the questionnaire, since it did not communicate its complete intent. It was meant

to elicit two kinds of comments (besides "No"): 1) attitudes which Board members felt we all (or some of us) needed to work on, and 2) plans or efforts to improve various women's (or girls') programs within their scope of responsibility. In general, the "Yes" responses considered only the part of the question dealing with attitudes. Perhaps if the question had asked if there were programs which Board members would like to modify *or* were already modifying, it would have looked less like an invitation to publicly criticize programs outside their jurisdiction. Nonetheless the question generated the expression of desirable attitude changes from 19 respondents, a representative sampling of which follows:

Families have a need to be able to spend more time together.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not condemn working mothers so heavily. They really can keep close to their children and not let them just run loose when they are tending to other responsibilities. However, a supportive and loving husband and family surely makes things easier when pressures arise. . . . My husband has his own Church callings that are demanding, . . . but we work towards a unity in our home and . . . treasure our Family Home Evenings and other times together, alone and with the family.

\* \* \* \* \*

In every way the Church is trying to bring about the very thing I would like to bring to action — and that is to create less prejudice among the Saints. I see a feeling among the membership of the Church of looking down on other members of the Church from other parts of the world. I feel it is wrong not to love everyone the same. [Five others commented on the need for more understanding of those not like "us," less prejudice, less self-righteousness.]

\* \* \* \* \*

. . . Not emphasize size of family but quality of family.

\* \* \* \* \*

I honor and respect the Priesthood, but it occasionally gripes me when in meetings or other gatherings members of the Priesthood are singled out for assignments that can just as capably be handled by a woman. Even in such a minor thing as calling on someone to pray, if there are 20 women and two men present, one of the men will be asked. . . . Where both YW and YMMIA have *equal* authority, it seems to me the deference toward the Priesthood is *unequal*.

\* \* \* \* \*

[I wish there were] less stratification of the Church by age levels and gender.

\* \* \* \* \*

The undesirable attitudes are usually personal. . . . I would prefer having the Relief Society program more flexible. Some of the lessons are too much dominated by religious motivation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Personally, I wish the membership could handle or accept the place of the single person in the Church. Not all of us who are single are sorrowing over our status. Many of us have found useful ways of knowing we matter to society, nor do we envy the married ladies whose lives center around home, church, and grocery store.

\* \* \* \* \*

I believe our philosophy “of the world, but not a part of it” is worthy in a specific sense but can lull us into an indifference or complacency that in many cases is undesirable.

### *CONCLUSION*

Despite a common background, these Board members do not move through their days in the same fashion. Some work as housewives; others work outside the home. Some actively serve the community; others do not. Some pursue cultural interests; others pursue home-centered activities. What they share, however, is their dedication to the Church, confirmed by their Board service, with its time and talent demands, often continuing year in and year out. It is also confirmed by their personal testimonies “of the beauty and practicality of the Gospel,” “of deep, abiding faith in God,” which again and again were inclined in their questionnaire responses. Yet their attitudes about the Church’s role in their growth also remind one that, though dedicated, they are different people with their own distinct perspectives. Their own words show that each brings her own spirit, her own need, her own background to the Church; and in turn each receives her own kinds of rewards and her own testimony of the value of her relationship with that Church. The life styles and thought processes of these women suggest that the Gospel not only can accommodate but may actually inspire and sustain their role divergence.



# THE RELIEF SOCIETY IS NOT ONLY TO RELIEVE THE POOR, BUT TO SAVE SOULS.

*Joseph Smith*

## **BELLE SPAFFORD: A SKETCH**

**JoAnn Woodruff Bair**

In 1945, while Belle Spafford was serving as a counselor in the general Relief Society presidency, a rumor circulated that Church auxiliaries would be reorganized and that future presidents would serve a specified term of five years. When Sister Spafford was called into the office of President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., she expected to be released. To her surprise she was called to be the new president. Recalling the rumor, she asked if she could expect to serve a five-year term. President Clark looked down at her over the rims of his eyeglasses and replied: "You may not last that long, Sister."

"Last" she has. Under Presidents Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith, David O. McKay, and Joseph Fielding Smith, she has served twenty-six years, longer than any president before her. Yet as an individual she is not well known in the Church. Women who have read Emma Rae McKay's advice on rearing children or experimented with Jessie Evans Smith's 90-minute bread would find it difficult to name anything specific about Sister Spafford. When in the summer of 1968 I was asked to do a research paper on her, I knew little more about her than her name. I soon discovered that it was easier to document her achievements as an administrator than compose a personal portrait. I read back volumes of the *Relief Society Magazine*, interviewed general board members and one general authority, and spoke with Sister Spafford and her son Earl. She was understandably reluctant to talk about herself; those I interviewed were very protective of her privacy, yet some glimpses of her as a woman emerged.

She was born Belle Smith, 8 October 1895, in Salt Lake City, months after the death of her father. She graduated from Latter-day Saints High School and from the two-year Normal School at the University of Utah in 1914. For the next seven years she taught school in Salt Lake City and Provo and for awhile was grade supervisor at Brigham Young University Training School. In 1921 she married Willis Earl Spafford, a young insurance salesman from a prominent Provo family.

Although she quit work to raise her two children, she has in many ways remained a teacher. Her son Earl tells of receiving one of his own letters by return mail with a dangling participle marked in red by his mother. As a grandmother she holds "Scholar Night" two evenings each week. One at a time her grandchildren are invited to eat dinner with her and spend some hours reading, preparing a talk, or studying some subject of their choice.

Her sessions with the general board, as with her grandchildren, are



sparked with humor. Hulda Parker Young tells how pressures and problems lift as Sister Spafford begins board meetings with the words: "I had the most interesting experience yesterday —." She is known for her quick wit and sense of humor. At a women's club luncheon she began her address only to have loud pop music ring through the inter-com. No one seemed to know where to turn it off. When it stopped she began again. So did the music. When this happened the third time, there was such a look of distress on the face of the conducting officer that Sister Spafford said: "Don't let this trouble you. I'm used to giving musical readings; many people prefer them, so I will just go on."

She is also known for her stories, many of which feature her Scotch grandmother, a woman who, though devoted to the Church, drank a cup of tea with her bowl of oats each morning of her life until at the age of eighty she became "converted" to the Word of Wisdom.

As a young woman, Belle Spafford had to be “converted” to Relief Society. When in 1926 she moved from Provo to Salt Lake City, she began to look for something to enrich her home duties and was pleased to be asked to join a literary club. When the visiting teachers called with an invitation to Relief Society, she told them she preferred to join the club as it seemed to have much to offer. Although she had always been active in the church, she was not interested in Relief Society; like many young women of the time, she considered it an “old women’s organization.” When one of the teachers explained in detail the program, she remembered the devotion of her own mother to the Society and accepted the offer of her visitors to call for her the following Tuesday. She was soon called to leadership positions in Belvedere Ward and Grant Stake and in 1935 was appointed to the general board.

In nearly forty years of service she has been involved in every aspect of the work, from doing research for *A Centenary Of Relief Society* to organizing an international chorus of Singing Mothers. In a telephone interview, Dr. Rex Skidmore shared with me his insight into a little known aspect of her responsibilities. As director of the society’s social service and child welfare agencies in Utah, Arizona, Nevada, and Idaho, she has been determined to guarantee a professionally trained staff. For more than twenty years she has worked with the Department of Social Work at the University of Utah, providing staff and space for the training of students. In 1957, she was awarded Honorary Life Membership in the Utah State Conference of Social Work and is currently a special lecturer for the School of Social Work at the University of Utah.

Probably few women in the Church realize that as President she has also represented the Relief Society in the National Council of Women. Early in her term, she became very discouraged with the Council and told President George Albert Smith she thought they should withdraw membership because “we aren’t getting anything out of it.” President Smith considered for a moment and then replied: “Sister Spafford, we didn’t send you to the National Council of Women just to see what the Relief Society could get out of it. What are you putting into it? I’d like to see you go back there and make a real contribution.” From 1948-1956 she served as Second Vice-President and from 1956-1962 as a member of the Executive Committee. In October 1968 she became the first Latter-day Saint President of this organization of 35 million women.

One of Belle Spafford’s favorite scriptures is from Ecclesiastes: “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” She has lived by that, as by the maxim of her Scotch mother: “An eighth of an inch makes a difference, especially if it’s at the end of the nose.”

# IN MY SIGHT THE PRESENT-DAY FASHIONS ARE ABOMINABLE.

Joseph F. Smith  
Oct. Conference, 1913

## SOMEWHERE INBETWEEN

Grethe Ballif Peterson

I had always known, or at least hoped, that my role as an adult female would be varied and progressive. I didn't know it would be as complicated or as conflicting as it has been.

My model was my mother, who gave as much time to her community and public commitments as she did to her family. During our early years, she was a member of the city school board and worked with the state Democratic Party. (Later when her friends were thinking about retirement, she was appointed Chairman of the State Department of Welfare.) She created a warm, comfortable home base from which to launch her various enterprises and both the children and the community seemed to prosper. The support of my father gave legitimacy to her duality.

After a solid and exciting academic experience at B.Y.U., I graduated unmarried, and was proud of it. I travelled in Europe, did graduate work at Radcliffe, and got married. My husband liked the idea that my interests might result in multiple roles. Together we hoped to create a warm, loving, committed, and interesting home.

After three years our daughter was born and two years later our first son. Even though those early years were physically exhausting, I enjoyed being a mother and I liked being at home. I knew those years would go quickly, and probably by the time the children were in school I would be getting another degree or working myself.

Our second five years found us deep in a medical practice in the West. We bought our first house and started knocking down walls, painting, plastering, and landscaping the back yard. Our second son was born during these remodeling years. As the plaster fell, he doubled his weight, my husband got busier and busier, the older children started school, and I began looking beyond the four walls. I did some political work, taught in the Relief Society, and made a modest but regular commitment to the community through Junior League. I volunteered at the Art Center, the Detention Home and the School for Emotionally Handicapped Children. I enjoyed my community work and found many possible avenues for a professional life. My dormant academic interests came alive and I looked forward to getting back into school. I returned home tired to my husband and children after my one day out a week, but with a new vitality. The children seemed to be doing well, my husband was stimulated by his practice, I was happy, and the re-

modeling was almost finished. We seemed to be on the verge of a new domestic tranquillity.

One night my husband asked, "If we didn't live in Salt Lake, where would you like to live?" I replied, "Boston," as he knew I would. He had been asked to return to Harvard as a dean. As we thought about the job challenge and the excitement of the Boston area, we found few reasons not to go. We uprooted our family, flew off to Cambridge, and landed suddenly in a dense urban area. There were more people, more cars, and more dirt than we had remembered. We no longer walked leisurely down Brattle Street as we had in previous years. There were endless hurried trips on one errand or another. But after a difficult year, we happily settled into a remarkable old Cambridge house.

I had anticipated that this move would provide me with a chance to return to school or pursue a career as my mother had done. The children were all in school at least half a day. I found a sister in the ward who could help keep the household together. My husband urged me to audit classes and attend lectures. But when I explored the possibility of more serious academic work, decisions got delayed, and I was uncertain as to the direction I wanted to go.

The children's lives in the city took more time and support than I had expected. I had to coordinate their play activities as well as their school life. It seemed to be important for all of us that I be at home when they returned from school.

In addition, I had to try to keep up with the intense political life that had descended upon Harvard College. What with driving elaborate car pools to and from everywhere and keeping the household running, I had little time for any new consciousness or direction of my own. For the first time I questioned whether or not I really wanted to have that "career" beyond the home.

In addition to these private doubts, the problems of our society were banging on our front door. Disillusion with the war was no longer academic. The students were taking their frustrations and immaturity out on the university. My husband confronted angry students daily. The issues were complicated, and the entire family was affected. More alienated street people gathered around Harvard Square. Our children walked through this tableau every day. They were sensitive and concerned about what they saw and needed us to help them sort things out. They needed explicit confirmation of our beliefs, our values, and our goals, which demanded a resourcefulness and tenacity difficult to sustain day after day. They were relieved to go to Church on Sunday, but that didn't diminish their perception of the problems they saw on Monday. As we observed the weakening of family ties of many young people and the extremes to which they were going to recapture human contact, I wanted to bolt the door and hold the children close. But of course I didn't. I had to be there, but I also had to back away, hoping they could cope with their complicated world.

After a hectic day, I felt pulled in all directions. Why weren't my solutions as clear cut as my mother's had seemed to be? Where was that balance I was so sure I would achieve? Wasn't I doing what I really enjoyed the most? Why this constant concern about a professional life of my own?

In the early months of Women's Liberation I read everything I could

get my hands on. Kate Millett hit me between the eyes as I plowed through *Sexual Politics*. I was both sympathetic with and outraged by her "biocultural" description of the history of women in western society. I read with great interest the responses and resolutions that came from women with a diversity of life styles. There were times when the militancy got to me and I thought about organizing a day care center of my own or marching with NOW on the State House. Those moments were fleeting; and ironically, as other women were seriously looking for new avenues of expression beyond the home, I was turning in the other direction.

I thought I saw my roles clearly developing in Salt Lake City, but my present fulfillment is not where I expected it to be. At a time when I assumed I would be preparing or participating in a career, I have chosen not to. While my greatest satisfactions are with my family, I realize that the quality of our home life is better when I extend my interests and energy to some issue, idea, or project. My life is not described in the conventional roles discussed in much of the Women's Lib literature.

I have chosen to live between two worlds. There are the precious moments with the family, discussing the events of the day; there are the meetings on the Status of Women at Harvard; there are the Thursday night dinners with students; there is the satisfaction of submerging myself in the novels of the Bildungsroman.

The conflicts and choices that I have described are now engaging more Mormon women. Because our children's experience can eclipse our own, and because our affluence and technology are giving us more time for other things, we must take off our aprons and go out into the world. The Church must help us discover new roles and role combinations. The solution for some women may be running the M.I.A., holding a full-time job, reading novels or coaching a little league baseball team. Each is an expression that can bring a stronger woman back into the home. Women must set priorities, live by them, and feel good about it.

I find my life somewhere in between conflicting expectations. I can't be everything I want to be; I can't meet everyone's needs. I can't be a superb gourmet cook and study American history; I can't keep an immaculate house and help my husband in his work. Yet, there are satisfactions in trying to mediate between these worlds, and I await with interest the next nudge.

I SAY THEREFORE  
TO THE UNMARRIED  
AND WIDOWS, IT IS  
GOOD FOR THEM IF  
THEY ABIDE EVEN  
AS I. PAUL, I COR. 7:8

## SINGLE VOICES

### A LETTER FROM THE EAST

Anonymous

Who would want to write an article on the single woman? It would be like being branded with a scarlet "S"! Our Church places a great emphasis on marriage and homelife. In terms of an ideal of personal happiness, doctrinal adherence, and societal cohesiveness, this viewpoint has its advantages. However, there are other parts of the equation which merit thoughtful evaluation: what kind of person are you? *Why* are you doing what-ever-it-is you are doing? I have seen many unhappy, frustrated and dull people and enough happy, productive and interesting people to know that similar circumstances do not determine similar results. There are so many challenges to living in today's world that we must put our feet firmly in the present and not over-reference ourselves to the past or the hereafter! We must strengthen our intellectual analysis, our spiritual guidance, and get to the actual doing — and find a measure of peace in all of this.

### A LETTER HOME\*

Maryruth Bracy

Dear Mom and Dad,

Your phone call last night left me feeling strangely orphaned, as if you had placed me on some foreign doorstep. I know you thought that Tom and I would get married, and that you can't understand why I've quit my job. Last year you questioned my going on to graduate school; last night you wanted me to return for more schooling in Utah: is it that you'd rather have me in school there than struggling out here?

My dear sweet parents, underneath all that you said was one question, "Why aren't you married?" I'm afraid I just don't know all the reasons. Somewhere along the way decisions were made and the results of these decisions have led me to where I am. I guess the best reason is that the right man has not come along at the right time. Can you understand that if I married Tom without the love I know I am capable of giving, I would be cheating both of us?

---

\*A composite letter representing the feelings of twelve single sisters, 25 and over, across the country.

My “right man” has changed a lot since high school. And the range is narrowing; not just because the number of available men is decreasing, though I have used some foresight in planning where to live and work, but because I find *myself* gradually becoming less flexible. I am no longer willing to date just to be going out. I could not say that before I turned 24. I do love to date, but I find an increased longing to have the experiences be meaningful. I also find myself struggling to be patient; patient with the “relationship process” which takes time to enact. The biggest danger I see in breaking up with Tom is hesitancy to start that process all over again with someone new. It takes an incredible amount of energy to begin again.

There is something I need from you right now: to write me and love me and include me, without the pressure your worry too often instigates. Please be comforted that marriage and a family are still my goals. If I could only know that in say five years I'd be married, then I would have no regrets about my life to this point. My greatest plague is that my previous decisions may have stacked the cards against my getting married. But since there is no way of knowing that, I try not to worry. Even if worst comes to worst, I guess as long as I live worthily of the celestial kingdom, I will still have that final choice between being a second wife or a ministering angel!

Your loving daughter,  
Mary

## JOURNAL JOTTINGS

Dianne Higginson

The Victorian Ideal of Womanhood doesn't seem so disadvantageous to girls thrust into a hostile world “on their own.” When you remain single, society takes away the advantages of being a girl and forces upon you the disadvantages of being a man — so you are neither and are lost in the void.

\* \* \*

It is difficult to talk about the advantages of being single since after a certain age it cannot properly be considered to be a blessing, though it well may be. All the advantages seem temporal and selfish, character-softening, and of diminishing value. Others, who tend to judge righteousness in terms of pitifulness (“It's not her fault, she *wants* to marry.”), tolerate only facetious exultings in the unencumbered life, for to be seriously exultant is to be instantly suspected of unrighteousness. To be too happy brings judgment, yet being too obviously unhappy is criticized just as severely. Job's comforters never had it so good!

\* \* \*

It's a buyer's market, one may as well face it. G. gave me this, from *As you Like It* (though I don't):

Mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees,  
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;  
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,  
Sell when you can! You are not for all markets.  
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer,  
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.

(Act III, Scene V, Lines 557-62)

Bewilderment is the main feeling. How does everyone else do it? And why can't I?

\* \* \*

The post-college single L.D.S. girl on the outer rim of nubility is aware of being in the right church but the wrong pew. Neither a priesthood bearer nor a childbearer, her presence becomes increasingly embarrassing, unless she has the good fortune of being in a predominately singles ward.

\* \* \*

Marriage: to be determined not to be determined by it is also to be determined by it.

\* \* \*

A year ago, away from home for Christmas, bronchial, and feeling keenly homeless, I re-read *Little Women*. My grief astounded me: I wept and wept and could not be consoled, not because Beth died (it seemed right that she should on this reading), not because Jo wouldn't marry Laurie, but because it was irrevocably clear to me that, of the four models for girlhood and womanhood presented by Louisa May Alcott, it was *Amy* who was the embodiment of all that was good, not Beth; Amy who triumphed, not Jo; Amy who deserved admiration and emulation, not Jo or Beth or the docile Meg. My grief was from shock and disappointment at having been so long and confidently wrong, from a horror of prolonged and disastrous self-deception. Perhaps other girls were perspicacious enough at nine or ten to realize that Amy was the one they wanted to be like. Perhaps they were half in love with Laurie and wanted to marry him and live happily ever after. I wasn't that insightful. I thought Amy a horrid, selfish little person quite deserving of the fate of marrying Laurie, whom I did not admire or find attractive; I accepted Jo's refusal of him as just in the largest sense, though heroic and sad too. Now I could see that while Jo reared Laurie, it was Amy who brought him to his best self, Amy who was the real "Little woman." The grief is real: I am not an Amy. I do not like or admire Lauries, and there simply are not enough German professors to go around.

\* \* \*

I am someone to whom movies like "Gigi" and "My Fair Lady" appeal psychologically — fulfill all fantasies . . . wanting to be the toad who is discovered by the Prince and magically changed into a princess. *Not* wanting to be found by another toad . . . and accepted with resignation.

\* \* \*

Out of the context and structure of family, the individual loses her meaning. There are so many other beings, how can God care about me? What about all those others on the subway? Within the family, with father or husband representing the Lord, *she matters*; she knows it, and the security is vital to a clear perspective. Family Home Evening groups in university wards are a worthwhile attempt to compensate for not being properly organized into a proper family.

\* \* \*

Faith is dating boys who, when they ask, "Is there someone else?" can only be answered, "There's got to be."

Faith is buying only dresses with sleeves.  
Faith is knowing you would like polygamy.  
Faith is crying a little bit when your Bishop tells you that had you been Eve you never would have eaten that apple.  
Faith is dressing up and attending your ninety-ninthousandth M.I.A. social.  
Faith is not contracting spiritual pneumonia from the cosmic chill blasting in from eternity.

\* \* \*

There is something to be remarked in coming home from a fairly satisfying Sunday School and a better than good Relief Society and instantly feeling the need to play Peggy Lee's, "Is That All There Is?"

### **A CANDID AND UNCENSORED INTERVIEW WITH A MORMON CAREER GIRL**

**M. Karlynn Hinman**

**Q.** Our readers are interested in knowing more about single professional women in the Church. Tell us about your background.

**A.** I'm from a small Utah community. I went to college in Utah and to graduate school in the east.

**Q.** What do you do with your spare time. Do you cook or sew for example?

**A.** Don't you think that question is beside the point?

**Q.** Not at all. I'm sure our readers would like to know —

**A.** — that I'm a genuine Mormon woman? O.K. I'm not a freak. I cook — make jam, bottle fruit on occasion, but I don't seem to get the right spice balance in my Pakistani curries; commercial curry powder just isn't proper. And I sew. I made both of my winter coats; they are lined, underlined, and interlined; and I love to throw parties and entertain. I once gave a surprise baby shower to which husbands and single men were invited. We had a folk-rock band. Some friends of mine who happened to be in town came by. And the oven caught fire and the refrigerator warmed instead of cooled. It was a great party! But I wander. Let me guess: your next question was going to be whether anybody had ever proposed to me.

**Q.** Well, this was to be a candid interview, but I wasn't quite going to get that personal. Uh, has anyone?

**A.** I've left a trail of broken hearts across three — no four — continents. It may interest you, though, that I have never had a proposal from a Mormon. I am not certain of all that says, either about Mormon men or about me. I think that it reflects the relatively young marriage age in the church and the fact that Mormon men are guided to seek wives who fit into a particular mold. On the other hand, maybe I have chronic halitosis and my best friends won't tell me.

**Q.** What about your childhood and home life?

**A.** I had a lovely childhood, and my parents encouraged me in my career ideas. My mother returned to teaching when I was about four years old. My father thought that was just fine, and he never felt any threat to

our home life. From what I can tell from talking with other women, I had a closer relationship with my father than most girls do, and I know that this helped to influence me to develop as much as I could professionally. I remember when I was about three my father decided to raise some pigs for the bacon. I went out to help build the pigpen. When he hammered the nails, his hammer left an indentation on the wood which I thought was like a ruffle or lace, so he made sure that he left hammer marks by all the nails. It's a little thing, but it always made me feel very happy to be with a father who understood a three-year-old's idea that pigs, like little girls, needed ruffles. I grew up feeling there was no contradiction between being a girl and developing to the fullest whatever talents I had.

Q. Do you think you'll marry?

A. Probably. It's a very great burden to break hearts all the time. Actually I prefer the company of men to that of most women. The most lasting and meaningful relationships I have had with people — particularly with men — have been where we both had deep intellectual curiosity. Few women are encouraged to explore the world of ideas, and I am happy in their company for only limited periods of time; the new rap groups are an even worse drag because of the ideas they think they explore. I prefer to be off doing something.

Q. Then you're not one of the bra-burning Fem-Lib People who —

A. You've been observing me closely enough to answer that question yourself.

## A LETTER FROM THE WEST

Anonymous

I sat down to write for *Dialogue* on the position of the widow in the Church, but I could never get past the first sentence, which was: "There is no place for a widow in the Church unless she is willing to look resolutely and cheerfully toward the grave." I'll probably write such an article sometime, but it won't be now and it won't be for *Dialogue*.

The truth is I don't like being "single" again and yet it gives me a great deal of freedom and mobility which I love. I find my greatest joy in being a mother, the role I take most seriously and which has the most stabilizing influence in my life. So far as the Church is concerned, the mother who *must* work is regarded in a far different light from one who does it for other reasons.

I also think that so far as the Church is concerned a widow is in quite a different position from someone who has never married or from a divorced woman. It's not a position I like because it does carry with it a certain amount of pity and condescension, but on the other hand there is no feeling of censure, which I think the divorced and single often get, and my strong sense of identification with women who are married helps them to see me as a person rather than as a position — widow.

Although I can in no way explain it, my relationship with people who knew my husband has a different aspect to it than my relation with people who only see me alone. The best way I can describe it is to say that people who only know me, only know a part of me.

## THOUGHTS ON LIVING ALONE

Alberta Baker

If singleness is an affliction, I can only conclude that I'm not a good example. I love living alone. I love travelling alone. I love people but not necessarily to live with. I enjoy company and contact and conversation, but I enjoy being a free soul who can come and go and do what I feel like at the moment.

Although I have been married and have a son, I have been alone for the last twenty-eight years, for all of my nineteen years in the church. A month or two before my baptism, I took a western trip. On a Greyhound platform I met a lovely elderly lady awaiting the same bus I was to take. We chatted and I asked her if she was a Mormon. She said, "Yes, why do you ask?" I replied, "Because you look like one and I am going to be one shortly." She exclaimed, "My dear sister, when you are ready to go to the Temple you must come to St. George and I will go with you." Two years later I did go and stay with her and she went with me every day. She said then she did not know what single women would do in eternity, but she would be willing to share her husband, dead for several years, with women like me. I don't know what to think about that! Still, where would one find that kind of friend except in the Church?

I have been asked how I feel about my status in a Church which emphasizes family life so strongly. Do I feel left out? I can only say what an awful thing it would be to be single and *not* be in the Church. I have shared so many families, their company, their children, their hospitality. Where else could one meet so many wonderful people of all ages, interests, talents and tastes, but all with the same spiritual ideals and working for the same eternal goals? Wherever I go I find brothers and sisters; I have visited Mormon churches in Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, England, Virginia, Florida, California, Utah, Mexico, and all over New England.

In Juneau the mother of an M.I.T. student took me to church; I was invited to dinner by the cousin of our Boston Stake Relief Society President. In Anchorage a former member from Cape Cod Branch took me sightseeing at nine p.m. in the bright-as-day light. In San Juan the member of the Church whom I phoned to find where services were held invited me to go with her family, calling for me at my hotel. In Hawaii, I was given a wonderful day of sightseeing by the widow of Matthew Cowley. Why shouldn't I feel I am a member of a very large family?

My son married about twenty-two years ago and so far I have not had time to be lonely. I think he expressed it rather well when his future mother-in-law asked him, "What will your mother do if you get married?" and he, who had been in the Navy for three years and in school for two years, replied, "Why, I guess she will just go on doing what she always does." I was working then and loved it. I am still working and still love it.

I may be single, but I never feel alone. The Church is a wonderful, warm, loving comforter, always within reach if the need should arise. It would take an hour for my son to reach me in an emergency, but I know I could get help in ten minutes from the Church if it were necessary. I know the home teachers would do anything for me — except my housecleaning! I mentioned that one time when they said, "Can we do anything for you,

Sister Baker.” I was deep in sewing as usual and anyone could see I *needed* some cleaning done. They just smiled and said, “Well, good night.” They are dears and so are the visiting teachers. When I really need them, they’ll be there.

I do have many friends outside the Church and they are dear to me too, but it is the Church which is the structure of my life. As for the hereafter, perhaps I can best approach it this way. I have always known my Heavenly Father fairly well and had great confidence in *Him*. Before I was a Mormon I looked into a lot of things and annexed a lot of ideas and, perhaps, experiences of how He operates. In the years since I have been in this Church I have learned much, much more. I think that whatever his plans are for me will be O.K.



I say Ladies,  
if WE ask YOU to  
make your dresses  
a little shorter,  
do NOT be extra-  
vagant & CUT  
Them so short  
that WE can see  
The TOPS OF YOUR  
STOCKINGS. BRIGHAM YOUNG

Housekeeping?  
I prefer  
pestilence.  
... EMILY DICKINSON

**DIRT**  
**A COMPENDIUM OF**  
**HOUSEHOLD WISDOM**

Compiled by Shirley Gee

Housekeeping provides the setting, if not the solution, to many basic and profound philosophical questions.

What housewife has not, in viewing the unending stream of dirty dishes or unmade beds, pondered the categories of reality: are these things in a state of change, or do they just exist, in and of themselves?

As she picks up dirty socks, has she not considered the contradictions of coherent theory? Has she not empirically demonstrated the limits and the scope of gravitational law as she ascends and descends the twelve stairs to the laundry room six or seven times a day? Or been awed by the law of diminishing returns as she refills the cookie jar?

Is the dust whence she sprung as actual as the dust on the piano?

More basically, what is she here for? Was she predestined or foreordained to be a housewife? What are the things that she can legitimately put before this calling? Was the pestilence of housekeeping provided by the Lord, by Satan, or only by Adam?

Certain contributors to the present issue of *Dialogue* have speculated upon these subjects. Their philosophical deductions are compiled herein. No attempt has been made to give direction to these words of wisdom, only voice.

I am a housewife. When filling out forms I find the title neutral, descriptive, and quite adequate. A housewife is a woman who works at home. That I am also a homemaker seems to me beside the point. If I were professionally employed I would still be a homemaker. My husband is a homemaker. So are my children. Next time I'm asked, shall I list my occupation as Latter-day Saint?

*To my mind we pursue the wrong villains when keeping house. Dirt is no enemy but the stuff from which God created our glorious earth. Spiders are nature's housekeepers and are easily tolerated as long as they keep out of sight.*

I watch the seasons pass as I am painting window sills. I watch the gigantic snowflakes while scraping paint off a peeling ceiling. I see a bluejay perch on a branch as I Formula-409 the woodwork. I smell spring in the softening earth as I haul out the garbage. Perhaps I want too much.

*I clean on impulse rather than on schedule. I clean my refrigerator and stove when I get tired of looking at them dirty. And I have discovered that I enjoy cleaning them more if they are quite dirty, because then I can see the difference when I am finished.*

I'd much rather be outside than in, so balmy days assure a swift sweep through the house, a hasty farewell to housework.

*I always fold my towels with the four corners precisely together and the hems turned to the inside. I always hang my diapers rather than put them in the dryer, so that the edges won't curl, and they can be folded in precise flat stacks. I always hang my clothes on hangers and put my shoes in the rack in the closet. These are the areas over which I have complete control, and I don't have to depend on the cooperation of anyone else. I'm no executive!*

Ironing I detest and I apply myself only when there is a television program worthy of distracting my thoughts from the task. I anticipate the advent of spring days when the washing can again be hung outside to flap in the wind and absorb the sunshine.

*“Do not let your children's clothing lie underfoot when you undress them at night, but teach your boys and girls, when they come into the house, to find a place for their hats, cloaks, and bonnets, that, when they want them, they can put their hands upon them in a moment.” —Brigham Young*

We are led to believe that proper husband-wife roles are clearly spelled out. It seems to me that an attempt to follow these behavior molds harms more marriages than it helps. My husband and I work together to keep the house clean.

*Before the kitchen window steamed up with heat from the dishes I was washing I could see my sons playing ball in the back yard. How I envy them their youth and their freedom. I would like to run and play with them. But who would do the dishes? “Work before play!” It is a harsh rule. I do not impose it, perhaps to my own detriment, but they have so little time.*

Making bread is a family activity with us, and a basic one that needs doing regularly. Often the ingredients are put together by one of us, and the kneading is done by another — sometimes my husband, sometimes my son or daughter. The loaves are usually shaped with the help of one or more of the children. Even the smallest can help to pat the tops.

*Do not put your loaf into the oven with a fire hot enough to burn it before it is baked through, but with a slow heat, and let it remain until it is perfectly baked; and I would prefer, for my own eating, each and every loaf to be not thicker than my two hands . . . and I would want the crust as thick as my hand. —Brigham Young*

In my frantic splintered life, weekly bread-making restores my self-image, calms my nerves, soothes my spirit, feeds my ego (and my family), relieves my budget, and signals my husband and children that mom's in the kitchen, all's right with the world.

*Why are L.D.S. women caught so inexorably in the "home-made bread" syndrome? For some it seems to have been elevated to a sacramental ordinance!*

While nothing can be more deadening than the routine performance of household chores, nothing can be more satisfying than completing a task that needs doing. To look through a clear window that seconds ago bore finger smears, contents the soul. The most disorderly room quickly responds to fifteen minutes of busy tidying. We wrestle with knottier problems that bring us no satisfaction at all. As housekeeping is one of the crosses that women must bear, how fortunate that even there can be found gratification.

*We like large rooms that can accommodate a lot of people or a lot of wriggling, as the case may be. We like materials and textures that age gracefully and do not crack like plaster or fade and smudge like wallpaper. We curse painted woodwork regularly.*

Having two toilets is defensible; bathroom line-ups create anxiety on both sides of the door. Bathing, on the other hand, can be planned. Why clean two bathtub rings — or two of anything — when one will do?

*Through some illogical process I have become the house and it has to compensate for all of my character failings: thick ankles, thinning hair, etc. The trouble is I can't, can't, can't keep it even forty percent perfect at any given time, and something in my system demands one hundred percent. I feel so confused wrestling with the ogres of peeling paint and ungainly furniture which I have poured hours into, modifying them from sow's ears into sow's ears.*

Children like specific assignments of household chores. Lists help because they also eliminate mother as the source of work and all such evils.

*Teach little children the principles of order; the little girl to put the broom in its right place, to arrange the stove furniture in the neatest possible way, and everything in its own place. . . . Teach the little boys to lay away the garden hoe, the spade, etc. where they will not be destroyed by rust. . . ."*

—Brigham Young

My husband helps me clean before we entertain, and I have discovered that if we entertain a couple of times a month, the house is quite livable.

*Food helps with fellowship, and anything will do. Along with a standard but simple Sunday meal for guests, I double dessert plans to allow for evening visitors. If these plans prove insufficient, I've found that any guest will respond, and be charmed by a slice of homemade bread and honey.*

But Martha was cumbered about with much serving, and came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. —Luke 10:40-42

*The endless pressure of our housekeeping comes not from the needs of our families but from the constantly escalating standards of excellence which require us to decorate our houses like magazine layouts and maintain them as if nobody lived there. We enslave ourselves thus in quest of family happiness, yet “beautiful home” never refers to a harmonious and loving spirit, but to some combination of carpets and chairs.*

I’ve been concentrating on not vacuuming my house before I have company. And what rewards this new virtue is bringing. I have too long equated a nice visit with a just-cleaned house. I’ve already missed what might have been important moments with friends because I spent the time wondering if they noticed that the candleholders were not polished.

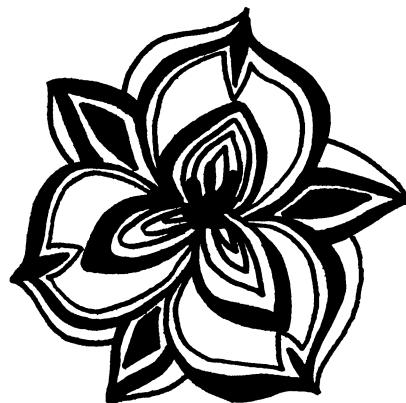
*A house should reflect the needs and interests of those residing therein and encourage the best side of their lives without being intrusive. A comfortable house waits patiently for the ministrations of its mistress. Our house is only the setting for domestic drama and doesn’t deserve the consideration of a character.*

Basically I am a slob at housekeeping. There are things that prevent me from remaining in this state. I have a neat mother-in-law. I have a daughter who is like her. I have a family that cooperates. Early Primary Bluebird days taught me that cleanliness is next to Godliness, and later, in M.I.A. I learned that a ruffled apron and a home permeated with the aroma of fresh-baked bread could keep a husband happy. I wish that dirt were not eternal, and that once objects were cleaned they would stay that way. But I am happy when my house is in order. My family responds to my feelings, and then more serious problems can be tackled.

*Instead of doing two days work in one day, wisdom would dictate to our sisters, and to every other person, that if they desire long life and good health, they must, after sufficient exertion, allow the body to rest before it is entirely exhausted. —Brigham Young*

Housekeeping is like the Word of Wisdom: we master it, and then go on to more important things. Cleanliness is pleasant but order is more important, and orderly lives require that ordering a house take a minor role. The dirty dishes can never be conquered; we have them with us always. By relegating them to their own brief hour we can rise above them. Housekeeping can be put down by this final insult: Do it but don’t think about it.

## FROM THE PULPIT



### MOTHER'S DAY, 1971

Lucybeth Cardon Rampton

*This talk was first given on Mother's Day, 11 May 1969, at the Utah State Prison. It was repeated, with an altered introduction — the one given here — on Mother's Day, 9 May 1971, at the Federal Heights Ward, Salt Lake City.*

Brothers and sisters, I find this a bittersweet year for me to be participating in a Mother's Day program, for my own mother passed away last November and my husband's mother was buried just two weeks ago. I should like, if I may, to begin by paying tribute to these two ladies. A loving salute, then, to Leah Ivins Cardon, who brought to the business of living a fine intellect, a childlike eagerness, and a creative zest, and who brought grace, dignity, and wit to the hard business of dying. And an equally loving salute to Janet Campbell Rampton, who, left widowed with three children at the bottom of the depression, equipped by neither temperament nor training to become the head of a family, still kept that family strongly together for forty years through her determined love. I should like also to pay tribute to another kind of motherhood — through my lovely daughter Meg, whose sweet article about adoptive parenthood you may have seen in the first issue of *The Ensign*.

I must now make a confession: Mother's Day programs make me uncomfortable. Of course the underlying idea is a lovely one — it is a warm and sweetly sentimental concept, this setting aside of one spring Sunday each year for the honoring of mothers. But for me such recognition is not something to be done on cue, at a prescribed time. The exchange of love and understanding between a mother and her child is a very private and a very spontaneous thing: it is a look, a touch, a private joke, a whispered midnight conference, a note left on a pillow, a guarded secret, a crisis weathered together. Mothers treasure these things far more than they do the presentation of a flower at Sunday School.

There is something else, too. The mother of Mother's Day tends to be too good to be true: a saintly creature who is always gentle, always wise, always noble, and always right. Not one of us measures up to this ideal. Mothers are people, with all the strengths, weaknesses, virtues, and blunders of human beings. Most of us try to do our best, and some do better than others — but we just don't belong on any pedestal.

So I would like to talk a little today about motherhood (or rather, about what might be called the maternal side of human beings) as an abstraction, a great human ideal. To assist myself in doing so, I have drawn two illustrative concepts from my study of prehistory.

The first is the concept of the Mother Goddess. The Heavenly Father whom we today know and love and worship is a masculine God; but it is interesting to know that the oldest deity of whom archaeologists have found evidence is feminine — a Mother Goddess, whose little stone and clay figurines have been found in Upper Paleolithic sites over most of the world. She was the goddess of the fruitfulness of the earth and its creatures, the source of the earth's abundant life, charged with its nurture. She became, as the centuries passed, Ninhursag, the mother-goddess of the Sumerians; the Minoan mother-goddess of ancient Crete; Demeter, the earth goddess among the older Greek gods. Some of her ancient worship was transferred to the beautiful cult of the Virgin Mary which reached its peak during the later Middle Ages. We still remember her today when we speak of Mother Earth.

The second concept, borrowed from Hindu philosophy, recognizes two principles in the universe: a strong aggressive, masculine one and a gentle, nurturing feminine one. The two complement each other. Both are present in all the universe, including ourselves. The feminine principle is what I mean by our maternal side. It is the warm, kind, loving, cherishing part of all of us — the concerned-for-others part of us. It is not an effeminate, "sissy" quality, and it is by no means limited to women. In fact it shows to best advantage when it complements the strength of strong men: it was a central quality of Christ Himself.

This maternal side of all of us is the part which wants to cultivate and nurture young growing things, especially children, and see that they have a chance to grow and mature properly. It takes pride in their maturity, and wants that maturity to be as productive as possible. It respects and values age, and wishes to see it accorded the dignity it deserves. Properly cultivated, this maternal side of us can expand into genuine concern for the well-being and proper care of our good planet Earth and all its creatures, in the best tradition of the ancient Mother Goddess herself. We will want to respect and care for our environment — for our air and our streams and our land, our forests and our seas. We will want to preserve, with discrimination and good sense, the scenic wonders and natural beauties and wild creatures of the earth, of which the astronauts speak so lovingly when they view it from the moon. Most of all, we will want to take better care of each other — of the swelling numbers of human beings who live together on this planet which looks so small in that moon-view. If we really feel maternal about it, we will work not only hard but fiercely to see to it that every human creature has a decent chance to grow and mature and be of value to the best of his ability.

This does not mean that we want to coddle anyone. This age-old, Earth Mother side of us knows too well that any growing thing, plant or child, which is given too much shelter and protection is not going to grow up strong and vigorous — it needs some struggle and some challenge, along with sun and air and nourishment. If it is a human creature, though, it also needs a great deal of love and appreciation. A favorite quotation of mine, which I have kept in my files for twenty years or more, is from the Hindu philosopher and poet Rabindranath Tagore: "Let my love, like sunlight, surround you and yet give you illumined freedom."

This old maternal part of us also knows that young growing things need some control and direction — not enough to stunt them, but enough to keep

them from growing wild. And it knows, too, that the nurturing of young things is not all deadly serious: there is joy and pure fun in caring for growing things, and especially for children. There is fun and pleasure in making sure that the child in ourselves never quite goes away — that we keep our joy in the world and in other people, and our sense of wonder at it all.

It seems to me that the greatest need this earth has ever had for this whole maternal outlook is with us right now. Some parts of our earth are getting very crowded, and the more crowded people get, the more complicated their living together becomes. We need to pray for all the wisdom which the parents of large families must have, in order that we may collectively (that is to say, through our governments and our volunteer groups) deal justly and wisely and compassionately with these crowded parts of our world, especially our great cities everywhere. We need to be profoundly concerned about hunger; indeed, we need to borrow from the masculine side of ourselves enough anger and indignation to demand that the hungry be fed — that ways be devised to bring the earth to produce more food over more of its surface, and that the available food be shared in better fashion with the hungry everywhere. We need to do all we can to replace (within our families and among the people of small and large societies) fear with friendship, hatred with love, suspicion with trust. Fear and hate, disapproval and mistrust, suspicion and contempt, stunt young human beings and distort their growth, and they likewise stunt mankind. Trust and friendship, approval and appreciation, love and kindness, nourish the individual and they can nourish mankind.

If there is a meaning and a message behind the turmoil and the unrest among the young people of today's world (and I am sure there is), perhaps this is it: care more about people; care less about things and about status and about material success, and more about each other. Stop fighting long enough to get acquainted. Spend less on human destruction and more on human need.

May we have as our prayer this Sunday, Mother's Day, morning that we may cultivate (and that is a good, Earth Mother word) — cultivate ourselves, in our families, and in our communities this maternal side, in order that we may do our part toward the development of a warmer, friendlier, less embattled, more loving, and therefore more humanely human world. This I ask in the name of our compassionate Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

**MORMON COUNTRY WOMEN**  
A Portfolio of Photographs by Dorothea Lange



Dorothea Lange (1895-1965) was a happy example of a “self-fulfilled” woman. She enjoyed a long and fruitful career as America’s foremost woman photographer, successfully blended her work with that of her husband, historian Paul Taylor, raised a family, and left an artistic legacy to humanity. She was both a photographer and a photo-journalist, wanting to see each picture as an artistic entity, and as part of a larger story. As a result collections such as her studies of migrant farm-workers and the dust-bowl are documentary as well as aesthetic masterpieces. And Dorothea Lange was not held to “sexist” stereotypes. When she did a study of American women it was not to Hollywood that she turned, and not to the false glamour we are known for around the world. Instead she focused on the kind of women she, as a liberated woman, felt made America what it is. Many may object to, or want to escape what she saw, but the American Country Woman series is her statement, and she felt it was a complementary one. The following photographs are selected as representative of that perspective from some three volumes of “Utah” proof-sheets in the Oakland Museum Collection. *Dialogue* is indebted to the Oakland Museum for their generous help in publishing these photographs from the Dorothea Lange Collection.

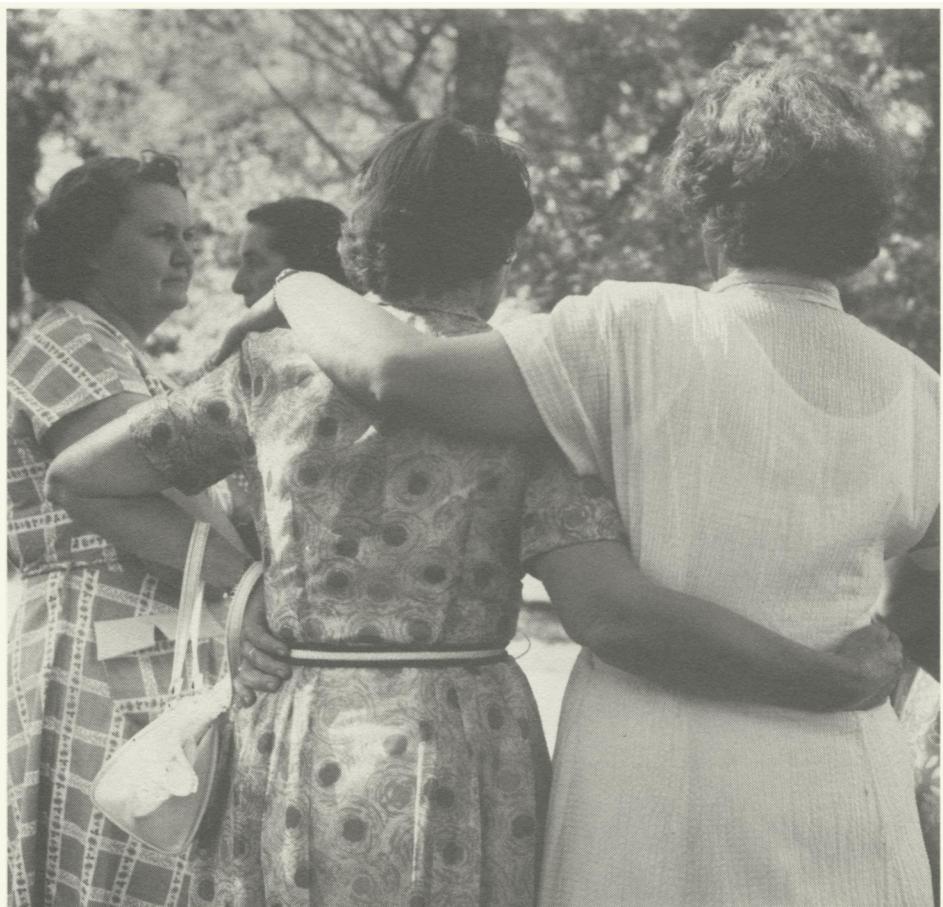
Readers interested in more of Dorothea Lange’s work should see *Dorothea Lange Looks at the American Country Woman* (Fort Worth and Los Angeles: The Amon Carter Museum and the Ward Richie Press, 1968), and the photostudy of Utah she and Ansel Adams produced in *Life*, 6 September 1954, 91-100.

*Gordon Thomasson*





*Toquerville, Utah, 1953*





*Mrs. Beatty, Toquerville, Utah, 1953*

*Gunlock, Washington County, Utah, 1953*





*Mrs. Naegle, Toquerville, Utah, 1953*

*Gunlock, Washington County, Utah, 1953*





*Maryann Savage, 1933*

*Near Toquerville, Utah, 1953*



**Ina Jespersen Hobson**

## **CANYON COUNTRY**

The bend, sharp thrust, and color  
Of this land abide the centuries  
Unchanged. Earth keeps another time  
Than man, and soon and late inters  
Each vanished traveler in her dust.

Edith Melissa came this way  
Once in the long-ago, late winter weather  
Of seventy-two. Snow doubtless lingered  
Near cedars, and frosted the red bluffs'  
Tableland. Silent in cold starlight,  
Or stirring to chill dawns, riding  
The lean fierce beauty of this time-carved land  
She knew the towering presence of primeval cliff—  
Always the long, bold line  
Thrusting vermilion skyward.

Daughter and wife to pioneers  
Had she grown weary of the male demand  
For newer horizons, and progeny?  
Schooled in the cost of wilderness  
Did heart and bone turn from another venture  
Farther on? Yield at the last goodbye  
To tears of mutiny? Or spirit will  
Obedience to the end?

Answers are hid with other ghosts  
Of this still empty land.  
Beyond a few remaining poplars  
And the vacant walls in one far field  
Editha Melissa lies — once of the green hills  
Of New York — and her eleventh baby.  
Grave place of days and years is rounded  
In two words: "Johnson's Canyon."

**Blanche Berry**

## **DEVOTION TO SAM**

The ocean's wide, and I can't step it;  
I love Sam and I can't help it.  
But there ain't no mule  
Had a harder life  
Than I  
Tryin' to be Sam's wife.

These young engaged gals,  
Tryin' to show me somethin' —  
The rickety wagon ain't had 'em,  
They ain't felt the bumpin'  
When your foot's so flat  
From Palmer housing 'roun'  
'Til an ant don't venture  
Between it and the groun'.  
You can 'fess to yourself  
They ain't no man livin'  
Worth the price you done give.  
But you just keep on givin'.

## **FRIENDS**

Those whom I have called friends,  
Whose exchange of thought  
Once brought that blessed relief  
That only comes to one  
When pliant natures meet,  
Have understood me least.

## **MY TEMPLE**

My roots are planted in God's earth.  
My wings extend throughout God's ether.  
My interior is God's kingdom.  
The sights and sounds that come to me are charged with power  
From the Father, Son and Holy Ghost;  
And like a bird within an egg,  
I rest in His love.

## **THE PERENNIAL HARLOT**

I met my first man in a garden.  
He fell easy; it only took a red apple.  
I laid the blame on a snake —  
It couldn't talk.  
I found that the Egyptian men liked persimmons.  
I planted a grove.  
I introduced the hen-wallow in Babylon.  
Then I created a wicked wiggle —  
I learned it from the snake.  
I did it to the music of cymbals, tamborines and the sax.  
But, when I met the Master,  
The man of Galilee, at the well  
And tried to make him,  
He had my number.  
From then on, down through the years,  
I've been a scandal.

**Mary L. Bradford**

**TRIAD**

**STEPHEN**

carries secrets he hasn't had time  
to decode,  
takes his clues from me  
as I search for signals myself,  
decks his walls with Johnny Cash,  
a brass rubbing, a moonshot,  
writes a poem: "Get out of my hair, war,"  
and in his nightmares is suddenly  
grown-up and suddenly irrational  
like the grown-up world.

**LORRAINE**

secretes vats of grey matter  
in her organic, pulsating room,  
creates swirling abstracts  
which she sells for pennies,  
anxious to be what she is,  
she is saved from the cliché  
of her Shirley Temple looks  
by the butterfly blur  
that flits across her face  
and curtains her secret self.

**SCOTT**

dresses on the move  
amid small-craft warnings  
of colds and other catastrophes,  
smiles and rubs  
my lipstick brand,  
chooses a coat outgrown last year —  
red and blue like superman's —  
walks out alone,  
his body enough to shelter him  
from rain and other agonies.



## SNOWFLAKE GIRL

Louise Larson Comish

I grew up in Snowflake, which lies in desert country in Arizona, altitude 5600 feet. Alof Larson and May Hunt, my parents, were among the early arrivals to this pioneer settlement, named for Erastus Snow and William J. Flake who in 1878 exchanged 500 head of cattle for 300 acres of land and proceeded to lay out the town. The gardens and farm lands were irrigated by the clear waters of Silver Creek. By the turn of the century, when this story begins, Snowflake had grown to a population of 700. Alof and May, who had married in 1881, now had a family of seven sons and two daughters. I was one of the youngest.

I was a tow headed, barefoot youngster dressed in a plain little dress of heavy shirting and a pair of bloomers, slipping out of the blazing summer sunshine into the rustling green world of corn, moving down the row, careful that an outstretched corn leaf did not saw across my face. I was looking at the fat ears, and when I found one made extra fat by a protuberance on its side, I knew I had found a small sucker ear and carefully removed it.

Seated on the damp sand in the bottom of the furrow, I peeled off the corn husks until the newly formed little ear lay unveiled in my hand, trailing its pale green silk in a sheen of beauty. This was my corn doll. I made a bed of the husks in a choice spot among the corn stalks and decorated this little bower with Michaelmas daisies. But if I left the doll in its nest overnight and came the next day, there was almost always disappointment, for the little fairy doll would be withered and dry.

Another doll was an overgrown crook neck summer squash whose eyes, nose and mouth I had outlined by pushing straight pins into beaded lines. This doll wore a long baby dress that had seen better days, and was wrapped in a square of muslin, a flour sack that had been ripped open and the advertisement washed off. This golden squash doll cuddled in my arms; I had picked it for its shape.

Another doll was a bundle of stiff, dry rattling weeds, tied with a length of binder twine I had found in the straw stack back of the corral. I pulled the weeds up from the ground, shook the dirt from the white threadlike roots, packed the plants close together and tied them tightly. The roots made a nice looking head of hair. The branches made a bushy skirt so stiff the doll could stand alone. It had no face: that was left to the imagination.

This doll was a big sister to the vegetable baby in swaddling clothes. I played with them down by the gooseberry bushes in a cleared place outlined with stones, or else I kept house in the corn bin when it was empty.

We also made dolls of the large white trumpet blossoms of the Jimson weed which we found along the banks of the wash and among the sand dunes. Fitting several together, one inside the other, made a ruffled skirt that would stand alone. We arranged our graceful white dolls, which stood eight inches tall, on a smooth sandy place like fancy ladies at a ball. Little straight sticks pushed into the sand were their partners.

When I was nine years old, I went on a trip with the folks to the new settlement of Hunt. Father, mother, Evan, Wayne and I were in the wagon. The first day we got as far as Concho Flat and here we camped. So far as I could see there was not a drop of water in this wide empty place, but father knew that down in the bottom of a deep gully there was a spot called "the seeps." I went with him when he took the team down to drink. We found a large, heavy wooden packing box turned upside down in the gully. Pa removed the box, revealing a pool of clear water, cool and sweet. First we each had a big drink from the cup we had with us. How good it tasted! Then we filled two buckets to take back to camp. Now the horses drank. They souped up the greater part of what remained of the water, and then we replaced the box cover. By morning there would be a fresh supply and all evidence of our having disturbed the spot would have disappeared.

The next day we arrived at Hunt and received a warm welcome from Aunt Ida Udall and her family. The youngsters in this settlement had devised a game fashioned after the life of their elders. This was cattle country, so the children played with flocks and herds. Some of their toy livestock were in corrals neatly fenced with little cedar twigs. Some were scattered out on the plain, which was a smooth stretch of sand in the bottom of a small draw. All the stock was white. Each little animal was the vertebra from some deceased calf, sheep, or other animal whose skeleton had been picked by vultures, cleaned by ants and bleached by sunshine. I recall with what amazement I viewed this spread.

At home we played many games, but One-Of-Cat was our favorite ball game. A battered old tin pan hung on a high board fence at a height where a well pitched ball would bring forth a loud clang from the pan. This simple gong did away with the catcher and umpire. If the ball was thrown hard, it would bounce off the fence and back to the pitcher. If the pitched ball sounded the gong, it meant a strike. Only one base was used. The batter, on a hit, ran to base and back, announcing his arrival at home base by banging the pan with the bat. If the pitcher could get the ball and throw it to the pan ahead of the runner, the sound of the gong announced that the runner was out.

The Larsons, in the winter, gathered of an evening around the fire-place and mother read aloud to us. Her fingers kept her steel knitting needles clicking even while she read. The book or magazine was propped up where the light from the coal oil lamp fell on the page. A child stood ready to turn a leaf once mother indicated she had read it. Sometimes she would say, "I'll have to stop while I turn the heel of the sock." Or she might say,

"I'll have to stop while I finish the toe, because I will have to count the stitches." This was a good time to ask questions, parch some corn, or replenish the fire.

Sometimes we worked on carpet rags. All wornout clothing had been washed and put into the ragbag, and when time permitted it was torn into inch-wide strips. Small hands could do the tearing, once mother had ripped up a garment and clipped it along the edge to the desired width. We earned five cents for every ball weighing one pound, but it took time to sew enough rags together to create a ball six inches in diameter. The rule for color in sewing rags was that every third rag must be black or some other dark color. Some people could afford to hire their rags sewed by the ladies of the Relief Society, who always kept their fingers busy sewing while they listened to the lesson at their meeting each Thursday afternoon.

On the walls of our front room were enlarged likenesses of beloved ancestors. Lois Pratt Hunt, my maternal grandmother, held the place of honor. Lace curtains, freshly ironed, crisp and stiff, hung at the two front windows. In front of the window near the fireplace stood the sewing machine. It was here, on the leaf of the machine, that mother did much of the writing in the extensive journal that occupied her spare moments, and recorded a literal history of life as lived in our little town.

The kitchen was attached to the front room. Against the west wall of the kitchen stood the big flour bin which held several hundred pounds of flour. A third of the top was flat, the rest was a lid that shut down at an angle. Fitted under the flat top was a shelf on which mother kept her flour sifter, rolling pin, breadboard and biscuit pan. These implements saw frequent use, for almost always we had buttermilk biscuits for breakfast.

In front of the cupboard stood the table. All meals were eaten here. Mother sat at the end of the table nearest the stove, father beside her, then came the big boys. The small children slid onto a bench between the table and the north wall.

The kitchen was not lined, so a 2 x 4 extended along the wall just above our heads. On this plank a small shelf was attached to hold the squat coal oil (kerosene) lamp that provided light on dark days and evenings. Midway in the north wall was a one-sash window, companion to the one by the stove. Sunny days were the rule in this land of little rain, so our kitchen wasn't dark. Besides, there was a screened door at each end to admit both light and air.

Between the table and the stove stood the water bench. It was a low one that held two water buckets, a wash basin and a soap dish. These buckets were filled at the well, not far from the kitchen door.\* Never did we have running water in our home. On a narrow shelf above the bench was kept the dipper we drank from. After using it, one put it back on the shelf, turned down, so no water stood in it to leave a lime deposit. If one could not drink all the water taken in the dipper, that left over was poured into the wash basin, not back into the bucket.

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\*Mother voiced one fear of the well. She was afraid that some morning when not fully awake, she might be drawing water and unthinkingly yawn, and her highly prized dentures, thus loosened, would fall into the depths of the well!

When I was half past three years old, father bought a fine range for the kitchen, paying \$71 for it. "That seems an enormous price!" Mother notes in her journal. This was a big event in our household. It was a Home Comfort, and attached to the left side was a copper tank that held more than five gallons of water. This was considered a wealth of hot water for family baths and other uses. The oven door let down instead of swinging open. This made a place to sit and warm one's back, a place to rest cold feet, a place to put pans of bread to rise.

It took a lot of bread to feed the Larsons. Mother baked several times a week, large fat loaves of salt rising bread. The big pan she used held six loaves. It was good bread and was especially tasty in milk. Our usual evening meal was a bowl of bread and milk. Salt rising bread spread with butter and topped with honey or sorghum made mighty good eating, and still does in my opinion. The honey was taken from our own bees and father made the sorghum. The butter was also a home product. Many homes had butter only occasionally. We were never without it.

As the seasons came and went, the interior of the kitchen grew more dingy. Mother decided that the three frame walls should be papered. The solid log wall of the original cabin always received a whitewash every time the front room did. Regular wallpaper was out of the question, because of cost and unavailability. Hard cash was not easy to come by. Legal tender of that sort was hoarded to pay taxes. Most transactions were an exchange of eggs, corn, beans and hay for supplies we did not raise ourselves.

What would we use for paper? Fresh issues of the *Deseret News!* This semi-weekly publication was put out by the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. It was read by the faithful to keep in touch with the world and local events as well as to receive the latest instructions from headquarters.

I was designated the paper hanger, though not more than a child. It seems to me that my sister Ellen would have nothing to do with the undertaking, since it outraged her sense of the fitness of things.

Conscientiously I cut out, fitted and pasted, using plain flour and water for paste. Clean pieces of newspaper, fitted neatly between and over 2 x 4's did indeed give the kitchen a fresh appearance.

This redecorating did more than freshen up the place. Now there was something to catch the eye of a mooning youngster, chewing food at mealtime, or warming shins by the stove. Stray bits of information were always being read aloud from the wall.

On winter evenings when night closed in early and we children sat around the table after supper, we often made a game of finding words on the wall. Whenever I lounged against the flour bin, this verse was directly before my eyes:

This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

I read it over and over. Each time it sounded better. It gave me a feeling of having struck something of real value. I read it aloud to mother and told her I liked it.

Mother was a well read woman. This was her response as I remember it: "Yes, Melissa, that is real nice. It was written by one of the greatest

writers that ever lived, William Shakespeare. When you get further in school you will learn about this man and the plays he wrote.”

Each time I have read *Hamlet* since, Polonius' speech calls to my mind a gangling, barelegged youngster reading lines from a newspaper pasted on a kitchen wall.

Every week there was the washing and the ironing. Rain water would have even a big help to mother, for the water from our well was heavily impregnated with lime, a fact not hinted at in its sparkling clearness. One funster said of it, “This water is so hard it rattles when poured into a glass.” To cut this hardness and make the water more effective as a cleaning agent, the top was cut from the can of lye and the wrapper removed, then mother just swished the can around in the wash boiler until the water felt slick. This was enough to cause a precipitation of the lime. It would rise to the top as the water got hot, forming a grey scum a half-inch thick. This was carefully skimmed off with a dipper before soap cut into bits was added to make suds.

So long as the weather permitted, the washing was done in the yard under the sweet apple tree. On a bench stood the two wooden tubs, one to suds in, one to rinse in. When we children came home for lunch on Wednesday, if school was in session, we would put water from the well in the two tubs and fill the wash boiler on the old stove. Sunshine would take the chill off the water in the tubs and a fire in the stove would heat the boiler. Mother would have the washing under way by the time our classes for the afternoon were over and we came home to help.

Mother washed on Wednesday and ironed on Friday. She ironed on a pad made from an old blue army blanket folded four times and covered with an old sheet. This she spread on the kitchen table. She used three sad irons that she handled with a thick pad, like a pot holder, to keep her hand from being blistered by the heat. The irons were kept hot in a sort of tray that fitted down close to the fire when the front lids were removed from the kitchen stove.

She changed irons often, which meant frequent trips between table and stove and also meant keeping a steady fire going. We tested the iron's heat with a wet finger. A sharp sizz meant a hot iron.

When Ellen and I were old enough to iron, three more irons were acquired. They had detachable wooden handles that required no pad. We also got an ironing board. When we returned from school on Friday, mother would be ironing and then we could take over and finish the job.

Mother always kept Thursday free for Relief Society meeting which convened at two p.m. the year around. She served as President of the Snowflake Relief Society for sixteen years, having received her appointment when I was a baby.

Most of the older children did errands to help Mother with her duties in this capacity and in due time I helped her too. One of my earliest recollections is of being in a Relief Society meeting in the little brick building that abounded with needles and thread, thimbles, quilting frames, carpet rags and seats with cushions on them. The Stake President, Sister West, was there with her young son. We two youngsters sat on the floor behind our

mothers' chairs. We tried to sew carpet rags as everyone else was doing. I could thread the needle but I could not make a knot on the end of my thread. The lad, being somewhat older, proceeded to show me how to wrap the thread around the end of a finger, roll it with the thumb and draw it to a knot. He made a masterful, though dingy, knot. And I had learned how.

Going to ring the bell to remind the dear women that it was Relief Society day was a big assignment for a little girl, and it was spooky. One went into the big church house to do it. On a weekday it seemed especially large, empty and full of echoes. I remember that Aunt Sarah's Frances went with me one time for moral support. It took our combined strength to open the large door. Then we crept up the stairs to the gallery where the bell rope hung. The first few swings of the clapper were jerky, but then we got the rhythm of it. As the deep-toned dong-ding-dong sounded, we were proud that we were able to send the summons.

As a small child I was eager to learn to read. I could pick out words in the newspaper while still young enough to enjoy sitting on mother's lap, for I recall how she held up the *Deseret News* so I could point out to her the words I knew.

I learned my letters before I entered school. They are not imprinted on my mind as a line of perfectly written capitals and small letters as one sees them at the top of the front blackboard in a schoolroom. Instead, my mind pictures them as they appeared on a child's set of blocks. The first sixteen letters are in rows of four each, the remaining ones straggling off in an odd way, since they were on the reverse side of the blocks and not in order.

A B C D  
E F G H  
I J K L  
M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z &

Starting to school was a big occasion, not only because I was eligible to go with the older children in answer to the deep toned bell, but because there was a change in centuries! Even the youngsters talked about how it was going to be hard to remember to write 1900 instead of 1899.

When the first day of school arrived in the fall, it was sunny and warm. I was wearing shoes and stockings in honor of the occasion. My blond hair was braided so tight I could hardly grin.

Always I had worn bobbed hair, but Mother had promised that I could have braids when I went to school. We had been working at it during the summer. It was too short to do much with, but by braiding a bit of store string into the front braids, they could be made to reach to the back two. These in turn were so short they stuck out like little thumbs on either side of my head. Nonetheless, I had braids and I was happy.

Ellen was piloting me to school, not that I didn't know the way, but I had always hidden behind her in new situations. Aunt Sarah's Ita joined us and Aunt Belle's Charles came across the street to walk with us. We met other children as we made our way to the schoolhouse near the Church.

This rustic building in which school was held was known as the Old Relief Society Hall. It was built in 1881, three years after the founding of

Snowflake, with funds raised by the town women. In addition to being their meeting house, it was a recreation hall, a frame addition having been built onto it to serve as a stage for local dramatics. Various Church auxiliary organizations also convened here. In 1889 the Snowflake Stake Academy came into existence and the ladies of the Relief Society gave this building to the Stake to house the classes in higher learning. Later, when the Academy had a building of its own, the primary grades used this log house. And this is where I started school. As beginners, my class must have been one of the last to start school in this rather primitive structure. It was torn down soon after 1900 to make way for the Social Hall that was erected on this site.

In due course of time I passed through the various grades. I looked forward with happy anticipation to entering high school. The large building erected by the Church to house the Snowflake Stake Academy stood up on the hill on the street running south from the Larson home, a walk of three blocks. With its three stories, it looked imposing. The upper windows offered a commanding view of the town and its surroundings.

One local girl entered the freshman class with me, but I did not lack for other girl associates for this was a Stake school and students from all the surrounding towns attended it. Lydia Savage from Woodruff, Ada Peterson from Pinedale and I made a happy trio.

I went to Woodruff, I recall, for a little visit with Lydia, and was made to feel right at home by her folks. We girls created ourselves new print dresses cut by the popular princess pattern. Ruth Savage, an older sister, helped us fit them. Mine was blue and I was much pleased with it. We put to practical use the lessons learned in our class in freshman sewing.

The water used in the homes in Woodruff was dipped from the irrigation ditch, its source the Little Colorado River. A flash flood caused it to be red with silt. To settle it, a little milk was poured into a bucketful of water. This was the first time I had seen this done. The result was not sparkling water, but when poured into a glass it was a bit foggy instead of red.

In September 1910 my second year of high school work started off with very high hopes. During the summer, a new addition was completed to the Academy building. This provided a large assembly room, a library and an additional classroom. I could hardly wait to avail myself of the opportunities offered. I had never used a library of any kind.

My pals from the nearby towns returned. More new fields of study opened to me — geometry, general history, rhetoric and more sewing and cooking. I was very happy. Then tragedy struck! The Academy building burned!

We had used it with the new facilities less than two months. I stood in the street by our house in the chill of early morning and watched the flames roaring across the roof of the beloved school. It seemed that all my hope for the future was going up in smoke, this 24th day of October at 3:30 a.m. There was no water up on that hill. There was no fire fighting equipment in the town. Nothing could be done to save the building.

Back in my bed I shook with nervous chill and cold dry sobs, while this wail ran through my mind: "What will we do? What will we do?"

I had not taken into account the resourcefulness of the pioneer leaders of the community. They had faced trying times before. Undaunted they

attacked this problem. Most everything was saved from the lower floors by the fast work of eager helpers.

Over the weekend, workers took the desks, books, equipment, etc. down to the Church and the large Social Hall, and classrooms were set up in those two buildings. Sewing machines went to the Relief Society hall, cooking equipment to a nearby residence. The science laboratory and woodworking shop were housed in the dance hall above Flake's Store.

Work began immediately on a new school building. A few rooms in the basement of this were finished so that some classes could use them by my senior year, but I never attended school in the completed building made of rich-colored hewn stone that now graces Academy Hill.

To me my sophomore year was a busy, happy, profitable one. Perhaps the outstanding experience I had was playing the part of an Irish washer-woman in the school play, entitled "The Merry Cobbler," a comedy, directed by a member of the faculty.

Standing in the wings on opening night, waiting for my cue, I was a plumpish middle-aged female with a touseled mop of stiff red hair. I was plenty scared, but with a pillow fore and aft to round out my spare frame, no agitation was visible. I was to enter and bump into the cobbler. This I did, but with more vigor than the script called for. It was a collision. I sat down hard. The audience roared. I stood up. The roar grew louder. The back of my dress had caught under my rear pillow. The laughter finally died down and we got on with the play. It was so well received that the director decided to put it on the stage in Winslow. I found the following account in Mother's journal:

May 1, 1911. J. G. Barrett took the play, The Merry Cobbler down the country. Evan, Louise, Jennie, Thalia, Lafayette and Ethel of the cousins were in it. Also members of the band went. Had a May Day dinner on the rocks this side of Holbrook. Went to Winslow on the train. Had the time of our lives, stayed at a big hotel.

The last two sentences are no overstatement. Never had I ridden on a train. Never before had I stayed in a hotel.

The fall of 1911 I began what I thought would be my last year in high school, for at that time the Snowflake Stake Academy was a three-year school. The authorities realized that more schooling should be provided and a movement for a fourth year of instruction was being agitated.

It was in the fall of 1911 that Newel H. Comish joined the staff of the Academy. I registered for his class in English Literature. He was a hard task master. You came to his class prepared or you got no grade worth recording. My grades were good. I enjoyed school work and put in a lot of time with my books. But I managed to have time to be president of my class, teach the junior girls in the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, take part in the school play, go stepping with young galahads, and even have a few dates with the new teacher.

In the fall of 1912 a fourth year of high school work was offered at the Academy. Students were urged to register for this additional training. A fee of \$25 was asked to help defray expenses. The response was a bit disappointing, only six students signed up for the work: Iris Flake, Nellie Flake,

Lydia Savage, Ernest Shumway, Albert Smith, Louise Larson. Lydia left school to be married before the end of the school year.

I worked at my books conscientiously, though romance was playing a rather big role in my life. Newel Comish was a regular caller at the Larson home.

My graduation from high school was somewhat overshadowed by my coming marriage. I will give you mother's report of it:

1913. April 23. Louise's class graduated at night, her speech, as president, was The Mormon Ideal, our view in regard to education. She, Ernest Shumway and Albert Smith were the four year high school graduates. Iris and Nellie Flake finished in Domestic Art and Science.

Mr. Comish sent to Albuquerque for a bouquet of white roses for the Commencement exercises and red carnations for the evening.

She remodeled her last year's graduating dress as she is preparing wedding garments and did not care to use them beforehand.

Another entry in mother's journal:

1913. May 3. Louise left her home and parents to become the wife of Newel H. Comish and live way off in Idaho. The thought I won't have her any more seems terrible, but that seems to be the way of the world. They went in the mail auto. It was a cold, windy day.

We were married in the Salt Lake Temple May 8 and went immediately to Franklin, Idaho, where we lived on the Comish family farm during the summer. The first letter that I wrote home from Idaho was found among mother's papers at the time of her death in 1945:

Franklin, Idaho  
May 11, 1913

Dear Ones at Home,

I am now in this beautiful land of the north where cool breezes blow, clear streamlets flow, and all nature is smiling and green. This is indeed a garden spot, well deserving of the name, Cache Valley. Trees; trees, everywhere and grass all over; why the streets here are covered with a thicker carpet of grass than the lawns of Snowflake can boast. Everything is in full blast and garden stuff will soon be on.

We left Salt Lake City at 4:05 p.m. Saturday. Br. Bond was at the station and saw us off. He was on his way home. Mr. Jack Welch (one of Mr. C's classmates) and his girl was on the train, also President Widtsoe of the A.C. I was made acquainted, and felt highly honored. The President asked us to come to Logan and eat with him. (a great thing!)

Arriving here near nine o'clock we were greeted with a generous shower of rice coming from the Comish fraternity. There was his sister Jennie, sisters-in-law Margaret and Bertha, niece, Reata and brothers Joseph, George, Myron, William and brother-in-law Will Robinson.

They were certainly a jolly bunch, but were somewhat surprised at my size, because judging from my picture and Mr. Comish always writing of me as his "little girl," they expected someone very young and small. But they soon got over their surprise, disappointment or pleasure or whatever it was and escorted us with all due honor

to his Mother's home. I was certainly happily surprised in her, because she had been pictured to me as an old lady crippled up with rheumatism. She is well and spry as can be, hasn't any grey hair and very few wrinkles. Her eyes are beautiful brown. She is nice and pleasant and being much like Mother in build, I felt right at home. We had a very jolly party with a nice lunch which ended about 12 with the presentation of a bundle containing a pair of knitted baby shoes, a didy, paper of small safety pins and shirt. It was killing!

I didn't feel a bit bashful among those many strange boys. I knew they were my brothers and in order to get the most out of them, it was up to me to become acquainted. My success was remarkable. They treated me so nice.

Today is Sunday so we went to church. The church house far surpasses ours in everything but size, I believe, and the difference there is small. Mr. Comish gave them a fine talk, occupying all the time. Jennie and Will, also Margaret and George were here to supper, it was just like Sunday night meals at home. I felt like I was at home because they treated me so nice.

Mr. Comish is certainly royal, he treats me like a princess and I am as happy as a king. If ever there was a pair well mated, we consider ourselves as one. We thoroughly understand one another and our greatest delight comes from serving one another. I don't think I will be homesick at all. There is plenty of work, good friends, and bright prospects. And I consider that all one needs to make for happiness.

Now dear mother don't worry about me because these folks treat me just fine and I am delighted with my many brothers, sisters and mother.

You and the boys and all write me good cheery letters and I will be content. My cup of joy will then be full.

Well goodby and much love to you and best wishes to inquiring friends. Will send you a picture some time next week if they prove satisfactory. Happy summer to you,

Yours with love,  
Mrs. N. H. Comish  
Franklin, Idaho

When the summer of 1914 was over, we went by train to the middle-west where my husband became a graduate student at the University of Chicago. We lived in a room on the fourth floor of a walk-up, a room with one window and a two-burner gas plate. Although the other renters were very kind to us and I was curious about city life and eager to learn. Chicago was teeming with people, just too, too many people, and I used to walk in Jackson Park trying to find solitude. It was a far cry from the great open spaces of Arizona. But that is another story, not yet written.



## THE COURSHIP

Patricia Rasmussen Eaton

It was nearly seven. Uncanny the way she could sense that particular hour even without looking and even on days that were not Thursday. The library was quiet as always. The afternoon people had been and gone, and the evening people had not yet come. She glanced at the round clock above the doorway. He had four minutes before she would consider him late. And she must now decide whether to look up as he passed or remain intent upon her book. It was all right either way. People in a library acknowledged every minor disturbance. Men watched women and women watched men; it intimated nothing. So tonight she would glance and even smile, but fleetingly — unconsciously. Then she could hear his footsteps: she smoothed her skirt, she touched her hair, she looked at the book in her lap.

They had always come on Thursday, but she doubted that even the library staff was aware that they had always come on Thursdays. Sometimes during long hours of filing she even doubted that he had ever noticed, but he had spoken twice and often smiled, and surely he must realize that their joint arrivals were past the point of coincidence. It was almost as if they were there to meet each other. But of course this was not so, and she admitted that it was not.

Indeed, she had learned to admit a number of things, but though she admitted some things openly, others were admitted only to herself. She was thirty as of last August. The girls at work had teased her a little on her birthday, had said she must be pretty choosy to have not yet found a man who was good enough, but they were generally quite kind. Turning thirty, she supposed, meant that she was after all an old maid. She quietly admitted this. She did not, however, confess that she had never had a suitor or a date for that matter. Her mother had had a friend who had a son, and twice while she was in high school they had both come for dinner. Once the young people had gone for a walk, and the next time he had a new sports car, and they had gone for a ride and then to a drive-in for cokes. But they never really hit it off very well. They went together because of "circumstances" and that was all. During the walk, not a word was spoken. He had called it a nice quiet walk, but she knew he meant it had been quite dull. She also knew that she was quite plain.

When she had been thirteen and others, too, had been quite plain, her

mother had told her it was the gawky stage and not to worry; she would outgrow it. But though the removal of braces from their teeth turned some girls into little beauties, she remained awkward and self-conscious. From high school on her mother kept quiet about her looks except to say that she looked better *with* her glasses, because it gave her face a distinctive feature. Even without her glasses there was nothing really ugly about her. Indeed, everything was perfectly ordinary — too ordinary, and people were constantly forgetting they had ever met her.

But the man too was ordinary. Often when he entered the reading room his glasses were steamed, and as he removed them to wipe them clean, she saw that he was more attractive with them on.

She had not been aware, until he looked up, that she had been staring at him for some time. He was nervously adjusting his tie as he often did, and she jerked her head down too quickly to acknowledge a friendly smile. Furious with herself for acting so stupidly, she ached to look up and return the smile but could not. Perhaps he too was shy. Perhaps all he needed was an encouraging smile, and he would sit closer next time and start a conversation. What a ninny she was! Did girls who were outgoing have any inclination of what it was to be timid, to have people forever commenting on how very quiet you are — still water runs deep — but know they really mean that you're not much fun?

Cookie at work spoke easily to men and women alike. She liked Cookie though, and even confided in her a little and asked advice about men. Cookie had suggested a padded bra once, but she had not the courage to purchase one in an expensive store where the saleslady insisted on attending you so closely, and cheap ones were too obviously pointed. She knew it would take more than that anyway. Cookie was nice but was, after all, not very perceptive, and she put so much emphasis on a full bosom simply because she had one.

But why had she jerked away so nervously? The smile had been warm, almost personal, and she had disregarded it entirely. If he would only smile again she would smile back immediately. Maybe, especially if he was shy, she should smile first, or at least do something. Maybe if she walked somewhere he would notice, but there were not many places to go. She did not want to go to the rest room, and the drinking fountain would take her in the opposite direction. This left only the magazine rack, and the trip would require her to walk directly in front of him. She hated to walk in front of *anyone*, but it wasn't far, and on the way back the magazine would occupy her hands. Besides, it might be her last chance.

With the decision made, she quickly stood before further thought could frighten her into not going. She felt shaky, but once up, was obligated to move, so she stepped toward the wall where the magazines were. He did not look up as she passed, but continued to fiddle with his tie. She was relieved but disappointed. Cookie had said that she really poked out in this particular blouse and she hoped that he would notice. She wondered if after she was past he had looked at her the way she had seen other men look at other women, but she supposed not. However, on the way back, he looked up slowly, and as she approached his chair he moved his briefcase

unnecessarily out of her way. She thanked him. He smiled. She smiled. He nodded. He adjusted his tie, and they both smiled.

When she was again seated, she was excited, but disgusted with the beating of her heart over such an insignificant incident. She felt somehow degraded at spending her entire evening at the library, and other evenings too, thinking of this man she did not know, and attaching such exaggerated importance to small bits of recognition. But he had recognized her all the same, and she could not help the feeling inside her.

When she had finished flipping through the magazine and had set it aside, he was standing at the window as were two other men, and several people looked from where they sat at the winter's first snow. Huge flakes filled the sky and settled on the panes in slow motion. She had no boots, but it was beautiful and romantic. He turned and they smiled, he pointed to the snow, and he grimaced a private grimace for her eyes only. She liked the look on his face and tingled.

Everyone went back to his reading, but she could not.

It was almost nine, and since she walked home, she never stayed later. She somehow felt that tonight would be the night, and if she left, it might mean leaving it all behind, and all the warm smiles would be for nothing. But if he had timed her departure as she had his arrival, he might think it strange if she did not go, and if he was not aware of what time she usually left, he was probably not interested anyway. Perhaps he was waiting for her to rise. Then he would softly speak and she would answer in the quiet room. But others would hear and think they were friends or maybe lovers.

Her anxiety had made her almost faint. Her hands perspired and she needed air. She simply must get up. If he followed fine, and if not, that was that and she would not allow herself to return again on Thursdays. She looked at the snow, at the man, and at the library walls. She started to gather her things, slowly, to postpone her leaving and possibly ending her romance.

At 9:15 she pulled on her coat. Her fingers trembled and would not move the buttons into the holes, so she picked up her things and started out. In the huge glass doors she saw him rise, and she started to shake and her stomach turned. She would have to slow down or he could not catch up, but her steps were uncertain, and the heat rushed to her face. She needed the outside air. If she stayed longer in the stuffy building she would surely faint.

But when she finally pushed the doors open, the relief was only temporary, and even when she stepped into the cold, she felt queasy. Perhaps it wasn't worth it after all. She was really not that unhappy living alone. She paused to pull on her gloves and button her coat, when the doors opened again. She swallowed and fumbled with her things.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello."

"It's cold."

"It's very cold," she replied and turned to face him. He had a nice face, and she was happier than she had ever been. But he was standing so close — too close. She could see his whiskers even in the dim light, and she was

sure she would be sick. She swallowed and could not speak and was embarrassed.

"It's very cold," he repeated nervously as though he could think of nothing else to say.

The heat in her face became more intense. Her hands were damp against the fur lining of her gloves, her back perspired, and she was sure that he could see the droplets on her forehead in spite of the cold, and was humiliated – unbearably so – and frightened.

If she could just think of something to say. Anything at all. But her lips would not move, her eyes would not move, her mind would not move.

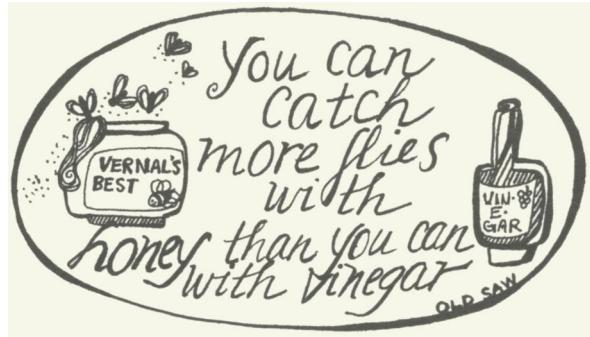
"You don't have any boots. Perhaps you'd like a ride." His voice was uncertain and he toyed with the top button of his coat, but even this did not calm her. She was aware that she was trembling all over, and hated herself for trembling, for shaking, for fumbling and blushing.

"Thank you," she stammered. My God! What was the matter with her? Tears were welling and she knew she was red and ugly. "That is . . . I mean, thank you but I have a friend," she finally said. "A friend . . . He picks me up . . . always . . . on every Thursday." She stared at him not believing what she had uttered, and hoping he did not.

"I'm terribly sorry," he mumbled as he turned and went quickly down the steps. He dropped a glove but did not turn to pick it up.

"My God," she said again weakly and sank onto a step. He disappeared into the snow, and she put her head in her hands. The heat left her face and she shivered. When people walked by she pretended to be waiting for someone.





## THE MATTRESS

Georgina Alvillar Wibert

I look around me and I laugh. I am caught by the interplay of light and color upon the chandelier. From long ago I see a child's triumph. In one dangling crystal I see her face . . .

I remember the hatred that made my eyes burn and sting when I gazed around the two-room tenement apartment where I lived with my family. How I despised those ugly walls which had at one time been calcimined and fresh, but now were fingernail deep with dirt and grease. I would spend many hours digging into the grime, then cleaning my nails upon my skirt. I liked to sit by the window and gaze at the few trees that gave a touch of life to the otherwise bleak and barren sidewalks below. My view was usually obstructed by the grime-caked window screens, so I developed a trick of inserting a straight pin into the grime and wiggling it until one of the clogged holes came clear. This would go on, hole after hole, hour after hour, until my fingers tired of the work. Then I would stand back and look with pride through an eight-by-five inch square to the outside.

There were two hideous common toilets used by fifty-four people housed in nine apartments. My own family numbered eleven. Then there was the rat-infested monster called the garbage bin. It was our misfortune that both toilets and the garbage bin were right beside our apartment. The garbage bin was two stories high and accommodated the refuse of the entire building. The collectors came about once every three or four months. The toilets were to be cleaned once a month. The arrangement was that the tenants who lived directly below us were to clean them in exchange for rent. But as it happened, they were cleaned less often than the garbage was collected. The bowls were always clogged with the newspaper we used for tissue and there was always waste from the effluent on the floor. Being shoeless I entered those slimy places with dread. Worse yet, the ill-used doors were without latch.

There were these things and many others, but in my eyes there was nothing that could set my heart to pounding with such force, nor my blood rushing with such velocity, nor my whole being filled with such fierce hatred, than the sight of the family mattress. It was about six inches thick and six feet long. The outer material had at one time been white with blue stripes. It was an ordinary mattress, although it had doubtless had a harder

life than most. I don't recall when my family first acquired it, but it is safe to assume it was given us by someone more fortunate than we.

In the kitchen there were four pieces of furniture: a table, a wood stove, a cupboard forever filled with cockroaches, and a stand with an enamel wash basin. In the other room there was a convertible sofa, two chests of drawers, and the mattress, which at night was laid flat on the floor for all those who could not fit on the sofa. Besides my parents, there were my four sisters, four brothers, and myself.

During the day the mattress was rolled up and placed against the wall. In this position it appeared innocent enough, provided no one came too close. But it was at night that the true character of that infernal mattress could be observed.

To begin with, it was no longer a blue and white striped design. It was almost solid black. This was primarily because of the hundreds of bed bugs my mother had squashed against it. The other mothers in the neighborhood spent hours pulling lice individually from their daughters' hair. If the louse was alive at the time of its capture, it would make a little clicking sound when the woman squashed it between her nails. But my mother was different. She spent her time squashing the bed bugs against the mattress. I could never bring myself to do it in the daytime. But I know I did it at night, because my arms and legs were streaked with blood when I awakened.

I had always believed the mattress to be most sanitary for I had often witnessed my mother when not busy with bugs, pouring boiling water around the edges of the mattress where she believed the bugs nested. At these times the apartment was filled with evil odors. But even this was better than the times she doused the mattress with kerosene. Food and drink had also been spilled on it, since when rolled up it was used for sitting. But I never sat on it.

At night the shaping of the mattress required some skill. I say shaping, but perhaps the word is reshaping. Every night there was the ritual of rearranging the matted cotton lumps to suit our bodies. It was rather difficult, for there were so many bodies and so little cotton. Most of the lumps were pushed to both ends of the mattress and were used as pillows, while the middle part was flat on the floor. This was all right for the older people; they could rest their heads on the lumps and muffle out the sounds of the rats chasing each other around the bedroom floor. But I was one of the younger ones, and although I was cuddled and half-way warm, my position was right in the middle of the mattress, between two lumps. So I spent many sleepless nights. My hatred grew as I lay awake listening to the rats play.

Partly to lull myself to sleep, but mainly because it gave me comfort and much pleasure, I used to conjure dreams about lovely beds with marvelously luxurious blankets. Always in my dreams, while lying upon the sweetly fragrant and fabulous bed, I would fall asleep and wet the bed. Never were there scoldings or beatings, but instead strong and exceedingly gentle hands would clothe me in warm, soft garments and tuck me into a dry bed more luxurious and desirable than the other. This was repeated over and over again, and I taxed my brain trying to imagine a more won-

derful bed than the last. Inevitably I would fall asleep, and inevitably I would wake up cold and wet.

One morning I awoke to find the stench unbearable. Looking down, I discovered that there were worms crawling in and out of the mattress through some of the holes in its lining. As it happened, my brother and I were the only ones home. Together, hurriedly, we tied kerchiefs around our faces, and bound cloths about our arms and hands. Then we rolled the mattress up and tied it with some rope. Gagging, we dragged that odious burden across the apartment and out into the open. Our intention was to throw it into the garbage bin. This gruesome project we could not carry through, however, for the mouth of the bin was too small. After some consideration, we decided to take it back into the apartment and fling it out the window into the alley below.

We were just children, and the mattress was very heavy. After a long struggle, brushing sweat from our eyes, we flung it out the window. There was a thud. It bounced only once.

The next morning we awoke in a cheerful mood even though we had slept upon the floor with nothing but newspaper for padding. Immediately my brother and I went to the window to look into the alley so that we might rest our eyes upon that hateful mattress and feel triumphant again. We looked, in spite of the nausea it evoked and dreaded nightmares it was to give me for many years. But as we looked down, we could not see it. The mattress was gone. We burst out laughing. Oh, how we laughed! All that morning long we laughed, and that night, huddled upon newspapers, we laughed again and again. We laughed so much that our stomachs hurt and tears came to our eyes. Someone had watched as we struggled with it and finally heaved it out the window. We laughed because someone had actually coveted our mattress.

# REVIEWS

*Edited by Davis Bitton*



## FIDDLIN' AROUND IN ORDERVILLE, OR, A MORMON ON THE ROOF

**Richard Cracroft**

*The Order is Love.* By Carol Lynn Pearson. Provo: Trilogy Arts, 1971, 97 pp, \$1.98.

Carol Lynn Pearson, in her delightful musical, *The Order is Love*, has managed to put her finger on the pulse of Mormon history and discover a vigorous throb of universality which is at times sobering and at other times wonderfully funny. Mrs. Pearson manages to skirt the temptations of in-group narrowness inherent in the provinciality of her theme to produce a fast-moving, tuneful, funny, yet thought-provoking piece of hoarhound candy — a bitter-sweet morsel, not only of Mormondom but of Humanity.

Mrs. Pearson (supported by the modern sounds of Lex de Azevedo's score) is at her best. An experienced actress, a prize-winning playwright, and author of those widely read but uneven volumes of aphoristic verse, *Beginnings* and *The Search*, Mrs. Pearson seems to have found her *métier*. As is evident in all she undertakes, she has a remarkable sense of staging, cadence and timing, and the play seems to provide her dramatic sensibility with a rich opportunity to ask and probe the questions which interest her as a young and sensitive Mormon woman, keenly aware of the implications of change in traditional Mormon society.

In fact, change seems to be the subject of the musical, which is fraught with interest for Latter-day Saints. Evoking the in-the-world-yet-not-of-the-world tensions, *The Order is Love* becomes an examination of how the idealistic Saint in each of us battles, with uneven success, against the earth-bound Mortal which exerts itself so tenaciously to cloud our vision with uncertainty and ambiguity. The play allows the viewer an opportunity for more objective consideration of his own inner battle in an age when a man's Christianity is too often judged according to his rating as a PEST (Protestant Ethic Score Tabulation).

Within this dichotomy, Mrs. Pearson asks questions which are applicable to Latter-day Saints, and others as well. She considers the problem of the group vs. the individual and the nature (and the degree) of control by the group over the individual. She gently joshes at the tendency of many to equate habits of dress and customs with the timely, unchanging principles of the Gospel. She treats, in a mature and balanced manner, the problem of hypocrisy and the ambiguities associated with living according to absolutes in a world of compromise. The result of these questionings is a play which

can be enjoyed on many levels, a play which is far more sophisticated than the fragmented and generalized *Promised Valley* or such sentimental and in-group productions as *All In Favor*.

The story, framed by an *Our Town*-type stage manager, Ezra Cooper, takes place in Orderville, Utah, between 1885 and 1886, in a setting which Professor Leonard J. Arrington, in his brief introduction to the book, assures us is "authentic." Catherine Ann Russell and her ailing father arrive at Orderville and consecrate themselves to the Order, though the young, attractive and talented Catherine Ann is loath to do so. A romance soon springs up between Matthew Cooper, Ezra's son, and the lovely Catherine Ann, who incites the previously docile Matthew to bits and fits of rebellion against the rules of the Order, though he never wavers in his allegiance. After several attempts to bring about minor reforms in the Order, reforms which would soften the harshness of life in the struggling village, Catherine returns to the civilized parlors of her uncle's Salt Lake City home, only to realize that her love for Matthew is greater than her own desires for culture and refinement. After the death of her father, who had remained in Orderville, Catherine Ann returns, only to find the Order dissolved, destroyed by the selfishness of its members. A chastened Catherine Ann and a grown-up Matthew are reunited as Ezra Cooper, *Camelot*-like, recounts his now-vanquished dreams for an Orderville which he had envisioned as the embodiment of a "world where every man's a brother." He sings:

I saw a world where every man would share.  
A world where not one soul  
Was left alone and cold,  
A world where every man  
Was loved, and clothed, and fed . . . .  
A little more love  
Will make it happen

Young Matthew and Catherine Ann join with him in harmony, as Orderville lapses into chaos, to sing more hopefully than prophetically, that,

A little more love  
Will make it come true  
.....  
A little less me,  
A little more you  
.....  
A little more love.

Through the play, Mrs. Pearson skillfully avoids taking sides. Catherine Ann never becomes the stereotyped bluestocking. Nor do the leaders of the Order become symbols of bigotry and tyranny. Nor do the outcroppings of destructive selfishness receive unfeeling, scathing attention. Mrs. Pearson writes of human failings with a mellowness and understanding that humanize and universalize the whole, an uncommon thing in the spotty history of Mormon letters. Mrs. Pearson threads into the play the human motivations behind all the philosophical stances in the drama, so that the play becomes, if one wishes to view it as such, a much-needed lesson in tolerance and understanding. Besides comfortably couching the action in an aura of authentic Mormon background, Mrs. Pearson has woven into her play a de-

lightful pattern of humor, a humor organic and pertinent to the theme and momentum of the play. The first major line, spoken by Ezra Cooper, sets the tone: "If I was the devil, and I owned both Southern Utah and Hell — I'd live in Hell and rent out Southern Utah." He then rehearses the old Mormon joke about his call to Orderville: Brother Brigham had called him to assist in the founding of the town; Ezra, less than enthusiastic about the call, was told to go home and pray about it. Says Ezra: "So I went home and prayed about it — damn it!"

Thus Mrs. Pearson does a great deal of spading in the field of L.D.S.-Laughing-At-Ourselves, a field which has lain fallow too long. Her vehicle is often the odd couple, Brother and Sister Alonzo Burrows. Alonzo is the town tippler and his wife the town shrew. Provided by Ezra with a convenient escape barrel in front of the Cooper home, Alonzo pauses in flight from his wife's tongue to make occasional pronouncements, such as his rejoicing that at death he will rest from his wife's tongue. He pauses, then cries, "Oh, no! I just realized — she's eternal!" Sister Burrows has her turn, as well, and comments, after hearing how much the "early brethren" had to endure, "The sisters had to endure just as much as the brethren did. *Plus* they had to endure the brethren!" Whether it be that of saucy Francis Isadore, the poet laureate of the community, or that of the incessantly arguing blacksmiths, Brother Hill and Brother Sorenson, the infectious humor seems at once both Mormon and universal.

Mrs. Pearson bravely and artistically centralizes some of the major conflicts in Catherine Ann herself. It is she who shames Matthew into his slight but significant rebellion against the society by urging him to procure a new pair of non-regulation pants from the big and corrupt city of Nephi, from whence he returns to introduce not only the new pants but also the wicked practice of dancing face to face. It is she who insists that pleasures in life often arise from things that we really don't need; and it is she who urges the brethren to provide new tablecloths for the community dining tables. ("Dining should be an experience of pleasure," she insists.) And it is Catherine Ann who ultimately demands a piano and all that such a purchase would signify for the community.

Catherine Ann is denied the community piano — and the tablecloths — by the struggling and practical though sympathetic elders, who see the impending reforms as a threat from the outside world — a kind of microcosm of the same problems which the Saints in Great Salt Lake City had already been confronting for fifteen years since the influx of traffic from the railroad. Mrs. Pearson introduces others who show more blatantly the problem of selfishness in a commune, but it is Catherine Ann who points out that the Order "doesn't make allowances for the fact that everybody is different. And the Lord *must* have meant them to be different." On leaving the Order, she complains that "It's an awful place, where you can never rise very high 'cause too many people are holding you down."

Typical of the balance of the play, Catherine Ann receives a well phrased answer from her father as she takes leave of him and Orderville. He wisely asks his daughter to remember always that eternity is a long time in which to learn to play the piano and the violin and "a dozen other instruments. . . . But the Lord sort of ear-marked this earth life for one

special learning to come first. And that's learning how to play yourself. How well you learn that, Catherine Ann, determines the kind of tunes you'll be playin' for a long, long time." In this fashion Mrs. Pearson balances the endless tension between humanism, embraced by so much of the philosophy of Mormonism, and eternalism, likewise insisted on in Mormon theology, but she gentles each argument. Thus the viewer empathizes with the ideals which led to the founding of the Order and thrills to Ezra's heartfelt statement that while living the Order "I never felt so warm, so big in all my life." Yet the viewer similarly appreciates the human foibles which led to the Order's dissolution, the ideas made vivid in the number rendered by the Orderville congregation near the end of the play, wherein a stirring counterpart is set up between the public prayers uttered by all and the private and selfish thoughts uttered by individuals:

ALL

Help us to remember  
That all are Thy children  
And equal in Thy sight.

3rd MAN

(*Raising head*)

Though it does seem unfair that  
A skilled telegrapher like me  
Shouldn't get any more reward  
Than a mere weed puller  
Like Brother Stolworthy.

Lest these probings prove too repelling to those who dare look for entertainment in a musical, let me hasten to add that the play is highly enjoyable, full of laughter and poignancy and good music. The story is simple and the production of the play seems very adaptable to the requirements of ward and stake theaters. Audiences love it. Children are delighted; teen-agers identify strongly with the youthful protagonists, and adults (ranging from Iron-Rodders to Liahonas) find it vastly entertaining. Sell-out audiences made the production the high point of the annual Mormon Arts Festival at Brigham Young University this past spring. The music has been recorded on a high-quality record and is available (as is the book, at \$1.98) for \$3.95 from Trilogy Arts, Box 843, Provo, Utah.

*The Order is Love* is a promise of things to come. It blends some of the richness of Mormon culture with the fresh trends in "gentile" music and theater. In fact, the play reflects the obvious influence of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Though a subtitle of "Fiddlin' Around in Orderville, or, a Mormon on the Roof" might be suggesting the relationship too strongly, there is, nonetheless, an influence seen in a number of parallels. The "Tradition" number, at the beginning of *Fiddler*, for example, is strongly reminiscent of the "Love Thy Neighbor" number in *Order*, and several other *Fiddler* numbers and their positions in the play are parallel to those in *Order*. Certainly the theme of a conservative religious body confronting (as infrequently as possible, but irrevocably) the onrush of "gentile" economics and materialistic "progress" lends itself to comparison at several points. However, a comparison of *Fiddler* and *Order* emphasizes, above all, the greater depth and breadth of Jewish tradition and the brilliance of Jewish humor

in dealing with the plight of the friendless Jew. Ezra Cooper, no matter how hard he tries, cannot be a goodnatureedly irreverant Tevye and remain a leader in Orderville. And while the poignancy of *The Order is Love* lies partially in the nostalgic failure of a devout people to reach an ideal, the effect cannot quite approach the *Weltschmerzen* which arises in *Fiddler* from the dissolution of Tevye's family as they fatefully head, on their way to America, for the Warsaw ghetto, evoking recognition in the viewer of the Jew's impending fate at the hands of his fellow human beings.

*The Order is Love* resembles *Fiddler on the Roof* in many ways, but a comparison reminds us that it takes a great deal of history to create a bit of culture. In Carol Lynn Pearson's excellent play, however, Mormons may begin to be encouraged that there are still artistic stirrings among the Latter-day Saints, stirrings which should be encouraged, for the momentum could and hopefully will swirl to become much much more than a tempest in a postum-cup.

## LYRICS AND LOVE IN ORDERVILLE

A. Laurence Lyon

A review of the music of *The Order is Love*, a musical play by Carol Lynn Pearson, with music by Lex de Azevedo.

To write a musical play based on any church theme or motivate will inevitably invite comparison with the "Father of Us All," *Promised Valley*, written by Arnold Sundgard (lyrics) and Crawford Gates (music).

*Promised Valley* is the most successful musical in the history of the church in terms of popular acclaim and financial gain. Its popularity has been largely due to the memorable, tuneful music interwoven into the story. People come away from performances singing the tunes or wanting to buy the music. Though the story and lyrics were written by a Broadway professional, *Promised Valley* suffers from a weak plot, its story erratic and often contrived. The story is even worse in the condensed version currently presented to tourists in Salt Lake City. The music, however, deservedly lives on.

*The Order Is Love*, by a full Mormon team (story, lyrics and music) has reversed this situation in rather a nice way. Here the plot and dramatic situation dominate the show, with real characters and real situations developing believably. One goes away from the production feeling that Orderville, upon which the musical play is based, indeed must have been much like this, or at least hoping that it was. Some of the funniest lines in all of Mormondom appear in this musical, a tribute to the sensitive wit of Carol Lynn Pearson.

The music is lively, impressive, and highly rhythmic, but the qualities that beg for comparison to *Promised Valley* are in short supply. The music is fun and exciting, but there is difference between adequate melodies that merely satisfy and tunes which last beyond a single performance. There were a few of the latter in *The Order Is Love*. One tune, "We're Brothers," might be an exception, because of the clever counterpoint and the charm of the young men who sang it.

When this production gets trimmed down for stake and ward use, young people will probably enjoy dancing to and singing the music. The production numbers generally have zip and vigor, accorded by rock beats and Latin rhythms. The work has a "today" flavor, with plenty of appeal to the youth of the Church. But today's sounds become yesterday's sounds very quickly, and a work which seems fresh and alive at its inception becomes dated and old in less than a dozen years.

The orchestration is expertly done by Lex de Azevedo. Considering that most composers of musicals have other professionals score their show music, this is quite a feat for this talented young man. Many of the dances and group pieces may have to be simplified from their present rhythmic complexity for ward and stake musicians, but young casts will have rollicking fun learning the dances and music, all of which really "swings."

# THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IS WOMAN. ... HENRY ADAMS

Much of the music could be retitled "The King Family Show Revisited," which, considering the composer's background as arranger for the King Family Show (Lex is the son of Alice, one of the King Sisters), is only natural. The music contains all the elements found in a TV variety show, which tends to entertain but does little to unify a more complex vehicle such as a musical play. One thinks of the best songs as being the right combination of notes and words, in the right place and at the right time, but the songs from *The Order Is Love* could fit any number of situations. The musical style lacks the unity of the story and lyrics. A Latin-American nightclub style (a la Las Vegas), tends to take the viewer's mind farther south than Southern Utah.

The B.Y.U. production featured an excellent orchestra, rather precisely directed by Newell Dayley. Lead singers tended to be weak, but the choral singing was well-rehearsed and effective, as were the dancers and actors.

The marvelous thing to contemplate is that B.Y.U. has the facilities, the interest, the talent, and the money to finance this kind of venture. This should spur the kind of writing needed to provide more such quality musicals for Church use. Much was learned from the evening "in Orderville," more than many history lessons about the operation of the United Order there could have taught. May this be the beginning of better things to come.

## BIOGRAPHY OF AN INDIAN LATTER-DAY SAINT WOMAN

Grace F. Arrington

*Me and Mine: The Life Story of Helen Sekaquaptewa*, as told to Louise Udall. Tucson, Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1969. 262 pp. \$3.95.

*Me and Mine* ranks with the finest autobiographical accounts of Latter-day Saint women. Informative, interesting, and written simply but with a sense of drama, it is a fascinating book. Louise Udall, mother of Stewart Morris, explains in the Preface:

My friendship with Helen began when she was living in Phoenix, keeping a home for her children who were attending high school and college. Once every week she rode with me out southwest of Phoenix to the Maricopa Reservation where we spent the afternoon holding Relief Society meetings . . . with the Maricopa Indians. As we traveled we visited.

The many things she told me about her life prompted me to say, "You should write the story of your life for your children and grandchildren."

Her answer was, "I have thought of doing it, but didn't think I was capable."

I started writing the events as she told them. I visited her at the Ranch for weeks at a time, and the story grew and grew.

The Trader at Oraibi asked, "What is Mrs. Udall writing? I know she is writing something."

Helen replied, "I am talking. She is writing."

Helen was born in 1898 in Oraibi, a Hopi village, continuously inhabited for more than six hundred years. The early part of Helen's life was marked by conflict between two factions in the community — Hostiles or traditionalists, who opposed adaptation to the white man's way, and Friendlies or liberals, who favored such adaptation. Helen's parents were Hostiles, and one of the most fascinating parts of *Me and Mine* explains in charming detail the Hopi way of life and the imaginative ways in which the Hostiles sought to preserve it. Life revolved around the elemental provision of food and water. Oraibi was built at the end of a mesa, accessible by only one or two narrow trails, in order to provide the Hopis with protection from other tribes. But the only supply of water, except for snow and infrequent rainshowers, was a well about a mile away. It was the responsibility of the women to transport water from the well to the homes. Helen tells how they built and kept their homes, how they obtained and prepared their food (their "piki" sounds like a tasty delicacy), how they made their clothing, the trade and barter, the ceremonial festivals, and the inculcation of attitudes toward life and others. One of the traditional ceremonies — something like a baptism — took place when the children were about seven years old and proved to be quite an ordeal for Helen. Helen's story of the efforts of the family to hide her from the police and from school officials in order to keep her from going to the dreaded white man's school at the age of six is both entertaining and sad.

When Helen was seven years old, in September 1906, the long-standing feud between the Hostiles and Friendlies reached a climax. Rather than

battle it out in civil war, the two Hopi factions agreed that whichever side could push the other across a line would win the village. The Hostiles lost and thus were expelled from their ancestral home. They camped, Navajo style, near a spring called Hotevilla. All the 82 children who were of school age were forcibly taken to a government boarding school in Keams Canyon. The fathers who would not promise to support the government in this endeavor (72 in all, including Helen's father) were sent to prison. With only a handful of men, women, and little children, the exiled community barely survived hunger and exposure.

At the school Helen was one of the youngest children and suffered, not only because of the white attempts to "make her over," but also because the older Indian children took her food and excluded her from play. Because they knew her parents would seek to prevent her from coming back, white officials kept her at the school for four years. During all of these years, she was able to see her mother only twice. Nevertheless, Helen came to appreciate the school and what they tried to teach, and she liked the clothing and health habits. She worked hard and studied hard. Because of the misery and trauma of this experience Helen vowed never to be unkind to others, and to help others when she could.

Having become accustomed to the white man's life-style, Helen was uncomfortable when she returned home to learn what every Hopi girl should learn from her mother. Not until then did she realize how well she had been cared for. She returned to the Keam's school and finished all the grades. After a brief period at her village, she made up her mind to finish her education, and left without her parents' consent to attend a high school in Phoenix. There she supported herself by doing laundry work, sewing, and taking care of white people's homes. There she met Emory, also from a family of Hostiles, whose personal motivations and experiences were similar to hers. She had always considered herself an ugly duckling, and when this most responsible and sought-after young man started to court her, she felt like she had "turned into a swan."

After finishing high school she returned home, having been away for thirteen years. She would not wear the Hopi clothes her brothers had made for her, and instead gave them to her sister. During her first year home her mother and one of her brothers died during the flu epidemic. By Hopi custom Helen should have become the "mother" of the home, but her married sister, Verlie, still a Hostile, moved in and took over. Verlie made Helen's life miserable. When Emory realized Helen's situation, he proposed that they marry. Enmeshed in two cultures, they underwent two marriages — a traditional Hopi wedding and a licensed Christian marriage by a Mennonite missionary.

Helen and Emory went to Idaho for a year, but had most of their food production ruined during the long winter. They worked hard, however, and managed to accumulate enough to pay their fare back to Hotevilla. There they made their permanent home. Gradually building a bridge between Hopi and white culture, Emory has become a community leader and tribal judge. In many ways Helen and Emory have tried to quiet prejudice, set up programs for the good of all concerned, and convert enemies into friends.

The first child of Helen and Emory, named Joy, died of dysentery; a

baby son also died from injuries received in a fall. Eventually, however, Helen bore ten children and reared two foster children. Several of her children have attended Brigham Young University.

Helen's father had told her the traditional history of the Hopis, and this recitation included a prophecy that the true religion would some day be given to the Hopi people. When Helen first read the Book of Mormon it all sounded like the handed-down history and the fulfillment of the prophecy. In 1950, when her son Abbott was in the hospital afflicted with acute arthritis, he met Mormon Elders. The next year Emory, Helen, and Abbott were taught the Gospel. Helen was converted at once, became active in Relief Society, and became almost a legend among Latter-day Saints because of her goodness to neighbors and missionaries. Says Helen:

All my life I have liked to work, and I have accomplished a lot in my lifetime, raising food, making clothes for the children, nearly everything they had at first, and all the other tasks that go into the making of a home. . . . When I think upon my children and the kind of people they are, a feeling of joy and pride fills my heart, and I say to myself, "I have had a good life."

Let no one dismiss  
Mormon autobiography  
as an inferior  
literary form; in  
the end it may  
outweigh in value all  
the rest.

DALE MORGAN

Helen's father remained a Hostile, but before his death he told her: "You are a good daughter. You have good children. You raise a lot of food and take care of it and feed us good and never waste a thing. . . . I marvel at the way you stood up against people, and we have all lived better because of it."

By trial and error Helen and Emory have appropriated the best from the Hopi and white man's cultures and fashioned a practical, meaningful, and wholesome life for themselves and their children. Mrs. Udall concludes:

Helen always sings hymns softly as she works in the kitchen, even toward evening after a sixteen-hour day. Emory sits quietly waiting for the meal to be served; he also sings to himself — Hopi songs. The tone of voice used in their conversation with each other and the expression of their faces is beautiful to behold. They are at peace with each other and the world.

## A MORMON MOTHER

Charlotte Cannon Johnston

*A Mormon Mother, An Autobiography.* By Annie Clark Tanner. Salt Lake City, The University of Utah Press, 1969. 294 pp.

*A Mormon Mother*, which Annie Clark Tanner wrote in long hand in 1941 in her 77th year, seems especially valuable to me as an honest, perceptive account of the human problems of living polygamy during the peaceful 1870s period as well as the more tumultuous era of the underground and Manifesto. She tells her story with remarkable detail drawn from her own memory, her diary, letters to and from her children and husband, and newspaper accounts. As her son Obert C. Tanner says in the foreword to the second printing in 1969, she "tells it like it was."

Born in 1864 to Ezra Clark, a successful community leader whom she loved dearly, and his second wife, Susan, a meticulous housekeeper and able homemaker, she grew up with a positive attitude toward polygamy. The wives she knew were proud and honored to be chosen to share in the highest exaltation in the Kingdom of God. A common saying was "I'd rather have his little finger than the whole of a man outside the Church."

In contrast to her childhood experience, her marriage in 1884 as the second wife to a prominent educator, Joseph Marion Tanner, was extremely difficult. No longer was polygamy the inviolate "capstone of Mormon doctrine." The enforcement of the Edmunds-Tucker Act created unsettled conditions. Homes were broken up and families scattered among friends and relatives. Annie became a wife in the underground, living in borrowed rooms, and hungering to make a home for her children. Her struggles after the Manifesto were no less difficult; her own pain provoked her to re-examine her idealized childhood views.

She began to analyze her own mother's position as a second wife and to remember some negative details. Ezra Clark married his second wife, a beautiful girl of 24, years after the first wife, Aunt Mary, with whom he had lived in Nauvoo, crossed the plains, and raised a large family. The father spent most of his time in Aunt Mary's more spacious home, the center of activity. There the provisions were kept and frugally distributed. Company and dignitaries were entertained there. The family carriage always loaded there with Aunt Mary in the front seat and Annie's mother in the back. When her father and Aunt Mary celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, Annie's mother stood quietly in the background. In recounting a dream she had shortly before her death Annie's mother said she went to Heaven and met her husband and "Though I looked everywhere, I couldn't find Aunt Mary."

Aloneness is a major theme of the book. Annie was alone on her wedding night. Her husband is never mentioned at the births of any of her ten children. She established her homes alone and largely supported her children even before she and her husband officially separated. She never had the partnership we feel marriage should be today. But there are advantages to aloneness. "The wife in polygamy does not feel the security that I imagine monogamous women feel," she writes. Yet, because of her lone position she developed an "independence that women in monogamy never know. . . .

The plural wife, in time, becomes conscious of her own power to make decisions.”

In her middle years, Mrs. Tanner could no longer accept her former belief that it was man’s place to create conditions and woman’s place to accept them – his right to command and her duty to obey. The results of unquestioningly following her husband’s will were disastrous for her and the development of her family. She was forced to rely more and more on her own judgment and less on outside authority. The reader experiences her evolution from a woman directed and dictated to by forces outside herself to forces within herself.

When the Church changed its position on polygamy in 1890, many of the Saints could not forsake the cornerstone principle of their lives for which they had made such sacrifices. The ambiguous language of the Manifesto left many Saints feeling that polygamy remained a divine Commandment. J. M. Tanner was one. Because he later married three other women (a total of six), he lost his standing in the Church and eventually died alone on a unsuccessful farm in Canada. He seems to have been a villain, but we never hear his side of the story. He becomes a tragic casualty of the transition to monogamy.

*A Mormon Mother* is an articulate minority report of a difficult era. Mrs. Tanner illuminates dark issues that many of us don’t want to see. We prefer to view polygamy as idyllic or at least tolerable, as she did when a child, not as the painful, solitary life she experienced as an adult. For many polygamy was not a nightmare; for Mrs. Tanner it was. *A Mormon Mother* is a unique addition to understanding our Mormon heritage.





## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

CLAUDIA LAUPER BUSHMAN has an AB from Wellesley, an MA from B.Y.U. and is currently pursuing a doctorate in American studies at Boston University. She teaches Relief Society in the Cambridge Ward and delivered her sixth child and this issue of *Dialogue* in the same month.

LAUREL THATCHER ULRICH is a graduate of the University of Utah and Simmons College. She was principal author of *A Beginner's Boston* but doesn't intend to write a guide to New Hampshire, where she now lives, because "we already have too many tourists." She is the mother of four and a Primary teacher in Portsmouth Ward.

GRACE ARRINGTON, a convert to Mormonism from North Carolina, has served for many years as a teacher and counselor in the Relief Society and has edited two cook books. She is the wife of Leonard Arrington (also a contributor to this issue) and the mother of three.

LEONARD ARRINGTON wrote of the "male bias" in Church history in *Dialogue*, Summer 1968. In articles in *Western Humanities Review*, *The Improvement Era*, and elsewhere, he has begun the job of correcting it. He was guest editor of the Winter 1970 issue of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*, devoted to women.

JOANN WOODRUFF BAIR, a 1967 graduate of Utah State University, is already a veteran of three Relief Society presidencies. She lives in Phoenix, Arizona, and expects her first child in December.

ALBERTA BAKER is officially "retired" but she maintains a thriving sewing business in her Somerville, Mass., apartment. She was secretary of the New England Mission Relief Society under five presidents and is now serving in the Cambridge Ward Relief Society. She is a speed reader, a writer of light verse, and a devoted patron of Greyhound.

BLANCHE BERRY, a black sister in the Church, died recently in Washington, D.C. in her eighties. "A sparkling, charming personality — very much the *grand dame!*" — she was an actress who appeared in the original production of *Emperor Jones*.

MARYRUTH BRACY is teaching at the Yale Foreign Language Institute in linguistics. Her MA is from UCLA. This year she edited for the Boston Stake "Words With Wisdom: A Congregation of Prose and Poetry from New England."

MARY LYTHGOE BRADFORD is a consultant in English Language for the General Accounting Office in Washington, a member of the Board of Editors of *Dialogue*, and has recently been teacher of a creative writing course for the Potomac Stake Relief Society. Her hobbies are raising children (three) and light homemaking.

JUANITA LEAVITT BROOKS, a well-known scholar and writer, is the author of *Mountain Meadows Massacre* and biographies of Dudley Leavitt and John D. Lee, and editor (with Robert Cleland) of the diaries of John D. Lee and Hosea Stout. Her most recent book, *Uncle Will*, is a biography of her husband.

LOUISE LARSON COMISH's great-grandmother was "Mormondom's first woman missionary," whose journals were published by the D.U.P.. Her mother kept a journal which chronicles Snowflake's history. Her children and grandchildren, to keep up the tradition, are writers of letters and "other stuff as well." "Snowflake Girl" is part of a much longer manuscript prepared for her children.

RICHARD H. CRACROFT teaches literature at B.Y.U. He has published widely in his area of special interest – nineteenth century American and Western literature. He serves on the High Council of the Provo East Stake and assists in the writing of priests' manuals for the Presiding Bishopric.

CHRISTINE MEADERS DURHAM received her Juris Doctor degree from Duke University Law School in June. She is a member of the Association of American Law Schools' Committee on Women in Legal Education. While at Duke she was a member of the Moot Court Board. She is a graduate of Wellesley College and the mother of two.

PATRICIA RASMUSSEN EATON attended B.Y.U., graduated from Western Michigan University, then worked for "and became disillusioned with" the Job Corps and Headstart. She has spent the last two years helping to establish a parent controlled day-care center at the University of Michigan, where she works half-time. Her daughter was born while her husband was in Vietnam. "The Courtship" won the 1967 Mayhew Contest at B.Y.U.

JAROLDEEN ASPLUND EDWARDS is a native of Canada and a graduate of B.Y.U., where she was poetry editor of the "Wye." She now lives in Pasadena with her husband and eleven children. "I can't talk to population explosionists. My mere existence is a source of contention and disgust to them." She recognizes the problems of a filling earth, but is distressed with the absolutism of the solutions offered. "I can't get on a soap box. All I can say is 'for me this is a satisfying life!'"

SHIRLEY HAMMOND GEE achieved national prominence during the Romney campaign in New Hampshire when *Time* referred to her Somersworth house as a "clapboard crackerbox." She is a native of Idaho and an English-Journalism graduate of Utah State University. She has five children and a staggering collection of Church assignments in the Sanford (Maine) Branch.

DIANNE HIGGINSON is an elusive philosopher of solitude.

M. KARLYNN HINMAN comes from Farmington, Utah. She has a BA from the University of Utah and a Ph.D. from Harvard. She has been a Fulbright fellow at London University and an assistant professor at the University of Maine where she authored a baccalaureate program in criminal justice. She is now a second-year law student at the University of Chicago. She was recently made "vice-president for publications" of her family genealogical society.

INA JESPERSON HOBSON's interest in genealogy has deepened her appreciation of her pioneer heritage. Following her graduation from the University of Arizona she taught in the public schools and has continued to teach in various Church auxiliaries in El Cajon, California, where she now lives. She is the mother of three and a grandmother.

DIXIE SNOW HUEFNER, Wellesley '58, has pursued her study of heterogeneous communities in a variety of citizen and professional projects in Salt Lake City, Washington, D.C., and Boston. With her husband she taught an "urban environment" section at the 1971 Boston Stake education series and regularly conducts the family relations class in Cambridge Ward. She is the mother of two boys.

CHARLOTTE CANNON JOHNSTON taught high school English after her years at B.Y.U. She lives in Hyde Park, an integrated urban section of Chicago, with her four children and psychiatrist husband. A counselor in the Relief Society, she likes much about women's liberation, but doesn't object to being known as her husband's wife.

A. LAWRENCE LYON teaches music at Oregon College of Education in Monmouth. He serves as stake organist and stake music director as well as the group leader of his High Priests quorum.

CHERYL LYNN MAY spent the summer in Washington, D.C. doing research on the Bricker Amendment for her Ph.D. thesis at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She is from San Rafael, California, and a graduate of B.Y.U. With her husband she teaches a teen-age Sunday School class and is chairman of the Somerville, Mass., Ecology Task Force. She chose to become a political scientist, thinking that "in this man's world I probably couldn't become a politician."

GRETHE BALLIF PETERSON is a graduate of B.Y.U. and of the Management Training Program at Radcliffe. She is the mother of three, lives in a house once owned by William James, and enjoys untangling the varieties of her own religious experience, which includes teaching a Relief Society class. She finds coping with urban life the modern equivalent for "crossing the plains."

LUCYBETH CARDON RAMPTON, the First Lady of Utah, has shown great interest in Utah history and the preservation of historic sites. She teaches in the Relief Society of the Federal Heights Ward. Her academic training has been in anthropology.

ALMERA ANDERSON ROMNEY graduated from B.Y.U. with honors and has done graduate work at Stanford, Claremont, and Cal State, Los Angeles. She has had a distinguished teaching career, which includes seventeen years as principal of an all-minority elementary school. The mother of three and grandmother of six, she lives in the Monrovia Ward, Pasadena Stake.

GEORGINA ALVILLAR WIBERT, one of eleven children, was born in a Colorado mining town, to a Mexican-American family active in early unionism. She spent her early years in Alabama and in Texas, where, she says, her brothers kept her from accepting a job as a cabaret dancer. She now lives in Arlington, Va., with her scientist husband and two children. Most of her stories and poetry revolve around her early life.

CAROLYN DURHAM PETERS, illustrator of this issue and of *A Beginner's Boston*, lives in Brookline, Mass., with her husband, four children, and several hundred cacti and succulents. She sells her fabric wall handings privately and through a Rockport gallery.

Other members of the group in the Boston area who made significant contributions to this issue are Kaye Clay, Helen Cutler, Judith Rasmussen Dushku, Judy Gilliland, Stephanie Goodson, Bonnie Horne, Mary Ann MacMurray, and Linda Millward.



One by one they fall to the jackhammers and bulldozers of demolition crews . . . structures of distinction and integrity, only a few remain . . . a precious few.

Condemned by the indifference and the economics and the success imperative of our time, these churches are about to be removed from the heritage of all Latter-day Saints, of all Utahns. Not all that is old is good or meaningful, but some of the structures now threatened have demonstrable worth, and their preservation can be justified architecturally and historically. If only the most significant can be saved, at least a portion of our past will remain to speak to us and to succeeding generations . . . to remind us of the sacrifice — not to mention the good taste — that characterized the faith of the Latter-day Saints.

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*Photo courtesy the Utah Historical Society*

## COMING NEXT IN DIALOGUE:

### MORMONISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

*A Special Issue Edited by James B. Allen*

“Religious and Social Attitudes of Modern Urban  
Mormons”\* by Armand Mauss

“The Church in Asia” by Paul Hyer

“Three Myths About Mormons and Their Church in  
Latin America” by Lamond Tullis

“Mormons in the Third Reich” by Joseph M. Dixon

“Implications of the World-Wide Church” by  
Douglas Tobler

“Mahonri Young and the Mormon Church: A View of  
Mormonism and Art” by Wayne Hinton

“The Re-Organization in the Twentieth Century” by  
Barbara Higdon

“Reed Smoot and Social Welfare Legislation” by  
Thomas G. Alexander

“The International Perspective of J. Reuben Clark, Jr.”  
by Ray Hillam and Martin Hickman

“God and Man in History” by Richard Poll

\*All titles are tentative.



WE BELIEVE THAT WOMEN ARE USEFUL, NOT ONLY TO SWEEP HOUSES, WASH DISHES, MAKE BEDS, & RAISE BABIES, BUT THEY SHOULD STAND BEHIND THE COUNTER, STUDY LAW OR PHYSIC, OR BECOME GOOD BOOKKEEPERS & BE ABLE TO DO THE BUSINESS IN ANY COUNTING HOUSE, AND ALL THIS TO ENLARGE THEIR SPHERE OF USEFULNESS FOR THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY AT LARGE. IN FOLLOWING THESE THINGS THEY BUT ANSWER THE DESIGN OF THEIR CREATION.

BRIGHAM YOUNG